

# @ The Cedars



**THE CEDARS**  
SCHOOL



THURSDAY 30TH APRIL 2020

## DEAR PARENTS

I hope you and your families are well and that your son's online learning is going well. Here at The Cedars we are finding it incredibly time-consuming to run an online school but we are learning more about technology than ever before!

At The Cedars, curriculum art lessons are supplemented through various extra-curricular activities such as 'Artist of the Month', which introduces boys to a wide range of artists and styles, and clubs for art and nature journaling. During this period of school closure, I would encourage your son to start keeping a nature journal and they may wish to enter this competition: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning-for-kids/rspb-kids-competitions/wild-art/>. A good nature journal can really help to boost boys' presentation skills as well as their knowledge and appreciation of the natural world.

At The Cedars we value art not just because it is a great vehicle for creativity – which it is - but also because it has a part to play in forming rounded young men with the wisdom to discern what is most important in their lives.

In our society it is easy to see art as something useless because it appears to have no practical value. But art can help us to learn something about ourselves; it calls us back to see the profound meaning that lies beneath the surface of our lives - what we might call the 'grandeur of ordinary life'.

Art is a call to happiness in the midst of our difficulties. We might see this as a form of escapism, fleeing the harsh realities of life and taking refuge in fantasy. But it is just the opposite: good art points us to the deeper reality which is all too easily obscured

*Having been impressed by the quality of photos that the Y7 artists have been submitting, I thought we should look at a photographer this month.*

## Martin Parr

artist of the month May 2020



Martin Parr born 1952, is a British Photographer, known for his documentary photography and his anthropological depictions of every aspect of modern British life.

You might recognise his seaside images. To see more of his work:

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/martin-parr-2750>

<https://www.martinparrfoundation.org/>

<https://www.jamesmaherphotography.com/historical-photography-articles/history-photography-martin-parr/>



in our everyday lives, particularly when our lives are beset by difficulties and suffering. Art reminds us that we have been made for more than this; we were made not for suffering but for joy. Tolkien expressed this beautifully when he wrote of “Joy, joy beyond the walls of the world, poignant as grief” to describe the intimations of deeper truths that can be expressed through art. Indeed, this was one of his aims with *Lord of the Rings*: to communicate, below the mythical surface of Middle Earth, deep truths about our human nature.



Tolkien’s friend, C S Lewis, once said that “There are no mere mortals”, and that quote is displayed prominently in one of our English classrooms at school. Thomas Merton would have agreed. He once told of how, walking through a high street in Louisville in Kentucky, he saw other people “walking around, shining like the sun.” He continued: “If only we could see other people that way all the time, there would be no more war, no more hatred, no more greed. But this cannot be seen, only believed and understood.”

Merton’s insight is crucial. When we see below the surface of things, we realise that everyone else is important. Our life is an epic, and so is everyone

else’s. An immediate consequence of this perspective is the respect we should have for others. Every other human being, without exception, is worthy of our respect simply because, like us, they are human. Like us, they are called to be with God and have been redeemed by the blood of Christ.

Who said art was useless?

Robert Teague,  
**Headmaster**

## What to do



Create a piece of art inspired by nature – let your imagination run WILD! There are 2 categories to choose from this year – REAL LIFE – entries using the more traditional approach of paints, pastels, acrylics, pens or pencil. And our new GO WILD category – for those of you who want to ‘go wild’ in every sense of the word. To enter this category, experiment with textiles, sculpture, recycled and eco-friendly materials, collages – anything goes!

### TO ENTER

Please email a photo of your artwork to [competitions@rspb.org.uk](mailto:competitions@rspb.org.uk) with the heading **WildArt 2020 Competition**, and don’t forget to tell us your age and category selection! If your submission makes the shortlist, we’ll be in touch with further details after the competition closes. WildArt is split into three age groups: under 8s, 8-12, and 13 years and over.