

# AUTITUDE!



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

# WELCOME!

**It's officially summer and what a selection we have for you in this latest issue!**

**Do you have artwork, photography, poetry or stories you would like to share? Or perhaps you have an autistic idol that you think should feature as our Spectrum Superstar?**

**Whether it's a thought, suggestion or submission, send it to us at [autitude@scottishautism.org](mailto:autitude@scottishautism.org).**

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



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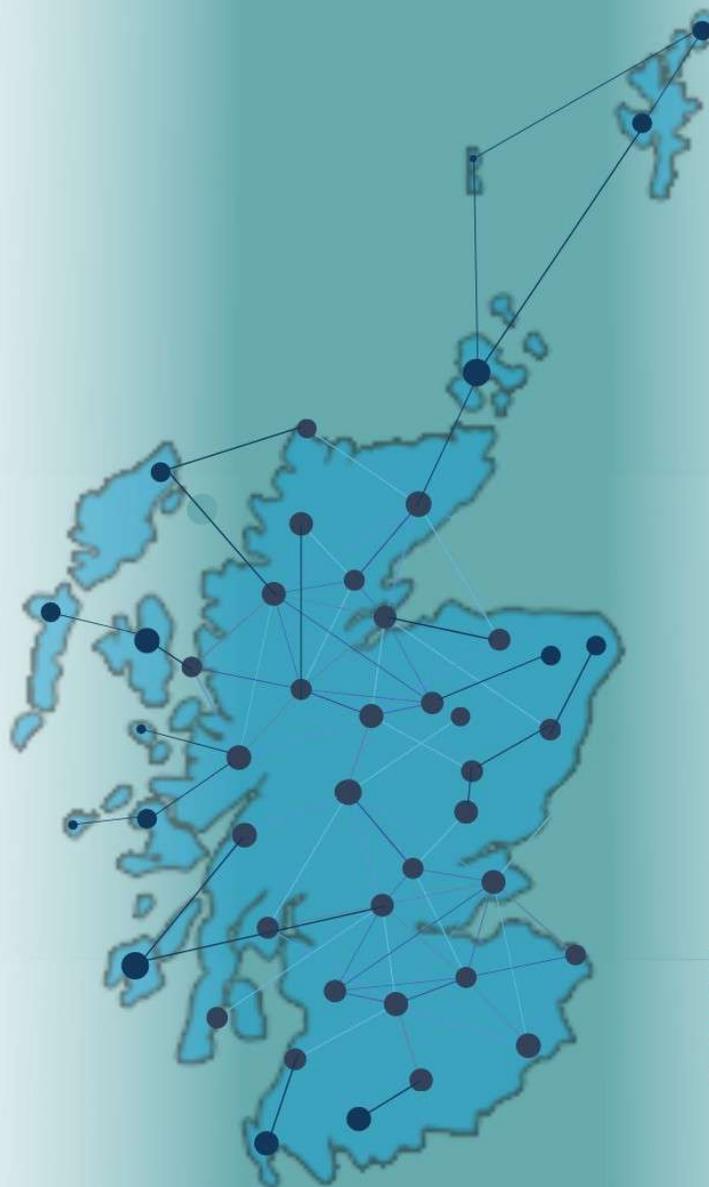
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Scottish  
autism  
WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE  
ARE VALUED

Book your place for Click & Connect Block 6 taking place from July to September!

These online events aim to help the autistic community and families in Scotland to stay connected.

All group sessions run via Zoom and are free to join.

## **Mindfulness for Autism**

**Mindfulness for Autism is a strengths-focused mindfulness approach that provides recovery and counteracts the negative sensory impact of the world for autistic adults and their carers. It also aims to reduce the impact of stress, isolation and fragmentation in autistic people and family members/carers of autistic people and aims to break this negative cycle, helping people to live a more self-aware, empowered and fulfilling life. The group will take place every Tuesday morning\* from 19th July until 20th September, 10am - 11am. \*excluding 23<sup>rd</sup> August.**

WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE  
ARE VALUED

## **Online Art Group**

**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. Join our online Art Group taking place every Wednesday\* from 20th July until 21st September, 5pm - 6.30pm.**

**\*excluding 31st August and 7th September.**

## **Virtual Choir Group**

**If you're a music lover who enjoys singing, come along and share music with others in a fun, no pressure environment. This group is for autistic people and their families in Scotland, and all ages and abilities are welcome!**

**Join our Virtual Choir group taking place every Thursday evening from 14th July until 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 5pm - 6pm.**

## **Autism Support Group**

**This is a guided support and dialogue group that uses guided mindfulness meditation and group conversation as a basis for stress recovery and improving relaxation and wellbeing. Come along and join our Autism Support Group for autistic individuals and family members of autistic people in Scotland. Run by Jonny Drury, the group will take place every Thursday\* 21st July until 22nd September, 1pm - 2.30pm. \*excluding 25th August.**

**Don't miss out, find out more and book your place now:  
[www.scottishautism.org/click-and-connect](http://www.scottishautism.org/click-and-connect)**

## My Neurodiversity Journey Part 6

**A quick recap.**

**In a previous unconscious life, before a medical retirement better known as a “burnout” I created “Cultures of Operational Excellence” in sport and business.**

**Before the “burnout” some 8 years ago approx. the world didn’t know, including me that I was Neurodivergent.**

**I was a failed neurotypical waiting to be found out.**

**Internal ableism, imposter syndrome were my constant companions during a period when I appeared on Sky Sports TV, ESPN, BBC radio articles published in the Daily Record, Scottish Sun and The Sunday Times.**

