

## **BALTIC brings together artists, school children and regionally based businesses to unveil art murals in 5 Gateshead schools**



Kingsmeadow Community School mural

BALTIC has brought together artists, school children and businesses to create art murals that have been unveiled in five Gateshead schools this autumn.

Gateshead secondary schools have felt the impact of Covid-19 on their school environment across two academic years. Remote learning and year group bubbles have divided the schools with most classes unable to move freely around their buildings to receive science lab or art room-based lessons.

BALTIC worked with **Whickham School, Kingsmeadow Community School, Cedars Academy, Heworth Grange, Cardinal Hume Catholic School** to bring about a moment of togetherness where pupils collaborated with professional artists commissioned by BALTIC. Through five skills-based workshops per school, pupils and artists have created five completely unique artworks specifically developed and installed in communal spaces to create a lasting legacy in each school.

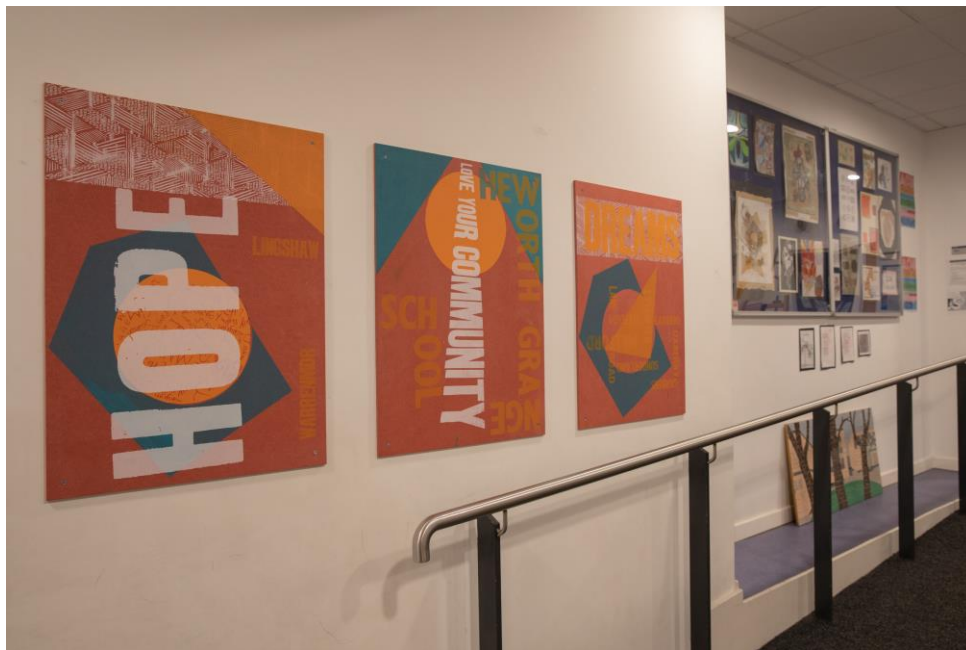
Learning new skills, gaining experience of working with practicing artists and being together in a shared space, were at the heart of this valuable and crucial project which has ignited pride, creativity and collective ownership of the final artwork by the pupils and schools.

The workshops and final art murals were made possible with the generous support of five national and international businesses with North East headquarters. BALTIC partnered with **Cintra HR, NBS, North P&I Club, Ryder Achitecture** and **Ward Hadaway** to bring together the five schools with artists Zoe Allen, Cath Campbell, Theresa Easton, Mat Fleming and Megan Randall.

As the murals neared completion in schools, a celebratory event at BALTIC took place on 16 November, bringing the pupils, artists and teachers into the gallery together with the supporting businesses. At the event the pupils got to meet the other schools, share their experiences and see a new short film which will be available online in January 2022 at [www.baltic.art](http://www.baltic.art)



Amanda McMahon, Producer (Schools) pictured with pupils and teacher Sarah Kilpatrick from Heworth Grange at BALTIC (above) and a section of the schools mural in location at Heworth Grange school (below)





Cedars Academy mural

Newcastle-based **North P&I Club**, a leading global marine insurer with over 160 years of history in the industry, sponsored the project, enabling **Cedars Academy** to work with artist **Megan Randall**.



The pupils from SEND school **Cedars Academy, Low Fell** worked with **Megan Randall** to make hundreds of ceramic butterflies which they glazed and added magnets to. These butterflies are being added to large sheets of metal which will be hung in three sites across the school titled *Kaleidoscope*. The magnets can be moved around and swapped across the site creating an ever evolving artwork. Megan also taught the pupils how to create printed images and decals supporting the pupils to develop and share skills and techniques to use as part of a planned enterprise project.

