

PRESS RELEASE

Through the Looking Glass: Life behind the knife.



Artist Emma Barnard is exchanging knives for cameras in London's Waltham Forest, working with young people with a lived experience of knife crime.

Artist Emma Barnard has been awarded Arts Council funding to run workshops for young people at risk of knife crime. Creating photographic interpretations from their perspectives, the finished photographic

artworks will be exhibited in pop up exhibitions throughout venues in the London Borough of Waltham Forest and also at an end of year exhibition (venue tbc). Equipment for the workshops has been funded through the LBWF Make it Happen program.

The London Borough of Waltham Forest is one of the most deprived boroughs in London having some areas with the highest deprivation in the UK. Young people participating in this project are likely to face barriers because of their poor socio-economic backgrounds and may have had direct lived experiences of knife crime.

Through peer to peer engagement, running a series of workshops with participants for a year and creating a body of artistic works *Through the Looking Glass* gives the public a chance to view the impact of youth violence directly through the young people eyes.

This project is an opportunity for young people at risk to discover and develop their creative skills in a safe space. This work is not intended to be therapeutic, however [social prescribing evidences this](#). Also that art has a powerful way of aiding healing and the artist will initiate an environment where this is possible.

The project is endorsed and supported by experienced collaborators and advisors; Iona McArdle FRSA, (Project Management), Carol Taylor Spedding BSc (Hons), PGCE (Safeguarding and Education), Styles (Life Experience and Young People), Dr Kay Leedham-Green, (Evaluation), and Consultant Trauma Surgeon Mr Martin Griffiths who is National Clinical Director for Violence Reduction with NHS England.

Mr Martin Griffiths, Consultant Trauma Surgeon *'We are really pleased to support the work that artist Emma Barnard is doing with young people around serious youth violence. Collaboration with a diverse range of communities and organisations is key to a successful violence reduction strategy. Being able to discuss the issue not just in a legislative or academic sense is really important in being able to share important messages and principles. We think Emma's creative expression as seen by her previous work demonstrates how photography can carry some meaningful messages to help illustrate the problem of youth violence and knife crime in a different way'*.

This work is not intended to be therapeutic, however, social prescribing evidences that art has a powerful way of aiding healing, and the artist will initiate an environment where this is possible.

The project runs until December 2021 with the artwork being shown at each community venue at the conclusion of the workshops, and at an end of project exhibition following government Covid guidelines.

There will also be images shown online through the artist's website and social media platforms.

Notes to Editors:

PR contact for interviews/image:

Binita Walia 07734 507799 binita@thespaceinbetween.co.uk

Artists Website: <https://www.emmabarnard.com/>

Results of the artwork will be shown at each community venue at the conclusion of the workshops and at an end of project exhibition (following government guidelines venue tbc. There will also be images shown online through the artist's social media platforms.

Image shown: Empty hands that illustrate the loss of friend Tommy to knife crime. Credit and © Emma Barnard

Links:

Social Prescribing evidence on the role of the arts [LINK](#)

Dr Martin Griffiths Consultant Trauma Surgeon [LINK](#)

Waltham Forest and deprivation, stats [LINK](#)

About Emma Barnard, artist, and project lead

Emma Barnard MA (RCA) is a visual artist specialising in lens-based media and inter-disciplinary practice and research within Fine Art and Medicine. Her work deals with social commentary, seeking to highlight contemporary issues and encourage debate surrounding them.

She has worked extensively with ENT (head and neck) consultant surgeons and their patients to explore through visual means the patient experience and the doctor/patient dynamic. The resultant artwork has been exhibited widely in

galleries, universities, and hospitals in the UK and internationally. In 2017 she had a solo exhibition at the gallery that represents her, BBA Gallery in Berlin. She presents her work at conferences within the medical and medical humanities fields such as UCL, Kings and Cambridge University for CRASSH (Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities).

Emma has extensive experience as a teacher having spent twelve years working within secondary, further and higher education teaching a variety of creative subjects.

<https://www.emmabarnard.com/>

This project is funded by Arts Council England:

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in Let's Create that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision. www.artscouncil.org.uk

With additional funding from Waltham Forest Council, [Make it Happen: Arts and Culture Grants](#)



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