

Campaign for Empathy: A Message



The Campaign for Empathy bike in North Cambridge, photo: My Linh Le.

The “Campaign for Empathy: A Message” is a travelling audio artwork spreading messages of hope, joy, togetherness and empathy from the future generation, in their own voices and their own words. The messages are recorded with local pupils from Grove Primary School in King’s Hedges, who share their words of encouragement out to their neighbourhoods. The artwork was devised by Kettle’s Yard Artist in Residence for the local community, Enni-Kukka Tuomala.

To mark national Empathy Day, pupils at the Grove Primary worked over the week with artist Enni-Kukka Tuomala to explore empathy in their revamped school settings. Enni, who is based in London, joined the class virtually over pre-recorded videos and shared creative activities through the school.

One special element of the project was recording messages from the children to give hope to their local community in Kings Hedges and Arbury. These messages were shared from a loud speaker from a specially adapted bike which travelled to mark what would have been Arbury Carnival, the popular local event which normally brings everyone together in North Cambridge. The messages included encouragement for the community, personal thanks to neighbours who have been helping individual families, and also a group thank you to the NHS.

One by-stander mentioned: *“I would normally be manning my stall at Arbury Carnival. Its so lovely to hear these messages and to bring a smile to our faces.”*

Another mentioned, *“Even though we are not in lockdown any more, it is a great way to help those who are feeling isolated and give them hope. Thank you.”*

The bicycle was joined by members of the Arbury Carnival committee and carnival host, Jezo, to bring the carnival feeling to everyone social distancing at home. People also dressed up at home and shared images to develop a ‘virtual procession’. This was supported by video tutorials by Kettle’s Yard artist Anu Ann showing people how to make carnival head-dresses at home!

Following a series of workshops with local community groups, members of the Open House community panel selected artist Enni-Kukka Tuomala as the next Open House Artist in Residence for North Cambridge. Enni-Kukka Tuomala will be working with communities in North Cambridge to creatively respond to the local area from now until March 2021.

Tuomala describes herself as an empathy designer and artist. Tuomala aims to make North Cambridge the most empathetic community in the UK by working with individuals and community groups who are based in the area. Kettle’s Yard and Open House are delighted to welcome her to North Cambridge to work locally over the next few months.

Notes to Editors

For all PRESS and PHOTO enquiries please contact
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About Enni-Kukka Tuomala

Enni-Kukka Tuomala is a Finnish Empathy Artist and Designer based in London. Her vision is to transform empathy from an individual feeling to a collective power across age, gender, race and culture to tackle some of the biggest global challenges facing us today. To do this she launched a series of artworks, experiments, communications, games and tools to channel the radical impact of issue-based empathy to create positive social change.

Having created empathy work in London, Tokyo, New York and Helsinki, Tuomala's collaborative and research-based practice builds on understanding and investigating the delicate relationships between empathy, culture, space and systems. Her work aims to break taboos and challenge social, cultural and behavioural norms in order to remove barriers to difficult conversations and bridge the growing divides in our communities. She has worked with the Finnish Parliament since 2018 to bring empathy into politics, collaborating with six Members of Parliament to create Empatia Ele; a collection of empathy tools for politics. Tuomala has also created empathy commissions for the likes of the BBC, Greater London Authority, Bath University, LIFT, Bow Arts and Virgin, including challenging 50 global Virgin CEOs to a series of empathy exercises as a part of the Embodying Empathy installation. She launched the first iteration of the Campaign for Empathy in the London borough of Newham in March 2019 as part of a residency at Bow Arts' RAW Labs. A graduate of the Royal College of Art, London, Tuomala recently installed her first permanent public artwork in London and her work is currently exhibited at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

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About Open House

Open House is a long-term creative programme in partnership with communities in North Cambridge and Kettle's Yard. Each year we work with an 'Artist in Residence' who is selected by people who live and work in North Cambridge to deliver an exciting and innovative programme of arts activities. Open House is funded by Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Cambridge City Council.

www.kettlesyard.co.uk/learn/open-house-artist-residency/
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About Kettle's Yard

Kettle's Yard is one of Britain's best galleries - a beautiful and unique house with a distinctive modern art collection, and a gallery exhibiting modern and contemporary art. Supporting this is an established learning and community engagement programme, archive, and programme of chamber concerts. In February 2018, Kettle's Yard reopened after a two year development by architect Jamie Fobert. The new Kettle's Yard includes state of the art new exhibition galleries, generous education spaces, a café and new welcome areas. Kettle's Yard's mission is to contribute to society by inspiring and engaging audiences through art, learning and research of the highest quality. We believe that great art should not be the privilege of the few, but for everyone. Our values reflect Kettle's Yard's creator Jim Ede's support for artists and belief in art's power to make us look again and change how we act in the world.

Open House forms a key part of Kettle's Yard commitment to build a dynamic and creative long-term relationship with its neighbouring communities of North Cambridge.

kettlesyard.co.uk

About Esmée Fairbairn

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation aims to improve the quality of life for people and communities throughout the UK both now and in the future. They do this by funding the charitable work of organisations that are building an inclusive, creative and sustainable society.

The Foundation is one of the largest independent grant-makers in the UK. In 2017 they made grants of £40.5 million towards a wide range of work within the arts, children and young people, the environment and social change. They also have a £45 million allocation to social investments for organisations with the aim of creating social impact.

esmefairbairn.org.uk



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