

Inspire: Behind the Scenes at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

[Go back to Inspire: A Celebration of Children's Art in Response to Jacopo del Sellaio's Cupid and Psyche](#)

And How Cupid's Bow and Psyche's Dress were Installed

On Tuesday 3rd of December 2019, there was a very special visit to the [Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge](#), arranged by Sarah Villis, Holly Morrison and [Kate Noble](#) from the museum's Education Team.



Children in the grand entrance of the Fitzwilliam Museum,

Cambridge

A group of pupils from two primary schools in Cambridgeshire were invited to see behind the scenes at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge and the installation of *Inspire* – an exhibition of children's artwork in the Octagon Gallery in the museum from the 10th December 2019 until 22 March 2020.



Pupils arrive at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge and are greeted by education officer Holly Morrison

These pupils are young artists who have had their artworks selected to be exhibited alongside the Renaissance painting of **Cupid and Psyche** by **Jacopo Del Sellaio**; Year 4 and 5 pupils

from the [Brilliant Makers Club](#), at Morley Memorial Primary School, Cambridge with their teacher Maya Dalby; and the The Fitzy Peters, a group of Year 5 pupils from St Peters C of E Junior School, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, with their teacher Natalie Bailey and head teacher Amy Harvey.



Pupils from Morley Memorial School and St Peters C of E Junior School, looking at the grand entrance of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

The day-long session was facilitated by **Holly Morrison**.



Tour of the Museum with Holly Morrison pupils from Morley Memorial and St Peter's Juniors

The pupils were greeted by the museum staff and Holly took them on a tour through the museum on their way to the Octagon Gallery, where their work was being installed by Charis and Jamie.



Pupils enter the Octagon Gallery where the Inspire Exhibition is being installed



In the Octagon Gallery, pupils are greeted by the installation team Charis and Jamie who are installing their work and see work by other pupils whose work will be on exhibition



Brilliant Makers talk to Charis who is installing the exhibition about how and where their work will be hung on the gallery walls



And Charis and Jamie set to work hanging Cupid's Bow

Brilliant Makers at Morley Memorial created Magical Cupid's bow and arrows in mixed media for *Inspire*.

'Focusing on the theme of 'change' and 'love', the group discussed inspirational people who were changing the world for the better. The children decided what positive change they would make if they had a magical Cupid's bow and arrow to shoot into the world. Responses ranged from arrows that stopped deforestation to arrows that helped people read.'

Maya Dalby, Art Coordinator and Year 5 teacher at Morley Memorial School, Cambridge



Cupid's Bow and Arrow by a pupil from Brilliant Makers at Morley Memorial School on the wall at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

This was also a chance for children to see other children's work and behind the scenes at the Museum.



Kate Noble shows children other children's artwork in the Octagon Gallery



Kate Noble shows the children the natural minerals, rocks, and materials which would have been used by Del Sellaio to make his panel of Cupid and Psyche

The children then went to the Seminar Room, where Holly had an afternoon of creative activity planned out for them, but first a chance for the Fitzy Peters to introduce the others to 'The Resilience of Psyche;' Psyche's dress which they had made over several sessions with their teacher Natalie Bailey.



One of the 'Fitzy Peters' artists describes how Psyche's dress was made and how they had chosen denim as the perfect material for it to represent Psyche's Resilience



The artists measure Psyche's dress

*'A group of children, **The Fitzy Peters**, became fascinated by Psyche's resilience during her period of grief and loss and made significant connections to the story during our PSHE lessons. We decided to extend the children's learning by running a Summer holiday project. The children decided to tell the story of Psyche through a dress designed especially for her at Studio 15 in Wisbech. What surprised me the most was how much art helps children to communicate and express thoughts, feelings and emotions.'* Natalie Bailey, Year 5 Teacher and Art Lead

'The main fabric is denim, we thought this showed resilience. It's tough and can take the harshness of life. The underneath of the dress is soft, white tulle showing Psyche's soft innocent side. Every single part of the dress has a message, a reason for being there.' Tomasz, aged 10



A sketchbook entry from one of the Fitzy Peters artists – under the guidance of Natalie Bailey at St Peters Junior

The Resilience of Psyche can be seen from the 10th December 2019 until the 22nd March 2020 in the Armory at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

inspire

A celebration of children's art in response to Jacopo del Sellaio's *Cupid and Psyche*

10 December 2019 – 22 March 2020

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[Inspire](#) – December 2019 to March 2020, was an exhibition of art made by primary school children and celebrated creativity in Cambridgeshire schools. It championed the on-going importance of cultural learning and the visual arts for all children and young people.

Based on the National Gallery's [Take One Picture](#), **The Fitzwilliam Museum** and **AccessArt** teamed together to offer free [Inspire 2020 CPD](#) (Continued Professional Development for Teachers), focusing on one painting, [Cupid and Psyche by Jacopo del Sellaio](#), as a source of ideas and inspiration.

Del Sellaio's Cupid and Psyche was on display next to the children's work in the Octagon Gallery.

With very special thanks to [Kate Noble](#), **Miranda Stearn**, **Sarah Villis**, and **Holly Morrison** for making this project happen and **Alison Ayres**.

This post was written by [Sheila Ceccarelli](#).

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