

Screen Printing Workshops at Kington Fitzurse, Primary School, Kington Langley

Sponsored by The Arts Society, Kington Langley

Artist Simon Tozer

Morning Mixed group Year 4 & 5 Theme: Mayan Culture

Afternoon group Year 6 – Theme: WW11

In discussion with James Osler and Liz Howe we discovered that a screen printing workshop would fit in extremely well with the curriculum both as far as developing arts skills were concerned and also to illustrate two different topics in KS2.

Year 4 & 5 are starting to investigate Mayan culture: architecture, beliefs, the discovery of this ancient culture, food & drink, hierarchy and costume and these potentially graphic images will translate well into designs for multi-colour stencils.

Year 6 is currently studying different aspects of WW11 including rationing, evacuation, the Blitz and the effects of propaganda

A natural match then with the artist Simon Tozer whose work is mainly screen-prints.

As Simon says “Like other non-digital print techniques, the process encourages images that are graphic and quite simple in form. In screen printing each picture is created in layers as a series of separate drawings onto film.”

Year 4 & 5

As part of the preparation for the workshops Simon has created layers transferred onto the screen using a chemical process,. This textured screen adds depth to the images the children have prepared as stencils and then each student hand prints one colour at a time.

The children used a selection of images to develop their two stencils – A Mayan Temple and then the remainder created the background colour for a surprisingly sophisticated and graphic two colour print. As well as the printing experience the children were able to research Mayan images and draw these to create another piece of illustration.

Year 6 Ration Books

The outcome of this workshop was for each student to have a replica ration book that they could then use as part of their coursework. Simon prepared two photographic screens – one for the cover and a second one for the eight interior pages.

The students worked in pairs to pull the squeegee to push the ink through the mesh and like magic – when they lifted the screen there was the finished image. The students were able to appreciate the printing process and the repetitive nature so gained knowledge of how books and posters are produced.

While the printed sheets were drying the students were looking at propaganda posters and seeing how images can be used to promote and manipulate ideas. There is some truth in the statement “a picture is worth a thousand words”

Simon then showed how a full sheet of differently aligned printed pages were then folded into a finished book.

All the students worked really well and obviously enjoyed the practical printing sessions and could see how this would help them develop and extend their work back in lessons.