

Charlotte 0:00

My name is Charlotte, and I'm doing Fine Art Painting BA at Camberwell. I think I was quite drawn to ... because at the time before I applied to do the degree, my practice was mainly painting based. I'd been working for quite a few years previously, so just, you know, going to university as a mature student, was something I was kind of apprehensive about. And, you know, just the complete kind of change of lifestyle and everything like that. But I mean, it was something I was really enthusiastic to do. So, even though I was kind of maybe worried about it, you know, my enthusiasm to do that kept me on the right track.

Academic Support 0:49

What do you think it was about you coming in, as a mature student, that may be surprised you, or did anything meet your expectation?

Charlotte 0:58

Um... I don't know, because I'm in my early 30s. So, I feel like, I feel like most of the mature students that I've seen are kind of, you know, quite a bit older than me, or maybe like just a couple of years older than the normal university age. So, I think kind of my age, particularly, I don't really see a lot of other people. So, I think that's probably proven a bit difficult. But I mean, that's just given me more time to focus on what I'm doing. So...

Academic Support 1:33

What advice would you give to any mature students or people who are coming in from industry, who perhaps haven't studied for a while, what advice could you give them?

Charlotte 1:44

Um, well, I mean, I've decided not to work for this first year. So, I've really had a lot of time to really devote to my studies, I've kind of taken the opportunity to just use, you know, everything that the university, has on offer throughout all of the different campuses. And I think that's been really helpful, because it's kind of exposed me to lots of different areas of work. And, also just, you know, going to like, lectures at other universities as well, because most of them open, so, you know, using that time as well.

Academic Support 2:22

What resources are you using? What do you use at the different colleges?

Charlotte 2:26

Um, well, I mean, I've come to LCC quite a few times to the archive because they run the sessions there where you can, you know, look at what they have and you know, discuss it and everything. There were a couple of really interesting sessions, actually, because one of them was about female voices in the archive. That was really interesting. And it was kind of interesting to hear other students' opinions on, you know, femininity and everything like that. Well, that was one particular one that stood out to me. And then CSM, I went to a session there with a poet, as well. And because I think me personally, I've found it quite difficult writing and using my own voice and feeling comfortable with that. And it's kind of been quite a journey since I've started the course. Going along to that session really helped. There was a

drawing session as well, that was really interesting, because there was lots of different students that are not kind of fine arts based, they were, you know, studying other courses. So, being exposed to different kinds of practices and everything...lots of different stuff.

Academic Support 3:41

That's brilliant. Have you adapted to the different styles of teaching and learning? So tutorials, seminars, workshops, how have you been able to navigate your way around those different levels of teaching provision?

Charlotte 3:59

This is kind of something that I have found quite interesting, because, obviously, coming from, you know, the working world, where everything has to be like, super efficient, and everything like that... I have found like, a lot of the tutorials and lectures and workshops to be fairly loose in their kind of approach and organisation. But I think that's just because of, I've been used to, you know, being a worker, and everything has to be, you know, so precise and perfect and efficient. And, I suppose when you're approaching my art practice, that's doesn't really always apply. So, I suppose it's been like a learning curve for me as well. I suppose the one to one tutorials is where I really feel like it's kind of helped me, kind of specifically with working out my practice. That's really helped.

Charlotte 4:58

Yeah, I suppose the one to one tutorials is the thing that I find most valuable. The first term of lectures that we had, I really, really enjoyed them. They were quite long, and really detailed. And the tutor that was given them, I kind of really understood what he had to say. Our next term, we will working in groups, which, again, I think that's me being a mature student, I didn't find them as valuable as maybe the other style of of lectures.

Academic Support 5:31

Does much of your work involve collaboration?

Charlotte 5:34

I suppose to be honest, like, that's the thing that I've been most stubborn with. I'm quite a kind of...I don't know, like solitary character in life, so it's not something that I find all that easy. And especially, I don't know, just being at a different stage in life, I suppose it's like yeah, that that's the thing that I haven't really been able to push myself into yet.

Academic Support 6:00

Do you think it's a skill that is necessary or important, for anyone coming into higher education?

Charlotte 6:09

Um, I feel like I've kind of got away without pushing myself into it. But, I mean, I'm sure I would have benefited more if I would have. Yeah.

Academic Support 6:21

Much of your work is about single practice or solitary practice as well, isn't it? Do you find that you get a chance to then, even if you're not collaborating, any of your work involves discussing or sharing your work with other artists?

