# Opening the art world

Pupils at Lossiemouth High School were able to expand their artistic horizons without leaving rural Moray thanks to a partnership between the school and the National Galleries of Scotland.

They were given special viewings of some of the art treasures of Scotland using videoconferencing via Glow so they didn't have to travel all the way to Edinburgh to see them.

The school and galleries staff formulated the project to enable the pupils to see the works of art, to encourage them to try etching and printmaking and to have the chance to ask the curator questions.

A printmaker also visited the school in person to show pupils how to create their own etchings and prints and the pupils were able to find out more about the different careers in the art world.

VIDEO

Transcript

**National Galleries of Scotland curator to the webcam:** Hello Lossiemouth and good afternoon! How are you all?

**Principal Teacher of Art:** One of the main problems that we have in Moray is that we don’t have a public art gallery and that was one of the reasons for going and developing this partnership with the National Galleries, is that because of our remote location we don’t get the opportunity of visiting the gallery as often as we’d like.

**Principal Teacher of Art to Galleries representative on webcam:** Can you see that?

**National Galleries of Scotland curator replies:** Yes, we can. Yes!

**Moray Council enterprise support officer:** I’m Enterprise Support Officer with Moray Council, with responsibility mainly for business engagement. I first became involved with Lossiemouth High through the Principal Teacher [of Art], really, who was seeking to get access to the National Gallery collection without having to go to Edinburgh. And that’s one of our issues, being a rural community [in the] North East of Scotland, [it’s] very difficult to access the central belt and the national collection is our collection.

**Principal Teacher of Art:** He had the idea of working in partnership as a school, with the National Galleries of Scotland and it was something that I thought, ‘Well, it could be something that we could use…’ but we weren’t quite sure where it would lead us. It was very much a creative process in itself, in that we decided just to see where it would take us.

**Principal Teacher of Art to a class of pupils:** But you’ll get the opportunity to at least make an attempt to start and possibly see through to the end, if not this period, maybe over the next couple of weeks, to finish your own etching.

**Moray Council enterprise support officer:** I’m really organised a three-day placement for the Principal Teacher of Art here and myself, to work with the National Gallery Education Team. To begin to look at ways in which we could work together and ways in which the school could access the collection from the school.

**National Galleries of Scotland representative 1 on webcam**: I can’t see you, you know!

**Principal Teacher of Art replies:** Oh! Moves the camera slightly. Is that better?

**National Galleries of Scotland representative 1 on webcam:** Oh yes, I can now! Laughs

**Moray Council enterprise support officer:** We began to see that, possibly, the first stage might be videoconferencing. So, linking with the print room, we spend some time in the print room, looked at what was there, in fact, and then began to think about how we could work in the school, work with the print room and work with the staff of the National Galleries.

**National Galleries of Scotland curator:** It was great to have the teacher coming down because we could formulate a joint vision and a joint approach to the teaching up at Lossiemouth. It was very exciting for us to actually talk face to face with the teacher and talk about her pupils and their interests and all about the history of the area that they came from. It was quite good for me as well because it was a joint enlightening experience. I’m sure that the teacher learned a lot coming down here, but at the same time, we, down at the National Galleries of Scotland learned a lot about Lossiemouth and the requirements and interests of their pupils.

**Principal Teacher of Art to a class of pupils:** This is Tessa Asquith-Lamb here who is, I suppose you could say, our artist-in-residence for the day! She's come up from Edinburgh, from the National Galleries, and she is a printmaker and she specialises in etchings.

**Tessa Asquith-Lamb:** I came to Lossiemouth last year to work with PT Art and Design after one of the art teachers saw my work in Edinburgh and thought that my work would fit in well with the projects that she had in mind for Lossiemouth.

**Tessa Asquith-Lamb to a class:** I'm just going to, really quickly, show you what I do, which is …. I’m an etcher and a printmaker.

**Principal Teacher of Art:** It was really beneficial for the pupils to bring the artist up into the classroom, rather than taking the pupils to the gallery. Its much more beneficial for the pupils and they get the experience of seeing things multidimensionally, in that they have the experience of speaking to a professional, they have the opportunity of having a discussion with the Curator in the gallery and they have the opportunity of doing something practically as well as looking at the work in the National [Gallery] Collection for inspiration.

