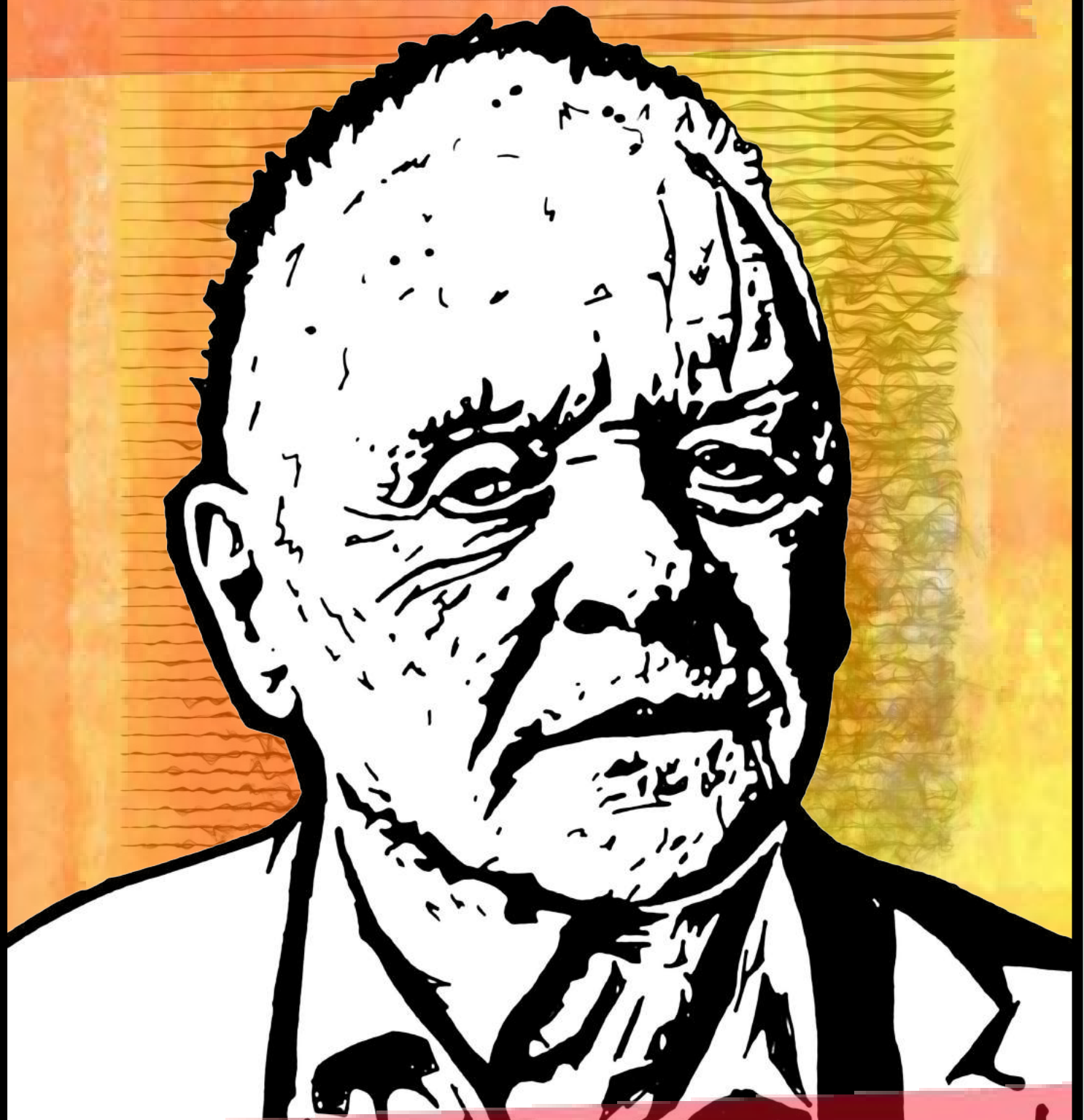


AUTITUDE!



INFO AND ADVICE!
MOVIES! ART!
AND MUCH MUCH MORE!

WELCOME!

Welcome to the fourth thrill-packed edition of Autitude! Illustrated and curated by the talented Ash Loydon, it is a feast not only for the eyes but for the mind too - we hope you enjoy it.

Autitude is shaped by what matters most to you. Each month we ask for contributions from the autistic community and we share your wonderful artwork, writings and creations in this digital magazine.

