



Computer Gaming Metropolis

Manchester could be renamed 'Computer Gaming Metropolis' according to the Chief Executive of Access Creative College Adrian Armstrong who helped run a series of workshops at St. Ambrose College.

Speaking at the Hale Barns Catholic Grammar School's annual creative arts festival, a two day event, to raise awareness of one of Britain's greatest success stories, Adrian said: "The North-West of England is one of the world's leading centres for the computer games industry. We've always done well as a nation at out of box thinking, being left field, and that's one of the skills sets that is essential in computer games design. We want to the young men at St. Ambrose to know that creative industries in this region just can't get enough good people."

He added: "There are three specific skills sets they will require: fine artists, very much left brain thinkers; games designers, which combines both the imaginative left brain skills and the more logical right sided dominance and coders, right-sided, logical thinkers. In other words they want people right across the skills spectrum for an industry that is set to expand."



Mair Bull, Adrian Armstrong and would be games designer Anashe Chikara take a closer look at virtual reality games design.

Head of Games and Media Mikael Hellberg, who designs the courses for the 16 plus age range at the eight Access Creative Colleges in the U.K., including one in Manchester, showed the young men an entry level sculpting package and a more advanced level virtual reality package, which help create the type of games currently enjoying exponential growth in world wide markets.

Mikael, who came to Manchester from Sweden, said: "It's remarkable how many people in Britain are involved in the computer games industry, probably as many in the U.K. as the whole of Europe put together and that's why I came here to be at centre of innovation." He added: "There are now more people working in the computer games industry than in the music and film and TV industries combined."

However, for the musicians the two day arts festival also ran a music technology workshop showing the young men the skills that back up modern production and how former students such as Ed Sheeran and Rita Ora. First developed their skills in the recording studios."

Altrincham based singer songwriter and actor Josh Jorritsma said: "I'd love to perform, but I'd also love to manage a band and the more technical skills I can acquire now the better."

Mair Bull, Head of Drama at St. Ambrose College, who organised the festival said: "The creative industries are the fastest growing part of the UK's economy, worth £92bn per year. Companies like Apple, Google and Facebook need the 'soft skills' that studying the Arts develops such as critical thinking, team work and curiosity for example."



Joshua Jorritsma plays at the music workshop.



In addition to the music and gaming workshops, GCSE and A-level Art, Music and Drama students listened to talks on the careers by publisher Natalie Williams, Director of University of Wales Press,, designer Jason West, of WDC Creative and Video Game expert Mikael Hellberg of Access Creative College.

There were also a performance and workshop of 'Metamorphosis' by Splendid Productions and GCSE taster sessions for 2nd years in Art, Music and Drama with the Art session led by professional artist and musician Gideon Conn.

Gideon Conn with a second year artist, Casper Kuhwald