

Art of the Possible



described by Keith Hebden who led the Green Christian retreat in June; as we lose and find ourselves in the broken world around us we can participate in it and conspire with it, for the common good.

So in this issue, we have gathered stories of creative collaborations and technological ingenuity; how dancing, painting, designing and story-telling can be used to create generous, innovative ways of being in community, with each other and all Creation. We can forget how to play as we get older; yet it is our creative birth-right and the source of all true learning and growth. Let's be inspired, take some risky, playful, daring steps and dance into a better future.

“Reason is a wonderful instrument but it rarely touches the human heart” writes Paul Kingsnorth in Lucy Neal’s *Playing for Time; making Art as if the World Mattered*. Jesus certainly knew this, as did the prophets. They communicated through parables and riddles, in drama and debate, both narrating and embodying stories of challenge and healing. For it is an emotional engagement, going beyond mere information, that prompts a response, a change of heart.

Likewise, artful creativity enables us to respond and engage with environmental concerns. The Green Project does this through dance, whilst the *Little Colouring Books of Climate Mindfulness* (see our front cover) provocatively invite a careful colouring in of predicted future UK climate scenarios (rising temperatures, summer droughts, winter floods) in what must be a strange juxtaposition of apprehension and calm.

Our emotional response to these challenges could easily become a gloomy despair, yet art can also challenge and inspire us to find solutions. In Christine Bainbridge’s underwater fantasy, the mysterious “ledgers” under the ocean loom ominous and threatening, causing pain and destruction. What are they exactly? Catalogues of environmental disaster? Our subconscious denial? The story remains cryptic yet we relate to the narrator’s sense of feeling overwhelmed, paralysed by inadequacy.

But in pulling us out of our everyday lives and into this submarine place of beauty and pain, a space is created where the dismal logic of failure can be ditched. It invites us to see differently, and like the storyteller, find our focus, our particular talents and start taking hopeful steps.

This is part of “being enchanted”, as

Instead of the usual trio of editors it’s just me, Clare Redfern, in the photo above, posing outside Tate Modern where there is a wonderful collection of art related to social and political change. My fellow editors, Suzy and Simon are definitely still on board and vital to the production of each issue. We also have a new book review editor Tanya Jones and are very grateful to her for taking on this role.



Our book review editor, Tanya Jones.