Thank you so much to everyone who has contributed. Whether it's a poem, a written reflection, a cartoon, a blog, photography or an example of another creative pursuit, we would love to hear about it. If you have something you would like to share, please get in touch with us at auttitude@scottishautism.org

Save the Date!

On 25th May, Scottish Autism will be joined by none other than Tom Stoltman, this edition's Spectrum Superstar and strongman competitor from Invergordon in the North of Scotland. Follow Scottish Autism on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram or check out the events section on their website for more details coming soon...

To make sure you are updated when the latest edition is released sign up here – thank you

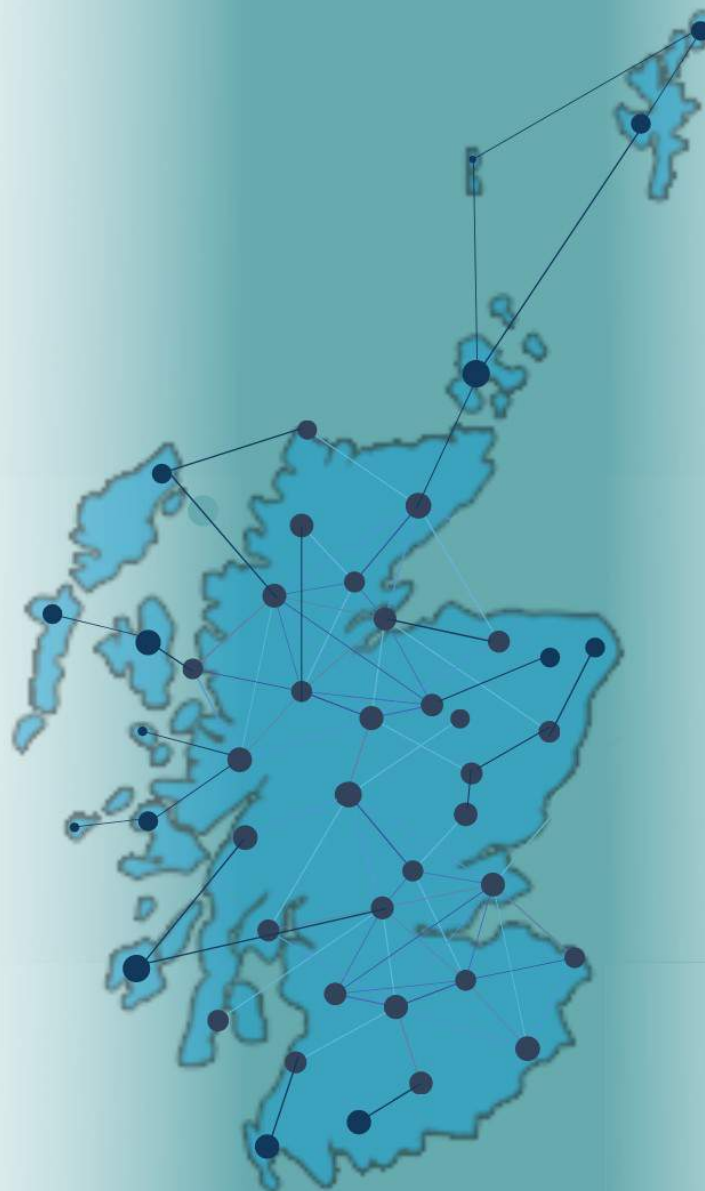
Scottish
autism

WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE
ARE VALUED

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WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE
ARE VALUED

Click & Connect

Click and Connect is an extension of Scottish Autism's Winter Connections project to allow the autistic community and their families in Scotland to stay connected through the pandemic and beyond.

The Click and Connect groups aim to reduce feelings of loneliness & isolation by providing an opportunity to connect with others online. We are delighted to announce that the following groups will be continuing until the end of the year:

Virtual Art Group
Mindful Autism Support Group
Virtual Choir Group

Mindful Autism Support Group

Come along to our Mindful Autism Support Group. Run by Jonny Drury, the group will take place every Thursday afternoon until 8th July (excluding 3rd June). Each session will run via Zoom.

Find out more and how to register [here](#).

Make sure you register for each group in this block as the link to join will change each week.

Virtual Art Group

Do you want to explore your creative side? Join our online Art Group taking place every Wednesday until 7th July, from 5pm - 6.30pm.

