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Brook Street Capers Mural

Chester Renaissance, in collaboration with Cheshire West and Chester Council, advertised the public art commission for the wall at 73 Brook Street, Chester. The artwork celebrates the interesting history of the street and wider area.

- A fantastic response from artists from all over the country was received.
- Eighty-five interested artists registered on the procurement website the Chest, and 35 of them submitted interesting and exciting ideas and proposals.
- A shortlist of submissions was made by the Project Team, with representations from the local community in Brook Street and from Chester University.
- The short listed artists were from London, Chester, Wrexham, Warrington, Manchester and Yorkshire.
- After having invited the short listed artists to further explain and expand on their ideas, Gary Drostle, was selected. His "exciting proposal" for this particular location was considered to be most fitting.
- Completed in the summer of 2011, the Brook Street street-scene is animated with references to events from the past, including the 'cow parade' during which cattle were driven through Brook Street from the railway station to the cattle market (Gorse Stacks), and across Cow Lane Bridge to the slaughter house.
- The mural was unveiled on the 8th August 2011.

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GABLE END MURAL CAPTURES STREET LIFE

CULTURE bosses are applauding the ongoing progress of artwork celebrating the history and heritage of a Chester street.

Following a spell of warm weather, artist Gary Drostle has been working on a mural on the gable end of number 73, which is home to a comic shop.

Cllr David Robinson said: “Brook Street has a rich history and, I believe, a bright future. Gary Drostle’s mural captures the colour and life of the street and I am sure it will become a must-see attraction to the area.” The design for the mural has been on display in the window of Brook Street Café for the last few weeks, and is said to be generating “considerable”

interest from passers-by.

The Chester Renaissance project is due for completion before August. Jan Yarasir, of Brook Street Café, said: “I am delighted the painting has begun. It will be such a wonderful thing to have in Brook Street. I hope the mural will become an attraction in itself, and people will visit Brook Street to see it.” Gary estimates the mural will take four to six weeks to complete. Students from the University of Chester will be involved in creating web pages about the mural, which can be found through a quick reference code

which Gary will paint as part of the mural. The Brook Street street-scene has additional references to events from the past, including the ‘cow parade’ during which cattle were driven through Brook Street from the railway station to the cattle market, formally at Gorse Stacks, and across Cow Lane Bridge to the slaughter house. Recent events are also included, such as the first Brook Street Carnival held earlier this year. The design for the mural was revealed at the carnival after Gary won a competition to select an artist.

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Activity



- 1 Show the children photographs of the Brook Street Mural.
- 2 Mount photograph on large sheet of paper.
- 3 Ask the children to look carefully for the detail and what can they see?
- 4 Mount a copy of the mural in centre of a large sheet of paper.
- 5 Ask the children, in groups, to write descriptive words and phrases round the copy of the mural.
- 6 Mount another copy of the mural in centre of a large sheet of paper.
- 7 Children work in small groups or pairs and write questions around the mounted photograph.

