

Grace Adam – Artist in Residence Walpole Old Chapel – talks to Lin Le Versha

As our Artist in Residence for 6 months, what will you do? **GA:** I will respond to the chapel, its histories, materials, forms and functions. This means spending time getting to know the building, exploring its histories, seeing it at different times of day and year. I'll make drawings and an installation that come out of that experience. They'll be sited at the chapel for a show at the end of the residency. I'm really interested in our built environments-particularly shared spaces. The buildings we make, change and adapt over years-centuries and are testament to the lives that are and have been connected to them.

You have offered to run workshops during your residency. Do you have to be good at art to come to a workshop? **GA:** Everybody is welcome to the workshops. I'll be there to give you as much tuition and guidance as you would like. It'll be a small friendly group, so whether you're a beginner or have lots of experience, come along.

What made you want to become an artist and how did you do it? **GA:** I'm not sure I ever considered anything else. It's just the way I am in the world. I did a Foundation Course, a degree, and then went back later to do an MA at Chelsea, followed by a Fellowship and a PGCert.

What excites or inspires you about working in and around the Chapel? **GA:** It's a great building. It might sound weird, but I'm a big fan of modernist architecture, so its spareness and sparseness appeals to me. I like the fact that the building holds its history in the materials, the alterations and the aging. The chapel has witnessed extraordinary events and has a strange and fascinating collection of stories.

You draw, paint, sculpt and produce installations. At this early stage do you have any ideas of the art you might create? **GA:** Yes, I'll probably be making large-scale charcoal drawings, and I've got plans for an installation that connects the interior of the building with the land around it, but that idea will develop as I get to know the building better.

Could you tell us about some of your other residencies? **GA:** Varied! Residencies include a prison. (That's not quite how it sounds). I've also been artist in residence in schools and colleges, at St Giles in the Fields, Covent Garden, at Banff in Canada and in Budapest.

In addition to creating art, what else do you do? **GA:** I teach at Chelsea College of Art, and I talk to patrons and supporters about exhibitions at the Royal Academy of Arts. I've worked with lots of galleries, (Tate, Courtauld, National Portrait Gallery, Whitechapel) with students and teachers and writing learning materials. A great project was working with young curators and art students from Myanmar, supported by the British Council. A colleague and I set up [The Art Channel](#). We make independent films about contemporary exhibitions. We're over a million views. Do

subscribe! It's free. We've just been filming at the National Gallery. Standing Infront of Holbein's *Ambassadors* at 8am as the lights were turned on was pretty special.

If you could own one piece of art, with no regard for cost, what would it be? **GA:** Ah, the impossible question! I'd probably have to go for a Rothko. I think you have to be surrounded, so the *Seagram Murals* or Jackson Pollock's *Blue Poles*.

What opportunities will there be for us to see your work during or at the end of your residency? **GA:** I'll be in the chapel doing some workshops on some Saturdays and part of the Suffolk Open Studios for a weekend in June. (See Walpole Old Chapel website for dates). There will be an exhibition at the end of my residency, which opens the weekend of 26th September. Keep an eye out on social media for updates and work in progress.

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