# SEND in art & design

Special Education Needs are Differences not Deficits



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Ableism is discrimination and social prejudice against people with physical or mental disabilities. And so, anti-ableist education can liberate learners with Special Education Needs & Disabilities. It can empower them and break down the concept of normalcy. Anti-ableist pedagogy makes learners active participants in a person-centred framework. Good art education challenges societal norms and removes social stigmas. Special Education Needs & Disabilities should be viewed as differences not deficits. Use art education to promote positive identities.

# Great Britain from a Wheelchair, Tony Heaton 1994

Great Britain from a Wheelchair is a map of Britain made from parts of two grey NHS wheelchairs by Tony Heaton in 1994. Many of Heaton/s sculptures use everyday impedimenta of disability: collecting tins, NHS wheelchairs, x-rays, and building regulations relating to disability. He transforms negative associations of these materials into witty, joyous art that makes statements about the nature of ableism - 'discrimination and social prejudice against people with physical or mental disabilities'. An image of this work was chosen by the National Disability Arts Collection and Archive as an example of work from the 'golden age' of disability arts. During the 2012 Paralympics Heaton was invited to redesign 'Great Britain From a Wheelchair' as lecterns for the opening and closing ceremonies. Image <a href="https://www.a-n.co.uk/media/52485566/">https://www.a-n.co.uk/media/52485566/</a>

# Self-Portrait with a Portrait of Doctor Farill, Frida Kahlo, 1951

Dr. Farill performed 7 surgeries on Frida Kahlo's spine in 1951. When she recovered, she painted this self-portrait as a tribute to the surgeon who saved her life. She is seated in a wheelchair, holding a paint palette decorated with an anatomical painting of her heart. Blood drips from the brushes held in her other hand, as the portrait of her saviour stands beside her. Kahlo's disabilities affected her whole life. At age six, she contracted polio, which left her with permanent damage to her leg and caused a limp. In 1925, she was involved in an accident in which a streetcar rammed into the wooden bus she was riding. After the accident, Kahlo was left disabled for the rest of her life. Later on in life, Kahlo had her right leg amputated.

# The Way Ahead, Caroline Cardus 2004

The Way Ahead focusses on how a disabled person interacts with the world and the social, physical and attitudinal barriers they face. Under the heading; 'EQUALITY?', we are faced with a road sign for two directions. The path we are on takes us to 'Man on the moon 1969', a path of pride and self-satisfaction at humanities' accomplishments. But, by taking a side-road; a detour, we could follow an alternative, perhaps humbler path, of disabled people having universal access to public transport. She is using irony here to make us stop and think about some basic human rights that are being overlooked. Website <a href="https://www.shapearts.org.uk/news/collection-the-way-ahead">https://www.shapearts.org.uk/news/collection-the-way-ahead</a>

### The Artist is Not Present Sonia Boué 2021

Sonia Boué's 2021 work, 'The Artist is Not Present' explores conditional visibility and invisible disability. It was a performance art piece streamed from the artists studio over 6 hours. Boué inhabited and embodied a living Dadaist collage in her studio via the Instagram Live platform. (Dadaism is an art movement that celebrates the absurd; is illogical, playful and unconventional.) The extended nose photograph is only one image from her whole performance. My opinion is that Boué is playing with theatre props, clowns noses, jokes and fake noses to perhaps parody rhinoplasty or make statements on social conventions around prosthetics and plastic reconstruction surgery. The title; the artist is not present suggests she is hiding behind a disguise, concealing her true feelings or identity behind humour. Sonia Boué's website <a href="https://www.soniaboue.co.uk">https://www.soniaboue.co.uk</a>

### Dubai panoramic skyline, Stephen Wiltshire 2008

Stephen Wiltshire is a British artist who draws and paints detailed cityscapes. He has a particular talent for drawing lifelike, accurate representations of cities, sometimes after having only observed them briefly. As a child he was mute, and did not relate to other people. Aged three, he was diagnosed as autistic. He had no language and lived entirely in his own world. At the age of five, Stephen was sent to Queensmill School in London, where it was noticed that the only pastime he enjoyed was drawing. It soon became apparent he communicated with the world through the language of drawing; first animals, then London buses, and finally buildings. These drawings show a masterful perspective, a whimsical line, and reveal a natural innate artistry. From his website <a href="https://www.stephenwiltshire.co.uk">https://www.stephenwiltshire.co.uk</a>

### **Other notable SEND artists**

- Nnena Kalu https://actionspace.org/artists/nnena-kalu/
- Linda Bell https://studiovoltaire.org/whats-on/linda-bell/
- Yinka Shonibare <u>https://yinkashonibare.com</u>

