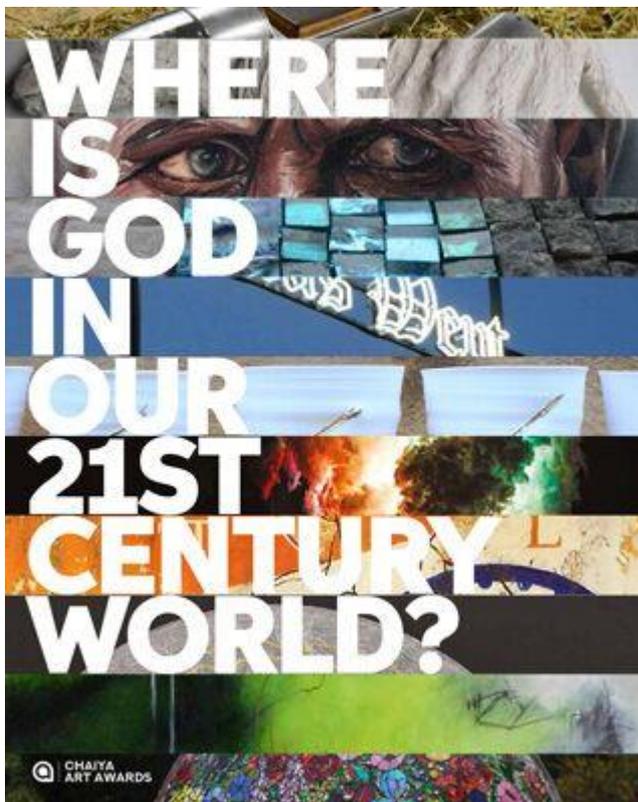


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'Really interesting, thought provoking works of art' - **BBC1
South Today News**

WHERE IS GOD IN OUR 21ST-CENTURY WORLD?
by Ann Clifford

Press Release



Explores the mystery of 'Where is God?' today

Showcases 60+ shortlisted art works for £10,000 Chaiya Art Awards

A multitude of original and stimulating responses

Thought-provoking word pictures and quotes

Makes art accessible to all

Delightful coffee table book

'God is dead,' declared nineteenth-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche in the wake of Darwinian Evolutionary Theory and the European Enlightenment. But given the impact of Islamic extremism on current global affairs and the continued influence of the Christian right on US politics, few could argue that He is still dead today. But amidst all this chaos, who and where is God?'

Seeking to explore this question is the UK's newest theme-based biennial art award, the Chaiya Art Awards – with a top prize of £10,000 and held at the prestigious gallery@oxo on London's South Bank.

Accompanying the awards is the book *Where is God in Our 21st-century World?* written by Ann Clifford who has worked with artists for more than thirty years. It features more than sixty shortlisted artists who care about our world and the life it sustains. This beautifully put together hardback is for the curious and open-minded, for people of all faiths and none. It is bursting with richness and diversity, vulnerability and exploration, colour and fragility, treasure and beauty.

Ann says, 'My writing breaks the whole into edible pieces and categorises the art into themes: Natural Order, Want and Worship, Brokenness, Suffering and Death, and Everywhere. Exploring the places where God might be found it creates word pictures for each category, and the pieces themselves each have a paragraph of explanation. I included lots of word titbits and quotes from other people.'

Where is God in Our 21st-century World? seeks, through art, to uncover where and if the sacred inhabits the ordinary. It encourages us to be humble seekers, to take a moment from the activity and turmoil, the stress and responsibilities of our daily living and engage our hearts and minds in a different way. Can art and faith impact everyday lives? Can art open up fresh conversations about life, about spirituality?

In this book the artists display vulnerability, brokenness, lostness and wilderness. The different headings throughout the book are an attempt to provide some bridges on a multifaceted exploration. 'The art, of course, will speak for itself,' says Ann, 'but the words also "paint" pictures that reference the theme. I hope they will inspire fresh thoughts and new perspectives, and provide "glue" to enhance and display the talented contributors. Together we can wander and wonder, allow space for unknown questions to rise within, to release the need for answers, to encounter mystery.'

