

Gallery's swastika art display sparks unease

Some passers-by offended by Nazi symbol

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Shocked passers-by have been "frightened" by the sight of swastikas in the window display of a Haggerston gallery.

The Nazi symbols, often used by racist far-right groups, were painted on the window at the Hundred Years Gallery in Pearson Street as part of a temporary exhibition called Human Glue.

A concerned resident contacted the *Gazette* after spotting the floral cartoons with swastika eyes, which were created three weeks ago.

'Frightened'

She said she was stunned to see the symbol in Hackney, which has a large Jewish population, just weeks before the borough is set to welcome foreign visitors to the Olympics. She added: "I cannot feel more frightened and worried."

The ancient symbol has been used by many cultures and is still used by several Indian religions, such as Hinduism, where it usually represents auspiciousness.



■ The swastika artwork in the window of the Hundred Years Gallery

But in Europe, the sign is linked with Germany's Nazi party, which systematically murdered Jews and members of other social groups from the late 1930s until the end of the Second World War.

The artist, Johnny Cole, said: "It wasn't meant to shock or frighten anybody."

"I had an important point to make about the changing face of fascism. Today, the British National Party is trying to be user-friendly, but it's the same old stuff. So I've taken these cute little creatures, and given them swastika eyes to show they're as bad as they've ever been."

Mr Cole said most people "get" the work, but if it sparks conversations among passers-by "it's done its job".

The gallery's director, Montse Gallego, said she tried to explain the work to anyone offended by it.

"In general they don't want to listen," she said. "They just stick on their offence - that is another way to perpetuate and generate totalitarianism and intolerance."

The display is due to be removed next week.



■ Mossbourne students, teachers and Hackney police officers with some of the hanging baskets

School brightened up by pupil's generosity

A kindhearted student who won a £200 prize spent her winnings on pretty hanging baskets for her school.

Mossbourne Academy pupil Nicole Mathurin, 16, received the money from the Jack Petchey Foundation, an educational charity, when

she picked up an achievement award for her hard work.

Nicole was invited to spend the money on a school or community project of her choice, and decided to allocate the funds to a hanging basket project at

her school in Downs Park Road, Lower Clapton, on Thursday, June 1.

Local police officers who also attended the event helped Nicole and some other students plant the baskets before enjoying a buffet lunch.

Student mingles with elite at jubilee lunch

A Stamford Hill student rubbed shoulders with royalty when she attended an exclusive Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebration lunch.

Sixth former Samroz Tandel, was chosen to represent Skinners' Academy, Woodberry Grove, at the special lunch at Westminster Hall by the school's sponsors, The Worshipful Company of Skinners.

Miss Tandel said: "It was such a grand event, a 'very elegant' event. The Queen entered to a trumpet fanfare and the meal ended with everyone singing the national anthem."

Nursery set to mark its 30th anniversary

Toddlers are getting ready to enjoy a 30th birthday party - because their nursery school is preparing a bash to celebrate its anniversary.

The Fire Station Community Nursery, a registered charity that has been looking after youngsters on the site of a former fire station in Stoke Newington for three decades, will be throwing the party on Saturday, July 7.

The event at the nursery, in Leswin Road, will run from noon to 4pm.

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Thurs 26th July 2012
5.00pm - 8.00pm
Enfield Baptist Church
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