

# animate arts company ltd NEWSLETTER

Winter/Spring 2011

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## FROM GECKOS TO DOLPHINS

After four and half very zesty years at Green Gecko Studios, Animate Arts has moved home!

On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011, Animate transported the entire office and store to a new space in Herne Bay. Sited on Dolphin Street (a road connecting the seafront and the high street), the new studio has been called The Pod (collective of dolphins is a pod and also a very nice place for like-minded people, or peas, to gather!). It was in great need of some TLC, but with the most generous help of Animate friends, the space has been cleaned, DIY-ed, de-weeded and decorated! Thank you to all those who helped, particularly supporting Jo through her hours of stressful need!

The future in The Pod is very exciting, as there is great opportunity for using the space for making, rehearsing, meetings and much more. In the next newsletter, we will announce how we hope to shape this space for the local artist community.

*Images by Jo Dyer: (top) front door of The Pod before clearing, (below) new kitchen installed to The Pod*

We hope that you all enjoyed the countdown to Christmas with the hand-crafted advent calendar and now prepared and embracing the year ahead.

This new look newsletter continues to celebrate the work that has taken place in the past few months, including major public art commissions to Miss L Toes who sprinkled Christmas magic across schools in Kent! You will also be up-to-speed with the latest news that has been transforming the company (and it is epic), and launching a series of new opportunities for animate artists to support their continued professional development (as well as an excellent excuse to meet up and be social).

But most of all, may we wish you a very happy new year and we hope 2011 will be particularly creative and inspiring!

*Jo Dyer*

Artistic Director

*Louise Hammond*

Arts Administrator

*Hannah Riches*

Schools Projects Co-Ordinator

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 7-9pm**

BOOST! 1<sup>st</sup> ever creative & social networking event for animate artists, featuring a one-off photography master class for attendees (more details on page 5)

**Mon 14 Feb - Sun 27 March**

Art In The Dockyard art exhibition, No.1 Smithery Gallery, Chatham. More info on [www.thedockyard.co.uk](http://www.thedockyard.co.uk)

**Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 7-9pm**

BOOST! returns with another creative 'Easter' master class and social!



# COMMUNITY



## THE BIG DRAW

In October, Animate got involved in the international 'Big Draw' festival – a campaign for drawing. Artists, Emily Tull and Rob Turner led a family friendly drop-in workshop in the brand new (and stunningly designed) No.1 Smithery Gallery at Chatham Historic Dockyard. Over the course of the day, artists and participants worked alongside each other to create a giant drawing inspired by the large scale paintings by Stanley Spencer, on display in the No.1 Smithery Gallery.

There were many projects for the Big Draw 2010 across the world, all held in different places from schools to libraries to historic sites throughout October. It promotes drawing as an effective tool for learning and engagement, and Animate's workshop really showed- off amazing creativity too!

Jo Creighton, Head of Learning at Chatham Historic Dockyard said; "I really loved the way you incorporated the drawings into something that was immediately identifiable as the dockyard site – brilliant!"

The artwork from the Big Draw (seen here in photos) is on permanent show in the Smithery building.

## HANDING STORIES TO LITTLE HANDS

Katy Hirst from the Animate team, delivered a hugely successful project last autumn - The Storymaker's Project at Little Hands Children's Centre in Canterbury. Over a six week period, parents gained new skills, knowledge and confidence in the joy of storytelling activities to share with their children. Through the weekly drama workshops, Katy supported parents to explore different approaches to storytelling, including using objects from around the house as inspiration and props to imaginative play techniques. This made the project really accessible and transferable to everyday life, encouraging the participants to take home what they learnt. With a focus on parents, the children have, and will continue to experience amazing stories! One parent said;

"This workshop has been life changing! It has opened my eyes to the fun that my children and I can have using our imagination to enjoy creating stories."