The Art Group is open to autistic people and their families and aims to bring people together for creative expression in an informal and safe environment. It offers the chance for a mindful break from the day's worries and can help to reduce stress.

Find out more and how to register [here](#).

Make sure you register for each group in this block as the link to join will change each week.

Virtual Choir Group

Come along to our Virtual Choir taking place every Thursday until 8th July (excluding 20th May & 3rd June) from 5pm until 6pm. This group is for autistic people and their families in Scotland, and all ages and abilities are welcome!

Numbers will be limited to a maximum of 15 people so sign up quick!

We will learn a range of songs over the sessions. The songs will be chosen by you and you will be able to submit your favourite song or a song that means something to you when you register for the group.

Find out more and how to register [here](#).

Make sure you register for each group in this block as the link to join will change each week.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT

(CRAZY ABOUT THE JOB!)

A SERIES BY LEA B.

3. Rich Girl.

April 2019.

‘Hello colleagues [smiley]. This is a brief guide about how to communicate with me as an autistic person. Thank you for reading, it means a lot to me that you do [smiley]. Even though my social energies are limited and often I can have difficulties with pacing myself as for completing my work tasks for the day and also engaging in interactions with you all, I really appreciate patient one-to-one conversations [smiley].’ Susan is a new start at PR, she just became a captive at Charity Towers last week. Because of this I decided to update and resend my accessibility guide to her and the other fresh prisoners. A lot of water passed under my shifts since last October. Oh, here she comes! [Reminding my face to smile because these things to me don’t exactly come in-built.] Susan: “Hello Lea. How are you this morning?” [Lips, keep curving up!] “I just wanted to say: I’ve read your wee notes. I understand you don’t like people and just wanted to say I won’t be a bother, I will leave you to your tasks, yeah? [she smiles]” [Lea: forgetting what face should do just now...]. Yeah. That was totally worth it, trying to be as elaborate in my wording as I could and then some more for ‘Lea’s Accessibility Guide version 2.00’. Sure, I cannot read between the lines usually, but some folks apparently cannot read *the* lines. I’m not that dodo, after all, phew! Apart from occasional Susans, employment seems to be going really well. Tons of positive feedback about my attention to detail, high focus, attentiveness to clients, precision recording on the system and having a warm and welcoming trench work-station. In other words: my attempts to survive job earned me some brownie points. What am I still doing at Charity Towers, by the way? What started off as a short contract I applied for (‘cause university said some related work experience would now be beneficial) has been made permanent. I said okay. I am likely the most honest employee in the building, when Lea says about her job: Oh, I LOVE it! Just absolutely love it. (Toothful smile.)

I think I do love him. Handsome Henrik, senior adviser at call centre (who is somebody else's Henrik) and Lea, green aspie from publications ended up in a meandering queue of messaging on the intranet, following a clogged toilet reporting to maintenance, making us talk to each other. Loos have never been this fateful! Kind of when that creepy toy-knight rolls out to the corridor in the movie *Kingdom of Heaven*. Ugh. Emailing with him will be my mean to learn something about Henrik, from himself, that would put me off completely and thus: instantly de-complicate my career progression. Easy!.

It was not planned that with each snippet he worked on to bring out from his mind and lay in front of me in type – the opposite happened. But what about Mrs Henrik? Clueless, for the very first time in my life I go into pretend-upset. I figured if I would write I think it is just me who is properly investing in our messaging and so I would rather stop here, that would do the trick. I was told Henrik is ruff, gruff and hates any fuss. Only... I forgot he can be quite sufficient at disarming nursery school level behaviour. Mine, in this case. He's so good. Makes me turn back by just one line of his. So, we carry on, Room 004 to Room 006, world to world, light to light. He must fathom we are buddies. To me he is all atom, taking some of my breaths away and putting in some more here and there for six months now. Between an ex-fiancé camping in my living room for now and those cinnamon memories of the company Xmas meal where my whole spine was blazing, sitting back to back with Henrik for nearly two hours – a new woman is hatching. She's working her way out of the landfill and mud, push by push, just like Henrik is now meeting me in the middle with each turn of this puzzling messaging we melt into. His digital letter awaits me every Monday morning, arriving before I would even start. What about Mrs Henrik? This might become so sore! And it will, exactly five months later. For now, I am a rich girl though, the richest can be past probationary period and beyond point-of-no-return in this one-sided attraction [my side – author's note]. Her soul dancing printer to kitchen and back. Yes, loving this job, just loving it, brows to shoes. What he is, compressed between heaven and earth, trying to be so upright, nearly breaking a back to it. Henrik was not the reason for that engagement ring slipping off of my finger. He was merely a catalyst and I am merely humbled. The rest I do not see yet. Nothing.

