

PRESS RELEASE

THE
NATIONAL
GALLERY



TAKE ONE PICTURE

DISCOVER, IMAGINE, EXPLORE
CHILDREN INSPIRED BY GEORGES SEURAT

Annenberg Court (Getty Entrance)
21 May – 21 September 2014

Artwork by Elvetham Heath School (detail) © The National Gallery, London

The National Gallery's 2014 display of schoolchildren's work inspired by the collection has Georges Seurat's *Bathers at Asnières* (1884) at its heart.

Hundreds of schools up and down the UK submitted their work for consideration for *Take One Picture*, now in its 19th year. The annual display includes work from schools that took part in the scheme which, each year, invites teachers and pupils to take inspiration from one work in the collection and use it as a stimulus for learning across the curriculum.

The diverse range of exhibits on show, from animation and poetry to large textile banners, reflects the abundance of creative responses that spring from just one painting. Beach huts, felt hats and prints are just some of the works that resulted from school projects inspired by Seurat's painting and which investigated themes of rivers, industry, changing landscapes, clothing, leisure and colour and painting technique.

The painting, on display in Room 44, depicts an everyday scene of young men relaxing and swimming on the banks of the River Seine, in the suburb of Asnières, north-west of Paris. Created by the artist at a time of industrial expansion and urban development, the painting is rich in material for classroom discussion.

Pupils from Barnsley created a 'Barnsley at Asnières' banner, finding parallels between the chimneys of the burgeoning industrial landscape in the background of the painting and Barnsley's own mining heritage. The small dog to the foreground of the work inspired pupils in Carmarthenshire to create a dog fashioned in willow, while pupils from London took inspiration from the lazy summer afternoon captured by the artist to explore the theme of leisure. Their brightly coloured large-scale Victorian beach huts and bathers adorn the Gallery's Annenberg Court.

In preparation for his large canvas, Seurat made a number of conté crayon studies for individual figures and completed several small oil sketches on site in order to record the scene, light and atmosphere. These too provided inspiration for pupils from Tower Hamlets, London, whose chalk drawings are the result of their study of drawing technique.

Head teacher from Bishop's Tachbrook C of E Primary School in Warwickshire explains: *"The Take One Picture exhibition allows the public to see a small snapshot of the excellent art teaching going on in so many primary schools where an imaginative approach can foster a real love of learning. Taking part in this special project often fires children with an enthusiasm for making links between a range of subjects and gives them a thirst for knowledge which lasts a lifetime."*

Sandy, aged 11, from Kenmont Primary School, London, said: *"I had fun painting the Bathers at Asnières and I discovered my real passion for painting. I didn't know I had that before. I learnt how to use acrylic paint and to use different brushstrokes. I learnt that you don't have to be perfect and it's okay to make mistakes."*

Caroline Marcus, curator of the *Take One Picture* display said: *"The children's thoughtful, original cross-curricular responses stimulate us to take a closer look at the painting and discover things we may not have seen at first. Beyond the hazy summer day, children uncover themes such as urban change and leisure in the 19th century and make links to their own contemporary experiences."*

Take One Picture is generously supported by The Dorset Foundation and by The Tavolozza Foundation.

The schools represented in the 2014 display are:

- Ashdell Preparatory School, Sheffield
- Bishop's Tachbrook CE Primary School, Warwickshire
- Bosvigo School, Truro, Cornwall
- CE School of the Resurrection, Beswick, Manchester
- Charlotte Sharman Primary School, London
- Columbia Primary School, London
- Elvetham Heath Primary School, Hampshire
- Gawber Primary School, Barnsley
- Grafton Primary School, London
- Kenmont Primary School, London
- King Edward's Junior School, Bath
- Lady Bay Primary School, Nottinghamshire
- Little Hallingbury CE Primary School, Essex
- Lunt's Heath Primary School, Widnes
- Malorees Junior School, London
- Netley Primary School, London
- Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee School, London
- Riseley CE Lower School, Leicestershire
- St Cuthbert's C of E Primary School, Leicester
- Takeley Primary School, Essex
- Thomas's Kensington, London
- Velmead Junior School, Hampshire
- Ysgol Griffith Jones, St Clears, Carmarthenshire

There is also a slideshow on display containing work from a further 53 schools.

For press information please contact Lizzie Phillips: lizzie.phillips@ng-london.org.uk / 020 7747 2532

For public information, please quote 020 7747 2885 or information@ng-london.org.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Take One Picture

Launched in 1995, Take One Picture is the National Gallery's scheme for primary schools. Each year the Gallery focuses on one painting from the collection to inspire cross-curricular work in primary classrooms. As part of a one-day Continuing Professional Development (CPD) course at the Gallery, teachers are given a print of a painting. The

challenge is then for schools to use the image imaginatively in the classroom, both as a stimulus for artwork, and for work in more unexpected curriculum areas.

Each year a display of work produced by schools based on the painting is shown at the National Gallery, and a selection is published on the Take One Picture website. In order to be considered for the display, schools submit examples of how a whole class or school has used the picture in a cross-curricular way to the Gallery's Education Department by a set date.

Further information about the programme, related CPD courses for teachers and the annual *Take One Picture* exhibition at the National Gallery can be found at www.takeonepicture.org.

About Georges Seurat (1859–1891)

Seurat is considered to be one of the most important Post-Impressionist painters. He moved away from the apparent spontaneity and rapidity of Impressionism and developed a structured, more monumental art to depict modern urban life. *Bathers at Asnières* is an important transitional work. It shows Seurat developing the application of his novel pointillist technique to a large work on the scale of history painting (traditionally regarded as the highest form of Western painting).

The painting shows a group of young men taking their leisure by the river Seine as it passes through Asnières, an industrial suburb west of Paris. This was the first of Seurat's large-scale compositions. He drew conté crayon studies for individual figures using live models, and made small oil sketches on site which he used to help design the composition and record effects of light and atmosphere. Some 14 oil sketches and 10 drawings survive. The final composition, painted in the studio, combines information from both.

Dates and opening hours

Open to the public: 21 May – 21 September 2014

Daily 10am–6pm, Fridays until 9pm

Admission free