**Feelings of inadequacy, constantly unsure and vulnerable were racing through my body.**

**Many late diagnosed will identify with these feelings.**

**Over the last 5 issues I have discussed the importance whether at primary or secondary school, collage or University or later on in your chosen path to “Know Thy Self”.**

**Parents / carers / partners who have lingering doubts that their child or young adult may have a developmental or learning disability should glean as much information such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, ADHD & Autism etc.**

**Naturally, communicating and working with teachers at school and being referred by your Dr for specialised services if required.**

**I am very passionate about this and motivated to assist politicians and change makers in the neurodivergent world to have an easier journey than my mother and I had in the 60's / 70's at school.**

**I strongly believe the narrative should now move on from the successful campaigns of: - AUTISM AWARENESS OR ACCEPTANCE.**

**TO: - ACCOMMODATION**

**We all have a role to play in seeking the appropriate ACCOMMODATION**

**As well as the 3 r's at school Reading, Rriting & Rithmetic as it was known in my day, we require the: -**

**The 3 A's**

**1. Awareness**

**2. Acceptance**

**3. Accommodation**

**"Know thy self" is the Leadership's First Commandment from Harvard Business Review that I mentioned earlier.**

**In previous issues I have written about Identity, Vision, Beliefs, Values, Capabilities / Skills, behaviours & environment.**

**We can do our own work "on self" to eliminate all confusion, internal ableism and the tyranny of should's that people like me suffered and endured all my /our life until the diagnoses some 7 years ago.**

**Amongst the many ah ha moments was one of relief and understanding.**

**Some of the confusion left me; however, there was much more to unpack, look at and feel, to re label the various events throughout my life as a neurodivergent.**

**This process is ongoing and entered a phase of deep curiosity.**

**There are many practical uses and benefits for completing this exercise for self / family members.**

**I have given a brief overview of the new self.**

**My No1 Vision:- However, let me stress how passionate that Learning Disability and Autism be removed from the Scotland's Mental Health Act.**

**After reading the text below attempt this simple exercise yourself. You maybe surprised at what you discover!**

**The table below describes how I used to see and feel about my old self and how I see and feel about my new self:**

	<b>NEUROTYPICAL OLD SELF</b>	<b>NEURODIVERGENT NEW SELF</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	Survive	Self-care & NeuroDiv Changemaker
<b>Identity</b>	Male – Brit Scot	Autistic Savant
<b>Vision</b>	Survive	Accommodation & equality for the disabled
<b>Beliefs</b>	Most distorted	New beliefs no confusion – Yippee!
<b>Values</b>	Survive - Masking	I know my top 10
<b>Capabilities</b>	Winging it	Limited and own this now
<b>Behaviours</b>	Trying to fit in	I am what I am -
<b>Environment</b>	As few as possible	As few as possible + zoom + garden

## LOGICAL LEVELS EXPLAINED

1. **Mission / Purpose:** - Successful people focus on the bigger system. Purpose with a Shared Vision beliefs & Values is the foundation of ownership. Dig deep!! Answers the questions in **red. What and for whom is my purpose?**
2. **Identity:** - How do you think of yourself. **My sense of self who am I?**
3. **Vision:** - Is imagining the view of an outcome through the window of your future. - the world of being, having and doing. **My future - What?**
4. **Beliefs:** - Emotionally held views. Beliefs held by you are only viable if supported by your values that drives behaviour. **My facts - Why?**
5. **Values:** - Criteria / qualities that you hold and form the basis for your daily action. **My motivation - What and Why?**
6. **Capabilities:** - The talents and skills of the individual. The behaviours that you do so well and can do consistently without any conscious
7. **Behaviour:** - What you actually say and do and consciously set in motion. refers to what you think about as well as your actions. **Actions & Reactions What?**
8. **Environment:** - Refers to what is outside of you. It is about time, place and people, where you work, friends and partner. **This is what we react to? Does it suit you?**

Until the next issue, stay safe and be kind to yourself and gentle to those around you.

**David Yeoman - Blogger & Volunteer; Scottish Autism, Contributor @ Autism Advisory Forum, Consultant at Dyslexia Scotland. Advisor / Consultant Autistic Knowledge Development**

# Brilliant initiative for hidden disabilities (including autism) at airports – sunflower lanyard scheme

By Alex Stratikis, Founder of 'Autistic Adventures Abroad'

Airports can be a minefield for anyone with a disability – or even for those without. They are stressful places. The immigration process in some countries is designed to put you under a lot of pressure. On top of that it's evident that many airports around the world are just not designed to help those with certain disabilities or have any staff trained to be knowledgeable about those said disabilities. But thankfully it looks like change is slowly over the horizon now. That change comes in the form of the Sunflower Lanyard Hidden Disability Scheme.

The company states that those wearing a sunflower lanyard for a hidden disability can be helped in various ways to ensure a pleasant airport and flight experience by satisfying ones individual needs; for example, by providing personal escorts, seat changes, sensory maps, customs support etc. All of which can be made by specifically stating which particular services you may need in advance of arriving at the airport for your departure.

Personally, I have only just become aware of this fantastic program. And to be perfectly honest, I don't feel like I do need it at this point having navigated so many airports alone in ignorant bliss to this option available. However, going forward – I will definitely sign-up next time I am at one of the participating airports  
([a list of which can be found on their website](#))  
so that I can share my experience and thoughts.



However, all in all it seems like a pretty in-depth program for those who participate, going from the information online – as there has been a lot of positive feedback from users across the board.

Something else I was recently made aware of is the airline code DPNA (disabled passenger with intellectual or developmental disability needing assistance). This is a special assistance option offered by many airlines to passengers with a disability (not just restricted to autistic individuals). This can be requested at the time of ticket purchase, or by contacting the airline at least a day before departure.