Following the success of this project, Animate is planning further projects with Little Hands and parents from Canterbury. If you would like to know more or be involved in these future plans, please contact [email@animatecommunityarts.com](mailto:email@animatecommunityarts.com)



Images by Rob Turner:  
(Top) participants start creating artwork  
(Right) section of finished artwork

## TIM LEEK ARTIST PROFILE



**This issue, we meet Tim Leek, who has worked with Animate on a number of projects and continues to explore his creativity through his photography across the county and world!**

**How did your path first come to cross with animate?**

As a space explorer on a planet far, far away in Faversham

**Obviously you bring your photography and creativity to Animate projects, but what inspires you when taking photographs (without or without Animate)?**

I'm really interested in people. All walks of life.

**How long have you been capturing people by lens?**

For about 10 years. I started painting from photos and then I stopped painting.

**What project have you most enjoyed being involved in with animate?**

I've have loved them all, but my favourite has to be *My Herne Bay*. We displayed large 8 foot photos on the pier and they looked great.

**People may have seen some of your work at Animate's exhibition at Horsebridge last year, but do you exhibit anywhere else?**

I try to when the opportunity comes along. I've exhibited in Berlin in the Goethe Institut which has been the furthest away.

**I hear on the grapevine you were involved in an animation project recently for animate - could you tell us more about it?**

Animator Hannah Miller and I made stop-frame animations with young people at Gatland School, Maidstone. They created paper cut-out characters, all chose a favourite piece of music and animated their characters into short music videos.

**So what does 2011 have in store for Tim Leek?**

I'm taking more time out to look after my beautiful baby girl, Martha. Also developing a community café project in Maidstone, Jam and Tea community interest company, of which I'm now officially the director. And of course, working on more inspiring animate projects.

**To see some of Tim's work check out [www.timothyleek.co.uk](http://www.timothyleek.co.uk)**

*Images: (Left) Tim Leek (Right) Photo from an animate workshop led by Tim, exploring portrait photography with secondary school students*

## Tim's TOP FIVE photography tips

1. Get to know your subject
2. Take your time
3. Don't get trigger happy
4. Slow down
5. Put the camera away and enjoy the moment

Tim will be running the first ever master class at BOOST! A CPD event exclusive for Animate artists. More info on page 5 of this newsletter.



# [SCHOOLS]



## A STROOD SAFARI THROUGH A VALLEY OF VISIONS

A new walking trail aiming to get the community actively exploring its green spaces, opened in Strood on the 11<sup>th</sup> December. Commissioned by Medway Gap Landscape Partnership - Valley of Visions, animate artists were invited to create a series of public artwork to be installed along the trail and deliver a big opening celebration of the community trail, as part of this landmark project for Strood.

Throughout autumn, the project kicked-off in the heart of Strood community with artists Jo Dyer and Rob Turner working with numerous groups, from primary schools to youth groups to start developing designs for the artworks. The participant's creative ideas were captured and shared, to help develop over a dozen designs for mosaic-ed markers to be made and permanently sited on the trail.

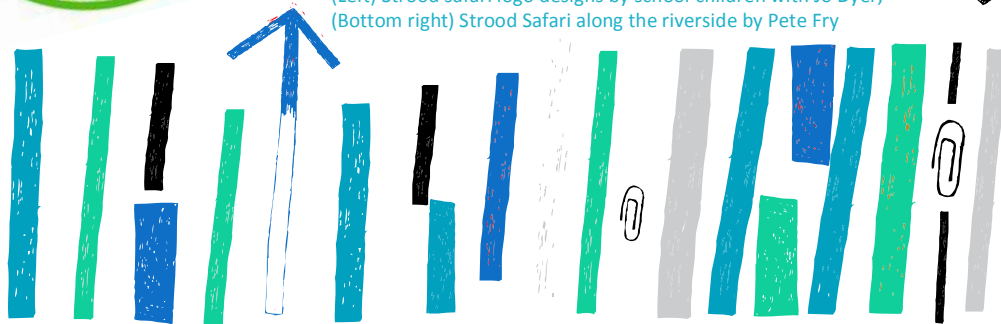
The walker's trail weaves around the town through green spaces and along the Medway riverside, tracing the habitats of local wildlife and nature. It has been mapped and renovated by local people from Strood, and was officially opened in December as part of Animate's 'Strood Safari' weekend. Pablo and Lisa, performers from Animate, took on the characters of Mr.C (an intrepid explorer with a love for collecting stories) and Anne (a local botanical illustrator inspired by Strood's famous Victorian resident!) who led local people around the trail. While searching for creepy crawlies and flowers, Mr.C captured local Strood stories and Anne shared her botanical knowledge through artwork and stories. Families and children loved the free back packs kits, with a handy sketch pad, pencil and magnifying glass which helped the safari come alive with real exploration.

