



THE PRINTMAKING PROJECT

UCL East Schools Engagement Programme

An overview of the Printmaking Project from 2017-2023 highlighting the impact on participating secondary schools and colleges.

Emma Bryant



The Printmaking Project



Outreach led by Slade alumnus

Introduction

The printmaking project has been running since September 2017 and is now in its sixth year. It takes place over or 3 days and introduces ks4 and ks5 students to the art of drypoint etching and gives them practical printmaking skills. Students study original prints in the UCL Art Museum where they learn about technique, symbolism and composition, back at school they produce a piece of work suitable for their portfolio. They are introduced to a world-class university; they meet and learn from Slade students and alumni to find out about studying at the Slade School of Fine Art. The students' prints are displayed in an end-of-year exhibition, either physically or digitally, (pandemic years excepted). Showcasing the students work has demonstrable benefits particularly, but not exclusively, in increasing confidence and raising aspirations.

The Printmaking Project is a component of the UCL East Museums & Schools programme. This programme consists of various interventions, focusing on UCL's museums, their collections, and object-based learning. It enables young people to learn about the world through UCL's collections thus increasing their cultural capital. In feedback, the vast majority of school students recognised how object-based learning in UCL's museums enriched their studies and provided inspiration for creative work.

The museum and schools' programme sits within UCL East Schools Engagement in the Access and Widening Participation Office (AWPO) which recognises that some students can face obstacles when accessing higher education. The Printmaking Project is committed to trying to ensure that these obstacles are mitigated as far as possible. The UCL East Schools Engagement programme encourages students at schools and colleges in the London boroughs of Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, and Waltham Forest, to study for a degree at UCL. A priority is to raise awareness of UCL. This is the impetus for all Printmaking Project participants visiting the Bloomsbury campus. School students and teachers enjoy meeting UCL students and staff: this is one of the most universally positive aspects of their feedback.



Learning about etching at the Slade

Project overview

Day 1: A visit to UCL Art Museum to study and draw from original prints and visit the Slade Print Studio. They meet current BA Slade students, discover how they use printmaking in their practice, create a joint etching and see printmaking techniques action.

Day 2: A hands-on workshop at school/ college. All materials are provided with a mini-etching studio will be brought to school. Students make and print a dry point etching. The workshop is led by 2 Slade alumni.

Day 3: An optional workshop at school/college. An extension workshop, led by the same Slade alumni, builds on the drypoint etching skills learnt during Day 2 and uses the chine collé (collage) technique.

Culmination: A show of students work. In previous years it has been in the central UCL space, the Wilkins Cloisters or [online](#). In May 2023 the exhibition, with the theme of 'East London' will be on show in the UCL East Campus.

Optional offers

From 2020: 'Stepping into Art School', a workshop led by Slade staff, either face to face or online about the process and requirements for applying to art school.

From 2022: A tour of the Slade BA Show as a follow up to the original tour of the studios on Day 1 where the school students can see the outcomes of studying at the Slade and talk to students about their experiences.



Working in the Slade printing studio

Feedback from students, teachers and parents

Students

Most responses for the printmaking project are positive. Students comment they want more time and also more interaction, demonstrating they are engaged and keen to learn more skills and acquire new knowledge.

‘The workshop was a great way of helping with my knowledge on how to etch, we were introduced to all the different types of etching and their procedures. It has significantly advanced my knowledge of etching and has inspired me to incorporate it into my A Level art a lot more.’

‘The workshop I felt gave us an insight into the Slade School of Art. We were exposed to new techniques and I found it very encouraging. The workshop showed us what higher education is like in an engaging way and encouraged each of us to take our own approach and style to etching.’

‘Really fun hands-on experience of something I’ve never tried before. It was really interesting and now I have the experience and the confidence to try it again.’

‘I learnt a lot in the print workshop and I really enjoyed creating my own print. On top of that I felt very welcomed by everyone and our guides were extremely kind and fun to learn with.’

‘I loved going to the University and seeing the students at work in their studios.’

‘The workshop was so inspirational, I have always been interested in Art and learning the process and seeing people creating Art made me want to carry out my dream.’

‘I liked doing the etching because it is very different from what I do in college’

'I really enjoyed being here. I learned some new things. I felt really welcomed and comfortable. The tour was really useful and interesting and we did some drawing and etching that I've not done before and it was a really nice experience. I would be happy to come back and maybe study here in the future.'

