

# ECYC GAZETTE

*'.....For your ins and your outs,  
and your whereabouts !*

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## Welcome back!

Here it is! Our final issue of the calendar year! It would be cruel after all that has happened to leave you, our treasured reader with an issue that isn't jam packed with all that is great about ECYC.

Inside, in abundance, are incredible tales sure to inspire you as we delve into the new year.

Enjoy....!

## Issue #6 - November/December '21

### Contents

Profile of ECYC member and, mogul in the making *Jean-Marc Burca*

In our meet the crew, we grab a sit down with ECYC's newest staff...*Tania Weekes*,

A page long feature about the time the club paid a visit to a gallery

A special guest express interview with one of the organisers of the Earls Court Film Festival...*Sean Duffy*.

Three special portraits from our Artists take on three themes from the nativity.

Plus, a page of news and happenings we've enjoyed at the club.



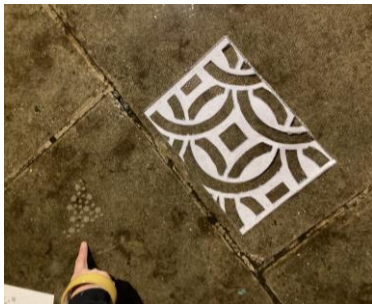


His name is Marc...Jean Marc

## ECYC's very own...Cadet of Industry!

***Hard times create strong people...strong people create good times.***" Is what could be said of this edition's person of interest. Jean-Marc Burca- 14-year-old, Year 10 pupil at Chelsea Academy and, owner of a burgeoning business.

Diversity makes for strong genes of course, and as well as British and French, Jean can boast of Venezuelan and Colombian. Yet, there is nothing overbearing or presumptuous about Mr. Burca. He first walked in here a little under 3 years ago. *'...My younger brother Harry was a member, so were my friends Ellis, Frank, Isidro and twins- Karim and Djibril.'* Jean identifies neither as an introvert nor extrovert, which is why he enjoys company, but also covets time to himself, where he *'...can be most creative.'* This is what makes him unique. This is what makes him, still shy of 15, proprietor of a business. *'...My dad was always encouraging me to start my own thing. He himself used to own a magazine company and, later became a landlord. I believe my entrepreneurial spirit came from him.'* With a loan from ECYC, Jean-Marc was able to purchase a brand-new pressure washer and since September has been putting it to work. *'...I didn't know until I started working just how many uses the tool could be used for. Besides washing cars, I've had other jobs, cleaning paths and driveways and even 'Artistic' jobs like stenciling!'*



*So far, I have two regular clients, with a couple more I'm still negotiating with. It's still early to make an appraisal on my enterprise but, it is a lot of hard work especially when trying to juggle it among other commitments. Nonetheless I'm determined to make a success of it.*" We for one believe him, as we are equally sure when he tells us, *'...next I want to move to drop-shipping, then I'd like to travel to America, for its vast opportunities and then, hopefully retire when I'm fifty and live on my Nan's mansion on the isle of Madeira.'* Characters with the constitution of a Jean Marc, reaffirm the mission statement of ECYC. His, symbolizes more than most, how investment in youth has the potential to not just enrich on a local level, but a wider one too. World...watch this space.



# ECYC- News & Events



## ECYC's Night at the Movies...!



On a dark Friday evening, our club en masse joined the congregation at St Cuthbert's Church, for the final night of the annual Earls Court Film Festival. Alas, ours weren't there to simply catch a screening or gawk at the opulent interior but indeed, were special guests as no less than two of the films on show had been created by our blue-sky Stock! Awe...Awards...and applause galore, greeted screenings of 'ROLLERCOASTER 2020, and 'A BOY WALKS HOME ALONE AT NIGHT'



## Self Defence Class



Winter, for many, means shorter days, colder nights and unfortunately, the likelihood of muggings, or worse. That's why we were pleased when PC Lee and PC Matt- of the Redcliffe Wards Safe Neighbourhood Team- agreed to deliver a series of intense self defence classes. *'...the idea is to make young people feel more confident when walking the streets these winter months.'* said PC Matt, who after several classes was known to our members as PC GET BACK! PC Lee, familiar to previous readers from our summer edition opined, *'...by teaching youngsters some basic, but effective self defence techniques, our aim isnt to make them more violent but rather, know how to react when faced with unexpected violence, which as PC Matt says, is a common reality during winter.'*



