

# *Bienvenue à la France*

Spring 2009

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les arts avec* **mpa**  
MID PENNINE ARTS





## Artist profile: Vanessa Card, Freelance Artist

Our student editors interviewed freelance artist Vanessa Card about her career and her work but first Vanessa introduces herself:

"I have experience in running workshops in illustration, mask making, props, puppet making and performance with Horse & Bamboo and other arts theatre companies. I have run a range of school and college based workshops. I have been a maker for theatre for 5 years and have 19 years' experience specialising in finely detailed and textural illustration for publishing, advertising and design. Media includes watercolours, pen and ink, scraperboard collage etc."

**Question: What made you get involved in this kind of work? What qualifications do you need?**

"Art was always the thing I did best and couldn't get enough of. My sister and I as children spent a lot of time using our imagination and I think the more you do that the more it grows and you can find inspiration everywhere.

"I did a degree in illustration which was a time to further explore ideas that interested me. If you can find that space without a huge pressure to earn money it becomes a joy. I don't think you need the qualification as such; your experience is the best qualification. No clients have ever asked to see my qualifications on paper. Looking at your past work is the best way to judge if you are capable - so your portfolio is more important. And they learn from talking to you and working with you if you can be relied upon to meet their deadlines or follow their brief. If you don't meet their needs they won't use you again."

**Question: When did you first become interested in becoming an artist?**

"As I said 'Art' was always my thing. When I left college and had to earn a living it was the obvious choice of career! I had done a foundation degree at Chester prior to my degree which had again been brilliant for allowing me to explore different media, and so honed down the choices about what suited me and my character."

**Question: What is rewarding about this job as a freelance artist?**

"I love the variety of what I do at the moment. Illustration work, when I get it is very familiar and comfortable as I have done it for a long time and feel very confident at it. The best thing is that every brief is different ... and I like my own company ... but equally working as a creative practitioner in schools is fun and challenging. More directly, a collaboration with the teachers and children which for me is an exchange of ideas involves much more high energy. Working within theatre is another type of brief - working in a team to solve a visual 3D 'problem'. And finally, 'Handheld', my own theatre company, is much more a whole entity in itself. My partner Fredrick and I can create our own brief, follow our own threads and ideas."

**Question: What kind of books have you illustrated?**

"Mostly educational books for children on topics such as ancient Egypt, Romans, Aztecs, the Greeks. My style is very detailed and textural which fits well with the styles of art in ancient cultures. Also some poetry books, and a few fiction books. In the past I also did a lot of advertising work, producing artwork for food packaging, wine bottle labels and company letterheads."

**Question: What is the 'Horse and Bamboo Theatre Company' all about?**

"It is probably best to look at their website for this. They specialise in masked theatre so music, stage design and movement is as important as dialogue. The artistic director and his deputy directory are supported by a body of administrators that run the 'Boo' centre, and then have a pool of freelance performers, prop makers and actors they put together for each project. I am one of those and they will ask me to be involved based on the needs of each production."

**Question: Can you tell us more about 'The Handheld Theatre Company'. When did you establish it and why?**

"I moved to Lancaster with my family two years ago. A lot of my work was around the Burnley, Rawtenstall and Accrington area and so I was looking to make new contacts closer to home, but it wasn't easy to do this. I met Fredrick Holm, a musician who had moved to Lancaster recently from Sweden and who had found similar difficulties in establishing work locally. We became friends, ate chocolate, drank tea, and had the idea to create an experimental piece of children's theatre as a sweet taste of how we may collaborate to make something together. Having both always made things or played music, in Fredrick's case for other people's projects, we could bring lots of skills together. We called ourselves Handheld because we wanted to make something small, nurturing and accessible to all. Most puppets are contained (held) in your hands."

**Question: What are your plans for the future?**

"I don't know; you can't tell what may happen. We would like to develop Handheld's identity and get it better known. Do more shows and workshops and so expand our work locally. Though I don't really want to let go of my other work. I think its good to stay open to following up any opportunity that may arise. More exciting new projects, new people, exciting new working relationships. Bring it on!"

Vanessa Card: [www.vanessacard.co.uk](http://www.vanessacard.co.uk)

## Mid Pennine Arts Educa

Welcome to the Spring Edition of Mid Pennine's Education brochure. You may have noticed a difference in style to this term's brochure. The whole brochure has been produced through a competition for students working towards the 14-19 diploma in Creative & Media. Four schools have been involved supported by the City Learning Centre in Burnley: West Craven, Park and Primet in Colne and Unity College in Burnley.

