PASSION FOR THE PLANET

Friends Meeting House, Butter Hill,
South Street, Dorking, RH4 2LE

21 to 28 October 2023

Programme

A story of two communities

Passion for the Planet first saw the light of day when Damn Cheek were asked to come up with a community show for the Gateshead parish of Felling during lockdown. Planning and preparation were all on Zoom. Community groups, churches and schools produced their contributions in their bubbles. The promenade round the venue – Christ Church in Felling – was in the then mandated groups of six.

The success of the show led to more collaborations with our Gateshead friends and to a desire to stage it again elsewhere. And where better than the Mole Valley, where Tony Earnshaw – the show's writer and Damn Cheek director – is a long-term resident.

The Mole Valley community rose to the challenge and Damn Cheek soon had a venue, co-producers and a range of supportive groups and individuals. The Dorking Meeting of the Society of Friends became the lead co-producer. It provided the venue, a beautiful historic meeting house in the heart of Dorking, as well as planning, financial – and moral – support.

The team then got to work on adjusting the script. This was needed first to allow for the different venue – Felling church and Dorking Meeting House are very different buildings and the site-specific promenade meant some changes were needed. The second change was to incorporate the different community, with Gateshead specifics removed and Mole Valley concerns included.

Passion for the Planet looks at our world, the need to care for it, the teachings of the major faiths and philosophies about creation, care and creativity, and poses questions about our behaviours and the legacy we want to leave – serious issues handled with care and a generous leavening of fun.

The list of community groups and individuals who have helped along the way is long and all their efforts are very much appreciated. They range from the Quakers to Circular Dorking, from writing groups to choirs, and from business groups to the team at Arts Alive.

Darren Cheek, Karen Spicer and Helen Potter rehearsing their dance moves!

Darren being upstaged by one of the many puppets that feature in the show...

The cast in discussion with Designer Chris de Wilde in rehearsals.

The people in - and behind - the show

Performers

Helen Potter
Karen Spicer
Darren Cheek

Creative

Stage Manager	Stephen Thompson
Designer	Chris de Wilde
Director	Darren Cheek
Associate Director	Willie Elliott
Trainee Assistant Director	Pippa Lilly Banks
Scriptwriter	Tony Earnshaw
Original music	Helen Potter with contributions from Eloise Kay
Musical Director	Helen Potter
Construction and risk assessment	Pete Sergeant
Schools facilitator	Vicky Tearle
Puppet Maker (Pollution Monster)	Rosemary Horton
Schools liaison	Keith Stride
Volunteer coordination	Dee Smith
Singer coordination	Barbara Christopher
Communications	Simone Tout
Construction support	Stuart Kerr
Trainee Assistant Stage Manager	John Allen

Front of house and stage management team

Jo Higginson, Nigel Bond, Keith Stride, Sue Bond, Robin Elias, Sally Elias, Anne Draper, Dee Smith, Simon Davy, Tim Gibbons, Judith Packer, Sophie Roberts, Chris Turpin, Daniel Lau, Susan Quilliam, John Allen, Pippa Banks, Sue Tanton and Sally McCormack.

Singers

Alan Smallwood, Barbara Christopher, Carole Brough Fuller, Charles Wheeler, David Wheatley, Ed Criswick, Estelle Earnshaw, Helena Twentyman, Judy Peace, Julienne Welsh, Mary Suckling, Phillipa Snell, Jo Peace, Lottie Child, Alison Carlier, Sarah Jane Weston Holland, Reuben Suckling, Robin Luff, Romey Criswick, Stephen Williams and Sue Tanton.

Box office	Ann Brewer
Web design	Howard Gossington
Flyer/poster design	Nadine Harris

The people in - and behind - the show

Producers

Tony Earnshaw and Darren Cheek with production support, advice, funding work and much more provided by Damn Cheek directors Susan Quilliam and Karen Spicer.

Biographies

Biographies of the Damn Cheek creative team can be found at https://damncheek.co.uk/productions/passion-for-the-planet-dorking-2023/creative-team

Artwork and poetry

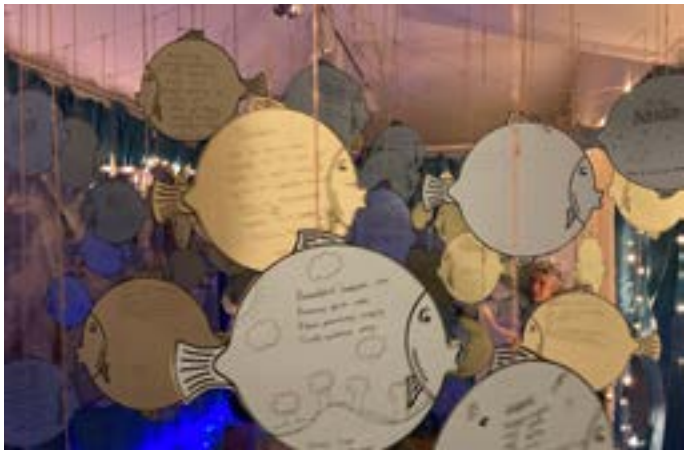
The artwork and poetry in the installations were produced during workshops and creative sessions at Pippfest and the Arts Alive launch, and in workshops with TAG and the children and young people of:

- Dorking MyTime
- The Young Quakers
- Therfield School
- St John's Primary School (North Holmwood)
- St Paul's Primary School (Dorking)
- The Weald Primary School (Beare Green)
- Leatherhead Trinity School
- Greville Primary School (Ashtead)
- Surrey Hills All Saints Primary School (Westcott)

The poems in the tree as you approach the Meeting House were contributed by members of Mole Valley Poets, leaves to a tree, Phoenix Writers, The Narnia Group, and others. The poems will feature, alongside the children's work, in a legacy book to be produced after the run of the show finishes.

Self-portraits by local children and adults produced in our creative workshops.

Clay model protesters carrying powerful messages about saving our planet.



Poems on 'wish fishes' written by local school children that feature in the production.

Our funders and supporters

The production has been made possible by the support and encouragement of many people:

The core project group

- For the Quakers – Geoff Squire, Ann Brewer, Sarah Freeman, Nigel Bond, Sue Bond, Katy Nunn, Lucy Barford, Judy Johnson and Rosemary Elias
- For Nower Productions – Keith Stride, Dee Smith and Chris Turpin
- For Damn Cheek – Tony Earnshaw, Darren Cheek and Chris de Wilde
- Community representatives – Mary Huggins, Wendy Saunders and Barbara Christopher

The wider steering group

Pat Smith, Jo Higginson, Claire Malcomson, Tim Mercer, Jim Tucker, Sally Elias, Judith Packer, John Arnold, Alex Birch, Simon Edmands, Jakki Philips, Jenni Williams and the many others who couldn't attend meetings but supported from the sidelines.

The launch participants

- Our speakers – Pat Smith for River Mole River Watch and Angela Docherty for New Ways
- Our poets – Jenni Williams, Sally Elias, Liz Barton and Tony Earnshaw
- Our singers – Brockham Choral's small group and Birch Tree Folk Choir (now the Wild Choir)

The hosts

Hospitality for cast and crew has been kindly provided by Val and Greg Praud, Edwin and Ann-Christine Harland, Jan and Rosemary Elias, Dee Smith and Simon Davy, and John and Penelope Arnold.

Special thanks

... are due to Mary Huggins, Sally Elias, Pat Smith, Simon Edmands and Wendy Saunders who helped with building the network, publicity and in many other ways, to Simon Keats who will be filming the show, to Jenny Monro for photography, Lisa Remmer for the storyteller's cloak, Deb Elliott for the River Mole banner, Robin Jago for work on the legacy book, and the Life Art group for forgoing their normal session and drawing our (clothed) performers in rehearsal.

Our funders and supporters

The organisations

Many local community groups and businesses helped by supporting in a number of ways. Our thanks to:

- Circular Dorking
- River Mole River Watch
- Brockham Choral
- Mole Valley Poets
- leaves to a tree haiku group
- Phoenix Writers
- Mole Valley Scriptwriters
- Society of Authors Surrey Group
- The Narnia Group
- Dorking Climate Emergency
- Green Westcott
- Dorking Business Breakfast Group
- Dorking Rotary
- Leatherhead Rotary
- Dorking Guerilla Knitters
- The Wild Choir
- Mole Valley Cycling Forum
- Mole Valley Arts Alive
- Squiggle Design
- Wates Builders
- Waitrose
- Bullimores
- Dapper and Suave
- Dorking Wanderers
- Dorking Choral Society
- Martineau Singers
- Mickleham Choral Society
- The Ladybirds
- S C Fuller
- Kangarooz

Funding

The project has been funded by:

- donations from individuals and groups including the Damn Cheek Angels, Dorking Business Breakfast Group, Dorking Rotary, the Dorking Quakers Wednesday group, Circular Dorking and The Arts Society Dorking
- goods and services provided in kind, including the venue itself provided for no hire charge
- grants of funding from the Sylvia Waddilove Foundation, Mole Valley District Council Prosperity Fund, Surrey County Council via the Councillor Community Fund, Dorking Quaker Meeting, West Weald Quaker Meeting, and Mole Valley Arts Alive

Our thanks to all of these and especially to County Councillor Stephen Cooksey and to Rosemary Elias for their support in obtaining these grants.