Teachers

Overall experience

- Well-organised
- Structured well
- Sessions work well together
- Students were challenged as part of the programme
- Provided them experiences they would not traditionally have
- Helped build upon their critical analysis work
- Planned well

'An excellent workshop, extremely well prepared and resourced with little for the school to do. The workshop leaders were patient, engaging and pitched the learning perfectly, they had an excellent rapport with the students. As a teacher I feel that I developed professionally by participating learning the technique and feel inspired to include this type of print onto the curriculum.'

'There were excellent learning outcomes with students learning new practical print making skills which linked to work being produced in lessons. Isobel and Taylor [Slade alumni] who led the session on the second day of the workshop were totally professional and experienced. They have built an excellent relationship with both students and staff at Stoke Newington school. Students were one hundred percent engaged and absolutely inspired by their excitement, positivity and praise about their designs and final prints. Two Year 12 classes were involved in the workshop and throughout the day all students made and printed a sequence of successful dry point etchings. '

'The work produced by students will be used to develop sketchbook and portfolio work. The print making workshop has inspired our students and given them the confidence to further try out etching as a print technique and final outcome. Taylor and Isobel in their follow up workshop, introduced colour into the prints with the traditional technique of Chine Colle – using handmade Japanese papers. They exhibited their final prints and acrylic plates at the exhibition, 'Make an Impression: Prints from East London Schools' at UCL. This was an excellent opportunity for students to view the work they created in a public gallery. Those who attended were impressed and wrote wonderful comments in the visitor book. This is a very exciting project and we were very pleased to be asked to take part again this year.'

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'The work produced was outstanding and could be shown in a professional gallery. Students were inspired and engaged and learnt the technique of chine collé. Students were entirely motivated throughout the day and were proud of their final prints.'

'Students were challenged day 1 and looked at work that they "would normally not look at". They deeply analysed the work of Rembrandt and former Slade students, making a series of drawings – this informed their designs for day 2 – all students completed the homework.'

'Perfect planning and step-by-step scaffold of learning.'

'Excellent range and scaffolding of skills and processes. The two sessions really work well together – thank you!'

'Insightful and inspirational look at the facilities, studios and student work at the Slade. This trip will have an impact on how our students view their work and the levels they can push it to in the future through reflection, research and material. P.S: thinking of applying myself for the MA course!'

'The prints will go towards their GCSE coursework, and it has given their portfolio an inspiring element. The year 9 students involved were asking if they could change their GCSE options to art, so it really motivated them creatively!'

'Emma and the team have been a dream to work with. Excellent organisation and communication throughout. Our students have benefitted in numerous ways including extending their skill set, working with artists and designers, experiencing an art crit and learning about pushing abstract ideas.'

When asked about the main learning outcomes

'An appreciation of print, an understanding of the dry point print process. Inspiring students to consider Art at University.'

'To be inspired by engaging with original artworks at the Slade.'

'To meet and work with students who are currently studying or have recently completed courses at the Slade.'

'To experience what it would be like to study at the Slade and view the incredible facilities there.'

'To gain a comprehensive understanding and experience of dry point etching and the specialist technique of Chine Colle.'

'For students to have the opportunity to exhibit their own work at the Slade School of Art. [actually in the Cloisters]'

'Exploring new print methods. Analysing drawing. Exploring a spectrum of artistic practices.'

‘Confidence building, compositional techniques, Dry point/ Chine collé processes, careers and pathways and experimental skills.’

‘Students experienced university life/studies. Exciting/printing skills. Mark making. Discussion practice – great for oracy skills.’

Feedback on how the project supports and enriches the curriculum and exam schemes of work

‘The workshop enhanced and deepened students understanding of the specialist technique of dry point etching and built on the skills needed at A level. We have since written the workshop into our schemes of work for Year 12. Some students used the technique in their final exam and other students who had not been in the workshop but had seen the technique being used by other students wanted to learn and staff were experienced enough now to teach them. We have since ordered the papers to be used in future lessons.’

‘There were excellent learning outcomes with students learning new practical print making skills. The two students Isobel and Taylor who led the session on the second day of the workshop were totally professional and experienced. Two year 12 classes were involved in the workshop and throughout the day all students made and printed a sequence of successful dry point etchings. The work produced by students will be used to develop sketchbook and portfolio work. The print making workshop has inspired our students and given them the confidence to further try out etching as a print technique.’

‘It was a fantastic and engaging opportunity for professional development to learn about the drypoint technique and see how it can be implemented onto the curriculum.’