The students responded to a brief set by Mid Pennine Arts and were supported by Paul Barlow from Burnley Council's Graphics Department. Each group made a presentation of their work to a panel at the Mid Pennine Gallery before the work from a group from Primet High School was chosen. We are delighted with the result and the students' professional response to the task.

In response to requests from primary schools we are linking much of our arts activity this term to exploring the language and culture of France! The programme offers an investigation into the skills of mime, French songs and music, developing ideas for your classroom from the great French artists and looking at the world of fashion.

Whatever the needs of your individual school we feel sure that there is something here for you and your pupils.

Don't delay. Avoid disappointment by speaking to David at our Mid Pennine Office today!



Vanessa Card



Mandy Precious







Leo Nolan

A final note: Hannah Kidd leaves her role as Education Officer for Mid Pennine Arts in January to develop a new career as free-lance musician and arts consultant. We are very grateful for Hannah's contribution to the development of both the education programme and to the whole range of our work at Mid Pennine Arts. We will miss her!



Beth Allen

### Teachers' Forum

We are delighted to offer a free rhythm, drumming and percussion workshop led by professional musicians from 'Dhamak'. Martin & Abdul will lead teachers through a fun session designed to introduce simple rhythm games which will develop skills from the traditional class 'music trolley'.

When: Monday 9th. March  
from 4-15 to 5 p.m.  
Where: The Mid Pennine Gallery  
Cost: Free - but booking essential;  
the session is limited to  
12 participants

### Leo Nolan - musician KS1/2

Leo will play simple French tunes on his melodeon as an introduction. He will tell familiar English nursery rhymes and stories in French, teach the children songs in English and French, and together, Leo and the children will act out one or two traditional French tales, dressing the children up in costume and using props.

Dates available: 6 half day sessions:  
Monday 9th February,  
Monday 23rd February,  
Monday 2nd March.

Where: In your own school  
Cost: £60 + vat per half day

### Beth Allen – voice coach KS1/2

Beth will provide songs in French for reception, KS1 or KS2. These will mostly come from a traditional French repertoire because it is the most musically pleasing. The songs will make demands in developing children's language and will always be musically satisfying.

If an individual school is using a language course in order to match up to their partner secondary school Beth will be only too pleased to help deliver it in as fun and creative way as possible.

Dates available: Tuesday 24th February,  
Thursday 26th February,  
Monday 2nd March.

Where: In your own school  
Cost: £120 + vat per day

### Mandy Precious – writer, theatre director and drama worker KS2

Mime is a universal language and the basis of learning in all cultures - and it has a strong cultural connection to French. In this workshop Mandy will use mime to translate words from the French into English.

This will lend itself specifically to 'action words'; pupils will also be able to use mime to explore feelings, objects, proverbs/sayings – literally 'playing' with language and aiding memory of words in the process. The mime 'actions' will concentrate on relevant French cultural references. Through this workshop, pupils will build a collection of mimed translations, that formulate a palette of movements which can subsequently be built into a piece of extended action (that can be delivered with or without subtitles...either in French or English).

Dates available: Monday 2nd February,  
Monday 10th February,  
Monday 24th February.

Where: In your own school  
Cost: £120 + vat per day

### Vanessa Card Artist & illustrator, puppet & mask-maker KS2

Vanessa will talk with teachers beforehand to identify the most suitable approach for this work.

She aims to introduce the idea of France and French culture through exploring the children's ideas and their knowledge of France followed by a creative activity. The work they produce can be displayed in the class or used in future lessons.

The workshop could include a playful introduction game, exploring holidays and other cultures before focusing on France or looking at the French language with a look at French words for colour before playing a 'colour game' in French. These sessions will be followed by a look at French iconic buildings and making-techniques or a look at the French Impressionists and their painting techniques.

The afternoon would be spent on sculpting iconic buildings from cardboard, glue and tape in small teams or working individually, painting in impressionistic ways

Dates available: Monday 2nd March,  
Wednesday 4th March,  
Friday 6th March.

Where: In your own school  
Cost: £120 + vat per day

### Rosie Fenwick – carnival artist KS2

Rosie will lead a one day workshop based on the themes of introducing textiles, fashion and modern languages, specifically French.

The day will be split into two halves, the first focusing on designing and creating fashionable prints for t-shirts, based on the works of famous French artists such as Matisse and Monet. During this session children will look at specific paintings and extract design ideas, which they will then transfer onto stencils or pieces of foam to become their block prints. The children will then use fabric paints to create their t-shirt motif. Thus children will learn elements of the process for making t-shirt prints seen in much high street fashion.

The second half of the day will be silk painting using traditional French phrases and iconic images to create individual pieces of work which can be joined together to form a class banner or displayed individually. Children will sketch and plan their picture which will then be painted onto thin fabric using silk outliners and paints.

