

# The Willows and Risley Avenue Celebrate Day One of The Hope in Tottenham Schools Art Festival 2019



A police van, six TSG officers and a pair of crowd control, horse-mounted officers surround The Willows School on Broadwater Farm.

Years ago this would have been a concerning spectacle, but today it is the set of an Arts festival hosted by the school.

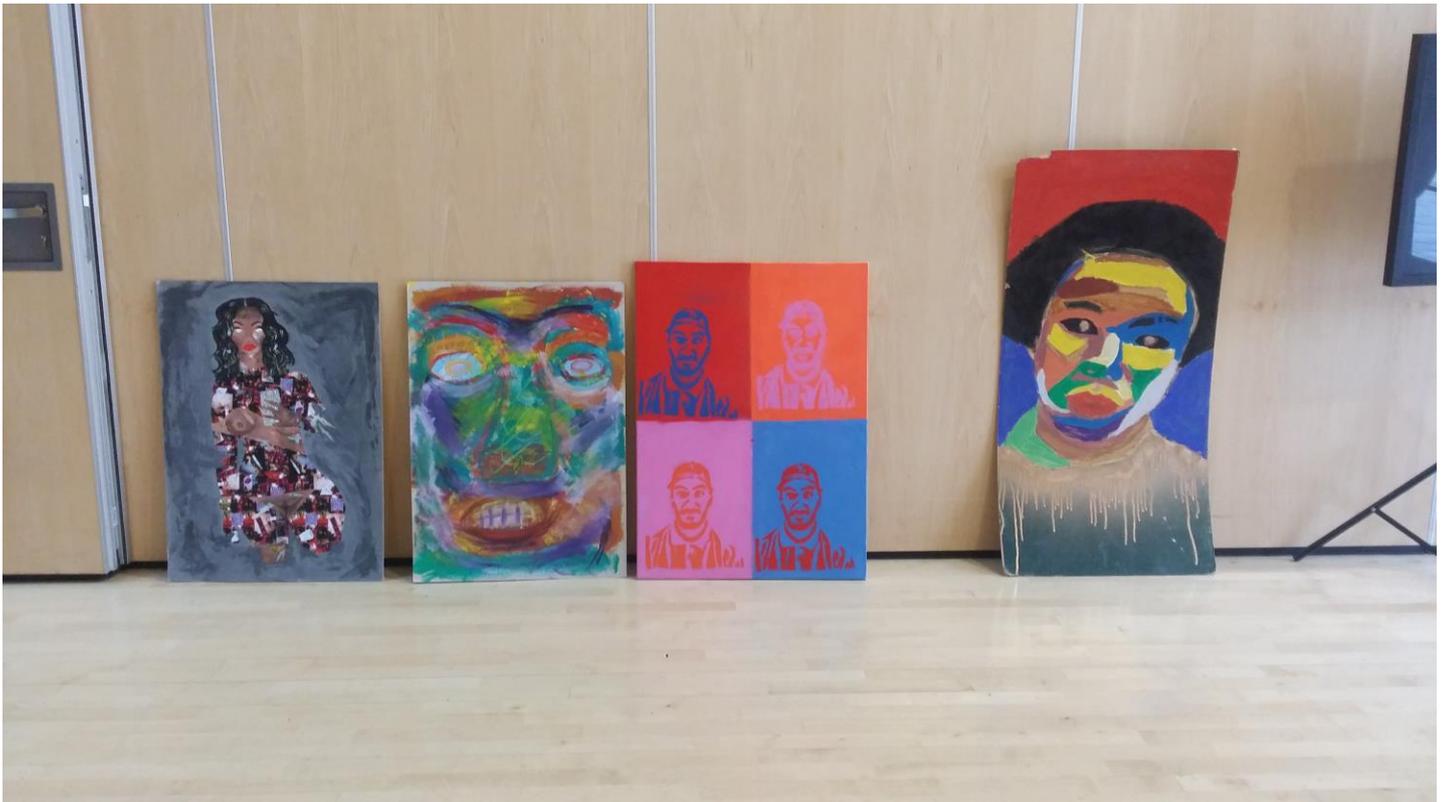
As part of a wider celebration, The Willows on Broadwater Farm became the first of four locations hosting the Hope in Tottenham Schools Art Festival; a celebration of talent which paired primary school artists in the realms of music, dance and painting, with that of professional works.

Conceptualised by Photographer Agenda Brown of Visual Marvelry and supported by Tim Benson, President of the Royal Institute of Oil Painters, students of the Pupil Referral Unit, 'The Octagon' also had a chance to showcase their work in a make shift art gallery within The Willow.

Meanwhile, students of the host school, The Willow and the accompanying Risley Avenue Primary School performed for the crowd with a number of acts that kept the audience engaged over the two hours.

Filling the hall to capacity, some members of the audience were forced to sit on gym equipment as Councillor and VIP for the event, Mark Blake opened the show with a few words on how optimistic he was for the area's future with such talent on display.

Starting with Willow's African Dance Group, this school's musical focus showcased the best they had to offer, leading their choir into a rendition of "This is me" which included an unexpected, but welcome violin performance.



Risley Avenue took to the stage to give The Willows students some reprieve, displaying a selection of Chinese dances; the first of which being an umbrella dance. With the dance's roots being almost 2000 years old, the Risley students tried their best to respect the Han Dynasty era tradition, with students loving the colourful, twirling umbrellas and traditional Chinese music.

A ribbon dance followed next and students marvelled at the form and acrobatic manoeuvres on show, closing out the showcase to a near standing ovation, one that carried an optimistic momentum going into the fan and then sleeve dances.

Individual performances were up next as The Willows' Grade one to three pianists had a chance to display their talents, performing their respective exam pieces before the Willows Red Hat dance troop closed the show.

As the curtain fell on day one of the arts festival, one parent said that the opening day to the festival was a "refreshing" opportunity and it was "a pleasure to be a part of".

The HiT School Arts Festival 2019 will continue tomorrow at Seven Sisters School where Agenda and Tim Benson will be joined by students of both Seven Sisters and Chestnuts schools as well as police officers from the local area.



By Omar Alleyne Lawler