The services offered with DPNA are also in line with individual needs. So, for autistic individuals they may include the likes of priority check-in, boarding first, sitting at a distance from babies/toddlers, checking-in on the passenger(s) to ensure they are feeling safe/comfortable should they wish so. It seems like the possibilities are far reaching, so it would be wise to be specific about your needs during the request procedure.

I encourage anyone who struggles with airports to take full advantage of this service whenever you decide to take your next flight! I also recommend that you check out their website for a comprehensive guide should you have any questions about the scheme; <https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/us/>

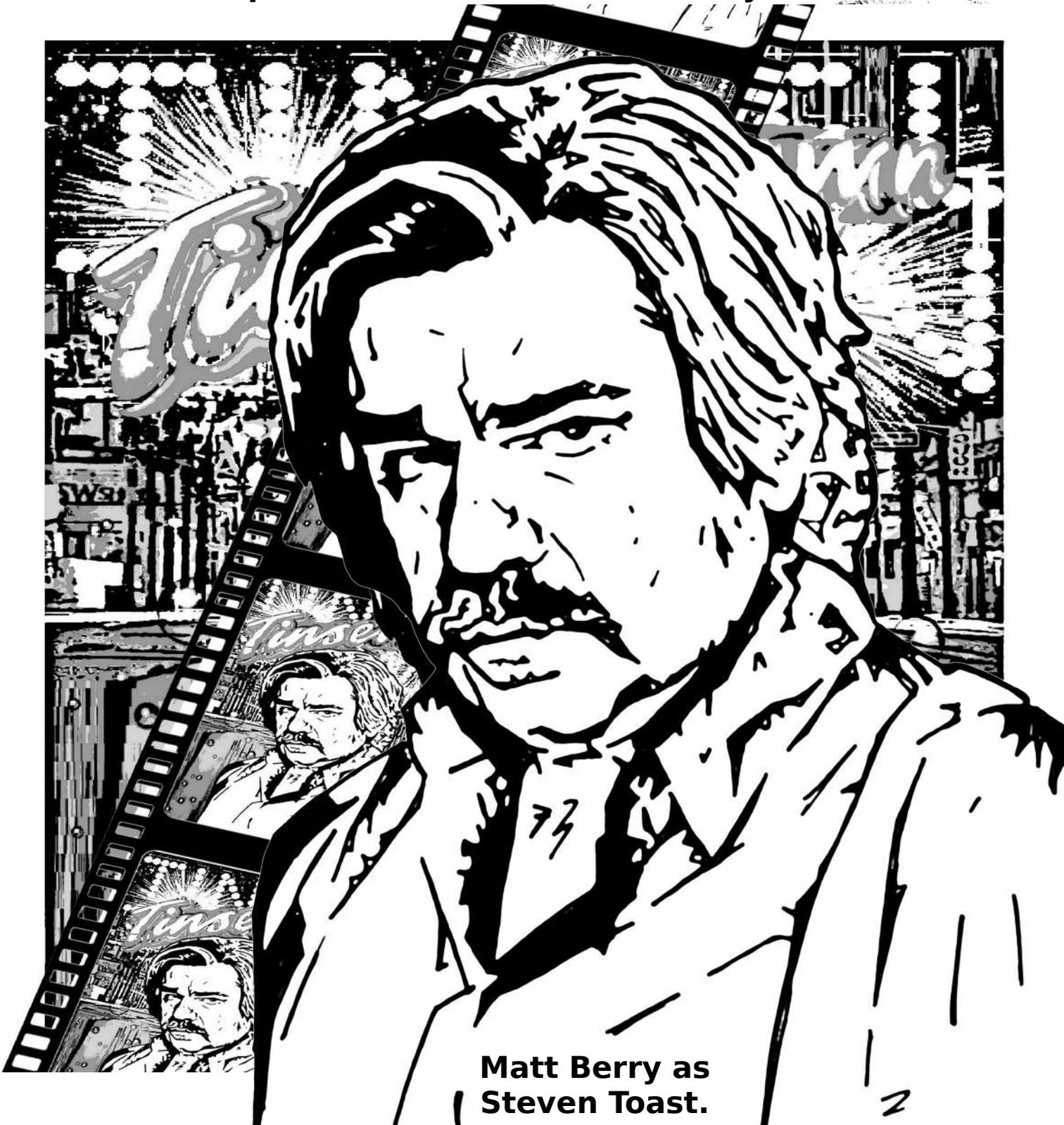
You can read more of Alex's blogs at [www.autismadventuresabroad.com](http://www.autismadventuresabroad.com)



# ARTITUDE!

More readers art and photography for your viewing pleasure!

First up is Ash with some TV comedy idols.



