

## **THE ARTS AT CHRIST CHURCH**

The Hub Gallery celebrated the Visual Arts ‘in all their fullness’ last year with 2 exhibitions, creative prayer spaces and an arts course.

Encounters 27th April – Sunday 5th May, 2019 - This exhibition included work from the 33 artists who entered a competition to choose the brochure cover image for the 2019 Christian Arts Festival.

Our local internationally acclaimed artist and judge: P.J. Crook MBE awarded 3 prizes at the Celebration View. As always, the event was very well attended and 3 very happy artists brought family and friends to the prize-giving. The exhibition was also advertised widely through the Christian Arts Festival publicity. Several paintings were sold ensuring commission towards Christ Church funds.

Amanda Thiselton set up a Creative Prayer space during the festival in the Church which included an installation from Cheltenham Ladies’ College by the girls of the Christian Union. The prayer spaces enabled people of all ages, to explore life questions, spirituality and faith in a creative and interactive way.

We also had our first drama workshop in the Harwood Hall inviting budding thespians from churches and theatre groups from across Cheltenham to audition for ‘The Sower: Encounters with Jesus’, a newly commissioned drama by our very own John Swan.

The Hub Gallery also became a venue for 3 local artists specialising in Printmaking, Painting, Drawing and Mixed Media during Cheltenham Open Studios for 2 weeks in June, 2019. This is a wonderful opportunity for outreach to the wider community and brings in a steady flow of art lovers. The work is often diverse and epitomises Jesus’ invitation to everyone.

During Jan/Feb 2020, the evangelism committee put on a course by Inside-Out: a group of 6 artists who presented their work over a 6 week period on the theme of ‘LIFE through ART and FAITH’ to stimulate fascinating discussion. There was an interactive element where participants could have a go at various creative techniques and a table to display their work each week. Everyone gave enthusiastic feedback at the end on forms which prompted an Art Day, scheduled to take place on Saturday 28th March in the Bayshill/Lansdown Room offering a felt-making workshop and workshop to learn the skills for willow lantern making for the children of Whaddon as a part of this year’s Festival of Stars in Whaddon on Saturday 13th June, 2020. This was subsequently cancelled owing to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Nikki has now been appointed the Diocese LIFE Priority Group Leader for the Creative Arts which wouldn’t have happened without the support of Christ Church through the Hub Gallery and her role as project leader for the Christian Arts Festival.

Nikki Seville