

Arts Volunteering AGM report 2025-6

Arts volunteering has been busy this year with its first Open Studios, which took place in July 2025 for 3 weekends in 'The Painted Church'; the church is one of Cambridge Arts Society's Heritage projects. Open Studios was a great success and attracted many visitors. The artists included painters, jewellers, a furniture maker, print makers, glass makers and ceramicists. There were 11 exhibitors altogether. Open Studios will be repeated again this year for 2 weeks in July.

Arts volunteering and Heritage volunteering joined forces for our annual art exhibition which gives contemporary artists the opportunity to show their work at 'The Painted Church'. This year the exhibition was entitled '*A Space Already Full*'. There were 5 artists exhibiting, who were all part of a collective of women artists called 'Working Spaces', exploring the spatial contexts of painting. The exhibition took place for 4 weekends in March 2026. The artists took inspiration from the interior of the church and their installations were thought provoking, enhancing the space and the decoration of the church which was alluded to in the title of the exhibition. We had around 790 visitors during the four weeks, some of whom had not visited 'The Painted Church' before and found it a surprising revelation. Cambridge Arts Society granted £750 to the artists to cover their costs and the overseeing of the exhibition was undertaken by volunteers. The artists were genuinely grateful for the funding and also for the opportunity to exhibit in the Church that inspired their installations.

During the exhibition we hosted two workshops for Rowan Charity, continuing our relationship with them. 'The Painted Church' will be presenting an exhibition by their students for 'Open Cambridge' in September, with some work inspired by the exhibition and the Church.

Another donation was given by our Arts Society to Murray Edwards College in Cambridge for an exhibition entitled 'The Sleepers', a theme relating to women artists' depiction of sleep and rest. We were pleased to donate £1000 towards the creation of a quilt designed and made by women at the Cambridge Women's Resource Centre. The curator of the exhibition gave Arts Society members a special tour of this show, which included the finished quilt.

Our local combined Art Societies' 6th form Art Competition took place at Michaelhouse Cafe in May 2025. We are planning the same competition in 2026. This gives local schools the chance to display their pupils' best artwork with the added bonus of a prize for the winning students.

Mary Kempski

Arts Volunteering committee member

Cambridge Arts Society

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