**Matt Berry as  
Steven Toast.**

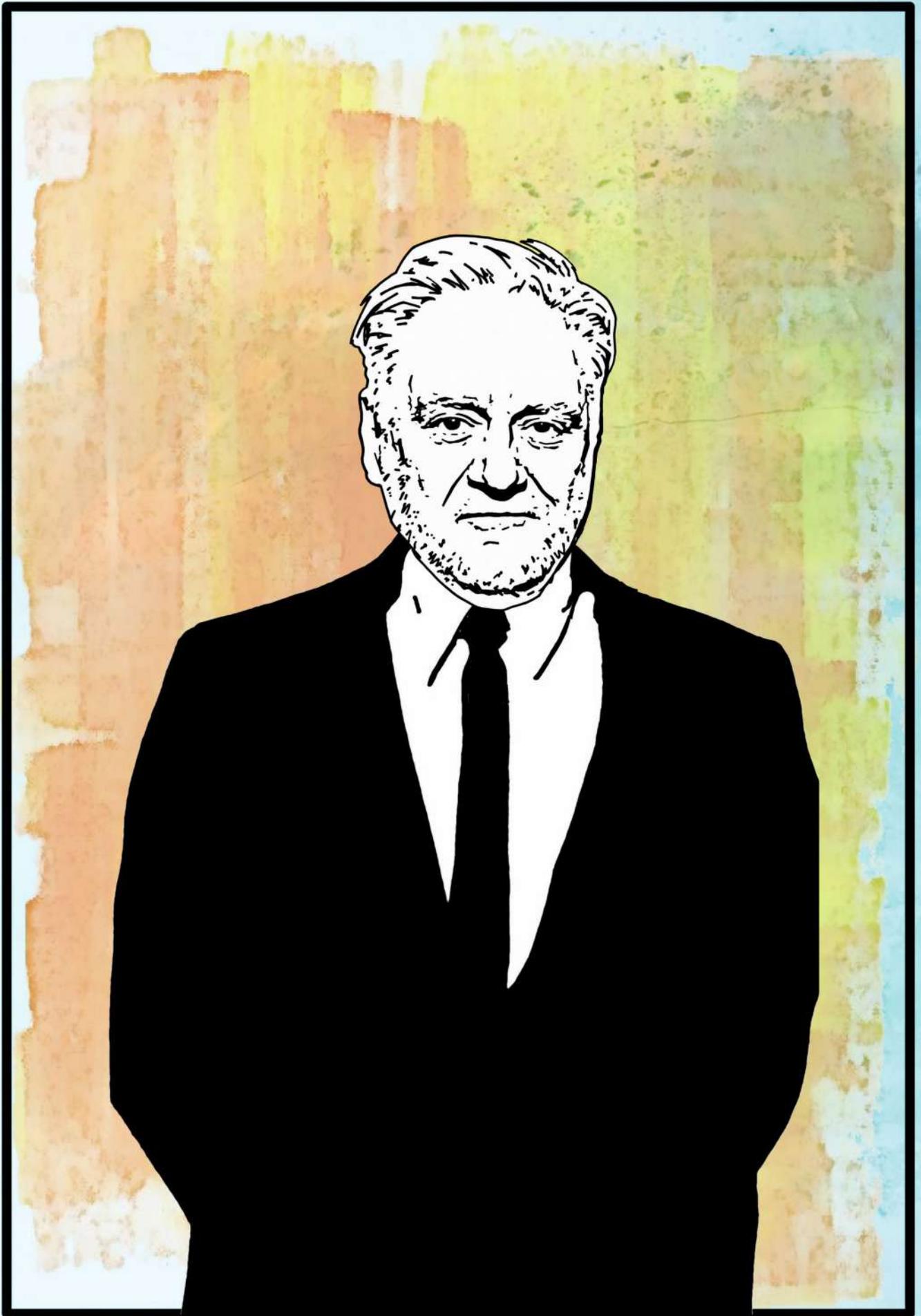


ASH '16

Rik Mayall.



**Meera Syal.**



**Tony Slattery.**

ASH '19

STOP



MESSING  
ABOUT!

**Kenneth Williams.**

# Sandra Louise Smyth

## "Removing the Mask"

Just been handed the letter

Will diagnosis make it better?

This mask is so tight

This is going to be such a fight

It's not over for me yet, just the beginning I bet

Where did she go?

The girl I used to know

Lost along the way

Trying to fit in everyday

Paying the price, for wanting to be liked

It was all fake, they would take and take

So burned out, I lost my speech

Joy feels so out of reach

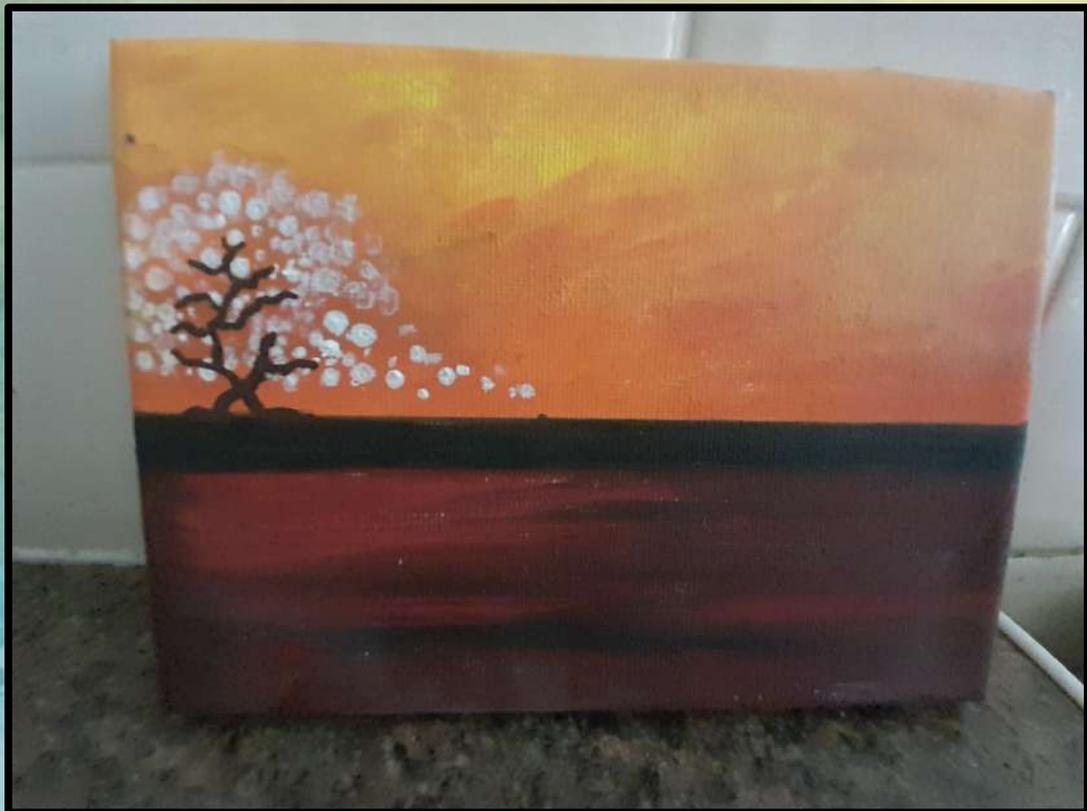
I need to discover the real me, but who is she?

