



## New community arts project champions local talent and brings vibrancy and colour to the city of St Albans

(4<sup>th</sup> August, 2021) A new community arts initiative that showcases local artists' work in St Albans City Centre '**City Summer Scapes**' has launched with artwork displayed on railings outside the Museum + Gallery, the parklets in High Street and the Cathedral.

Launched this week, it is part of a new and ongoing community arts project, run by St Albans BID, that creates vibrancy and supports local St Albans artists by exhibiting their artwork in outside spaces where they can be seen and enjoyed by the public.

**Denise Parsons, Manager of St Albans BID, says:**

*"We hope our new community arts initiative will enhance our city centre, bringing it to life and giving it vibrancy, colour and beauty. We aim to make art inclusive for all and give people joy in the most unexpected of places."*

The first instalments, by 28 local artists, are displayed in the three areas across the city on A3 and A2 foamex weatherproof boards.

**Chris Blanch, project lead at St Albans BID, says:**

*"This project is all about inclusiveness. We wanted to create a stunning piece of external artwork which is accessible to all, as opposed to being inside a building. Community artwork is a passion and I love the idea of people seeing these wonderful artworks when they are wandering past, perhaps on their way to work, or whilst shopping. It's unexpected and it makes people stop and think."*

St Albans BID approached a new local art gallery, Collective, whose aim is to nurture creative talents and build a community of artists and local residents alongside engaging new audiences in contemporary arts, to work with them on the project.

**Founder of Collective, the unique community artistic hub on Holywell Hill, Aisha Adi says:**

*"Collective is a unique gallery built on a vision of inclusivity. We aim to engage new audiences in contemporary arts particularly underrepresented groups and those who have*

*barriers to participation. We offer a relaxing space for workshops, exhibitions and events and we are proud to be very approachable.*

*“So, I immediately said ‘yes’ when I was approached by St Albans BID as the whole idea behind the project resonates very strongly with our vision here at Collective of giving emerging local artists a voice and providing opportunity to get their artwork seen.*

*“I put out a call for vibrant work that is thought-provoking and that people are drawn to. I was delighted by the response and the calibre of work submitted.”*

Helen Lack is one of the local artists whose works are displayed on the High Street. Helen is an extremely successful and well-known contemporary artist whose energetic and vibrant style made her a perfect contributor. Helen has seen huge success and acclaim with her works exhibited in many prestigious galleries in London and New York. Devastatingly, Helen was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer and is currently in Watford's Peace Hospice.

**Aisha from Collective added:**

*“I felt very passionately that an area should be dedicated specifically for artist Helen Lack who currently has a solo exhibition at Collective gallery. I wanted as much of our community as possible to view her work- it's a fitting tribute to her talent and mesmerising art.”*

City Summer Scapes, the first of the pop-up public art exhibitions runs in St Albans City Centre until Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August. The exhibition will then move to Verulamium Park where the art will be displayed along the railings adjacent to The Fighting Cocks entrance throughout September, to allow for a new pop-up linked to the St Albans Food & Drink festival.

For more information, please visit [www.EnjoyStAlbans.com](http://www.EnjoyStAlbans.com)

\*NEW\* 2021/2022 official St Albans Visitor Guide now out! Click [here](#)

**About St Albans**

- St Albans is one of the best-kept secrets in UK tourism. A historic gem of an English Cathedral City just 20 miles and 20 minutes by train from London is easily accessible by road with links to the M25, M1 and A1(M)
- The city's colourful history and heritage can be seen in the Roman remains and the beautiful medieval architecture and picturesque buildings that look spectacular all year round.
- A fabulous shopping destination, St Albans is home to an array of innovative independent retailers and well-known chains
- The city is famous for its café and pub culture with a fantastic range of award-winning eating and drinking establishments, including Britain's oldest pub, Ye Olde Fighting Cocks

- Enjoy lots of green, open spaces and parks – making St Albans a family friendly destination.

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