

# Questioning the Canvas

By Paula Briggs

This resource shares the aims and outcomes of 4 one-hour long sessions with students aged 11, 12 and 13 from the AccessArt Art Lab which took place at Wysing Arts Centre.



Following on from a short warm-up exercise which introduced the children to the question: "[What is a Canvas](#)", I wanted to provide the students with the opportunity to create 2-d or 3-d artwork inspired by the creation of a canvas. Rather than take an off the peg, ready made canvas, or a sheet or paper upon which to paint, I thought it would be interesting if we built up the canvases using other materials, so that the nature and character *of* the canvas could inspire what was then created *on* the canvas.

The sessions were particularly successful in enabling students to take part in a continuous process of reflection and action, as they made decisions, sometimes consciously sometimes not, about their next creative action.

## To Begin

We began our questioning of what a canvas was, or might be, by a gift and an invitation to deconstruct the gift. Each teenager was given an old Observer book, and with the book they were given permission to take it a part, and put it together again in any way they wished...

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# **How to Make a Simple Origami Bird by Melanie Johns**

Melanie Johns suggests using origami to transform old artwork. It's an exciting way of using less successful drawings or paintings on paper to produce a new creative outcome, in the form of a personalised paper sculpture.

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## **Priscilla the Puffin: Make a Simple Bird Mobile**

Nicola McGovern was one of the artists who generously donated an artwork to the AccessArt Share-a-Bird Project. She sent a mobile of a puffin and included a template so that the children who received her bird could have fun making a whole flock of puffins.

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## **Colourful Sculptural Birds by Pupils at Donhead Preparatory School**

See fabulous selection of birds by pupils from Donhead Preparatory School sent to AccessArt by Phillippa Dudgeon, Head of Art & DT.