

The Art Club, Canonmills celebrates its quarter century

Jennifer Reynolds is the founder of The Art Club in Canonmills. Here Laura Vida speaks to her about the club and how it came about.

What is your artistic background?

After studying in Edinburgh, I worked for a design company in Edinburgh's West End. This gave me experience in graphics and in architectural and interior design. But these days, I combine teaching with landscape painting.

How has the Art Club evolved?

25 years ago I began teaching at the kitchen table in Danube Street! Then I ran the Reynolds Gallery in Dublin Street, where I also held classes. After spells working at home, I moved from a small studio in Canonmills to this larger one (in 2014). Initially, I thought I'd only teach while my daughter was young. But the school grew and grew.

What is the your ethos?

Art is not a mystery: it's really down to confidence and skills. Some have more natural talent, but everyone can learn to draw and paint. And for me, art is about self-expression, not perfection.

How is teaching adults and children different?

As adults, we learn inhibition over the years and, being target driven, we're less likely to explore. The paint and wine evenings we hold here (and the painting holidays) are all about relaxing and having fun. For those who have once been told Art is not for them, my challenge is to change their minds.

When teaching children, you've got to be careful not to go into too much depth too early on. It's about giving them a broad spectrum of knowledge and firing their imagination. I want them to enjoy what they're doing and experiment with new skills. If they decide to study Art later, they need a real hunger to learn, which comes with maturity.



What have past students gone on to do?

Many have gone on to Art College. And some have even progressed further to become fully fledged architects, fashion and graphics designers. By teaching a range of traditional skills, we hope that students will discover their 'zone'.

Do you have plans to celebrate?

There will definitely be an open-studio celebration once Covid rules are relaxed. We're looking forward to getting back to the way we were!

For more information about The Art Club:

www.artclubedinburgh.com

