



The Drug of Art Charity proudly introduces our 6 Competition Winners, each embracing the chance for self-expression. The artworks of these 6 individuals under 25 have been selected by our esteemed panel of judges, artist Alison Lapper and Gary Mansfield, photographer Rankin, and BA representative Laura Phillips.

These young minds invite the viewers into their intimate emotions, thoughts, and experiences, translating them into compelling artworks. The competition consisted of two categories: 'My Happy Place' and 'My Reality.'

My Happy Place:

Artists were asked to visualize the essence of what makes them feel content. We see a vital connection between wellbeing and nature, as all three artists highlight the serene and peaceful encounters with the natural world. Jamie Smart, inspired by family day trips to West Wales, captures a fuzzy moment with a Turnstone at the beach. Daniel Goddard finds happiness amidst the sycamore trees along the northwest coast of Scotland, intertwining the joy of creating art with the tranquility of a scenic spot. Emily McIntosh's serene landscape of Eskdale in the Lake District serves as her safe haven—a place where the gently running stream instantly calms her down, away from worries.

My Reality:

Artists lay bare the intricacies of their daily lives. Jess Jebb's poignant piece, 'Focus,' sheds light on the struggle one faces with attention, offering a glimpse into the challenges of education through the eyes of a neurodivergent young boy grappling with overwhelm. Senal Weerackody's creation captures the societal pressures of concealing one's true self, as individuals choose a metaphorical mask to fit into the expectations of school or work. Joanne Mahmud courageously shares her journey of grief from losing her mother to suicide at a tender age. Each artwork is a window into the raw, unfiltered realities these young artists navigate.

Art knows no age limits. From 4 to 25, these diverse submissions highlight feelings that connect us all. We encourage you to delve into, reflect upon, and submerge yourself in the rich narratives skillfully crafted by these young artists. Join us in celebrating the many emotions that make us human.

The Drug of Art Charity aims to inspire and encourage young individuals to explore their creativity, discover their modes of expression, and nurture their overall well-being. Through collaborative art workshops conducted in partnership with the Michael Aldrich Foundation, we aim to foster playfulness and experimentation, curiosity, instill resilience, community spirit, and self-esteem.

In addition to our workshops, the Drug of Art Competition stands as a testament to our commitment to promoting young creativity.

The competition is supported by British Airways BA Better World Community Fund and partnered with CASS Arts and Museum of the Mind.



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My Happy Place

Jamie Smart

4-9

'Fuzzy Dreams'

"My name is Jamie and I'm 7 years old. I love any nature and wildlife, but birds in particular. Being homeschooled due to family health reasons I find great happiness in going out looking for unusual birds and watching them being happy in their environment. With the way things are going these days due to climate change and loss of habitat for these wonderful creatures, it gives me a lovely, fuzzy warm feeling inside when I see and capture images like this on my camera.....knowing this little Turnstone is content with life brings me a lot of joy....he looks like he's in a very Happy Place :-)

I took this photo of a Turnstone at the beach when my parents and I went for a day trip to West Wales one day. Day trips for us are a happy occasion and can only happen when mum is well enough. We all love nature and wildlife, so really enjoy spending time out in the wild. I have always wanted to see Turnstones and living in the middle of the countryside I knew this would have to be a trip to the coast one day, keeping fingers crossed for a sighting. Luckily a small flock of Turnstones turned up at the shore line on this sunny day....this one spent a bit of time foraging around and then took his place on a rock in the sun and snuggled up for a while. He looked so cute and peaceful there on his rock with the waves lapping around him in the warm sun I couldn't resist getting a photo of him. A lovely fuzzy moment for him and me.

Daniel Goddard

10-14

'Sycamore trees whilst eating cake'

"I am 12 years old and love creating art in a range of styles including oil pastel, coloured pencil and acrylic. I do this in my spare time and much prefer this to homework! I love visiting the northwest coast of Scotland and am happiest creating artworks when there. This is the view of some beautiful sycamore trees that you can see whilst eating cake in the lovely Bealach cafe on the road to Applecross, in northwest Scotland. I am happiest when sitting there, looking out onto the trees, and they do fantastic cakes and hot chocolate!"

Emily McIntosh

15-19

'Eskdale Peace'

"Eskdale, in the Lake District is my safe haven. Mountains surrounding the valley, quiet isolation from the frantic outside world, a place to escape to, charged with joyful childhood memories. Landscape unaffected by the broken society, untarnished by hate and advancing technology. Throughout the past two years the valley has liberated me from my mind and battle with my body whilst fighting against Anorexia. I longed to climb the surrounding mountains, as my younger and healthier self would have done. However, its peacefully flowing stream and slowness of the sheep eased me, releasing me from my internal fire."

My Reality

Jess Jebb

10-14

'Focus'

“‘Focus’ shows the struggles for some people that come with focusing, especially in lessons. Whilst the teacher’s head is only filled with a short math equation it shows the reality from the young boys point of view, the interests in his head are the type that also goes on in my head whilst learning, this is my reality for expectations in education and how I have a lot of struggles paying attention. I am on the NHS programme for autism which affects my focus, but without a diagnosis it’s really difficult to explain to others.”

Senal Weerackody

15-19

'Fake Facade'

“I have crafted a compelling depiction that explores the experiences of individuals managing the delicate act of putting on a “fake facade” before entering their working environment (school/work). Through a first person perspective, the viewer is instantly, intimately connected with the subject matter, as if they are the one looking into a mirror while holding the mask. It is an emotionally resonant representation of the quest for social acceptance.”

Joanne Mahmud

20-25

'The Overload'

Joanne shares her experience navigating the profound grief of losing her mother to suicide at the tender age of 9. In this poignant artwork, Joanne intricately captures the overwhelming nature of her emotions, depicted through a figure curled up, alone, and trapped inside a black box. The red pattern on one side symbolizes the anger and frustration caused by grief. On the other side, blue teardrops represent the sadness accompanying the loss of her mother. The collision of red and blue walls in the middle of the box symbolizes the overload of emotion. Through her art, she bravely communicates the intricate layers of her experience.