

Over £31,000 raised for The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity by Sophie's Secret Postcard Art Auction

St Richard's Catholic College fundraiser in memory of former pupil, Sophie

The original Sophie's Secret Postcard auction was held in 2018 and raised £15,000 taking the current total raised by St Richard's Catholic College, in memory of Sophie, to an astounding £46,000 for The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity.

While Sophie's Secret Postcard eBay auction is now over, raising a phenomenal £31,000 for the Royal Marsden, the task of sending out all 1096 postcards to the successful bidders is now a priority for Miranda Pennington, a fine arts teacher at St Richard's Catholic College and the Coordinator of this extraordinary project in memory of a very special little girl, Sophie Maria Taylor (06.08.2004 - 05.04.2017)

Sophie's parent's James and Luiza Taylor said, "It was fantastic and overwhelming to see so many people creating and bidding for these amazing postcards for such a good cause. It was a lovely way to remember Sophie and she would be very proud of everyone who got involved!"

Coordinator Miranda Pennington said, "It's been an incredible experience, and has inspired many people during the lockdown. So many wonderful artists donated the most amazing artwork in Sophie's memory. The secret art auction which was held on Saturday #sophiespostcard2020 was shared extensively in the press and on social media and there were thousands of bidders taking part from all around the world,"

Thomas Taylor, internationally-acclaimed children's author and illustrator, had the winning postcard in 2018 raising £1,071,51 with an original illustration of Harry Potter based on his own jacket design for Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, first published in 1997. For #sophiespostcard2020, Thomas again painted Harry Potter, this time with Hedwig the owl: it raised an astonishing £2,050 along with a fabulous illustration of 00000 from his new bestselling Trilogy, 'Malamander' featuring Herbert Lemon, an eccentric seaside hotelier and the fragrant Violet Palma. The lucky winner of this work, Brian Wiseman from the USA, said, "I am ecstatic to have won this amazing piece of art by Thomas Taylor! I am also more than thrilled to have helped support the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity!"

Sir Quentin Blake first took part in 2018, when his two enchanting illustrations were bought by one bidder for £1,250. This time Sir Quentin donated three charming illustrations which raised an unbelievable total of £3,710.

Talented art student, Will Jones, won the highest priced work from a pupil, raising £173 for his two illustrations depicting the plague doctor. Staff, pupils and parents from St Richard's Catholic College added thousands to the final total with their artwork.

The Principal, Miss Cronin, expressed her astonishment at not only the quantity of postcards submitted to the auction but the final total raised which beat all previous school records for annual fundraising. "This is a wonderful outcome for The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, who were not only a great support to Sophie and her family but have supported a number of other children and families in the school community too. I would like to thank all the artists for sharing their talents and their generosity and all those who bid for a postcard raising such a phenomenal sum. I would also like to pay tribute to Fine Art teacher, Ms Pennington, who has worked tirelessly over the past 18 months to bring this auction to fruition. Her serene, meticulous approach has been inspirational to watch. The auction is now set in stone as a feature of the art world's calendar so I know that she is already thinking of organising another one in the future, not only to showcase a range of famous and not-so-famous (yet) art work but to keep Sophie's memory alive, whilst supporting the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity. The whole school community is absolutely thrilled with the success of the auction."

Readers curious as to whose postcards belonged to which artists and how much they raised can explore the lists published on www.sophiespostcard.com.

A catalogue of all the incredible works and artists who took part in the auction is being created at the moment and can be pre-ordered for just £15 via [sophiessecretpostcardauction](https://www.ebay.com/itm/sophiessecretpostcardauction) on eBay or on the website www.sophiespostcard.com The deadline to order is 24th July 2020 when the catalogue will be sent to print, ready for posting during August.

St Richard's Catholic College would like to thank all the wonderful artists who donated work and everyone who took part in the auction on Saturday.