

22 October 2019

The Art House; a collaboration with creator Geeta Bhana and Hannah Bruce



Geeta Bhana. (Photo www.cherylcattonphotography.co.uk)

In 2017, when her children were small, Geeta Bhana started the The Art House from her home in Horsell village, offering art classes during the week for under five year-olds including painting, sculpture, print making and mosaics. Gradually, as the classes became popular, parents started to ask about holiday workshops, so Geeta started to offer some school holiday classes.

Geeta, who has a Fine Arts honours degree majoring in History of Art and Sculpture in multiple mediums and disciplines, is able to understand the fundamental art techniques supporting the various activities she teaches. 'I want to change people's perceptions and break down those barriers and show adults that anyone can be creative if they are just shown a little guidance and patience,' she says.

The children's holiday classes are now run during half-term and summer holidays and are for ages 2-6 and 6-11 years old. There are many different types of classes, from painting to printmaking to sculpture to paper construction. The Art House also run Art Camps which run for three and a half hours and where children explore three different mediums in one class.



Art Camp.

Classes fill up quickly, so it's best to book your child's space soon. You can do this on The Art House [booking page](#).

Geeta's teaching experience and fine arts background has enabled her to create a nurturing and fun environment for kids and has also created classes for adults. These regular adult classes have become very popular and she privately tutors adults and children and also helps art portfolio improvements. One of Geeta's students recently received an art scholarship in year 7.

Two years ago Geeta commissioned [Hannah Bruce](#), a professional award winning artist from Woking, to do a portrait of her children as a gift for a husband. Hannah creates original artworks in a range of mediums, primarily oils, resin, ink and pastels and sells her work all over the world. The two artists have been in touch ever since and now run some workshops

together. Hannan has also referred clients to Geeta for art classes. Geeta says, 'It's lovely to have a friend who is supportive and great to work with. I also recently curated her gallery space, to make it look cohesive, at the opening of her exhibition at her art gallery.'

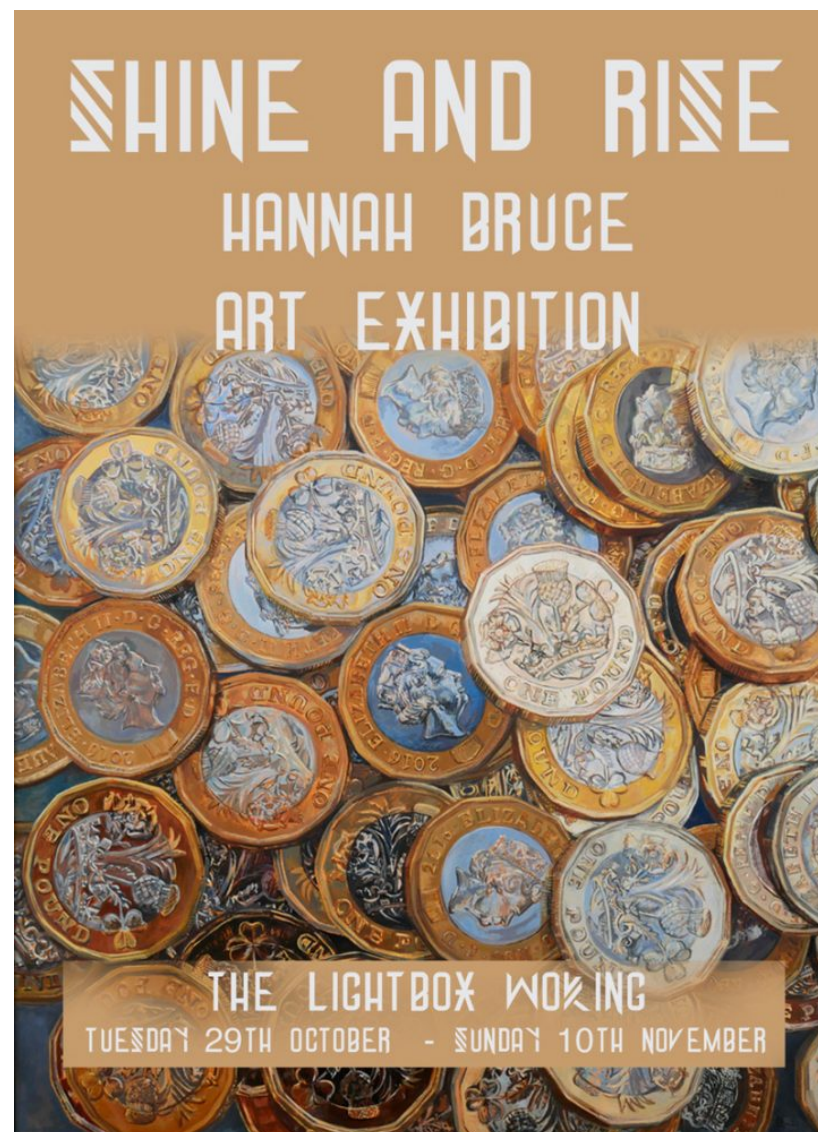


Award winning local artist, Hannah Bruce.

