

# From Norwich to New York: 'By Kerwin' Makes a Splash

Kerwin Blackburn (01-12) **Creative ON**



Kerwin Blackburn (01-12) marked 2022 with two milestone shows with his art business, 'By Kerwin' – firstly hosting his biggest and longest solo art exhibition to date in the school's Crypt Gallery between February and March, before jetting off stateside to exhibit his paintings and artwork internationally for the first time in New York City in June.

Kerwin's art brand is built around his signature style of pop art acrylic portraits, handpainted in a unique and exciting Jackson Pollock 'action painting' style. His paintings feature some of the most recognisable and popular faces in the world of music and pop culture, captured in a never-before-seen way.

Kerwin's exhibition at the Crypt Gallery, running for an almost 3-week stretch and billed as a homecoming show, saw his entire collection of over 40 pop art portrait acrylic paintings exhibited together for the first time, alongside his range of merchandise, clothing and handpainted vinyl records.

As well as entertaining visitors to The Close, the exhibition provided the perfect backdrop for Norwich School Art & Design and Sixth Form Business pupils to meet Kerwin and quiz him over both the creative

and commercial sides of his art journey to date. Kerwin also hosted other educational visits by local arts colleges and Private View evenings sponsored by Adnams – along with recording another appearance on BBC Radio Norfolk.

## New York State of Mind

Following his successful solo exhibition in the school's Crypt Gallery, Kerwin's focus then shifted to New York, where he participated in Saatchi Art's prestigious The Other Art Fair in Brooklyn over 4 days in June, featuring as one of 140 emerging independent artists from around the world.

This was Kerwin's first experience exhibiting his artwork internationally and saw him display the original paintings of his most popular US-focused music icons to thousands of visitors at the event and seeing his artwork head off to new homes across the United States. Not only was New York the ideal location for his vibrant pop art collection; it was also where Jackson Pollock built his art career and developed his trademark 'drip painting' style, adding extra sentimental meaning to the occasion.

Kerwin says: "These two art shows in 2022 really felt like landmark events for me; firstly hosting such a big and well-executed

exhibition in the brilliant Crypt Gallery at Norwich School – back where it all began – and then exhibiting internationally for the first time in the art capital of the world, New York, which was a fantastic experience.

"Special thanks to my former teachers that I caught up with at my Crypt exhibition and for those who toured their classes and tutorial groups around! Also big thanks to Jonathan Pearson for being my liaison throughout the Norwich School and ON Community for this – and for also using the extensive global ON network to get New York-based Adam Doy (87-97) and his wife Marzena to visit my New York show, which was a nice touch!"

Alongside his exhibitions, 2022 also saw Kerwin deliver his first speaking engagements as an artist, including a session sharing start-up tips with Norwich School's Sixth Form Young Chamber participants and a series of guest artist talks with UK-wide Access Creative College.

Kerwin's full range of paintings, videos and upcoming blog – 'Confessions of a Pop Artist', where he will be sharing insights into his journey building his art brand – can be viewed at [www.bykerwin.com](http://www.bykerwin.com), where the original paintings and prints are also available to purchase.