## ECYC trip to the New London Architecture Gallery



On a freezing Saturday morning in late November, fourteen members and staff defied the cold, wind and lethargy to journey to the **New London Architecture Galley** in Kings Cross. The excursion was organised by the Earls Court Development Company ECDC and, included a seminar at nearby Central Saint Martins UAL. A cross section of youth from West London sat, listened and gazed at the elaborate presentation and mammoth model gracing the lobby of the gallery. The aim was to inform young people on the role of Architecture and how urban planning goes a long way to shaping communities quality of life. The Young people were also consulted on what they think should come about from the grand Earls Court re-generation, spearheaded by the ECDC. Opinions on the day were mixed, some were impressed and honored at their counsel being beseeched, while one young lady who shall remain nameless, cited *'...It seems that everything's been decided and we're here simply for the photo-op'*. Whichever, it appears even at 2 degrees some still stay shrewd.....

# ECYC's Gander about the Gallery....!!!

On the corner of Cromwell Road and Earls Court Road, a small townhouse holds the ever-so nondescript **Mosaic Rooms Gallery**; and, it was there that thirteen members and staff journeyed one Wednesday evening on the 1st of December. This was the pilot outing of ECYC's *Cultural Capital* scheme, a long-term plan to increase our members Artistic exposure with trips, outings and workshops. The Mosaic Rooms being a fifteen minute walk from the youth club, seemed an obvious choice to kickstart our brave new initiative. For over a decade the gallery has stood as one of London's few Artistic spaces dedicated to showcasing culture from the contemporary Arab world. Truly, it is a treasure trove hidden in plain sight, unsurprising then, that less than a handful of the expedition had heard of the place. '....I'd walked past many times before, but always assumed it was an abandoned house.'



After a brisk walk through the teeming streets of Earls Court in rush hour, we arrived greeted by the warmth and smile of **Najia Bagi**, the learning curator at the gallery and, our personal tour guide. The current exhibition was titled **Stateless Heritage**- and encompassed all 3 of the gallery's main rooms. The focus of the exhibition, Najia explained was the Dheisheh refugee camp in the west bank, which traces its history back to the very start of the Israel-Palestine conflict in 1949. '...A year after the Nakba, displaced Palestinians settled in the village of Dheisheh- just south of Bethlehem. The idea was that the 'camp' would be a temporary abode until the refugees were able to be repatriated to their homes which had been lost following the 1948 war. However, as we know subsequent conflicts throughout the decades and Israeli expansion into Palestinian territory meant Dheisheh became an unintended city within a city, home to several generations across seven decades.' This dichotomy was evident in the main exhibit hall where stood, a series of illuminated boxes emblazoned with image stills of Dheisheh. After an introductory gander, we went downstairs to see the second exhibit room- filled with short plinths atop which lay colored books designed like Anthropological documents. It was back upstairs for the final exhibit, known as the *Al- Madafeh*, or 'lounge'. Built to replicate a living room at the Dheisheh camp, here the group sat for refreshments, and were encouraged to ask questions about what they'd seen. It was also at the Al-Madafeh that the group learnt of the initiative of this exhibit, to raise the cause of Dheisheh and spur the United Nations to grant the camp as a UNESCO heritage site. The Zamzam Sisters, who are both of Palestinian heritage, were especially taken by the pieces on offer, summing up the trip by stating '...It was great to find a piece of my history displayed so prominently, just five minutes from my house.'





Nativity- redefined by Sophie



A rendering of the holy ghost by -Isobel



# Meet The Crew....!

In this edition we have for you a hot off the press exclusive! Prepare to be inspired and amazed as we sit down with ECYC's newest member of staff....**Tania Weekes!**

"Sometime in the mid 80s...a young mix raced girl crept downstairs of her home in the outer London borough of Hillingdon, to watch a copy of the video the family had rented and would be returning later that day. The film was *KARATE KID*, the girl was TANIA WEEKES. The newest member of the ECYC team, Tania's trajectory is as unique and varied as the strands in her dreads. Born and raised in the suburb of Hayes, to two mix raced parents, Tania's solace growing up was her own youth club '**the Cramwell**'. '*...Being essentially the only mix raced family in a predominantly white suburb was tough, especially on the kids. Britain was a different place at the time, people didn't tolerate difference very well, particularly if it was on your skin.* Throughout her childhood and early adolescence, Tania was mocked and bullied. Her youth club offered her a safe space, where she was, '*...given value and recognized as an 'individual'*" But it was not until that fateful morning in 1980-something that Tania was inspired to pursue martial arts- both as a tool for her own self discovery and, a shield against an unfriendly world. '*...I was 8 when I first began to train in Karate. By my mid-teens I realized I was pretty decent at it, and by 17 was representing England!*'"