Parents

‘Taking part in this project has made my daughter decide to apply for a foundation course.’

‘What a fantastic project. I’m so pleased that my son could be part of the exhibition.’

‘There was a parent’s evening last night and parents of some of the students involved in the workshop said that it was a wonderful experience for them.’



Outreach at BSix College

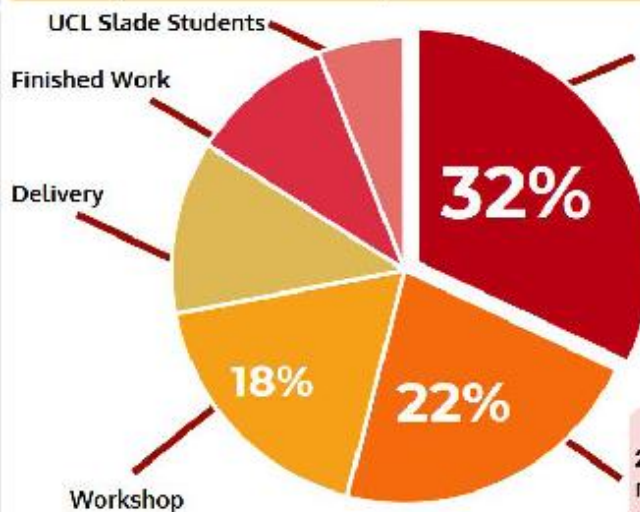


UCL Culture Printmaking 2019 Evaluation



Building Skills

The project got positive feedback, with 32% of end-of-project feedback referring to the benefit of learning new skills and techniques.



New Skills

Students benefitted from learning **new skills**, commenting that they appreciated the opportunity to develop their printing, etching and drawing skills.



Enjoyable

22% and **18%** of end-of-project feedback referred to the **enjoyable** atmosphere and **workshops** respectively as further strengths of the programme.

Growing Knowledge

12% of students reported that they learned new skills on Day 1. This more than doubled during Day 2 to **32%**.



12%



32%

Making Impressions Exhibition

Teacher and parent feedback said that the programme gave students an insight into studying art at university.



"Taking part in this project has made my daughter decide to apply for a foundation course."

- Parent of Participating Student

In depth feedback from Schools

Stoke Newington School- Hackney

Stoke Newington School have participated since the beginning of the project, this is what the Head of Art has to say:

'Our collaboration with the Slade School of Art's printmaking outreach programme has been established now for several years. Many of our students from Stoke Newington School meet the Widening Participation criteria, many are on Free School Meals and this project has enabled them to gain access to higher education in the Creative subjects. It encourages those thinking of studying art at university to seriously consider applying to UCL after a Foundation course. 60% of our A level students go on to study a creative subject at university.

On our last visit to the Slade school of Art we met 2 ex-students from our school who were in their final degree years. It has such a powerful impact on our students to experience past students in such an awe-inspiring creative environment and it helps our students believe what they are capable of achieving in their futures. This year we have already had a 2-day workshop. The first workshop began by students taking inspiration from prints in the collection at the UCL Museum, and later students' engagement with the Slade School through a printmaking workshop back at our school. Our students were highly productive, and began working enthusiastically with pencils in the museum, after a talk and discussion on Rembrandt's etchings and previous Slade students work. The rationale behind the workshop is through introducing the students to a new medium, where they will develop new skills and expanded their creativity. The workshop then develops these ideas through practical making as well as discussion.

The reciprocal visit from the Slade to SNS was eagerly awaited. Our students had prepared designs by creating small line drawings titled 'East London Identities', a brief set by the Slade. The etching plates were based on elements of their own work, personalising and connecting their existing personal development to the workshop. Current students from the Slade arrived on site, Taylor [alumnus] and Grace [undergraduate student] and reviewed the students work with them. They inducted the students in the core skills, especially inking up and then preparing the plate to go through the etching press. The students adapted quickly and were soon proofing their etchings with a first print. They were having to make decisions about how much ink they clean off their plates, would they leave more to give tone, shading or atmosphere to the marks scratched into the printing plates.

In the afternoon students added colour to their prints and were prolific and created a huge array of experiments. With expert guidance from Taylor and Grace and supportive feedback from their class teachers the students worked extremely hard, not just producing a large number of prints and a great deal of experimentation, but very high-quality outcomes. The diversity and range of prints is enormous. The relationship between print design, application of coloured ink and each student's personal investigation is really strong and has enabled our Year 12s to engage in technical learning as well as creative development. Well done to them and a big thanks to Taylor and Grace, and of course Emma and the Slade for partnering with us. We may have an opportunity to show this work at UAL [UCL East] in the Olympic Park.