Charlotte 6:35

Umm, yes, so we have the group crits, which, yeah, again, I've not really been all that good in participating in. But the couple that I have been along to, yeah, they were good and I kind of kicked myself for not doing it more. Yeah.

Academic Support 6:53

So I've got a couple of questions that are not linked to your position on the course but about Charlotte, the artist or the painter. First of all, just for clarity, do you define yourself as an artist or a painter?

Charlotte 7:07

So, my course is painting and yeah, like I said, I was painting before I started the course. But pretty much as soon as I started, I stopped painting. And now my practice is video-based and sound installation, that kind of thing. And I feel like maybe it was just taking that step to go to university gave me the confidence to move into that practice. I kind of still do see my work has like a painterly style because I think a lot about painting is about reflecting the world we live in. And I think that's kind of what my practice really focuses on. So...

Academic Support 7:54

Students who are coming into university may never have experienced London or the UK before. And often we talk about this space being a hub for inspiration. Could you tell us about where you might look for inspiration, thinking about how somebody on a course at UAL, maybe not knowing London or the UK for the first time, what they might do, or how they could use the environment or, their environment, to inform their creative practice and maybe your own experiences. But what advice you might give somebody coming to the UK?

Charlotte 8:37

Yeah, I suppose this is quite an easy answer for me, really, because I think, again, my practice is quite like observational, focused on London, really. Because I grew up on the outskirts of London. And my family was from London. So it's always been the feeling of being drawn back into London, and I've lived more central London, for a long time now. And it sounds quite cliché, but like London is kind of my inspiration really. Because it's like, formed so much of me. Yeah, so I suppose a lot of my practice and like what I just enjoy to do in general, is just walk around. And I mean, you can't really fail to be, like, you know, there's just so much around you.

Academic Support 9:29

Any particular spots that you might recommend? And this could be galleries or places in in the UK that you'd say, well, actually, you know, this is a creative hub, or a place to be inspired or anything that's inspired you recently?

Charlotte 9:44

Well, I suppose it along the river ... the river is great. And, you know, there's so much life there, and you know, you so much like in the present, but the river itself, and the

architecture. Like immediately look at it and there's so many layers there, so much history, because it's kind of you're in the present that you can so easily just be taken back, you know, hundreds of years. But I think that's the same with any area of London, you've just got so many layers built up... the people, the architecture, you know, everything really.

Academic Support 10:29

When we think of the identity of an artist or who they are, what they do, how do you define yourself as an artist? You have a career or you've had a career. And so you're coming in at kind of slightly different level. How do you define yourself? Or how do you identify as as an artist or even a student? How do you introduce yourself to people? What is it that you tell ...because I mean, the thing is, there are dozens of artists, dozens of painters, so how do you define yourself as a, as a painter as an artist?

Charlotte 11:05

Umm.. I don't know, I'd have to think on that one...

Academic Support 11:10

The reason I'm asking is that maybe any advice you might want to give any, again, pre-arrival students on how they might identify as artists or as designers or as creatives, but the key thing, is any advice you can offer them, that might give them confidence in

Charlotte 11:32

I don't know, maybe it's to try to not identify yourself. Just you know ... because it's hard, once you kind of start identifying as something in particular, you know, because I suppose, maybe it applies to me, that I kind of thought to myself that I was a painter. And now maybe I'm not but I kind of think I am. But if I maybe would have labeled myself as that. I've kind of shifted from there. So, you know, maybe identifying as something is kind of, maybe, it just restricts you maybe. Yeah.

Academic Support 12:14

How do you think you might use your summer? The independent study period, or the summer break can be a long period of time.

Charlotte 12:22

And so yeah, I've got a good answer to this. Well, I'm trying to arrange to go to, well, hopefully, Italy. I've got Italian family, but my Italian is really bad and it's something that I want to work on. So I'm trying to arrange to do some work experience in a gallery in Sicily for a month in the summer. But if that doesn't work out, I hope to do a month somewhere. I've kind of been doing some volunteering since I started here. And I've been fortunate enough to not have to work. So, I've had that time to use and, you know, just trying to gain any kind of experience is really helpful because you're just exposing yourself to something that you haven't done before and then, you know, it can give you a different view on things.

Academic Support 13:09

Super. Really good way to use your summer.

Charlotte 13:12

Yeah.

Academic Support 13:13

Well, Charlotte, it's been a real pleasure. Thank you so much, and I really wish you the best

Charlotte 13:17

Thank you.

Academic Support 13:17

Brilliant. Thank you