Hannah has recently opened a pop up gallery in Woking (at 151-152 Maybury Road) and looks forward to welcoming people to see more of her collections. A large part of these are resin, animal and outdoor painting based. Hannah has also written an Art marketing e-book *100 Online Art Marketing Tips (The Happy Artist Book 1)* which is available for Kindle [online](#).

Hannah is a creative and experimental professional artist. Her work is diverse and this is the way she likes it. She utilises materials in new and unique ways with ink abstracts combined with outline realism which is inspired by her term 'abstrealism'. Hannah says 'Art work that explores abstraction with part realism is what the wider public seem drawn to.'

Hannah's exhibition [*Shine and Rise*](#), inspired by the shine created in Art, opens at [The Light Box](#) in Woking on Tuesday 29th October.



The next joint venture between Geeta and Hannah is called 'Festive making Doo Daah!' and is on Saturday 16th November at Hannah's gallery in Maybury Road, Woking. Here, among other things Geeta and Hannah will show you how to make mosaic and macramé tree decorations, Lino cut Christmas cards, make wine glass charms and create a frosted glass jar for twinkly festive lights.

There are limited tickets, so click [here](#) for further information and booking.



the art house

HANNAH BRUCE
ART GALLERY

Join Geeta & Hannah for a creative afternoon of:

Grown ups only!

FESTIVE MAKING DOO DAAH!

Sat 16th Nov, 3 - 6pm

Come & make some festive craft & learn a new skill!

Early Bird saving:
Book before 25th Oct!
3 activities: £30 £28
5 activities: £45 £40

BOOK TICKETS ONLINE AT WWW.THEARTHOUSE.CO
(COLLECT YOUR ACTIVITY PASS AT THE DOOR)

- FREE TOTE BAG WITH GOODIES!
- FREE MINCE PIE & MULLED WINE ON ARRIVAL!
- FREE 3 HOURS PARKING!

- MOSAIC & MACRAME TREE DECOR
- LINO CUT XMAS CARDS
- WINE GLASS CHARMS
- CHIC CANAPÉ TRAY
- FROSTED GLASS JAR & MUCH MORE...

Venue: Hannah Bruce Art Gallery
151-152 Maybury Road, Woking, GU21 5LJ
Prebook tickets at www.thearthouse.co



Adult classes (with Prosecco)!

The Art House also run regular monthly adults classes from the studio in Horsell Village that try different mediums such as painting or clay sculpture or printmaking. Different themes are explored, such as painting landscapes or cherry blossoms to sculpting bowls or a bust.



Clay hippo sculptures.



Pop Art painting class for adults.



Acrylic pouring class for adults.

No experience is necessary as Geeta will guide you on composition, colour choice and technique, therefore the classes are smaller and more attention can be given. Classes run in the evening and last for about two hours. A glass (or

two!) of Prosecco is included or you can enjoy a cup of tea while painting.



Monoprinting adult class.

These classes are good fun if you're looking to try something different and have a fun evening out, while also learning a new skill. Geeta says people often surprise themselves with the ability they thought they never had.



Date night at The Art House.

And as if all of the above isn't enough, Geeta offers one-to-one tuition for children and adults and also runs art parties for children from age five to 12 years-old. You can also arrange bespoke classes for a group of friends or colleagues.



Art party set up for children.



Flamingo themed Art party.

The Knaphillian caught up with Geeta and Hannah to ask a little more about themselves, their passion for art and their busy lives.

The Knaphillian (TK): Did either of you grow up in Knaphill or locally?

Geeta: No, I was born in Cape Town, South Africa and have lived all over London over the past 14 years. We moved to Woking when my son was a baby and have been living in Woking for eight years and have no plans to move.

Hannah: I first moved to Knaphill in 2001 when I got my first Art teaching job at Fullbrook in New Haw. Since then I've lived in and around the Woking area.

TK: What did you study and where?

Geeta: I studied BA (Fine Arts) honours degree at the University of Cape Town. I majored in Sculpture and History of Art.

Hannah: I went to Aberystwyth University to do Fine Art and English and then to Cambridge University for Teaching Post Graduate.

TK: What did you want to be when you were at school?

Geeta: I had a list of varied careers. I wanted to be a private investigator or an interior designer!

Hannah: I always wanted to be a teacher of Art.

TK: Was there anything you were particularly keen on at school?

Geeta: I went to a Catholic school that was run by nuns and loved the hymn singing. I also enjoyed Art, English, Economics and Sports. I loved decorating and creating school project posters. I disliked History but then enjoyed it when I was at University.

Hannan: Urmmm Art was favourite obviously and then History and English.

TK: Hannah, do you have any childhood memories of any local activities or clubs you attended?

Hannah: I have played hockey for Woking since I came to the area in 2001, although these days the art antics take most of my weekends. I've been Woking Art Society's Chairwoman for three years (2015 -2017) and each first Saturday of the month head to [The Vyne](#) in Knaphill to see demonstrations by well known artists.

TK: What were your first jobs?