Back at home, my neighbours are Lauren and Graham. They too think I am rich. The type of quiet couple next door that could be completely friendly, which may be great – if they initiated chats –, or they could be undercover spies for some fishy secret agency (which would not be so good). I am finding this out from a pre-Covid, leaning-over-the-fence type of mini-conversation with them, that they believe I have lots and lots of money. They saw I take taxis every workday – Lauren zooms in on my face. Uuum! It doesn't seem to appeal to their logic when I tell them it is every disabled employees' right here about to use the Cab-cess To Work scheme, get free lifts to and from the mine if they need it. After a few more failed tries of common-sense inducing, I ask: 'Guys, do you think I would reside in this suburb if I had *that* much money?' This time they agree. No, I'm that rich. Uhum. But I am rich enough: I am Mrs Lea. Heartmailing, intra-networking. The rest I don't want to ponder yet...

If you'd like to contact Lea about her article you can do so at leapublish@gmail.com



The background of the page is a photograph of a room. On the left wall, there is a large, colorful mural of a tree with thick branches and dense foliage in shades of green, yellow, and brown. Below the mural, a white light switch is visible. To the right, a doorway leads into another room, which appears to be a bathroom with a toilet and a sink. The entire image has a semi-transparent green overlay.

Poems by C.D

Light

In the darkness of the night,
I am woken by the light,
the flicker sears my mind
as it creeps behind the blind.

F**k! Spring time again.

Fear

Of all the things
that I am afraid of,
and there are many,
I am mostly terrified of myself.

The background of the page is a photograph of a room. On the left wall, there is a large, colorful mural of a tree with thick branches and dense foliage in shades of green, yellow, and brown. In the foreground on the left, there is a wicker basket on a surface, with a box of tissues and a small container next to it. On the right side, a desk with a chair is visible, and a window with white curtains is in the background. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

Anxiety

Items travel too fast,
can't keep up,
nappies, cans, carrots.
Bag, drop, fluster.
You stop, stare, scream.
I freeze, waiting for the strike.

Striding past me, bump my shoulder,
panic. My fault?
Wait for altercation,
adrenaline flows, extremities flicker.
Bubbling, slightly dizzy.

I'm not violent, aggressive,
but you are, all of you.
A lifetime of reading emotions,
feeling your slightest frustration,
as a deep wound,
festering in my consciousness.

I can feel it.
My Spidey-sense tingles all over.
I am in danger.

“Even though I felt isolated and lonely, music was the only thing that never betrayed me and stayed by my side.”

TAKARA ARAKI

Takara Araki is an Autistic singer/songwriter from Japan whose first European EP PARANOIA was released last year on the Get Your Genki label to much critical acclaim.

A glorious mix of darkwave ambient synth-pop Takara has been compared to Bjork and Kate Bush and thanks to the wonders of the internet I got to talk to her about her life and music.

“I am from Kamakura in Kanagawa Prefecture. Kamakura is a place of sea, mountains, historical buildings, and people associated with great writers. There are also many shrines and temples. When I visit Kamakura, I find myself becoming very creative before I know it because there are no tall buildings or busy air. However, my music is dark and nothing reminds me of Kamakura.

I think there are several people in me.

There is me who is creative and makes music, there is me who makes a living, and there is me who likes Kamen Rider. I do not want to unify me into one person. I never thought I was great at making music, and I never thought I was miserable at earning a living. I've loved Kamen Rider since I was a little girl, and there's a consistent theme in the Kamen Rider series: "Justice through the power of evil. They resonate with me."

"I think I've had a pretty complicated life until I turned 27.

By the time I was diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum, I was suffering from panic attacks and couldn't spend time as a normal teenage or 20-something girl.

I was sometimes bullied for being different. However, I would laugh at such people, thinking that they were narrow-minded and pitiful.

Even though I felt isolated and lonely, music was the only thing that never betrayed me and stayed by my side. Of course, my mother is there for me in my distress."

Takara Araki



I would like to turn the loneliness and hatred towards society that I feel for any reason into music to affirm the suffering of the listeners.