Well, the girl did love her art

That seems to me like a good start!



Sandra  
Louise  
Smyth





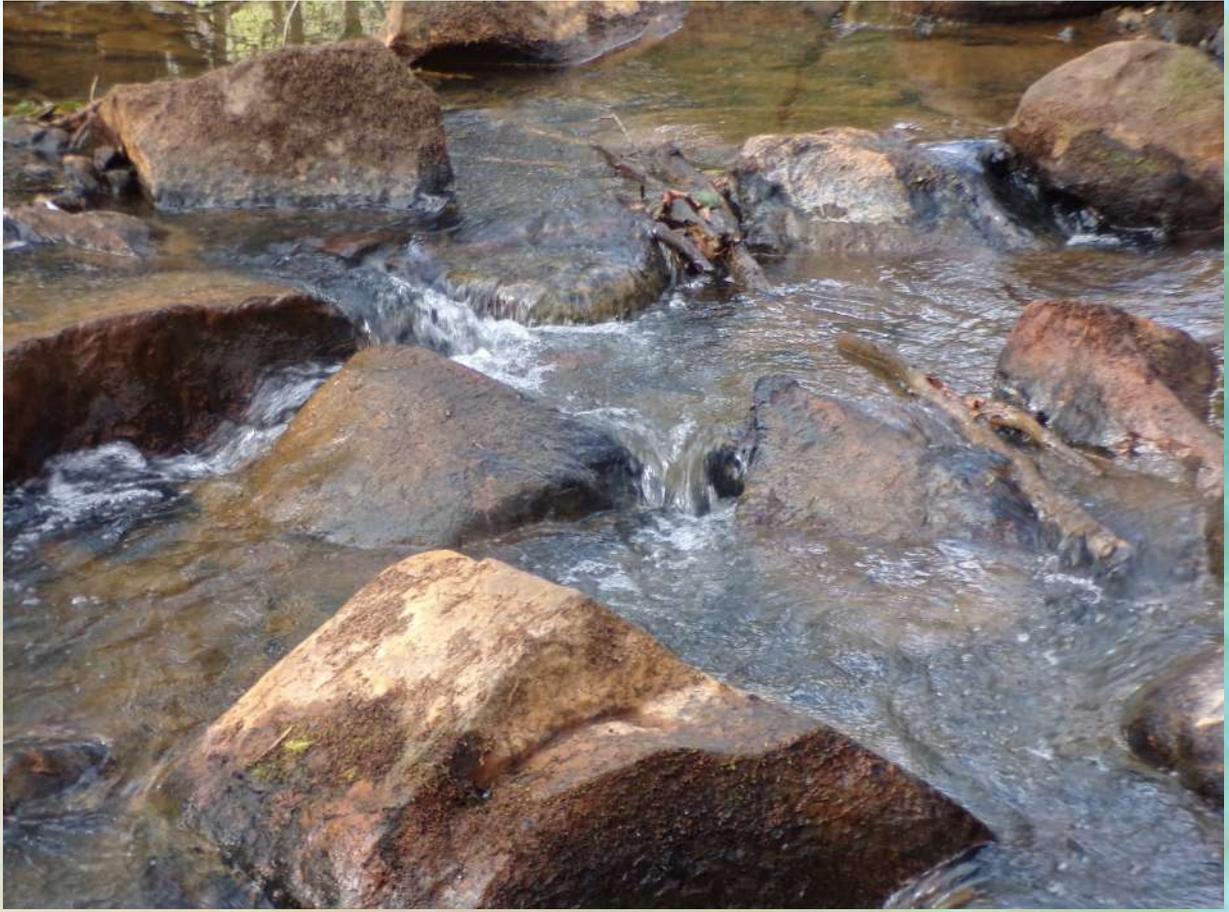
## Matthew Gray

I am Matthew, I'm 18 years old and I have Aspergers and I love taking photographs of nature, wildlife, pets or landscapes.

I got really into photography during covid thanks to a grey squirrel that use to visit my garden and look in my patio doors. I actually managed to capture a picture of it. Since then I only like going out to do photography as it gives me something else to focus on. It's my dream to be a Professional Photographer. I love my photos to tell a story.

I have a few photographs for you taken by myself. My mum has helped me to write this as I also have dyslexia and my mum encourages me in everything that I do. The first 2 photos are at Polkemmet Country Park in Whitburn West Lothian. The swan is at Lanark Loch and the Owl is at The Scottish Owl Centre, Polkemmet Park in Whitburn.







