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**Cc:** [David Mackenzie-Dewhirst](#); [Rita Wright](#); [Natasha Dovey](#)  
**Subject:** Art Matters Newsletter April 9th. 2021  
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Dear Artists. 9<sup>th</sup> April 2021

After a week of weather – Easter sunshine followed by arctic winds, frost and snow – today is again bright and blue. Next week things continue to improve - Art Matters reopens for sessions!

This newsletter celebrates new artworks, thoughts and poems from you this week, all of which are amazing, beautiful and help us feel connected. We also remind ourselves of the protocol for coming into the studio and have some information about the new Covid test kits. We start with new works from Barry and Laura who capture our optimism.



Barry. 'Art Matters Opens Soon'.



Laura.

*Here's my latest creation: 'Something Fishy'*

*Looking forward to re-opening of Art Matters.*

♥ Laura

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Studio reopening – things to remember.

Next week Art Matters opens for sessions for the first time since the beginning of the year. We feel ready to reopen, excited and a little anxious and recognise that many of you probably share these feelings. To maintain a safe environment we'll all need to work together and respect and abide the measures that we have in place. We will monitor how things are and make adjustments as we are able and it is safe to do so.

Our preparations are in line with our revised Covid-19 Risk Assessment and include safe distance working and the wearing of facemasks and disposable gloves. If you attended during the autumn term you will recognise many of the measures as they remain in place.

We ask:

Please do not arrive early.

Ring the doorbell and wait for a member of staff. Anti-bac hands.

We'll meet you at the door and ask about your well being and Covid-19 symptoms – any symptoms you'll be advised to return home.

We will continue with the temperature checks.

Please wear a mask - we have a stock of face masks and protective gloves.

Use the NHS Covid-19 QR scan if you have the app on your mobile..

During sessions we will all maintain social distancing.

Sessions will be activity based and group sizes smaller. We'll ask you try to limit your movements across the studio as much as possible.

Bring own materials when possible and take home when finished.

Please wipe down touched surfaces after using the bathroom using wet wipes.

The kitchen will continue to remain closed during session.

Finish on time (we'll need to clean)

Sessions will be every two weeks.

This may seem lots to remember but it will help keep Art Matters a safe and creative environment and we'll be here to guide and remind you!

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The Gatehouse, Reigate. Beautiful new painting by Molly.

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When we closed for the second time on January 7<sup>th</sup> it felt important to everyone that *'Art Matters maintain a sense of community, and find ways of sharing our experience and offering support'*. We thank you for all your contributions to Instagram and this newsletter, and your support during our phone call conversations in helping us all to achieve this.

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*This is Fred my pheasant friend who visits me! He comes to the patio, watching and encouraging me. Raj.*

Thanks Raj. Good to meet you Fred!

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### Covid Testing

Starting today, Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April, many chemists and pharmacies will stock Covid-19 testing kits. The kit contains 7 tests for use at home and gives results in about 25 minutes. They are for anyone who does not have symptoms. Pharmacists will ask why you want a kit (to get tested) and your age. The kits are free. If the scheme works Art Matters studio staff will self test twice a week – we have already started. The government is encouraging us all to test, however, it's early days and there may be initial 'teething' problems. We'll provide a list of participating local pharmacies next week.

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Always good to get the philosophy of Pooh. Thanks Lucy.

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Pierina has been baking – and sketching - and is looking forward to finally getting started at Art Matters. Thanks Pierina.

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All the images can be found on the Art Matters Instagram account.

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A collection of Deanna's new work.

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*Do you have a message for an Art Matters friend? Send it to us and we'll put it in the newsletter. Likewise, a thought for the day, a poem, an idea or a picture you'd like to share.*

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Emma writes: *I made a bunny for my best friend and her mum asked me to make one for her friend's birthday in peach. I went to post it and got a large envelope at the post office and the post office lady and man loved it and asked me to make an elephant one! I had to adapt the pattern to make the elephants head and I've still got to make the coat. You said one day I'll be adapting patterns - lol I didn't think it would be so soon! You've taught me so much just over the phone, by sewing lace slowly and how to adjust my fingers while hand sewing! Thank you so much Natasha! Just getting ready to go to work as they finish at 2 today but I've been dying to message you with my news and also about the Great British Sewing Bee. There's a group on Facebook that I joined as it all about Luna Lapin and friends e.g. the characters I've been making...well they do a Great British sewing bunny!!! You make an outfit for the bunny! Lol! So they give info and then you submit your pics. I can't wait for that!! Anyway I better get going and Happy Easter to you!*  
Brilliant. Thank you Emma.

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Thank you everyone for sending in your work. It's an amazing collection. Art Matters feels very proud.

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Please continue to listen to Government advice and stay safe and stay in touch. Look after yourselves and each other.

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It was announced earlier that Prince Philip has passed away. Our thoughts this afternoon are with the Queen and her family.



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Contacting Art Matters: [artmatters@richmondfellowship.org.uk](mailto:artmatters@richmondfellowship.org.uk) - all staff access these e-mails. You can also call the studio number on 01737 766212 and if we are unable to pick up leave a message and one of us will get back to you as soon as we can.

Staff mobile numbers:

David: 07741 817654 – 9:30 – 4:00. Tuesday to Friday.

Natasha: 07786 191114 – 9:30 – 4:00. Wednesday to Friday.

Rita: 07741 817651 – Tuesday – Thursday.

Mark: 077886 191154 – 9:30 – 4:00. Monday – Friday.

We'll see you soon.

The Art Matters team.

Mark Cremmen

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