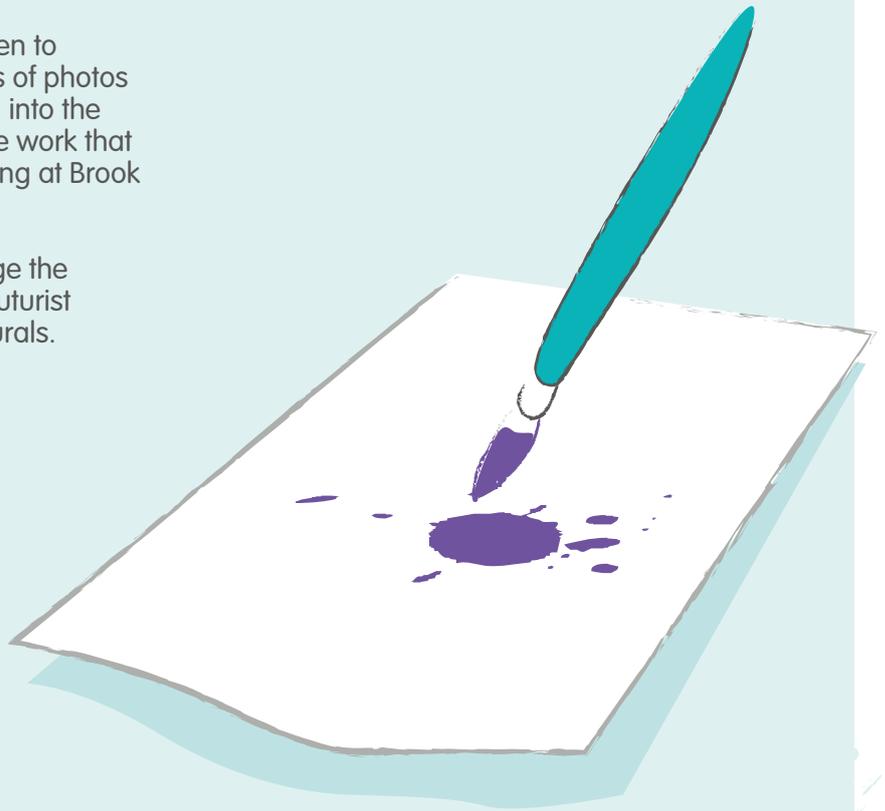


Activity

Mural Creation



- 1** Create, in any combination of medium, a mural that looks at the past, present and future of Brook Street.
- 2** Encourage the children to incorporate elements of photos that they have taken, into the collage as well as the work that they have done looking at Brook Street in the past.
- 3** In addition, encourage the children to create a futurist influence for their murals.



Activity



Research mural artists

- 1 Gary Drostle was the artist who created the Brook Street Mural, research his life and work.
- 2 Find out about the work of other street artists, such as Banksy.

About the Mural Artist

Gary Drostle Born in Woolwich, South East London in 1961

Gary studied at Camberwell.

Gary studied fine art at St Martins and Hornsey (Middlesex) colleges of art, leaving in 1984.

When he finished art college in 1985 he knew he wanted to work on the street, always thought he'd end up in the gutter.

Gary's work, specialising in painted and mosaic murals, mosaic pavements and public art features, has received many awards and can be seen in town centres, parks, schools, hospital and other public and private buildings across the UK and in the USA. The starting point for all Gary's work is the site itself. Whether it's drawing on the areas history and folklore, or reacting to the landscape and architecture, or the views and aspirations of the client and local community each work is designed solely for it's site

1985 - 1987

Gary initially began working as a mural artist for a project for Haringey Hospitals and spent two years painting murals there.

1987

Following on from that project he founded Haringey Mural Workshop. At the same time I served on the executive of Haringey Arts Council for two years and worked closely with many different community groups.

The first major commission 1887

Gary's first major commission was in 1987 to paint a series of murals for Alexandra Palace – 'The History of The Peoples Palace'.

The first mosaic work

After the Mural Workshop disbanded, Gary formed Wallscapes and initially worked with Belfast artist Ruth Priestley.

Ruth and Gary took on our first mosaic commission 'Sunburst – the light at the end of the tunnel', commissioned by the London Borough of Islington. This was a turning point in Gary's life.

The Wallscapes Years (1990 – 2000)

In 1990 artist an old St Martins colleague Rob Turner joined Wallscapes. Rob and Gary went on to work as Wallscapes for over ten years completing numerous public art projects across the UK, honing and refining our mosaic technique. In 2001 Rob and Gary decided they needed to go their separate ways in order to explore and develop further their own work.

Drostle Public Arts Ltd

Since 2000 Gary has built up a successful studio in south east London creating large scale site specific artworks to his own designs and occasionally collaborating with other artists.

A growing reputation

With well over thirty years experience now under his belt and a mantelpiece full of awards his work is now in demand abroad too. He has gained international recognition for his mosaics, completing major commissions in Iowa, Chicago, California and Washington DC as well as work in Colombia and Chile.

At home he continues to create major public artworks including commissions for TFL – Transport for London, Chester City Council, London Borough of Bexley, The Royal College of General Practitioners and many more.