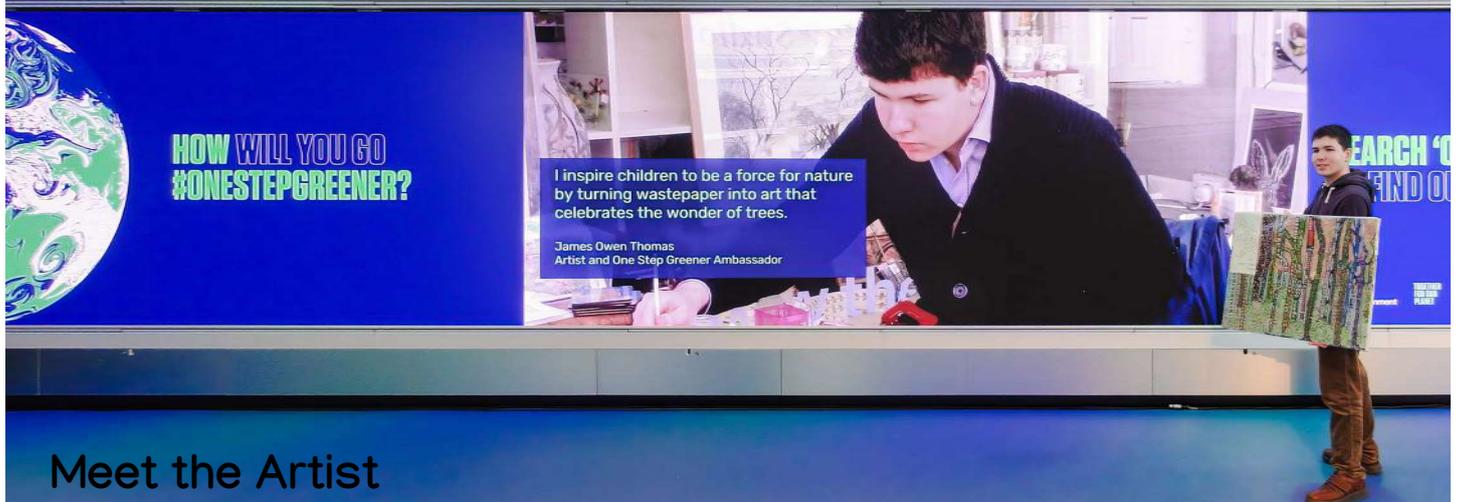
# James Owen Thomas

James is an artist from North Yorkshire who is holding his first exhibition in Scotland in collaboration with The Image Collective and the Leith Collective. He became a COP26 ambassador linked to his work with the Tree Council and other charitable works. His artwork is beautifully produced using recycled waste including things like discarded scratch cards.

James's autism has inspired his work, using images to express himself and get a strong message across around sustainability.

James also teamed up with the Pyramid Educational Consultants company and The Tree Council to develop a range of picture exchange communication system (PECS) symbols on climate change. Learn more at:

<https://www.jamesowenthomas.com/using-pecs-climate-symbols-at-henshaws-symposium-and-festival-8th-july-2022/>



## Meet the Artist

You can meet James in person on 2nd August at the Image Collective in Ocean Terminal, Edinburgh from 10am – 3pm where he will be doing a demonstration of his artwork.