Katrina Moss, founder of the Chaiya Art awards says, 'The judging panel was overwhelmed by the response. We had more than 450 entries from all over the UK, but what was even more encouraging was the number of visitors to the exhibition, which topped 2,700 over a twelve-day period, and they really engaged with the artwork, with more than 1,300 visitors voting for their favourite piece.'

Be inspired and challenged by a multitude of original and provocative responses that will draw you into the mystery of just where God is in our 21st-century world.

What reviewers say:

'Many of us talk about art and faith; you have made something actually happen.'
The Revd Mark Dean, Chaplain and Interfaith Advisor, University of the Arts, London

'We are so used to hearing and reading words that critique the place of God and spirituality in our contemporary western world but this book is filled with exciting full-colour images that demonstrate the creative musings of more than sixty contemporary artists who have reflected on the meaning of life, and produced work in a variety of mediums that explore the place of suffering, the gift of hope and our longing to worship within a 21st-century world.'

Lesley Sutton. Director of PassionArt

'It is a privilege to be featured in this book as part of an incredibly diverse group of artists working in response to the question "Where is God in our 21st-century world?" The text weaves around and through the images inviting readers to explore their own responses to the artworks, and opens up wide-ranging conversations about faith, spirituality and art.'

Deborah Tompsett, Artist, Winner of Chaiya Art Awards 2018

'Where is God in our 21st-century world? is a hugely encouraging book showcasing some of the provocative pieces of visual art brought together through the Chaiya Art Awards. Visual art has its own language, and the juxtaposition of these images with sensitive and provocative text by Ann Clifford makes reading the book an inspirational treat. Quotations from a variety of sources are beautifully complimentary.'

John Forrest, film-maker; founder of the Insight Film Festival; founding producer of BBC Chorister and Songs of Praise School Choir of the Year competitions

'This beautifully produced book is a lasting legacy of an extraordinary event held last Lent and Easter at the Oxo Gallery in London. The author succeeds in a near-impossible feat by drawing together a coherent piece of apologetics blended with quiet evangelism, inspired by a wildly disparate collection of art from across the UK. An absolutely open, no-holds-barred call to artists has borne fruit in this remarkable book which has become an artwork in its own right, with its references to poetry, prose and intuitive responses to the art included. I heartily commend this book.'

Sophie Hacker, Curator, Artist, Curator of Chaiya Art Awards

'A truly amazing accomplishment and I'm sure will have a lasting legacy.'

Sue Whittick, Pilates teacher

Very thought-provoking indeed.'

Ilaria Vignolo, Marketing, Coin Street Community Builders

'The book is amazing — that is a physical legacy and I pray that this will be used to mark a new moment in spiritual art making for the 21st century.'

Jean Lamb, textile artist

'I was reading the book on the way back. It is so well put together both in terms of design and the text by Ann Clifford which, as well as being thought-provoking, weaves it all together. Super quality reproduction.'

Peter Cresswell, Author

'Thank you for your vision in setting up the Chaiya Art Awards, it must have been a massive task from the start but has come together as a wonderfully thought-provoking exhibition; what is art if not communicating ideas!'

Elizabeth Rutt, textile artist

About the author:

Ann has wide-ranging professional experience encompassing church and organisational leadership, screenwriting, film-making, special needs education, public speaking and latterly, writing. Life happens, and she has experienced a lot of it. She loves God, her husband, her two adult children and many others. Her website is: www.annclifford.co.uk

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Where is God in our 21st-century World? (ISBN: 9781909728905) by Ann Clifford is published by Instant Apostle and is available on 21st September 2018 from bookshops and online retailers. Non-fiction, hardback, 96pp, £15.00