





A few weeks ago I attended Fly Festival at UEA. Fly Festival is a literature festival, aimed at young people, holding a vast range of events over a week from poetry and scriptwriting workshops to talks and UEA live literature events. I took part in the 'comic muse' workshop where I learnt what a clerihew poem was, and had a go at writing one myself. It was interesting to see poetry in a comedic way, using irony and making fun out of the serious situations we are facing in the world.

The part of the day that stuck with me the most was the inspiring talk with author, Jenny Downham. Jenny was discussing her career, how she got to where she is today and how you can become a writer yourself. She told us a story of how years ago she was feeling down and her son asked her what was wrong, to which she described she had a writer's block. Her son handed her a piece of paper that simply said 'write'. After telling us this story, Jenny went on to say that if you want to be a writer, all you need to do is **just write**. Take the notebook with you on that bus ride home and write. Even if it's just five minutes a day, **trust yourself and your writing skills**. I thought this was such simple, yet powerful and encouraging advice.



Interview with the new YOUNG NORFOLK LAUREATE, Ciera Drury:

Q. What was the inspiration for your piece?

A. "Actually when I went to sixth form, we were doing student magazine and the theme was women's votes and rights and feminism in general and I wrote that piece '100 years of silence' for that but it was never used so I had it and I put it out there."

Q. What made you take part in this competition?

A. "My tutor leader at sixth form actually she must've told me about five or six times 'Ciera have you entered it yet' because I was pretty shy and wasn't sure and I did!"

Q. What advice would you give to younger writers?

A. "Just to keep writing and just keep going with it no matter what people say. Don't be scared to do it."

Q. So obviously you're one of the winners this year – what are your plans for the future? More competitions?

A. "To get more confident with speaking, I'll look at more competitions and just keep writing in general I guess."

Q. Do you have any poems or scripts or books that you would recommend people to read?

A. "A book called Mind Platter by Najwa Zebian, that and a book called The Weight of Water by Sarah Crossan – just, I love them, they're really good."

Q. Last but not least, this is a more silly question but if you could be any celebrity for a day, who would you be and why?

A. "Birdie – is a singer, not a writer but she writes such beautiful songs, just the words – I love words."

We Are What We Wear: On Finding Your Style

I don't know who I am; not really, truly, properly.

And I don't suppose you do, either. But the things we wear can help. I've been through stages.

At two, I was already choosing my own outfits, delighting in pretty dresses and skirts.

At nine, I decided I didn't like 'girly' clothes, and spent the next few years in jeans and an assortment of t-shirts and a bright green puffer jacket.

At ten, I knew I was a goth. I wore black; black jeans, black tops, black boots. I wore dark eyeshadow, all to match my dark and brooding pre-teen personality.

Then I entered high school and things changed - I became a lot more conscious about what other people thought of my clothes. Up until this point, I wore what I liked, and because I liked it, and because it made me happy.

At high school, I promptly exited my goth phase and emerged into something new: an attempt to 'fit in'. The other girls had told me that I 'had no fashion sense', that I wore 'ugly' clothes. So I shopped where they shopped and wore what they wore. I rejected the charity shops I'd been raised in and migrated to the malls, dropping £70 in Primark and New Look and H&M, desperately trying to be 'cool'.

...It didn't work.

I was trying too hard, and not hard enough. I still never looked like the other girls. I never felt comfortable. At this point, I wasn't just confused about fashion; I was confused about myself. Who was I? My personality changed from hour to hour, I didn't know what my values were, or how to define 'me'.

That all continued until Year Nine, when I entered the world of theatre on joining the cast of a local youth music theatre. Suddenly, I found myself surrounded by Doc Martens and vintage clothes and proud charity shop wearers. One girl in particular stood out to me: she had a collection of orange and yellow and lime tights and wore flowery Docs. Thirteen-year-old me was inspired.



Almost a year later, for a birthday/Christmas present, my parents bought me my very own pair of Doc Martens. For the first time in years, I felt super confident. I didn't look like the girls at school. But this time, I was beginning to feel comfortable.

That was the catalyst for the style evolution and mind revolution that followed.

Over the next few months, I phased out my old wardrobe, returning to the charity shops and seeing them through fresh eyes: they were no longer signifiers of the embarrassment and isolation I felt when I was younger. Colourful skirts and dresses and tops and jumpers replaced the black skinny jeans and slogan-emblazoned t-shirts. Bright tights and funky socks became my staples. Glitter and rainbow eyeshadow became the order of the day.



I had discovered that once you find something you truly love, you no longer care about what other people say about it. I had discovered a new confidence, and this confidence transferred to other parts of myself and my life. My clothes gave me a way to express myself. They've helped me find who I am.

Finding your style is a long process - mine is still growing and evolving, and will continue to do so for the rest of my life. Learning to stop caring about what your friends and the strangers on the street are thinking is hard, but it's vital; how can you be truly yourself if you're toning yourself down to meet the expectations of others?