So I say to suffering, "Come at me! I think. I'm not a masochist! Face with tears of joy.

I think I'm using music to do what Kamen Rider did: "Use the power of evil to achieve justice. Is that too much to ask?

And about her creative process?

“My commitment to music production is to make sure that I am creating music that I feel is the best.

For me, it is unthinkable to publish music on the internet with a compromised feeling of "this is good enough". Even if the music is completed, if I am not satisfied with it, I will not publish it.

My production speed may be slow, but being proud of my music is what I value the most in my music production.”



Intrigued to hear more? Well you can as we have 3 digital copies of the EP to give away to the first readers who email autitude@scottishautism.org with the answer to this question:

What is the name of the label that released Takara Araki's PARANOIA EP?

WHICH OF THESE FILMS WILL SAVE CINEMAS?



As lockdown restrictions begin to ease, people will have more freedom to go to places like shops, restaurants, bars, and of course the cinema – which, out of the businesses that suffered due to the pandemic, seemed to have been one of the worst hit. There was some hope in August 2020 when restrictions were relaxed and cinemas were allowed to open again, but what they were showing was mostly old films apart from a few new ones like TENET, Bill and Ted Face The Music and The New Mutants.

A lot of people hoped TENET would be able to undo some of the damage and while I think it possibly made a start, it was not the success many were expecting. Most fingers pointed at an overcomplicated plot, but I don't know what was expected given that TENET is a Christopher Nolan film. He is known for existing properties like The Dark Knight Trilogy and Dunkirk, but when he makes something original like Interstellar or Inception you can be excused for missing some important details that may require a second viewing. TENET can't be called an outright success or failure, but it was far from being the film that would restore the cinema to pre-pandemic attendance levels. It didn't help matters that the end of the year and the start of 2021 saw tougher restrictions re-imposed.

But that's set to change soon with the lifting of restrictions cinemas chain like Cineworld have set a re-opening day for Monday 17 May. This time it seems that we may get more choice for new films to see; looking at the upcoming release schedule you will see there's quite an impressive line-up with at least four films that will be charged expectations of reinvigorating the box office.

Two of the first films set to come out following the reopening are Peter Rabbit 2 and Nomadland. Peter Rabbit is a sequel but not much about the first one seemed that impressive. Nomadland is set to be released on Disney+, which is probably how most people will choose to watch it, but for those who can't wait to step inside a cinema again Peter Rabbit 2 may be your only option – but not for long, as a few days after the re-openings another film will make its long-awaited debut...

Its safe to say 2020 was not kind to Disney, with releases like Artemis Fowl and the reboot of Mulan getting their fair share of criticism. PIXAR did have some good luck with the well-received Soul and Onward. But then again, luck appears to be something Pixar always has on its side. Cruella is Disney's next big release that will be out in both cinemas as well as Disney+. It's directed by Craig Gillespie who may be best known for directing I, Tonya but before that he directed 2016's The Finest Hours, another Disney film.



The odds of Cruella being a huge success is understandably hard to predict; Emma Stone is a well-regarded actress and Cruella Deville is an iconic Disney villain but there are two problems that could threaten the chances of a success. Many people have had their idea of Deville coloured by the well-remembered portrayal by Glenn Close in the 1996 live-action remake. Another detail to consider is that the plot looks much the same as Maleficent where an attempt is being made to portray a classic villain sympathetically. Some audiences may be a little tired of this device, especially when the sympathetic villain was surprisingly well received not thanks to Maleficent but to Joker. If people want more sympathetic villains, fair enough and maybe Cruella will give us that, but if the criticisms of Maleficent 2 are anything to go by, then maybe stories from a classic villain's point of view are not Disney's strength.

Friday 9 July brings us not one but two significant films, Black Widow and Fast And Furious 9. Right away I'd be fairly sure both will do well but I think Black Widow has the better chance of emerging the victor. It's part of a large cinematic universe that's been going on for years and is showing no signs of slowing down. Scarlet Johansson's portrayal of Black Widow has been much praised and the supporting cast has promise with talent such as Rachel Weisz and David Harbour.

In the case of Fast and the Furious my outlook is rather different. This franchise has been producing films since the start of the 2000s and has evolved from films about street races with a strong emphasis on family to, well, generic action films with a strong emphasis on family. Yes, they may be well made and make money, but fans of the franchise seem to long for the days of the street races and not just another action franchise that makes star vehicles for Dwayne Johnson.