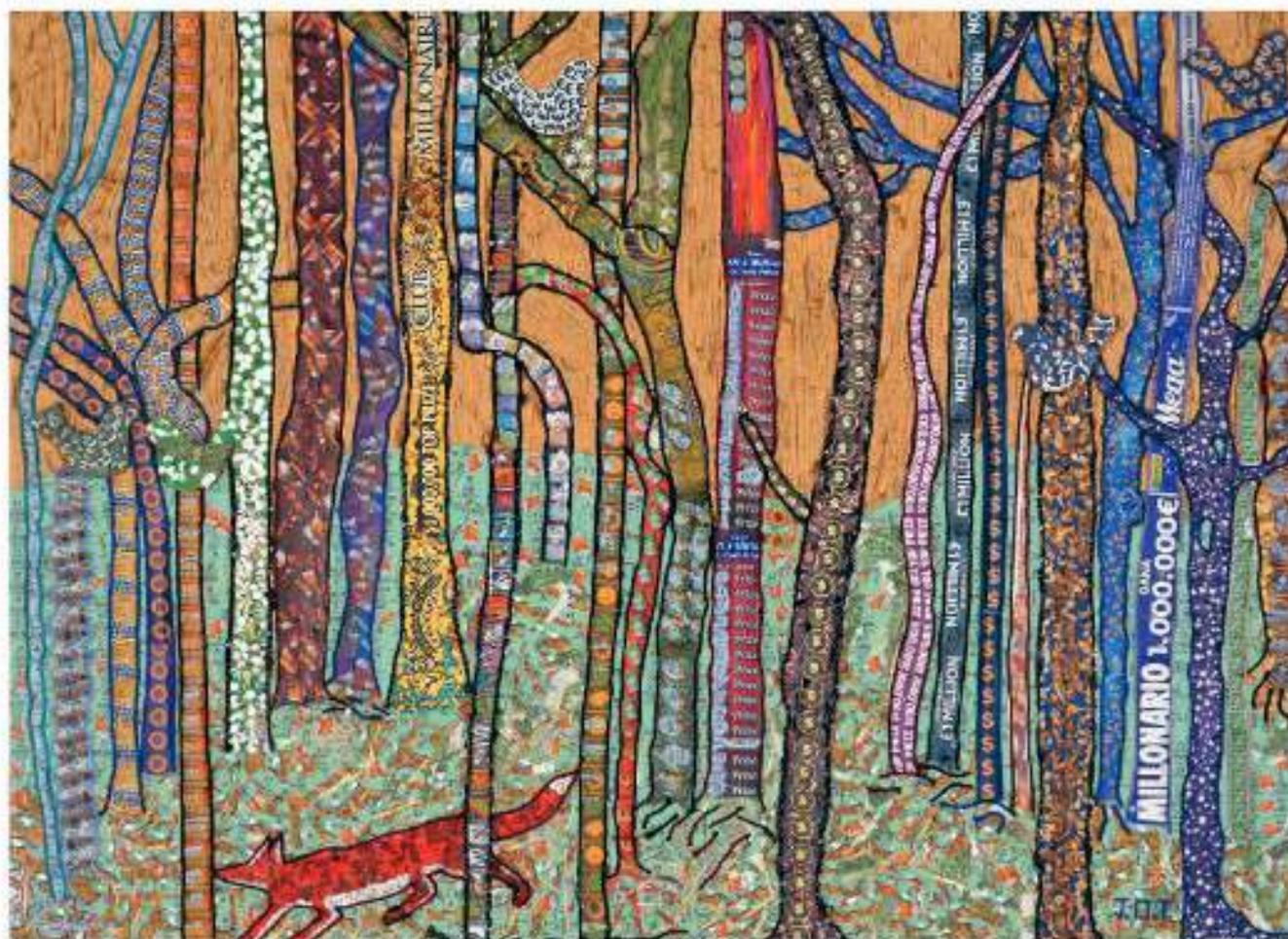
# From Waste to Wall

An exhibition by



James Owen Thomas

Environmental Artist and COP26 One Step Greener Ambassador  
Art created from recycled materials such as used scratch cards



**The Image Collective Gallery**

Leith Collective, Ocean Terminal, Edinburgh, EH6 6JJ

Further details:

[info@theleithcollective.com](mailto:info@theleithcollective.com)

**2nd August - 30th September 2022**



# Why anime is important to me

## by Danielle Gilligan

Anime is a kind of stylistic cartoon that is made in Japan with different genres and demographics. The animation style may look really weird to people in Europe and America at first, but it has become really popular in the last few years. The style is characterised by realistic looking people with exaggerated features such as spiky hair, big eyes, small mouths and pointy chins as well as high-pitched Japanese voices and dramatic reactions. Anime can be hand drawn like in Studio Ghibli movies (My Neighbour Totoro and Princess Mononoke) or computer generated like in Pokemon and Naruto. I like anime because it's my favourite drawing style to practise and I adore Japanese culture and how different it is to mine.

Japanese Anime was made in 1917 as a way to make Japanese commercials stand out and became used as a way to animate Japanese cartoons in the 1960s. Anime comes with different demographics targeted for each gender and age. They are Shonen (for young boys), Shoujo (for young girls), Seinen (for adult men), Josei (for adult women), and Kodomuke (for young children). However, people can watch anime of any kind and, for example, I enjoy action anime which is usually found in Shonen and Seinen anime and I don't like Shoujo anime!

I started drawing anime when I was at a young age after I discovered Doraemon (an anime about a young schoolboy) on Youtube by accident. I was confused when I saw it because of how it was drawn compared to shows like Peppa Pig and Dora the Explorer. However, I couldn't stop watching it and I became obsessed with drawing the different characters. I remember drawing different characters with crazy hair, cat ears and big eyes which is similar to the characters in anime. I felt that anime was like a bizarre experience for me because when I was young, I had DS games that had an anime look to them.

I became fascinated with Japanese mythology and culture because of anime shows and started to love drawing anime animals and anthros (human-animal hybrids).

I first started drawing when I was 5 or 6 but over 10 years later and I am still watching anime and drawing which is a treat for me. Even though Doraemon got me into anime, my favourite shows are really different now. I consider myself a tomboy and I don't really like girly things like a lot of my old friends did. I love watching Jojo's Bizarre Adventure, Naruto and One Piece because what they have in common is martial arts, action set pieces, male leads and epic openings and music. Watching these shows let me feel like the real me - a girl who likes "manly anime". They also do not have mature themes like some modern animes do today and anyone can watch them. Today, anime is also important to me because I can learn more about Japanese culture.



I love Japanese culture because I think Japan has a great history and a rich heritage. One of my dreams is to become a comic book artist which would include Japanese anime comic characters and to learn the Japanese language. Watching animes like Jojo's Bizarre Adventure and studio Ghibli movies have allowed me to learn about the different clothes such as kimonos and yukatas and cook Japanese food like sushi and ramen. I am NOT a "weeaboo" (a negative word for a young Western person obsessed with living only a Japanese lifestyle) because I don't want to say Japanese words and live like them all the time, I still enjoy being Scottish too. I would love to go to Tokyo someday for the amazing arch culture, shops and of course anime and manga. One of my favourite Japanese creatures are the kitune, tengu, tanuki and the tatsu.

My love for anime and Japanese culture let me make good friends at my first school Stanecastle. When I moved to this school, I met other people who felt the same way as me and it felt great that people understood how amazing and unique anime is. I now go to Hollybrook Academy which has a big connection to anime. There is an anime club run by Mr Gallacher my English teacher. Here, I can watch different shows every week, read manga, and draw. We also get to go on trips to geeky shops. I have made lots of friends in the club such as Charlie, Shannon and Heather.

Everyone should give anime a chance because it covers so many different genres and has hundreds of different anime characters. If you're like me and you find Japanese culture interesting, then you can help keep it alive by learning more about it and sharing it with your friends and family. I would recommend going online and reading fan sites to learn about what anime is right for you. Or if you want to just jump in, watch Spirited Away by Hayao Miyazaki - you will thank me. Anime is special to me and I hope you find something special in it too.

