

London's National Gallery wants to revamp its image with the help of influencers

SOCIAL MEDIA • MUSEUMS For its bicentenary, the gallery has chosen 20 influencers to make content inspired by its collections, but some wonder if that was a good idea.



By FRANZISKA LANGE

1 IT'S NOT every day that you get to celebrate your 200th birthday. For this special event, the National Gallery in London hasn't only planned a year-long festival of art; it's also working with influencers to give itself a fresh image and pull in younger visitors.

2 In an open call last autumn, the National Gallery chose 20 influencers to become "Creative Collaborators". Those influencers got exclusive access to the gallery's collections and a £4,000 commission to make videos inspired by the gallery's treasures and the work behind the scenes.

3 The influencers – among them historians, artists, comedians and former TV show contest-



PHOTO: Getty Images

4 One TikTok video shows the

ants – started posting those videos on their social media channels in July, offering their own interpretations of famous artworks.

creative couple from Adeche Atelier@adeche.atelier painting inside the museum. In the video, they say they want to "cast a new light on stories we know and love

that can be found in the National Gallery". They did so by making paintings about African mythology that share themes with paintings in the National Gallery.

5 Alice Loxton, a historian and author who posts on TikTok and Instagram, made a video on the roof of the museum and talked about the history of the building itself, while Brett Ball quizzed staff on trivia about the gallery's collections and history for TikTok. And Lizzie Acker, a former

Great British Bake Off contestant, made cupcakes and focaccia bread inspired by Vincent van Gogh's Sunflowers to show her social media followers.

6 As different as their backgrounds are, all the influencers were chosen to make the gallery more appealing to younger people. Ellie Wyant, the National Gallery's social media and community manager, said that art collections are often seen as "quite stuffy or boring". She wants to show that "our paintings can be just as relevant as they were 400 years ago", adding, "In our 200th year, more than ever, it's important to highlight that the gallery is for everyone, everywhere."

7 Wyant believes that videos created by influencers that young people admire and trust are more likely to make them visit the gal-

lery than "try-hard" attempts from the National Gallery itself.

8 But while Ellie Wyant has found working with the influencers "endlessly exciting" and welcomes their "fresh ideas and approaches", others are less enthusiastic.

9 In the newspaper The Times, Kathleen Stock writes that while some influencers "talk with erudition about particular pictures", most just use the collaboration to promote "their personal brand". She believes that the videos reduce the gallery to a backdrop instead of putting the art in the centre.

10 Despite such criticism, more and more museums are working with influencers to draw in a younger crowd by doing things like inviting them to take pictures outside of the opening hours.

11 The National Gallery itself has even more digital engagement projects planned for its bicentenary: it wants to post on more social media platforms and provide a bigger variety of digital content, like videos, podcasts and educational events. Plans also include offering exclusive digital content for members, such as documentaries, interactive digital events and video classes about the history of art.

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s.o. in h.; jdn. (für sich) gewinnen — open call of-

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Kunstwerk — to cast a light on s.th. (fig) ein Licht

auf etw. werfen — mythology (mɪθə'lɒdʒi) — theme

(θi:m) Thema; Motiv



5-6 trivia (trɪvɪə) Wissenswertes; Funfacts — The Great British Bake Off brit. TV-Backwettbewerb

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3-4 **historian** (hi:stəri:ən) Historiker(in) — **contestant** (kən'testənt) Kandidat(in) — **artwork**

Kunstwerk — **to cast a light on s.th.** (fig) ein Licht auf etw. werfen — **mythology** (mi:θə'lədʒi) — **theme** (θi:m) Thema; Motiv

5-6 **trivia** (tri:vɪə) Wissenswertes; Funfacts — **The Great British Bake Off** brit. TV-Backwettbewerb (dt. Spin-off: „Das große Backen“) — **background** h.: berufl. Hintergrund; Laufbahn — **appealing** (ə'pi:lɪŋ) ansprechend — **social media and community manager** Verantwortliche(r) für Social Media und Betreuung der Online-Community — **stuffy** spießig — **to highlight** betonen

7-8 **try-hard** bemüht (wirkend) — **attempt**

(ə'tempt) Versuch — **endlessly** unendlich — **approach** Methode; Herangehensweise — **enthusiastic** (in'tʃu:zi:æstɪk) begeistert

9-11 **erudition** (erʊ'diʃən) Gelehrsamkeit; h.: Wissen, Expertise — **particular** (pə'tɪkjələ) bestimmt; einzeln — **to promote s.th.** für etw. werben — **backdrop** Kulisse — **criticism** (kri:tɪsɪzəm) Kritik — **to draw s.o. in** jdn. anziehen — **digital engagement project** (ɪn'ɡeɪdʒmənt) Projekt zur digitalen Interaktion — **educational** (edʒu:kətʃənəl) Bildungs-

LANGUAGE CORNER

Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

JUST PERFECT
in the classroom

By SIOBHAN BRUNS

1 THIS YEAR would be the 150th birthday of Winston Churchill, who was born on November 30, 1874. To mark this occasion, November's Language Corner features the phrase **blood, toil, tears and sweat**, which is now often shortened to **blood, sweat, and tears**.

2 This phrase is used to describe the great amount of effort put into something.

3 If someone has given all of his or her strength and abilities to a task, you could say that person has given his or her blood, sweat, and tears to the task. It's another way of saying that someone has tried their best, or perhaps even more than could be expected. The phrase was used by Churchill in the first speech he gave in the House of Commons when he was elected prime minister.

4 It was on May 13, 1940. Nazi troops were entering France and

the Low Countries. The month before, the Nazis had invaded Norway, and the British army had been unable to stop them.

5 Things did not look good for Britain when Churchill gave the speech. The nation stood alone against Adolf Hitler. Every other European leader challenged by Hitler had either backed down or been conquered, and the US and USSR had not yet joined Britain in the fight against the Nazis.

6 Rather than try to paint a positive picture about the situation, Churchill admitted how grim things were. But he understood the horror of what the world was up against.

7 Therefore, although Churchill could not promise his country victory, he could promise them that he would give them everything he had – his blood, toil, tears and sweat – to try to defeat the Nazis.

8 "I would say to the House, as I said to those who have joined this government: 'I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat.'"

9-2 **TOIL** Mühsal — **sweat** (swet) Schweiß — **to mark this occasion** (ə'keɪʒən) aus diesem Anlass — **to feature s.th.** etw. vorstellen — **phrase** (freɪz) Wendung — **to shorten s.th.** etw. verkürzen

3 **to give s.th. to a task** etw. in eine Aufgabe stecken — **strength** (streŋθ) Kraft — **speech** (spi:tʃ) Rede — **House of Commons** brit. Unterhaus — **to elect s.o.** ... (-) jdn. zum/-r ... wählen

4-5 **to enter** eindringen in — **Low Countries** Benelux-Länder — **to invade** einmarschieren in — **to challenge s.o.** jdn. herausfordern — **to back down** nachgeben — **to conquer s.o.** (kɒŋkə) jdn. besiegen — **USSR** Sowjetunion

6-8 **grim** düster — **horror** Schrecken — **to be up against s.th.** sich mit etw. konfrontiert sehen — **victory** Sieg

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