On the positive side, he doesn't seem to be in this one and is going to be in Disney's Jungle Cruise instead. That may give some fans hope but with this being the ninth entry in the franchise and following on from a 2019 spin-off starring Johnson and Jason Statham there really is no way to tell how this one might go.



I can't talk about films delayed by the pandemic without mentioning No Time To Die, Daniel Craig's fifth and last time portraying James Bond. I understand it had a rather turbulent production with Danny Boyle attached to the project as director at one point, who was then replaced by Cary Joji Fukunaga. Let's hope those who have enjoyed Craig's previous Bonds will flock to the cinema to see it on opening day – 30 September. I know I'll be there but there are some things working against it, one being that some people may simply be fed up waiting and can't be bothered with it. Others may still have less than pleasant memories of Spectre or are dreading seeing Bond succumb to the recent trend of overly 'woke' entries in established properties.

Yes, No Time To Die does feature Lashana Lynch who bears the 007 title in most of the promotional material, but hopefully 'Woke Bond' is nothing more than a horrible fantasy. I'll keep my fingers crossed this doesn't happen.

Those aren't the only big films coming out this year. A Quiet Place: Part 2 is coming out on 4 June and Halloween Kills is out on 15 October. There's also Stephen Spielberg's West Side Story and Spider-Man: No Way Home, both of which are scheduled for December.

So, assuming the easing of restrictions goes according to plan, it's going to be a very interesting time to be a fan of cinemagoing, and for the films that are coming out soon, to paraphrase a great man, "I just want to tell you good luck, we're all counting on you."

Andrew Moodie.



ARTITUDE!

Amazing artwork by autistic individuals has been collated in a new online art gallery, 'Lockdown Art'.

As part of the Scottish Government funded Winter Connections project, Scottish Autism ran an online art group led by talented Support Worker, Gabriele Gikyte.

The weekly Art Group brought people together for creative expression in an informal environment, offering the chance for a mindful break from the day's worries.

Below are just some of the astonishing artworks, you can

view more at bit.ly/onlinelockdownart



Wendy's Art

"Some vibrant daffodils to reflect the topic of nature. I enjoy drawing in detail and took so long to capture each petal and stem that some of the flowers had begun to die. I chose to capture them as they were."



Wendy's Art

"I like the bold colours and contrast of my clown. This reflects my mixed emotions as our sessions were coming to an end. The painted happy face of a clown could also represent the everyday masking I feel I must do to fit into society. The art classes have allowed me to set my inner creative free."



"I don't know if this happens to everyone, but I regularly have things "pop up" on Facebook and have no idea where they came from?! And if I don't click on the link right there and then, I'll never be able to find it again!!" Says Wendy "So when the Winter Connections post came my way, I'm so glad I listened to the voice in my head that said "Click this now...it's important".

"The journey ahead was one not to be missed. From prioritising myself and moving my family meal time, to learning to focus again and let my creativity flow.

I think the most significant experience was learning to let my creative expression just "be". Learning, through attentive encouragement that the expression was enough, no matter how "good" it was. This realisation really allowed me to explore deeply within myself. The ultimate result being my Crying Clown – my creative expression of endings and beginnings. I was processing the end of the classes and the knowledge that my safe, autistic, creative haven was gone. I saw a vision of the clown in my mind (complete with his super bright orange hair).

I drew exactly what I saw inside. No judgement, no filter, just pure creative expression. Some may say it looks immature or naive or whatever. That's ok, because I know it's my Crying Clown. I was crying when the classes ended and from that emotional place came a poem, describing my journey in the group. It was written, unfiltered and just as I "heard" it."

And you can hear Wendy share her poem titled 'Daring to be Me', in a short video here:

<https://youtu.be/6u9ccmvzyzY>

Tahir's Art

"My name is Tahir and I am 18 years old. I am very passionate about drawings and enjoy doing them. I like to draw in details and make them as colourful as possible."



