



MEDIA RELEASE

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Dockyard displays creativity to celebrate arts and help reduce stress

An interactive art exhibition has been launched by Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, as part of its ongoing commitment to mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

'Designed by: Dockyard' is an online virtual gallery featuring a diverse collection of original pieces by The Historic Dockyard Chatham's visitor experience team who were inspired to express their creativity during the national lockdowns.

This week marks both World Art Day and Stress Awareness Month and the Trust continues to support its workforce by encouraging them to reconnect with hobbies and forgotten skills – with some very impressive results.

Chief Operating Officer, Paul Barnard, said: "Our team has been incredibly resilient in such a challenging time."

"We are proud to celebrate months of creative output with a collaboration that is testament to how a positive attitude and commitment can produce a brilliant resource for everybody to enjoy."

The eclectic collection showcases a diverse range of expressive arts completed in various mediums, including abstract watercolours, contemporary textiles, novel

excerpts, audio clips, digital and architectural photography and landscape paintings.

Visitor Experience team member, Tre Dench, who showed some of her embroidery collection, said: "Without all this crafting during lockdown I would have really struggled, but having something to do in the afternoons and evenings keeps me grounded and happy."

Research by UK charity Stress Management Society reveals that 65% of people in the UK have felt more stressed since the COVID-19 restrictions began in March 2020.

World Art Day sees people coming together to promote the development, diffusion and enjoyment of art and reinforces links between artistic creations and society. Taking time to make art is proven to improve mental health by boosting confidence and providing a sense of identity and achievement, as well as helping to re-focus the mind from everyday worries and stress.

The simulated display is 'set' in one of the Dockyard's many impressive exhibition spaces, No.1 Smithery, and can be viewed at: thedockyard.co.uk

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MORE PRESS INFORMATION

Please contact Nina Carr on 01634 823800 or email ncarr@chdt.org.uk for further information

Notes to Editors

About Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust

The Historic Dockyard Chatham has over 100 buildings and structures, including 47 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The site is in the stewardship of the independent charity, Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust (No. 292101).

The Trust's dual objectives of education and preservation are achieved by a strategy of preservation through reuse. Some of the buildings are open to visitors; others are occupied by residential tenants, businesses, and faculties of the University of Kent.

As a fully accredited museum, the Trust collects, preserves, researches and exhibits objects and materials connected with the history of the dockyard and its people. It studies the development of Royal Navy warship design, construction and the use of the River Medway by the Royal Navy. The Historic Dockyard Chatham presents unrivalled status as the most complete and best-preserved dockyard of the Age of Sail anywhere in the world. It immerses audiences in a mighty feat of preservation, innovation education and heritage. It offers access to the ships that shaped the world, from a Victorian antislavery sailing ship, to a Second World War Destroyer and a Cold War submarine as well as the stories of the people who made them. From historic buildings, including the Commissioner's House and officers' quarters to the remarkable Victorian ropery, where the rigging for HMS *Victory* was made, to its collection of maritime archaeology, the Dockyard forms an indispensable part of Britain's naval history and its national heritage.

Visitors to and users of The Historic Dockyard Chatham are fundamental to its purpose and the economic reuse of the site and its buildings. Its staff and volunteers play a vital role in providing a high level of service and customer care. The Trust is also involved in the ongoing regeneration of Medway and The Thames Gateway, with Culture and Heritage at its heart.

As part of the Trust's strategy of "Preservation through re-use" recent projects have secured the long-term financial sustainability (on a revenue basis) of the wider Historic Dockyard site. The economic outputs from the new uses of the recently opened Fitted Rigging House as well as other activities across the site will bring the total annual contribution made to Medway's economy to £26.3m in 2019, building on the 2012 estimate of £16m (64% growth).