Experimentation is key. Trying new things is important. Getting outside of your comfort zone is essential. **Be more you.**



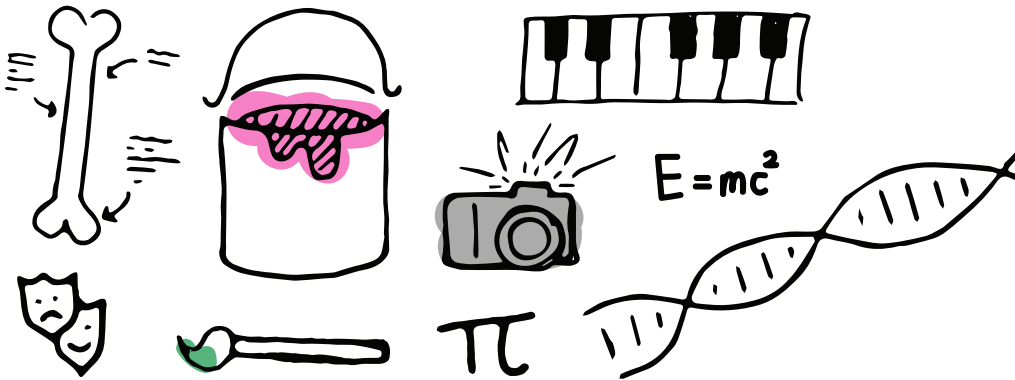
Photos: Taryn Everdeen

The Arts and.... **STEM.**

It doesn't sound like a very common mix. Painting, drama, media, film, and all the other arts require creativity, a rich imagination and the ability to communicate subtly through your work. However, to succeed in STEM fields, these are also all vital skills, best learned through exploration of art. Back in the 'day', say 200+ years ago, it was a lot more common for people to be a 'scientist, and a writer'. An 'engineer, and a painter'. A 'mathematician, and a musician'.

Archimedes, Da Vinci, Galilei. Their work covered a huge range of areas, unrestricted to just one area, be it science, writing, engineering, art, medicine, or drama. Polymaths were important, treasured. They're perhaps the most well-known people in history.

Maybe it was decided that in a modern society, boxing individuals into specific paths makes it easier for societies to succeed and collaborate. But an appreciation of a variety of



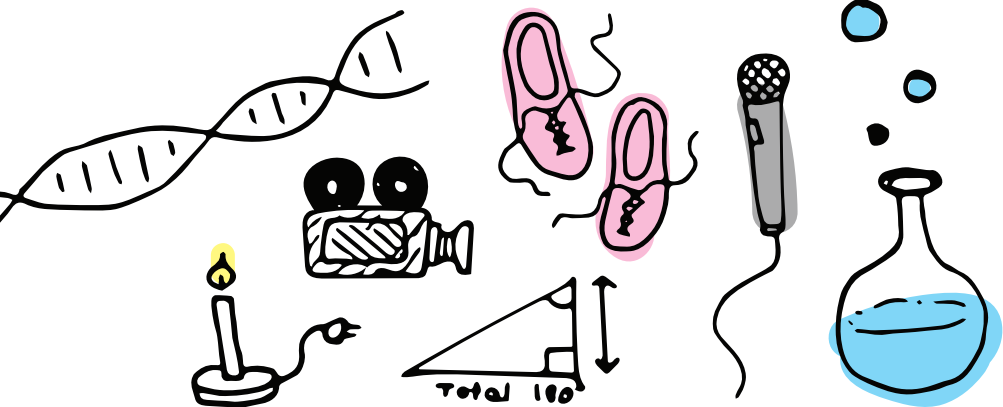
thinking methods and general knowledge can maybe create even more impressive work than thought before. Scientists need to communicate their ideas, visually, or in writing, or through media. Inventors and Architects could be seen as the perfect intermingling between these 'polar' worlds. According to the Scientific American, Nobel laureates for science, in comparison to the average scientist, are seventeen times more likely to be a painter, twelve times more likely to be

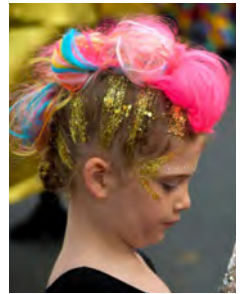
a poet, and four times a musician. And it works the other way round. To go back to our earlier example, Da Vinci; the famous painter's success in art can be at least partially determined as due to his vast appreciation and understanding of anatomy.

The skills required in both fields are universal.

Are you an artist? Or a scientist?

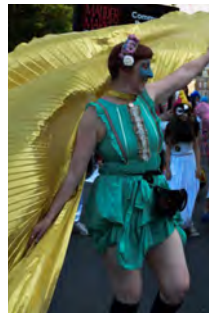
Why choose? Be both.





