

THE ART ACADEMY

Artists & Art School bring life back to Southwark Council's former Newington Library

Southwark Council has agreed a two year 'temporary' lease for the old Newington Library enabling The Art Academy to put this exceptional building to good use, while its long term future is decided. Following a fire in the adjacent Walworth Town Hall in 2013 and the consequent water damage, the Grade 2 listed Victorian library in Elephant and Castle has stood empty.

The Art Academy, an independent art school based off Borough High Street, will use the building to provide extra studios for students and to offer a public programme of short courses and public events in the new Gallery Space. In addition the Academy will host **Cooltan Arts**, a charity that runs workshops and creative activities for people with mental health conditions.

The Art Academy's first free public exhibition programme opens on September 9th with a residency in the new Gallery Space of **Art Angel**, one of the UK's pioneering facilitators of daring and innovative public art. **The Art Academy** will be inviting other artists to exhibit here and local community groups will be welcome to use the space too.

Cllr Johnathan Situ, Southwark Council Cabinet Member for Business, Culture and Social Regeneration, said: "I am delighted that The Art Academy will be setting up in Newington Library. It will create an exciting cultural hub for young people and other members of the community, with a great programme of evening classes and new Young Artist weekend courses."

Charles Savage, Principal at the Art Academy, said: "We are very excited about moving part of The Art Academy to the old Newington Library. Not only is it a great opportunity for our current students but we are also looking forward to running new courses that will be accessible to the local community. We believe we'll become a much enjoyed member of the Walworth Road community."

For further information or any press enquiries please contact Sophie Posgate:

Sophie@artacademy.org.uk

+44 (0)20 7407 5969

Mermaid Court	info@artacademy.org.uk	Tel. 020 7407 6969
165a Borough High Street	www.artacademy.org.uk	Fax. 020 7407 6619
London SE1 1HR	Company No. 3801729	Charity No. 1078804

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