Children will acquire skills in two textile techniques as well as gaining insight into the research planning and design which occurs during art and fashion process. They will also benefit from having completed a real t-shirt to take home and collaborated on a joint project to stay in school.

Dates available: Wednesday 4th March,  
Monday 9th March,  
Wednesday 11th March.

Where: In your own school  
Cost: £120 + vat per day

Phone: David on 01282 421986 or  
e-mail: david@midpenninearts.org.uk  
web: midpenninearts.org.uk





## Todmorden Schools' Tour

We are delighted to offer Todmorden primary schools a tour featuring two artists whose workshops will focus the heritage of the Northwest. The tour is a gift to Todmorden Schools from the Town Council!

**Alex Fisher** will introduce clog dancing to pupils at Key Stage 2. She offers a whole school demonstration of the art before working with a single class to learn and develop their own clog dances. Clogs are provided!!

Voice coach and singer **Beth Allen** will explore the rich heritage of folk songs from both Lancashire and Yorkshire. Pupils will meet familiar and new folk songs to build into their school's repertoire.

Dates: to be confirmed with individual schools in February/March

Where: In your own school

Cost: Free to Todmorden Primary Schools

## Start exhibition of Pennine Lancashire Secondary Schools

Mid Pennine Arts is dedicating the space of the Mid Pennine Gallery in Burnley to an exhibition of artwork from mainstream and special education secondary school students (11 – 16 year olds) in Pennine Lancashire and Todmorden from Wednesday April 29th to Saturday 13th June '09. This is the fourth annual exhibition and it has proved to be very popular with audiences, exhibiting the very high quality art work which is regularly developed in schools across the region.

The exhibition will work on the principles of a professional gallery with a selection panel consisting of: Rebecca Keating, Visual Arts and Projects Officer, 3 art students from Pennine Lancashire schools and a Curator from a major gallery in the Northwest. If your school is eligible to apply and you have not already received an application pack then please do contact us. The last submission date for work is Friday 3rd April.

## Gallery: Suki Chan 14th February–11th April 09

Suki Chan's video installation explores traces of human presence within two contrasting landscapes. Suki juxtaposes two contrasting types of architecture, a cast iron pier on the northwest coast of England and a rammed earth roundhouse in rural southwest China. She then uses time-lapse to capture the movement of light and shadows over the structures and engages the viewer in the cycles and fluctuations of time.

The cast-iron pier is a symbol of industrialisation and a place of social and cultural activity. Today, as piers fall into disrepair, many become a refuge for a new community. Thousands of starlings return each day to roost, marking their arrival with mesmerizing swarming formations in the sky.

The roundhouse is the traditional dwelling of a group of Chinese people with a long history of migration. The round structure is designed to protect its inhabitants and stands for the collective spirit of the community. As China modernises, their way of living is being challenged as many move away in search of new opportunities in the cities.

## Suki Chan in Residence: Friday 27th February

The residency day is an opportunity to meet Suki, see some of her past work, hear her talking about the film, watch the film, ask Suki questions about her way of working.

Hourly slots available for secondary schools from 12.30 pm onwards finishing at 4 pm or 4.30 pm if required. Booking essential for group visits - no charge.

Please call Rebecca Keating or David Smith on 01282 421986

## DANCE and ART WORKSHOPS during Half Term in the Mid Pennine Gallery

### Dance:

This is a real opportunity for young people to work with professional dancer Anthony Briggs to choreograph a new dance in response to Suki Chan's beautiful film.

Ages 7-10	Monday 16 February 10 am to 12.00 pm
Ages 12 – 16	Tuesday 17 February 10 am to 12-30 pm
Cost:	£2-50 per session

Please call Rebecca Keating or David Smith on 01282 421986 to book a place.

### Art workshops:

Artist Philip Bradley will lead workshops responding to Suki's film.

Ages 6-11	Wednesday 18th. February & Saturday 21st, February from 10-30 to 12-30
Ages 15-16	Friday 20th. February from 10-30 to 12-30 pm
Cost:	Free – no booking required

## Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts

We are delighted to have received funding from the Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts to deliver a programme of work with 10 schools from across Pennine Lancashire and Todmorden to bring their pupils to the Mid Pennine Gallery this term.

Pupils will visit the Gallery to view work by the internationally renowned artist Suki Chan. They will experience a workshop in the Gallery based on the exhibition led by one of our creative practitioners before returning to school for a second follow-up workshop.

This is a three year project. During each year, pupils will experience a dramatic performance and a professional art exhibition as well as working with practitioners in the venues and back in their classroom.

*Merci*