“When I do photography I like capturing all the different emotions in people. The Lord Mayors procession is the perfect place for that to be done. I had an amazing time watching the performances come on and off like clockwork while rides just kept going and going like there was no end. Kids of all ages were constantly entertained by everything the day had to offer and being in that atmosphere was truly wonderful.”

Writing + Images : Lydia Jones



Summer Reading Bucket List

The Song of Achilles
by Madeline Miller

"This is a breathtakingly original rendering of the Trojan War - a devastating love story and a tale of gods and kings, immortal fame and the human heart"

1984
by George Orwell

"1984 is a dystopian novel by English author George Orwell published in 1949. The novel is set in Airstrip One, a world of perpetual war, omnipresent government surveillance, and public manipulation."

Mind Platter
by Najwa Zebian

"May this book give a voice to those who need one, be a crying shoulder for those who yearn for someone to listen, and inspire those who need a reminder of the power they have over their lives."

The Weight of Water
by Sarah Crossan

"The Weight of Water is a startlingly original piece of fiction; most simply a brilliant coming of age story, it also tackles the alienation experienced by many young immigrants."

An Inspector Calls
by J.B. Priestley

"While holding its audience with the gripping tension of a detective thriller, it is also a philosophical play about social conscience and the crumbling of middle class values."

If You Could See Me Now
by Cecelia Ahern

"Tender, magical and captivating – a story of family, friends, and the unlikeliest of romances from the No. 1 bestselling author, Cecelia Ahern."

Before I die
by Jenny Downham

"Released from the constraints of 'normal' life, Tessa tastes new experiences to make her feel alive while her failing body struggles to keep up. Heartbreaking yet astonishingly life-affirming, Before I Die will take you to the very edge."

A Place For Us
by Fatima Farheen Mirza

"This is a novel for our times: a deeply moving examination of love, identity and belonging that turns our preconceptions over one by one."

All summaries quoted from Google Books



Illustration: Celeste Simpson

A Philosophy on Art

As long as humans have existed, art has been created in varying forms. What began as cave drawings and cupules became sculptures, paintings, photography and film; what started as folk tales developed into epic poems, ballads, and novels; what was first group celebrations through song and dance became orchestral masterpieces, refined dance steps, and musicals. Throughout human history, the arts have been present as a parallel to evolution as a matter of self-expression, revelry and aesthetic pleasure.

It is often widely thought that art is beauty. While it is certainly true to say that much art is beautiful, the idea that it is merely something for decoration cannot be true. If the arts served no purpose other than being pleasant to look at, they simply would not have survived hundreds of thousands of years of life.

Perhaps, instead, the beauty of art is not just the way it looks or sounds but the way it makes those presented with it feel. Drawing upon human experiences, hopes, dreams and fears, the arts create a platform for everyone to encounter these feelings. Universal to humanity is the desire to find place and meaning, thus art becomes a matter of survival.

In the 21st Century, art is used in therapies to help those with mental health disorders

and has been found to improve wellbeing by 76% and lead to higher feelings of social inclusion in 69% of individuals. This reflects how community is at the centre of what makes art so special: it is non-discriminatory and whatever your age, culture, creed or background, art is a common component in our lives.

When we take for granted the methods our ancestors have provided us with to create joy and light from seemingly menial situations, we begin to lose a part of ourselves. Moreover, what is central to art is freedom to forge future pathways, while still echoing and honouring the past and present, yet we continue to create arbitrary rules about what is and isn't acceptable in each discipline of the arts.

Merely considering them to be separate disciplines places them under threat as the notion of togetherness is what elevates the value of art; fear of what is different has no place because art is ever-changing and developing to reflect the condition of humanity and the world.

Art and culture are not just two facets of life that ought to be appreciated but are intertwined within our ability to create a benevolent experience for ourselves while also being the marker of a time of modernity, new ideas, diversity and hope.



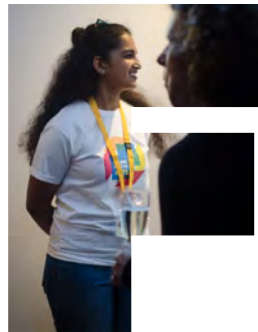
FROM US TO YOU

By being in this year's YNAF Comms Team, we have gained various skills including radio training, blogging and interviewing. We have met industry professionals such as Nina Nannar (from ITV), Kate Roma (from Future Radio) and Steve and Steph (from SFP Communications). We gained the confidence to meet and interview new people and made a whole lot of new friends along the way! But, most importantly, we had fun!

We owe a great deal of thanks to Lucy Farrant, Lucy Hall, Megan Thrift and Lewis Wickwar. Without them, we wouldn't have been able to take advantage of this amazing opportunity!

However, we can't always take the front row seat - we need more young people for the next Comms Team which YNAF will soon be recruiting for! So, keep an eye out on our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram...

Good Luck!



Proudly produced by the 2018 YNAF comms team

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Front + back cover design: James Wickham