

Lesley 0:02

My English name is Leslie but my Chinese name is Chen Lou. I'm from a city that is near Shanghai. I was in international school for three years in high school. And I learned a lot of like academic stuff. And I always wanted to learn art and stuff because I was interested in art from a really young age. But I feel like art is not as important as other academic stuff in... like...in my country, because they value like math or like, you know, other subjects more than art and music. So that's the reason why I come to London to learn more about art so maybe in the future, I can go back to my country and tell other people like art is as important as other subjects. I started to learn like sketches and drawing since I was like, five or six. So I was like pretty young. But I stopped for like three years because when I was in middle school, the class was really really intense. And I was struggling a lot with my academic subjects. I'm always thinking about like art and stuff.

Lesley 1:20

I feel like there's a cultural difference between European countries, American and like Asian countries. Often their parents and teachers will think that studying art is not a promising thing to do for such a young age. We have a few art classes back in middle school or high school, but it's only for one semester or like two semester which is really short for us. And I felt like people think that the reason why a lot of students choose to study art is because they can't do things like physics or math. They're not smart enough. But I feel like it's not because our students are not smart enough. It's because like, everyone has different abilities and talents. It's just like you do this better than others and people do, you know, other stuff better than you. It's just like everyone has different abilities.

Lesley 2:29

And I feel like London is like universal city with a lot of people from different countries, along with different cultures. And it's really nice to talk to someone that is from another place. And it's really inspiring because for students we should embrace all the cultures from different parts of the world.

Lesley 2:56

I was really looking forward to come here, cos I didn't really fit in when was back in China, because I was doing art all the time. So my classmates think I'm kind of a weirdo. And I was like, I'm gonna... like... my only hope or wish is to go to another, you know, city or country to study what I like. So, I watch a lot of TV with English subtitles. So language is not a big problem for me. The only thing I was worried about is, is the students here. I was like, I don't know whether, you know, people will like me or not, 'cos I wasn't a really popular person when I was back in China. But after I come here, I feel like people here are really warm and they care about you a lot. So I feel like yeah, I made a lot of friends here. So it's not really a problem for, you know, different cultures or different countries.

Lesley 4:05

I think the only difficulty for a student might be, there's no one telling you what to do. Because when I was back in China, we always got like test and stuff. So, teacher will tell you directly what to do, what to learn. And you know, all the instructions are just there and you will just follow them. If you're good at the subject, it will be pretty easy for you to learn and study. But here it's like, we have like three ways project

and four ways project. It's like during like two weeks, three weeks, no one will tell you how to do. It's like you are asking more instead of someone is telling you what to do. Yeah, I think that's the main difference. And it takes time to you know, digest. Yeah, it's like, suddenly, you're too free, if you know what I mean. So, some students will think, because there's no one telling you what to what to do, it's like, you don't have any task anymore. But actually, you have to do things by yourself instead of, you know, someone telling you.

Lesley 5:23

I mean, I have a few friends that always complaining about they don't have like inspiration for their work and project. But, I feel like, if you really wanted to, like do something, you should just follow your heart. Like things happen in your life every single day. And every single thing that happens in your life can be an inspiration. And whether this thing is important to other people or not it's important to you. So if that's your inspiration you just like go for and if you need help, you can always ask teacher and the teacher here is really nice. If you ask them, they will definitely help you. So yeah, I think just ... just like be a little more confident. And I know a lot of Chinese students have language barriers. And, I mean, they have Language Support. And when you ask help from teacher, like after they understand what you are saying they can help you. So, I mean, just, improve your language a little bit more, I think. And then ...yeah. and then, like other people will always be there help you helping you. Yeah.

Lesley 6:43

I remember the other day, I was chatting with my friend who is British. And I gave her a gift. And she was like, 'what is that and are you giving me a gift now?' And that was like, because a few days later is the Chinese New Year. And they were like, 'Why is Chinese New Year in February?' And I feel it's really interesting because I can bring, you know, other knowledge for them. And I feel like people here have more opinions, and they say things that we don't say. And yeah, I don't know which one is better. But definitely, I experienced the cultural differences through lessons and classes.

Lesley 7:38

You inspire me some way because I was studying art in China. And all the thing we learned is like technique of drawing and all of that stuff, we didn't really learn how to design. And I feel like after I come here, I learned a lot about, you know, value, the process of making and value of your own sketches. And I really don't value my own sketches, I sometimes feel like, it's not as good as I expected, I just throw it away. But it's actually part of your thinking and part of your process. And it's really important to research, whether it's like, image or words, or even videos, because even though we're doing art here, actually art is everything and you can relate to our to everything. Art is actually a form a way for you to express. But behind a piece of work, there's a lot of information and a lot of thinking. It's not like you learn everything from school, school won't teach you everything. You still need to do your own research, just like you research, and then you get information and you need to have your own judgement. And it's not like you have done a lot of research, and the research is already complete... it's not... it's never complete because the information is always changing.

Lesley 9:26

I just want to say, for those students who wish to come here to study, if you really want to study here, and you know, what you are looking for and what your goals are, especially for studying abroad, the most important thing is to communicate. So, if you are a really shy person, I feel like if you make some friends here, and then ... especially friends from other countries, it will really, really boost confidence. Because a lot of students they are shy because they never talked to another, you know, international student before. But really after you talk to another international student, you will feel like oh, they're just like us, English is also their second language. It's like it's the same for everyone. Yeah, I think it will change after you come here. Yeah, 'cos I was a really shy person. But I feel like I'm just a completely different person here now because I wasn't a really popular student back in my country. But after I come here, so like if you will find good friends and then you're surrounded by like resources and good teachers, it will really really change your personality. Yeah, it's like the studying here is add more things to you as your person. It's not like change part of you, it's just adding more things. Yeah.

Lesley 11:04

Yeah, I'm enjoying it a lot.