

# MEET ME WHERE I AM

FRIDAY 28TH FEBRUARY - 3PM-9PM - PRIVATE VIEWING

**OPEN TO PUBLIC**

SATURDAY 1ST MARCH 11AM-5PM

SUNDAY 2ND MARCH 11AM-5PM

MONDAY 3RD MARCH 10AM-2PM

TUESDAY 4TH MARCH 11AM-7PM

WEDNESDAY 5TH MARCH 11AM-7PM

THURSDAY 6TH MARCH 11AM-2PM

THE BOMB FACTORY ART FOUNDATION  
UNIT 2 BOOTHBY ROAD ARCHWAY N19 4AJ

The  
Bridge Trust



ART PROJECT BY  
FAUSTO BORIOLI

THE BRIDGE ILS STUDENT  
ART EXHIBITION

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# Meet me where I am

**Art makes ILS students happy and focused. Their work gives us insight into their world.**

Many of our students cannot use words to express themselves. But they can make highly expressive works of art which will take your breath away. Through art, many of our young people can find a critical voice and a way to tell stories about who they are and their unique ways of being.

Some of their surprising works will be exhibited at The Bomb Factory in Archway, London, opening next Friday, 28 February. The exhibition has been developed and curated by our fabulous artist, Fausto Borioli.

**For more information or to visit the school, please contact:**

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## Who we are – The Integrated Learning Space

The Integrated Learning Space (ILS) in Islington is often described as a “special” special school for young people who require an extremely tailored learning environment. We provide education for thirty students with autism and different learning profiles, aged 8-19 years old. These students were previously at schools which could not provide the intense support and provision they need. The wholly student-centred approach of the teaching at ILS and the support it offers students and their families, enable the students to continue to live at home.

In its ten years, ILS has been inspected by Ofsted twice, both times found “outstanding”. In the last report from 2023, the school is referred to as “this unique place”.

The ILS has students from six boroughs; Islington, Hackney, Camden, Haringey, Tower Hamlets and Newham.

The ILS is part of The Bridge Trust.

## Art at ILS – Some Student Stories

Fausto Borioli has been running art workshops with ILS students for three years. He is originally a social worker who set up and for 15 years managed a pottery lab project for a public disability care centre in his native Italy.

“I had 20 students with different kinds of neurological conditions, like downs syndrome, schizophrenia, oligophrenia, cognitive delay and autism.”

Fausto came to ILS seven years ago to work as a special needs professional. He has used his insight and artistic training to the benefit of the ILS students. Both he and the school hope that there will eventually be funding for a full-time position as an arts teacher for him, bringing the benefits of art to more students. In addition to working at the ILS, Fausto is an artist in his own right, who’s works can be seen here: [faustoborioli.org](http://faustoborioli.org)

### S: A Girl with a Feather

S started art classes with Fausto last year. Initially having seemed keen to experiment with colours – using pain paint, pastels and crayons – she quickly lost interest. Fausto remembers the day he found the key to her enjoyment of art;

“S and I found a bird feather in the school playground. So looked at it, held it and then took an elastic band out of her hair and began to wrap it around the feather.”

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Fausto realised that S in fact had shown a deep interest in elastics, threads and fabrics, especially for tying her hair, something which at times led to moments of intense frustration.

Together, Fausto and S started using, coloured feathers, elastic bands and fabrics to create sculptures. S grew ever more interested in the sessions, and the pair went on to use other materials, like coloured wool and tissue paper.

“She was able to increase the length of time she could concentrate on the task, and as her passion grew, so did her calm and happiness.”

### **M: A Striking Way with Pastels**

M has a striking way with pastels and crayons, passionately drawing circles. But it wasn't always so.

“At the beginning of the workshop, M did not seem to observe what he was doing. He often appeared distracted and ended up throwing the pastels on the floor,” Fausto remembers.

After a few sessions, M grew more focused and now observes his work during execution. With a little support and encouragement, he chooses different colour combinations. He takes an interest in the work and is happy and calm.

### **L: Ripping Yarns**

When L joined the ILS, she showed a clear interest in fabrics and textured materials, pulling and ripping fabrics into intricate forms. This was her way of self-regulating. Fausto used this as a way into their art sessions.

“I built some mesh frames, into which we weaved fabrics. I encouraged her to use her own, unpicked threads and coloured wool to weave into her work.”

L learned to choose colours, thread a needle, tie knots and weave her beautiful designs into the mesh. Fausto attached the frame to a microphone stand, so Sa was able to work more independently. She seemed happy, excited and focused. She was able to spend whole mornings with this activity, fully independent, creating her unique designs.

### **A: From Monochrome Painting to Mixed Media Collages**

When A joined the ILS, she showed an interest in painting sheets of paper in assorted colours. This became part of her morning self-regulation routine. Fausto thought they would try to use these paper sheets to create collages.

“I encouraged A to cut her paper sheets and explore different ways of combining them into a large composition. We often had long sessions, up to two hours, where she was very focused, calm and happy.”

In the last month, the two have explored adding colourful fabrics to the collages.

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