

Art for Wellbeing

Ann Soo and Saide Cameron hosted the first 'Art for Wellbeing' session on **Saturday 12th September** on Zoom. The focus of the session was enhancing our wellbeing through the medium of art. We were privileged to do so by engaging with three of Graeme Laming's painting.

It was such a delight to have Graeme participating in the session with us. Graeme expressed his delight in being

able to show his work. He explained that he paints with great care but there is no special way to look at his work. Graeme paints with a deep love of colours and light and this was very evident in the works we reflected on during the session. Beginning the focus session Ann invited us to be present and attentive to Graeme's work, to view the art together, to allow the work to speak to us and then

to share our responses if we wished. We viewed the works one at a time. Ann offered a guided contemplation which was followed by a period of silence. Following a time of sharing Ann then invited participants to offer a name for the painting. Saide concluded offering a gathered reflection on the shared responses.



Suggested titles:

- Contemplation
- Peaceful contemplation
- The beauty of silence
- Wellsprings
- Hope
- Joy of Life
- New journeys
- Into the new

This work invited us to contemplation, we found in it peace, tranquillity, agelessness, reflection, serenity. We heard bird song and chanting. We saw light and shadow, the colours of spring. We felt the miracle of being at once one's centre of the universe and yet sharing that centre with those around us. We experienced an invitation to move through the archway and into new life beyond isolation.

Graeme offered his gratitude for the session commenting that he had got a lot from what was said. He shared that the angel is a self-portrait from a time when he was at his lowest ebb. He began to get better after this having experienced that he didn't have to suffer alone. The first painting he calls 'Meditation in solitude' which was painted when he was spending time with the Carmelite nuns. The second painting is for him an experience of inner light, a bit like a stain glass window. Graeme works between paintings and doesn't know what he is trying to say in them. He expressed his gratitude again for all that had been shared saying that he has been in a bit of a dry spell lately. Graeme says that painting is good for his mental health. He encouraged us to 'paint what you feel yourself'.



Suggested titles

- Life in the city
- Gentleness
- Composition in a minor key
- Fractured light of colour
- Cityscape
- All into one
- Turmoil to peace

We saw colour, gentleness, balance, a blendedness. We were drawn deeply into the centre where we found turmoil and confusion and then an invitation to move out, to take the essence of the world with its clashes of colour and movement into the most important world - the interior one - the one when eyes are shut and the mind is open.



Suggested titles

- An angel on my shoulder
- Liminal Space
- Here for you
- Beside you
- The touch of comfort
- There for you
- Winged hope

We saw healing being offered in a time of pain, comfort, a liminal space. We saw light. We felt hope. We experienced reassurance that we are not alone. We heard the message of renaissance - we can be reborn at any instant - even in the darkness.

Ann thanked everyone (Jane, Meredith, Gwen, Phil, Leanne, Helen) for joining the session, Graeme for sharing his work and Joanne, his support worker.

We look forward to further Art for Wellbeing sessions. If you have any ideas for art in any medium to reflect on please let one of us know.

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