Geeta: My first proper job was straight out of University where I was offered an Assistant Curator position at a Contemporary Art Gallery in Cape Town. This led onto being a Curator for the Touch of Mandela company where I curated The Unity series at the World Economic forum in Davos, Switzerland. I then moved to London and worked as a Specialist Art Assistant at an Old Masters Gallery on New Bond Street for three years. I was craving some creativity and doing something for myself. I opened Chagan Contemporary (which was my maiden name) and represented Contemporary South African artists and young British artists. I was on a mission to change people's perceptions of the formal gallery space and make affordable art accessible to people. Now, I'm trying to change people's perceptions that anyone can experience making art if taught the basics and also having events like this festive craft event accessible to them.

Hannan: A teacher of Art and then Head of Art at Fulbrook School. I travelled the world for a year and then return to teaching as Head of Art at St Peters in Guildford. Leaving in 2014 and then teaching for two terms at Woking College to help them out. I am now a full time professional Artist.

TK: Do you have any other hobbies or pastimes?

Geeta: I enjoy running as it's my time to clear my head. I also enjoy up-cycling things around the house and slowly decorating each room in our house from the 1920's. I have been painting more walls recently rather than canvases!

TK: Do you have any unusual or amusing stories to tell that relate to your work?

Geeta: I've worked with Nelson Mandela's paintings and met some amazing artists while working on the curatorial project in Davos. I've also had dealings with a well known British actress who wanted to return a painting after owning it for about three years. And there was a lady who came to a holiday class aimed at two year-olds with her baby in tow and ended up making the paper mâché bowl by herself while her baby explored her changing bag!

Hannah: I'm very keen on painting outdoors. I was at an event in Norwich when one of the artists easels flew into the river with his painting on. Another artists nearby obligingly stripped down to his pants and dived in to rescue all the gear. It was a wooden easel and so it floated somewhat but he was branded a hero for the entire event. I've taught royalty – but obviously can't say any more than that. And I was once asked if I could paint a

person in the nude. I declined, but for every other kind of commission I'm open to people's ideas.

TK: What is the best decision you ever made and why?

Geeta: Working for myself and having the flexibility whilst taking care of my children. I'm doing something I'm passionate about and teaching students new skills while I find the private classes very rewarding as children and adults find it therapeutic and relaxing. Also, collaborating with other talented people like Hannah and working towards a creative community event.

Hannah: Working with Geeta to collaborate on this art event has been brilliant. We think alike and our art passions are foremost in our minds. And deciding to go from teacher to professional artist has been very rewarding so far. I'm very happy to be following my passionate art making narrative.

TK: Are there people in life who inspire you both?

Geeta: My dad was hardworking and also an entrepreneur but generally it would be women in business who can manage juggling children and their careers. It's all very challenging but so rewarding!

Hannah: Everyone inspires me, all my customers with their suggestions and art requests. I get something from all the people I meet. Often it's just ideas and inspiration or websites. My head is turned easily in new and imaginative directions. I believe that every interaction is meant to be in some way.

TK: If you could give any advice to your younger selves, what would it be?

Geeta: Always do your best. I tell my kids this. Also, don't copy what your peers are doing. Try doing new things and you never know you might enjoy it.

Hannah: Trust your judgement, everything will work out for the best. Life conspires in unusual ways.

TK: What have been the best moments so far in your business lives?

Geeta: I was recognised as a Finalist in The Family Network Awards earlier this year in the small business of the year category. One of my private tuition students got into the college of her choice and another student received a distinction in Art at school and awarded an Art Scholarship. Earlier this year I also created an Easter event for children which was also successful. Having sold-out classes still amazes me. It's been a good year!

Hannah: Winning awards. Opening the pop-up gallery in Woking. The best is yet to come!

TK: What about your plans for the future?

Geeta: I have so many ideas on how I would like The Art House to grow. I am enjoying creating more events similar to this current one with Hannah and within the community and offer something to everyone.

Hannah: A Solo exhibition at the Light Box [details of this appear above]. Working with Geeta on our collaboration of the Festive Art Crafts event. Continuing to explore the new pop-up

gallery and what it can bring to the community as a nireable space.

TK: What makes you laugh or feel happy?

Geeta: My friends and kids make me laugh. On a Friday evening the kids and I watch YouTube music videos and have a dance around the kitchen. It's such fun for the end of the week! Also, seeing the look on the faces of my students who have never painted before and they are just amazed at their artwork. That's such a wonderful feeling.

Hannah: Art. People's company. Family.

TK: Thank you so much for sharing some insights into your lives with us. Finally, what makes your weekend complete?

Geeta: Hoovering my studio on Saturday after teaching my private students and a gin and tonic on a Sunday!

Hannah: My Family and a gin and tonic!

Geeta and Hannan can be contacted about tuition and other events in various ways.

Geeta (The Art House):

[Website.](#)

[Instagram.](#)

[Facebook.](#)

Hannah (Hannah Bruce Art Gallery):

[Website.](#)

[Instagram.](#)

[Facebook.](#)

