

# The Social and Therapeutic Arts



Cranstoun City Roads  
Rehabilitation Centre, London

## Public and social art

Perhaps a garden is best considered as a precise point of connection between a human and the earth' Proverb.

Art making and community gardens, produced by individuals and groups within a community, create their own reality, represent themselves and thus challenge the cultural/ agricultural hegemony. Cultural value and its link to status is embedded in the built environment, and the artifacts and signs therein carry a meaning to residents and others. If we see art as cultural activism, challenging materialism and passive consumption, then we begin to create subjective social fiction and vision.

### The Collective self

Engaging in participatory processes such as art creation that is socially responsible is transformative and healing.

This piece was conceived as a memorial to those who lost their lives to substance use, though it also a testament to the process of survival in the face of adversity.

The mosaic was made with over a hundred clients. The process enabled individual's expressions to be made permanent, at a critical stage in their lives ►





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and produced this collective image. The written material is extremely moving and indicative of integration, in the process of recovery between repression and expression, using the metaphor of mosaic as bringing together pieces to create a new whole.

## Home

Oversized 3- seater settee and foot stool: cement, mosaic and printed tile. Acton Community Forum, London  
Working with a variety of groups to create mosaic seating in a parkland that celebrates Acton's rich heritage and considers current changes.



'Home' settee and detail. Acton Heritage Project.





# Sustainable communities

**“Whenever we engage in consumption or production patterns which take more than we need, we are engaging in violence.”**

Vandana Shiva, *Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability, and Peace*

Through an exploration of our relationship to the natural world and the legitimacy of an emotional response to the earth we have the possibility of moving from counter activity to proactive processes, such as garden creation, forestry and ‘rewilding’, alongside social intervention through psychotherapy, as a form of micro politics.



Raised food growing beds. Potter's Fields Park



Public footpath sign

“I walked along a highway. I was looking for a place to sit down, for some grass I could walk in, for a wood I could explore. I walked for hours. All land on both sides of the highway, cultivated and wild, was private. I had to keep walking on the highway. I thought that people today when they move move only by car, train, boat, or plane and so move only on roads. They perceive only the roads, the map, the prison. I think it's becoming harder to get off the roads.”

Kathy Acker



Seating and food beds, Bolnore

**“...no one should have to travel far to seek refuge from the ordered world”**

George Monbiot



# Community Development

“Don’t mourn, organise”

Jo Hill

Karen has twenty years experience of working within artist’s collectives, education and mental health services prior to qualifying as an Art Psychotherapist. ‘I have initiated new projects including outreach work; establishing new partnerships, and the creation and facilitation of new collaborations’.



‘Somewhere’ Artists at University of Cambridge Archaeology department public - art project to create a ‘model village of the future’



Victoria and Albert Museum The Treatment Rooms Collective.

Facades and step texts commissioned for Disobedient Objects Show

Links: <https://www.facebook.com/TheTreatmentRoomsCollective?fref=ts>

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/exhibitions/disobedient-objects/ceramic-intervention-on-the-v-and-a-facade/>

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/exhibitions/disobedient-objects/disobedient-objects-about-the-exhibition/>

Tomorrow Today with ‘Somewhere’ Artists at University of Cambridge Archaeology department, the ancient & sustainable technique of cob building from the UK’s leading experts, an amazing public art project to create a ‘model village of the future’ from the subsoil generated by the archaeological investigations. A walk-through scale model of the paths, houses & shops planned for the future of the site.

See more at:

<http://www.nwcambridgeart.com/artist-residencies/blog/enjoy-tomorrow-today-somewhere/#sthash.FLmCqnyi.dpuf>



Artexpartell, Berazategui, Buenos Aires Province, Argentina. International Public Art collaboration



# Art in education

**“The problem with education? Children aren’t feral enough”** Monbiot



Bradstow School, Kent. The creation of earth ovens and a Roman kiln for community events.

We work with schools and communities to make sculptures, seating, growing areas, ritual spaces- domes and willow tunnels and a ‘nettle’ experience of making food, fertilizer and an exploration of the habitat they provide.



Raw materials for a new food growing space

A positive cycle of learning is fuelled by curiosity and the pleasure that comes from discovery and competence, played out in the ‘outdoors’

# Art Psychotherapy

Karen is an Art Psychotherapist working within clinical settings and the community context.

Having participated in a rigorous and enriching training and subsequent practice, which includes depth work of an experiential, clinical and academic nature, I am able to use a variety of skills to work within the therapeutic process. I practice with respect and sensitivity for the individual and with groups, and have found that psychotherapy has deepened my awareness and recognition of how we can suffer and yet how profoundly we are able to find our way back.

I have worked to reduce stigma and promote awareness of mental health issues in the community and have sought out the means of expression in group and individual work in a wide variety of settings.

I aim to create dialogue between seemingly disparate groups, e.g. collaborations between psychiatric hospitals and schools to produce permanent, public artworks, working to showcase and highlight work produced by marginalised groups.

In clinical work, the containing and mediating function of the artwork is evident, its use as a means of engaging clients in a processual and communicative space, enabling an overcoming of psychic defences and resistances to facilitate relational possibilities.



# Karen Francesca

Personal work is informed by all of the above.

My work addresses issues around land and resources and the social implications of environmental degradation. I am interested in accessible, public artworks in urban and green spaces, also in gallery and unused space.

Urban spaces and landscapes are shared cultural phenomena, and I aim to promote social experiences and interventions that reflect our common values and are a communion with a historic self. Where the audience's role is non-participatory I aim to convey a sense of engagement with the work through

the processes and materials employed in construction.

I am currently Resident Artist at Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World. International Year of Soil

for more info go to:

[www.ccanw.co.uk](http://www.ccanw.co.uk/assets/files/Soil%20Culture%20AR/soil_culture_press_release_26_feb-2015.pdf) [http://www.ccanw.co.uk/assets/files/Soil%20Culture%20AR/soil\\_culture\\_press\\_release\\_26\\_feb-2015.pdf](http://www.ccanw.co.uk/assets/files/Soil%20Culture%20AR/soil_culture_press_release_26_feb-2015.pdf)

My work seeks to point to the physical reality of our lives; to create both a sense of wonder and urgency about our current situation on earth.



Chaise longue/ day bed. Wood with inlaid mosaic





Utopia Food Garden at Whitecross St Art party

These objects aim to explore the boundary between interior/ domestic and exterior/wild spaces. This 'furniture' serves to question notions of comfort and sensual pleasure and its confines, and draw attention to the materiality of our lives in relation to food, hunger, sexuality and survival and what may be described as feral.

Wild boar Ceramic with printed surface



'Practice and production' Larch wood and ceramic loaves



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