Hillingdon's own, Karate kid



Her career in martial arts spanned two decades, and when it ended KARATE was still a few years shy of being entered as an Olympic sport. However, during that time Tania maintained her involvement with her childhood club, which had since merged with the larger 'WEST DRAYTON' youth center. '*...In the late 00s' the youth worker who had mentored me was retiring. Once her position had been vacated, I decided to apply and, I got the job!*' While she was running the club, Tania studied for her BA in Youth and Community Services Studies. '*...By the time I graduated in 2012, Austerity had hit many vital community centers, including Youth clubs. Where I worked was being faced with many redundancies, and eventually I myself would quit.*'"

The last nine years saw Tania work with local authorities situated within the county of Surrey, followed by stints with various charities. As she says, '*...there, the work consisted of targeted support, with the aim of safeguarding those vulnerable to violence or abuse.*' Prior to her joining our team, this November, Tania had been working with REDTHREAD- a charity which works with hospitals to offer vital outreach to victims of serious violence and abuse. '*...I started my career at a traditional youth club, which back then was limited to a very tight framework. Now I'm extremely glad to return once again and implement all the experience I have accrued onto a youth setting which I'm sure has equally changed since the days I was a child.*'"





**Sean Duffy**- far right, along with Caroline Tod and Toby Brown, fellow organisers of the Earls Court Film Festival

## Special guest express interview

Toward the end of every issue, we meet one of our many partners here at ECYC. You may not have seen them on our grounds, but we assure you without their friendship and support we wouldn't be half as successful as we are.

For our sixth issue, we have none other than **Sean Duffy.....!** who as co-founder of the **Earls Court International Film Festival**, oversees one of ECYC's most enduring partnerships!

### Who are you...and what do you do?

*I'm Sean Duffy, and I'm one third of the producers of the Earls Court Film Festival, along with Caroline Tod and, Toby Brown. However, my main line of work is in the Corporate sector.*

### What's your connection to ECYC?

*Through our festivals, we have collaborated with new and upcoming filmmakers to support short film making workshops with the young people of the Earl's Court Youth Club; and giving a platform for ECYC's short films to be screened at the Earl's Court Film Festival finale, to our whole community. Not only that, I was also involved in getting twenty young people from ECYC into a ten week Masterclass at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA)*

### What's the best thing about our community?

*We are a community of contrasts with a real opportunity for our diverse young to have a voice on the future development of the old Exhibition site. I think it's important that the ECDC enlist the consultation of locals, especially the voice of the youth, to bring forth their vision of Earl's Courts future. Aside from that however, I love the cultural heritage of this area, and the fact so many prominent artists and writers have resided here over the years.*

### What's the most rewarding part of your job?

*It's great to see our work and energy come to fruition in the making and screening of short films. One of the highlights was seeing the short film from the youth club with all the young people and Abdi, at our finale. I'm also proud when show-casing the short films of new film makers we have collaborated with, as well as the short films selected by our judging panel from UK Based and International film-makers. Some exciting news is that we have collaborated on our first feature film, **To A Cinder**, much of which was filmed in Earl's Court and will be screened in at our 2022 festival.*

### How would you advice the young to make a career- and living- in culture?

*I would say to take advantage of any and all initiatives that are out there, like the annual film workshops we do with the ECYC. It is important to have a serious and proactive approach in the pursuit of your ideas, and be open minded too. I'm not suggesting brick walls do not exist, that's why it's important to really 'believe' in one's dream and take that gamble of throwing your hat in the ring. This may melt away the brick wall, I hope.*

### What role for Arts and Culture is there in these next few, precarious years?

*Anything is possible. So long as we keep our imagination- and a desire to tell stories- alive, the arts will flourish.*

FOR 2022 I WANT  
TO HEAR MY BABY  
SIS SAY HEL 1st WORK

Things to do in '22.....

I'll have good grades

Improve weak foot<sub>in</sub> (football)

Eat <sub>MORE</sub> bread :D

I will smoke Karim Kella

To make more friends.

Eat more Breakfast.  
Be more confident in the things I do

I would like to  
be a better football  
Player