

Young Edinburgh Writers create poetry installation

✘ Pupils from schools across Edinburgh will join together to launch a UK first later today when they unveil a teenager bedroom in the middle of Edinburgh's Central Library. In a unique twist, the installation will feature more than fifty original poems carefully handwritten on all the furniture and furnishings.

Named 'A Room With Our View', the unique art installation is the work of Young Edinburgh Writers, a group established in 2009 to bring together young people who share a passion for writing.

For a duration of six weeks until 27th April 2012, the library's Mezzanine level will feature a traditional teenage bedroom with poems on almost every surface. Poems about sleep will grace the duvet cover and pillows, words about reflections will appear on the mirrors and even a tiny but beautifully written poem will feature on the screen of a mobile phone.

Dorothy Baird, poet and founder of Young Edinburgh Writers, explains: "The idea behind the project is to help people of all ages to appreciate poetry and to find it more accessible. We want them to see that poetry can be fun and unstuffy – think Tracy Emin's bed taken to a new level!

"We wanted to be original, ambitious and above all encourage more people to discover poetry through a new medium. Last year, the group published a book called Muffins and Musings but this year, we wanted to push the boundaries. The idea of putting two art forms together really appealed to the group and we were fortunate to receive funding from the Young Scot Creative Enterprise Fund."

11 pupils from schools including Gillespie's High School, St Thomas of Aquins, Heriots, Mary Erskine's and the Edinburgh Steiner School, have been taking part in the project.

Ismay Hutton, age 17, from Gillespie's High School has been with the group from the outset. She said: "It's been really amazing to see it all come together. To keep within our budget, we got the furniture and furnishings from Freecycle and jumble sales and donated our own unwanted things. We'll give the furniture back through Freecycle. It's been really exciting doing something that is so unique.'

Hanni Shinton, age 16, from the Edinburgh Steiner School, continued: "There are lots of sport, music and drama after-school clubs in Edinburgh but before the Young Edinburgh Writers started, there wasn't really anything for young people interested in writing.

'I hope lots of families will come and see the installation and that more young folk will join our group as a result.'

Dr Mark Burgess, a teacher at the Edinburgh Steiner School, has encouraged several of his pupils to join the group. He said: "Young Edinburgh Writers provides a wonderful opportunity to meet young people from other schools and to help them to build creative skills that will stand them in good stead throughout their future lives and careers.

"Work like this helps to inspire the Scottish writers and poets of the future while the group offers young people the chance to see how writing can bring a feeling of personal satisfaction and achievement – qualities that are far reaching into adult life.'

Susan Mooney, Head of Community Safety, is hugely supportive of the group showing at the Central Library. She said: "This installation shows what can be achieved when young people bring together passion, enthusiasm and interest in all forms of written expression. Libraries are all about reading,

writing and finding a passage to a uniquely personal world through books and the printed word. We are delighted to see the manifestation of such talent and ideas from young library users.”

The Installation will appear on the Mezzanine floor of Edinburgh’s Central Library, George IV Bridge now until Friday 27th April 2012. Entry is free.

Young Edinburgh Writers is a group that meets twice a month in the Central Library, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh from 4.30pm – 6.30pm during term time. It is open to anyone aged 13 years – 18 years who is interested in creative writing and costs £5 per session. For more information and availability, please contact Dorothy on dorothybaird@tiscali.co.uk Tel: 07910 217 259.