## **Baltic Electric Blues**

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**i get up and i put on my shoes  
and they're baltic electric blues  
i choke on my toast as i'm watching the news  
gives me baltic electric blues**

**what are your commitments? where are your dues?  
is it baltic electric blues?  
have you time for your wife, and your kids to amuse?  
with some baltic electric blues?**

**does it seem all they want is to keep you confused  
with their baltic electric blues?  
is there context aplenty? is it lacking in clues?  
is it baltic electric blues?  
is there rhyme to their reason, reason in rhyme?  
or do we all feast on the proceeds of crime?  
did this only start lately? was it so for all time?  
if you'll sell me some nickel i'll stop on a dime**

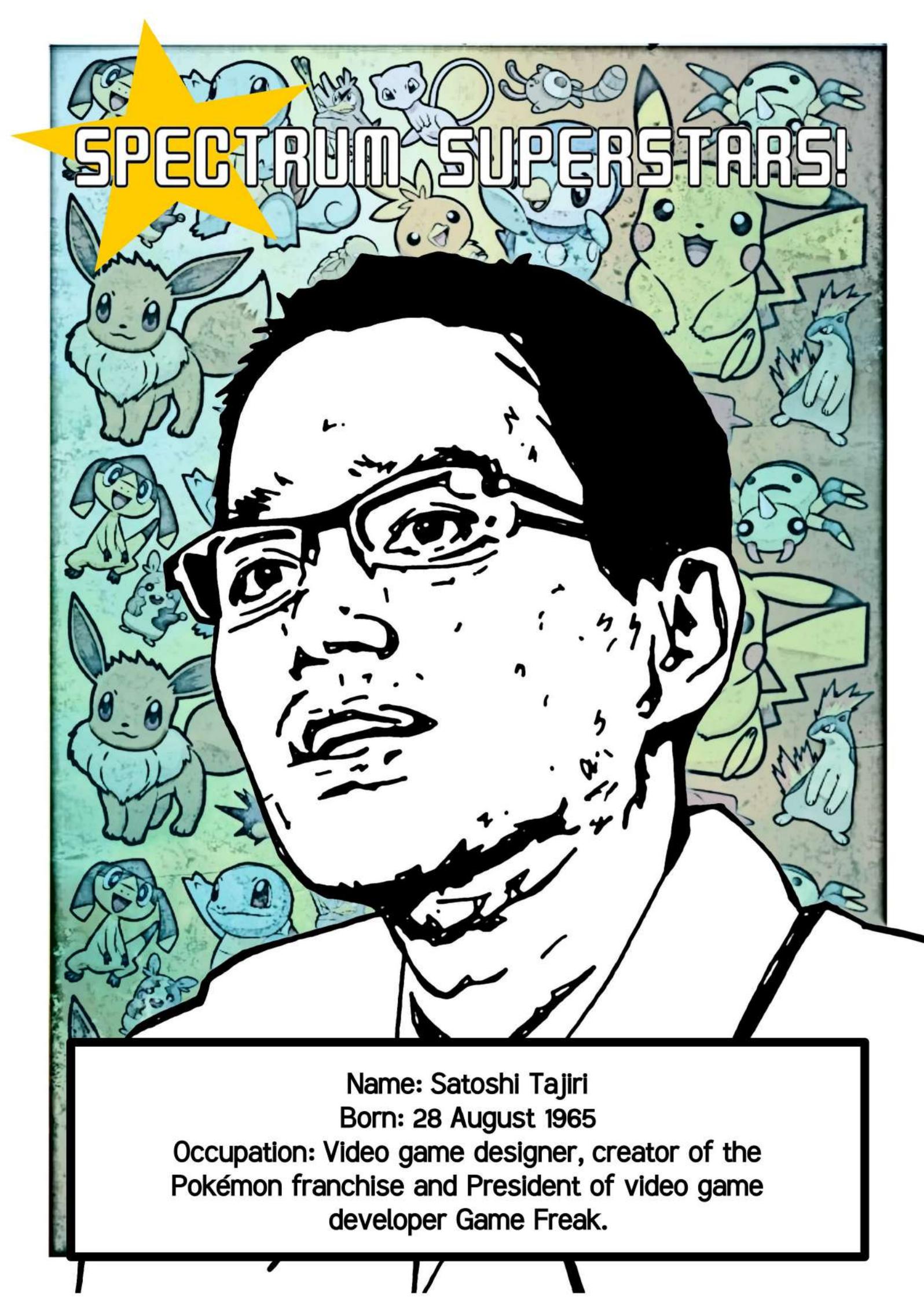
**i get up to go shopping but find only queues  
of baltic electric blues  
is it worth all the time that i'm going to lose  
to these baltic electric blues?**

**there's an absence of everything to which we've been used -  
just baltic electric blues  
whilst those in the driving seat party and booze  
it's just baltic electric blues**

**is it really something anybody would choose -  
these baltic electric blues?  
cos they never commit to the stats they produce  
they are baltic electric blues**

**and there's nothing for you and there's nothing for me  
and they don't even care - it's not worth it, you see?  
cos they don't need us happy - they don't need us nice  
they just need us to march to their story once or twice  
every couple of years to remind us we're free  
to remind us we choose this as our 'liberty'**

**OTL Cellartapes**



# SPECTRUM SUPERSTARS!

Name: Satoshi Tajiri

Born: 28 August 1965

Occupation: Video game designer, creator of the Pokémon franchise and President of video game developer Game Freak.

# AUTITUDE NEEDS YOU!



Well that's it for issue 17!  
Hope you've enjoyed it!  
Don't forget to send your contributions to  
[autitude@scottishautism.org](mailto:autitude@scottishautism.org)