

# spotlight

on Children & the Arts

Autumn Edition 2011

## “THE ARTS ARE SO IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN”

New Children & the Arts Ambassador,  
Amanda Holden, on arts education



Amanda Holden is an actress and presenter, notable for her role in the long running series *Cutting It*, for her Laurence Olivier Theatre Award-nominated performance in *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, and as a judge on *Britain's Got Talent*.

She most recently starred in the West End hit, *Shrek The Musical*, finishing in November to await the birth of her second child. Amanda is also an Ambassador for The Prince's Foundation for Children & the Arts and has been lending her support to both Arts & Kids Week and Face Britain. Based on two recent interviews for the charity, Amanda describes her experience of the arts and the impact that it can have on young people:

“I'm fortunate to be invited by many organisations to offer my support but I only get involved with those I feel really engaged with.

My daughter and I are always going to the theatre so it felt natural to want to encourage other youngsters to experience the arts too. The arts offer kids a real escape. Maybe it could lead to a career and stardom but more importantly it's about opening a door on the arts, introducing children to the fabulous world of concerts, art galleries and museums.

Music and dance has been in my life since I was nine. I lived in a tiny village and used to put on little theatre shows in my back garden. Later I joined the local 'am-dram' company and then got a grant to go to drama school. Early arts experiences helped me and they can help thousands of others too.

It's excellent to be a part of this [Face Britain]. I'll be entering a picture of myself, but I'm rubbish at art. I'll try and draw it to scale if nothing else and I'll probably make my eyelashes look longer than they really are. I'd rather get Quentin Blake to draw how he thinks I look – I love his drawings.

It's interesting because Lexi, my daughter, comes home with pictures she's drawn of herself and I'm fascinated with how she sees herself. I just think this is a core exercise for children that shows how they perceive who they are and how they're seen by the rest of the world.

I think the arts are so important for children's education – I've seen the difference in my own daughter's confidence. But a lot of these things cost money and are not always affordable for every family – that's why this charity is so important.

Children & the Arts inspires deprived children to have a better life – and to dream!”

*(This article is based on interviews Amanda Holden kindly gave with Hello! Magazine and Classic FM Magazine for Children & the Arts)*

## Start Case Study: The Gate Theatre & Westminster Academy

All the Year 10 pupils who took part in this special **Start** project are on free school meals and many are from refugee families. These young people from Westminster Academy in Paddington, London, are amongst the most socially and economically deprived in the borough.

The participants visited **The Gate Theatre**, to watch the Greek tragedy, *Electra*, before spending six weeks working with a professional director to produce their own version of the play.

The group can be very challenging and their headteacher was impressed by the near 100% attendance, the total focus during the sessions and the quality of their performance: “I'm absolutely stunned! I always expect a lot from them, but this has really put them in a different light. This project will have changed their lives!”

After a very successful final performance, one participant said “Thank you so, so much! You have opened the box in our heads and we can't believe what you have made us aspire to!”



## FACE BRITAIN: OVER 500 SCHOOLS REGISTERED!

Since launching in September, over 500 schools have registered to take part and over 3,000 self portraits have already been uploaded to the **online gallery**, brought to life by PhotoBox. More self portraits are being added every day.

Every self portrait submitted will form part of a very special montage image of HM The Queen to be projected onto Buckingham Palace in 2012 as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations!

Recent support for the project includes a feature on Blue Peter and the release of BBC World Class Face Britain **assembly packs**. We have also welcomed new project Patrons including Angela de la Cruz, Jamie Oliver, Rankin and Rory McIlroy.

Everyone aged 4-16 years is invited to take part by creating a self portrait by March 2012. Visit the **Face Britain website** to find out more.

## GREAT ART QUEST LAUNCHES AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY

This October Children & the Arts launched the fourth year of **Great Art Quest** with an exciting event at The National Gallery. Participating teachers and gallery staff from Penzance, Milton Keynes, London and Margate attended the launch to learn more about the project which, thanks to generous support from **GAM**, will be introducing 500 children from across the UK to visual art.

The day started with speeches from former participants before National Gallery staff led a master class on teaching visual art. In the afternoon, there were further workshops in art and storytelling.

The enthusiasm was palpable in the end of day planning session, as teachers and galleries discussed their ideas:

**It was such a fantastic event. I know all the teachers thoroughly enjoyed it!** ”

Emma Fry, MK Gallery.

## Dates Announced for Catalyst Teacher Training 2011/12

Catalyst is a series of inspiring arts teacher training days for Key Stage 2 (Scottish P3-P6) teachers, generously supported by Maaikie McInnes Charitable Trust. Each day aims to build confidence in delivering arts across the curriculum. Working with professional artists, teachers are given accessible and adaptable ideas that they can use in the classroom, irrespective of their own artistic ability.

We have eight dates confirmed for the coming year, plus days in Scotland and Northern Ireland still to be finalised. Thanks to the generous funding each day is heavily subsidised, providing opportunities for all schools.

For more information and to book a place please visit [www.childrenandarts.org.uk/catalyst](http://www.childrenandarts.org.uk/catalyst).

23rd Feb

Citizens Theatre, Glasgow

7th March

Focal Point Gallery,  
Southend-on-Sea

9th March

Chinese Arts Centre,  
Manchester

9th March

Theatre Royal Margate

14th March

Warwick Arts Centre

15th March

National Museum Cardiff

16th March

Middlesbrough Institute  
of Modern Art

## New Crowdfunding Initiative launched by Children & the Arts

This November, Children & the Arts launched a new crowd funding initiative to support Face Britain. Any funds donated to the appeal will help us commission a series of downloadable digital teaching materials for Face Britain. This will ensure that children, regardless of their social or economic background, can be inspired by the arts.

We have designed an exciting reward scheme for those that contribute:

- **Donate £10** and you will receive an official Face Britain commemorative certificate.
- **£20** – the above, plus inclusion on the thank you page of the Face Britain digital teaching resources.
- **£50** – the above, plus a copy of Darren Henley's *The Incredible Story of Classical Music*, and a classical music CD.
- **£120** – the above, plus a collection of high quality printed teaching resources for your nominated school.
- **£250** – the above, plus a framed limited edition montage portrait of HM The Queen, made up of thousands of children's self portraits.
- **£500** – everything!, plus an invitation for you and a guest to an exclusive event celebrating Face Britain.

If you would like to get involved please visit the **Civilised Money website**. You can also let your friends know by inviting them to the **Facebook event**.

## Children & the Arts cards now available!

The time has come to get your Children & the Arts Seasonal Greetings cards! Help support Children & the Arts by ordering yours **online** today.



## CAROLS AT HOLY TRINITY – Last few tickets left!



Thursday 1 December 2011  
Holy Trinity Church  
Sloane Square, London  
7.15 – 8.30pm

An evening packed full of celebrity readings from Brian Blessed, Alistair McGowan, Ronni Ancona and Rowan Atkinson, and performances from classical singer Laura Wright and former Royal harpist Claire Jones. Perfect for getting you in the festive spirit! Buy tickets online at **See Tickets** (search Carols at Holy Trinity).