**National Galleries of Scotland representative on webcam:** Today we are going to show you some more prints from the print room, on the theme of myths and legends again.

**Pupil 1**: This was my etching of myths and legends. It involves a wolf, because the man who was in this war was described as a wolf and that’s what he did to the houses and the people. He set fires everywhere and this is a picture of that …

**Tessa Asquith-Lamb:** I think this is a very valuable and positive project, both for the liaison with the National Galleries of Scotland, for the school and for the pupils involved, because it’s bringing together all these different elements.

The pupils are seeing wonderful works of art which they wouldn’t necessarily have access to normally and they're seeing them via the webcam link, which is quite a new thing to be happening. And quite an exciting thing to be actually present when that’s happening.

So they're seeing wonderful things, like a Goya or a Leonardo Da Vinci drawing and they're seeing them right in their classroom and its very direct kind of inspiration for them. And it’s very positive that these things from the print room of the National Gallery are getting seen by a wider audience like that, and I think its something that would be brilliant if most schools could see them.

**Pupil 2**: I liked seeing the etchings and the art from the gallery because I know it was a once in a lifetime opportunity. And no-one got to see it, except for us!

**Pupil 3:** I liked the project today because we got to look at different etchings and talked to the person who does etchings as a professional career and it made me think about, maybe, doing that as a career when I’m older.

**Principal Teacher of Art to Curator on webcam:** Could you, maybe, explain to the pupils as well, a little bit about your job and what a Curator does …

**National Galleries of Scotland curator replies:** A Curator looks after the collection; it comes from the Latin [word] meaning to care for. Part of my job is to look after 30,000 works on paper here and the works on paper belong to the nation. They belong to you and to everyone else; my job is just to care for them for you.

**Tessa Asquith-Lamb :** I think it’s also great that the pupils that are seeing that art is something that can be part of your life and can be a part of your career. And something very imaginative and fulfilling, like that, is possible as a career. It’s not necessarily something that you do I school and that’s the end; it’s something that you can go on and use and that you can feel great about in your later life.

**National Galleries of Scotland representative:** The evaluation from the pupils who were involved in the pilot project last year … they went on to display some of their artwork that they produced, inspired by some of the prints that they saw.

So, I believe that they … the expectation was high but I think the pupils more than delivered and that’s fantastic.

**National Galleries of Scotland curator speaks to class via webcam:** Hopefully we might see some of your coming down here and taking up art as career!

**Principal Teacher of Art replies:** Well, there's a few of them already that have suggested that it might be something that they're interested in doing.

**National Galleries of Scotland curator speaks to class via webcam:** It’s a fantastic job, a fantastic career. Always being creative and looking at things … I’ll tell you something – you’ll never be bored!

**Principal Teacher of Art:** We can really benefit from this partnership and there's a very strong connection here now, and it’s a personal link as well. I think that’s something that’s very important. It’s getting past the nameless business … but we have created real friendships and real opportunities here and it’s, very much, down to the people involved.

**National Galleries of Scotland curator:** For me, the key outcome of this was the ability to get some of the collection to [the] wider public. People that, perhaps, wouldn’t be able to come down quite readily to look at the collection.

**Principal Teacher of Art:** There is so much potential in this. It’s really exciting and it’s really refreshed my approach to my teaching and I can see benefits, not only for our art and design education, but there are benefits for other schools, other subjects to become involved with partnerships with other businesses where you can really call on the professionalism, you can really call on the expertise of a business and a working partnership to create something really exciting for the 21st Century for Scottish education.

**Moray Council enterprise support officer**: The National Gallery is obviously looking at [making sure] their education programme is nationwide. They want to bring their collection to a wider audience and, really, it probably is a win-win situation for them. The fact that there is somebody in the north east of Scotland who is looking to work with them effectively and they see this as, possibly, something that can be rolled out nationally as well.

**National Galleries of Scotland staff speak to class via webcam:** Bye! Bye Lossiemouth! Waving

**Class replies:** Bye!