



**PRESS RELEASE, April 2008**

***Future Mix: Imagining the next generations through art and science***



Pupils at South Camden Community School working on the Future Mix Project

What is a clone? How would our approach to life change if we were able to prolong it by a hundred years? How could genes be used for medical treatment? These are some of the questions explored in *Future Mix*, an engaging and topical web-resource for young people on current advancements in genetic research. Through the imaginative lens of the visual arts, themes including cloning, gene therapy, extreme life extension and synthetic biology were explored.

*Future Mix* is a joint project, funded by the Wellcome Trust, between Artakt, Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, University of the Arts London, South Camden Community School (SCCS a Specialist Arts College), scientist Dr Chris Mason (Advanced Centre for Biochemical Engineering, UCL), social scientist Prof. Sarah Franklin (BIOS Centre, London School of Economics), and artist and film-maker Carl Stevenson. Aimed at an age group between 12 and 17, the resource has been devised both as a tool for teachers to use in the classroom, as well as for interested individuals.

The website, [www.futuremix.co.uk](http://www.futuremix.co.uk), hosts a range of informative and exploratory articles and activities based on a related artist/scientist residency at South Camden Community School, London. As part of this residency Year 10 art and science pupils worked with Dr. Chris Mason (UCL), a leading researcher in the areas of stem cell and regenerative medicine, and Prof. Sarah Franklin, an authority on genetic technology and author of *Dolly Mixtures: The Remaking of Genealogy* (2007). Together they presented pupils with examples of recent developments in stem cell and genetic manipulation, introducing their potential future applications as well as the many issues that the science raises. In collaboration with artist and filmmaker Carl Stevenson, the pupils took part in a range of creative activities through which they engaged with and better understood the topics discussed.

A downloadable series of information sheets with related creative activities has now been developed out of the *Future Mix* school residency programme, and is freely available to all. Under the four themes of Cloning, Gene Therapy, Extreme Life Extension, Synthetic Biology, and Art/Science, the series informs, facilitates discussion, and initiates creative interpretation about recent achievements, current research as well as future developments in animal hybrids, human embryo research and genetic manipulation. They explain key scientific concepts, address the concerns and potentials of these topics, and propose a range of creative activities including a discussion blog around the potential issues of being a clone, creating a plaster-cast cloned hand and imagining of a 300 year old with the body of 21 year old.

The *Future Mix* website also shows the digital artwork created by the pupils as part of the school residency, has a blog on the development of the project, and lists the series of related events run in collaboration with the Royal Institution of Great Britain.

**Note to the editor:**

- For more information or for interviews please contact Caterina Albano: [caterina@artakt.co.uk](mailto:caterina@artakt.co.uk); 02075148718
- Future Mix was devised and managed by Dr Caterina Albano and Rowan Drury for Artakt, Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, University of the Arts London.
- All activities were devised and written by Mike Flynn.
- Funded by the Wellcome Trust, the largest charity in the UK. It funds innovative biomedical research, in the UK and internationally, spending around £650 million each year to support the brightest scientists with the best ideas. The Wellcome Trust supports public debate about biomedical research and its impact on health and wellbeing.
- To arrange interviews with Dr. Chris Mason please contact Dave Weston in the UCL Press Office, [d.weston@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:d.weston@ucl.ac.uk), 02076797678; or with Prof. Sarah Franklin please contact [s.franklin@lse.ac.uk](mailto:s.franklin@lse.ac.uk), 02079556465

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community school

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Arts London \* \*  
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