**Artist Megan Randall said:**

*I enjoy working with SEND schools and this exciting project was a chance to bring aspects of my practice into the BALTIC School Murals project. Cedars Academy asked to try and combine making an installation with developing skills for their students that they could use in their own enterprise business. I have*

*facilitated approximately 80% less activities during the pandemic, with more online which doesn't really suit my ceramic practice. It's a thrill to see in this project the pupil's work on display and to see the pride, confidence and joy that they put into making this art mural.*

**Cedars Academy teacher Alan Finn added:**

*During the pandemic, our pupils weren't able to take part in arts activities due to room restriction around sharing and using equipment and resources. This project helped to bring value to art in our school having BALTIC facilitate space to be creative in and provide an experienced artist to work with our pupils.*



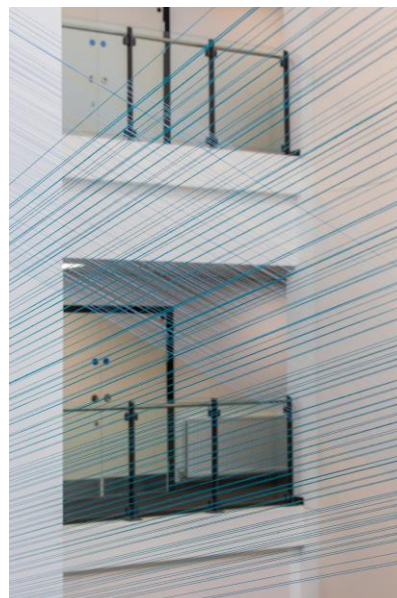
*The pupils gained a lot from working in a different environment to the school classroom. BALTIC's learning studio had a calming effect on the group. They were able to use the experience to work towards gaining an Arts Award Silver which may not have been achievable if it wasn't for the experience of working with an artist. They gained new art skills in ceramics, printing, painting and guerrilla arts, and a sense of worth and wellbeing by taking part.*

**Paul Jennings, Chief Executive, North P&I Club:**

*Through partnering with our close neighbours on the Tyne, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, we are pleased to be involved with the Schools Mural project and support the children at Cedars Academy in Gateshead. We hope that through working alongside their artist, they have had the opportunity to express themselves creatively in what has been a challenging time for everyone recently.*



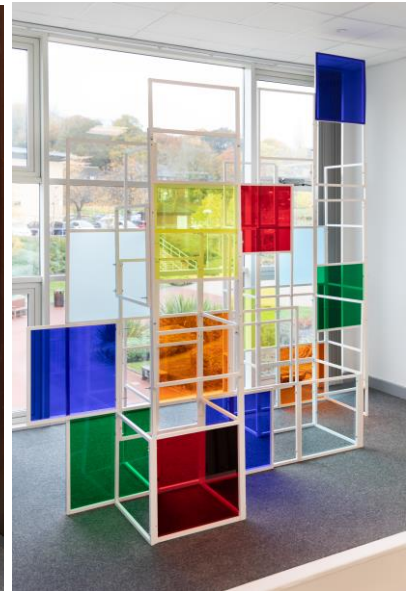
**The further four schools worked with the following artists in the murals project made possible by BALTIC's sponsorship partners.**



- **Whickham School: Pilot**
- Artist: Zoe Allen
- Business: Ryder

Mark Thompson, Managing Partner, Ryder Architecture said:

*Ryder are delighted to be partnering with BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art to support Whickham School pupils create a high-quality mural under the guidance of a professional artist. We hope our participation in this initiative helps to inspire more young people into a career in the creative industries.*



- **Kingsmeadow Community School: *Island* (2021)**
- Artist: Cath Campbell
- Business: NBS

Robin Cordy, Marketing Director, NBS said:

*It's been fantastic for NBS to partner with BALTIC on the artists mural project for Kingsmeadow School. We're so pleased to be able to support such a worthwhile activity which will benefit the pupils, the school and build links with the arts community.*



- **Heworth Grange: *Love Your Community***
- Artist: Theresa Easton
- Business: Cintra HR

Eric Dunmore, Executive Chair, Cintra HR & Payroll Services Ltd said:

*Cintra are delighted to partner with BALTIC to support Heworth Grange Secondary School pupils create this commemorative mural under the guidance of a professional artist. We hope the project has and will continue to inspire young people to spark creativity, conversation and togetherness through art.*

- **Cardinal Hume Catholic School**
- Artist: Mat Fleming
- Business: Ward Hadaway

Ward Hadaway said:

*Ward Hadaway are absolutely delighted to be partnering our near neighbour BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art in supporting Cardinal Hume School in Gateshead in the creation of a mural to commemorate the pandemic working with artist Mat Fleming. This is a positive response to a terrible situation that has affected our communities. The programme whilst acknowledging the pandemic, will look to a brighter future and hopefully will inspire the development of the creative skills of the many pupils involved.*

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

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### **About BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art**

BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art creates and produces exhibitions, events and learning opportunities which explore the role of artists from across the world. Located on Gateshead quayside, BALTIC has 2,600 square metres of exhibition space making it the UK's largest gallery dedicated to the art and artists of today and tomorrow.

BALTIC welcomes visitors free of charge, all year round to experience art, talks, performance and activities in a fully accessible building. Over 8 million have walked through its doors so far. Beyond its bricks, BALTIC connects and exchange with communities, individuals and groups exploring creativity, social connections and wider understanding of the world.

**www.baltic.art**  
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