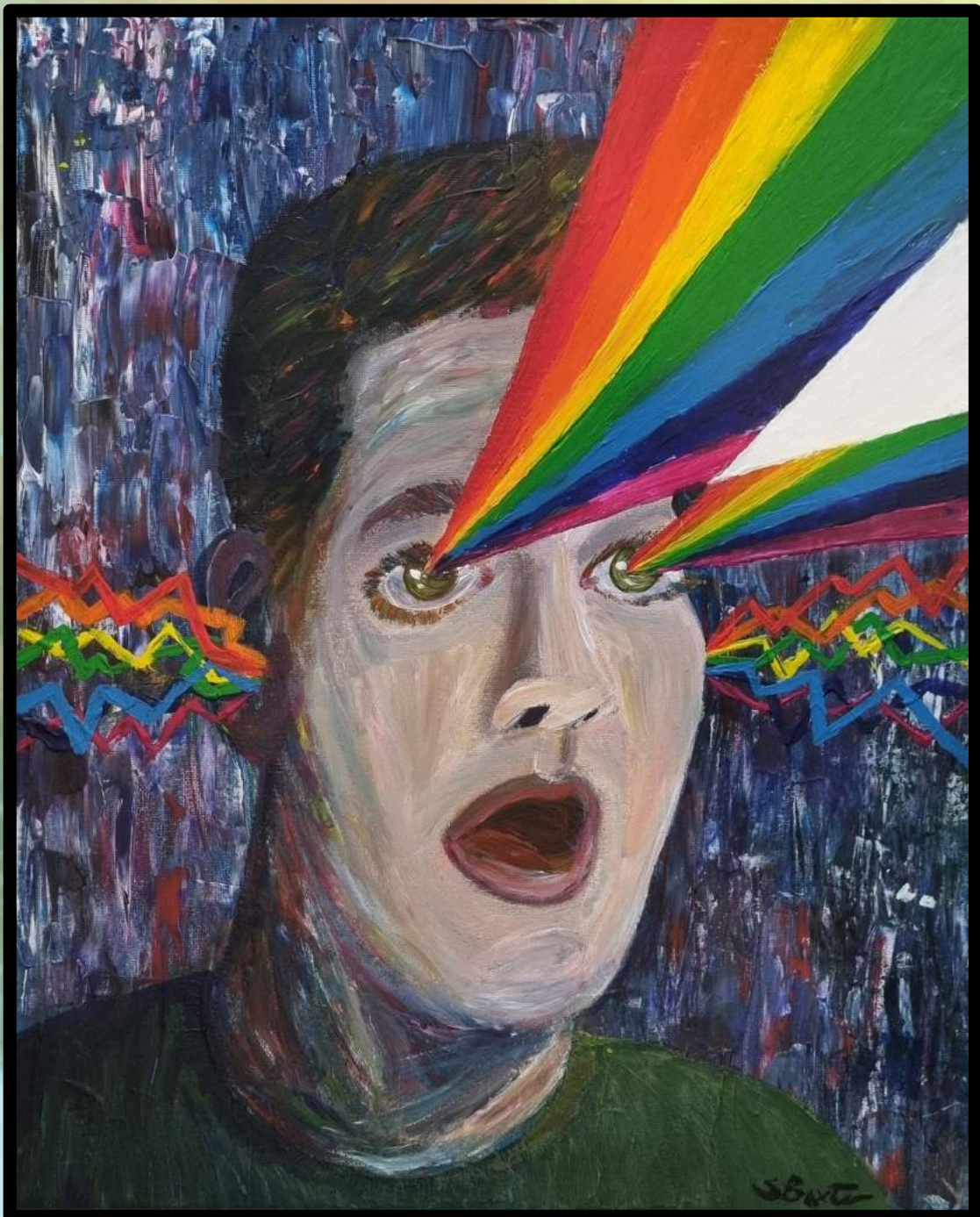
Ru's Art

"I've always wanted to do creative things but never had a chance to, so these sessions were brilliant. I started this (knitted scarf) because I couldn't resist sparkly rainbow yarn, it felt very fitting."



Sean's Art

“Senses of the Overload – I painted this self-portrait during the online art session of the senses. It depicts the everyday life of someone with sensory overload. I see and hear the world more vividly than others. In a sense, those are my superpowers. I have been a part of the online art group since day one, and I have enjoyed taking part in all of the sessions. I feel it has been beneficial for me, not just as an artist, but who I am as a person, and my goals for the future.”





SPECTRUM SUPERSTARS!



**Name: Tom Stoltman AKA The Albatross
King Of The Stones**

Age: 26

Height: 2.03 m

Occupation: Strongman.

AUTITUDE NEEDS YOU!



Well that's it for issue 4!
Hope you've enjoyed it!
Don't forget to send your contributions to
autitude@scottishautism.org