The work produced by students becomes part of their portfolio used for applications to Foundation courses. Some students, awing skills and high calibre of work that our students produce. Much of this is down to the partnership that we have developed over the years with the Slade. Students are valued and treated as artists. This project not only highlights the importance of visual culture in young people's lives, but the importance of those young people as future producers of culture, and the images and etchings produced for 'East London Identities' are certainly a testament to this.'

Audrey Mullins

Kelmscott School- Newham

Kelmscott School have participated since 2019, this is what the Head of Art has to say:

'The engagement project with UCL inspires aspirational ideals in our students as they are able to speak to and visit a high achieving and exciting art environment where they could possibly study in the future. The workshops support their GCSE work in the use of materials not available in the school as well as being able to speak with young people studying post 16 about their work and processes. The work is always high quality and fully embedded into the projects we are undertaking as part of the marking criteria. It's an event we now all look forward to in the art department here.'

Sarah Dempsey



A display at Kelmscott School of students work from the Printmaking Project

NewVic- Newham Sixth Form College

New Vic College has been bringing students for the past four years. In 2021-22 A' level Art students from year 12 took part in the project. Out of the 9 students 6 of them have applied to study art related subjects for their degrees and have the following offers:

| Subject | University |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Fashion x2 students | LCF (London College of Fashion) |
| Jewellery | UAL (University of the Arts London) |
| Architecture x2 | University of Greenwich |
| Art Therapy | Unknown |

Outcomes

Over the past six years, 458 students have taken part from 10 east London schools and colleges. In 2019-20 several students applied to an art foundation course, 6 from one school. There are currently 2 undergraduate students from one of the participating schools studying at the Slade. There has been 1 student from another participating school who has studied here. 6 other students from the our boroughs applied to the Slade but were not offered a place.

Schools and colleges return year on year. Some have been coming since the project started. The work produced frequently ends up in students' portfolios for their art school application and is used as part of their course work. Two institutions have brought etching presses because of their students' enthusiasm for printmaking post- project and two others are putting their existing presses to better use. Kelmscott School has integrated the project into their year 11 curriculum. It also has a display of work from the project in the school.

Reflection

The UCL East Museums and Schools programme continues to meet its aims of raising awareness of UCL in east London by providing knowledge and appreciation of the opportunities available to young people; the strong and enduring relationships built with the schools and colleges joining the Printmaking Project cements this understanding of what UCL can offer, particularly the Slade School of Fine Art, to their students. Having benefitted and enjoyed the project these young people, from a wide variety of backgrounds, have gained the confidence to apply to art school and in some cases successfully to the Slade.

Find out More:

<https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/2020/04/29/wp-printmaking-intro/>

<https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/category/schools-engagement/printmaking/>

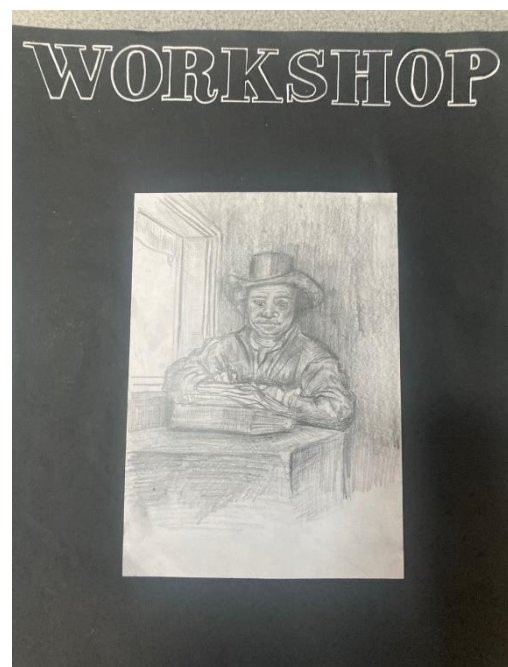
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/culture-online/make-impression-ii>

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ucl-east/working-secondary-schools-and-colleges#arts>

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/widening-participation/>



Rembrandt Drawing at a Window, 1648, Rembrandt van Rijn. One of the etchings studied in the UCL Art Museum



A students sketch of the Rembrandt self-portrait on display at Kelmscott School