Valley of Visions is a three year Heritage Lottery Fund project investing in the landscape and countryside of the Medway Gap, whilst providing new opportunities to engage the local community to conserve, enhance and celebrate the natural beauty and heritage of the area. More info can be found out on [www.valleyofvisions.org.uk](http://www.valleyofvisions.org.uk)



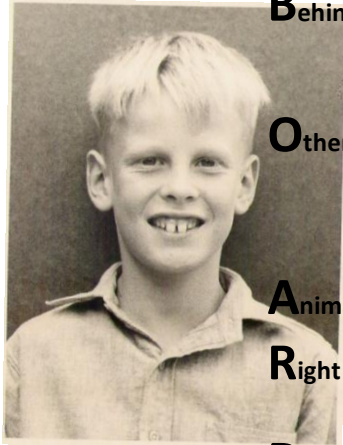
**The mosaics are currently being made by Rob Turner and will be installed along the trail before Spring 2011! Rob is continuing to blog his progress and the creation of the artworks and you can keep up-to-date on <http://stroodcommunitytrail.blogspot.com>**

Images: (Top left) Mr.C on safari by Pete Fry,  
(Left) Strood safari logo designs by school children with Jo Dyer,  
(Bottom right) Strood Safari along the riverside by Pete Fry



# ON BOARD

As part of our regular feature on Animate's board, we meet Dee Ashworth, one of Animate's trustees who has been part of the board since it was established in 2007.



## Behind the scenes

I've been on the board for about 3 years after working with Jo at the Gulbenkian. I bring a wide perspective of the cultural scene and an experience of working with artists and arts organisations. I believe in peace and I try to bring this to all I do.

## Other hats

I've just retired from being a venue manager and am developing my first passion - lighting design. I am also a trustee of the Vayu Naidu Company, an Anglo-Indian theatre company. I live in Faversham with my wife and our two daughters now live and work in London. If I get the chance, and it's not raining, I get out on my bike.

## Animate is....

a vibrant art organisation enabling all sorts of people to value art, each other and themselves better.

## Right here, right now.

Animate has succeeded wonderfully with many projects during its first few years. It now has the right foundation to go on to be a central force in the East Kent cultural landscape.

## Direction of animate

These more difficult times bring greater need, and with it, a greater desire for community participation. There could be new opportunities for Animate in the new studio home in Herne Bay.

Animate Arts

# BOOST!

*The social and creative boost!*

RSVP to [email@animatecommunityarts.com](mailto:email@animatecommunityarts.com) by: **31 Jan 2011**

**WHEN:** Wednesday 2nd February 2011, 7-9pm

**WHAT'S ON:** Exclusive tours of The Pod, mini-masterclass in photography with Tim Leek, unpicking project documentation & photo consent, and ....  
....drinking lots of hot chocolate with marshmallows!

This is a social and professional networking event for Animate artists and colleagues. It will be held at The Pod. There are an additional five spaces for invited guests. If you would like to bring someone to this event, please contact Animate in advance.