



Michael Rand *Landscape Study 1*

Contents

Page 2
Chair's Statement

Page 3
Working at the
Water's Edge from
the 'mud flats up'
By Debbi Lander

Page 8
Melting Earth
By Edith Slee

Page 11
Dancing in a New
Place
by Andrea Olsen

Page 14
The Line as Light
By Janet Swailes

Page 26
Art, Physiology and
the Soil-Body
Interface
By Alexandra
Toland

Page 37
Book Reviews

Page 41
Kirkby Stephen
background
Information
By Dick Capel

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Journal 40, the first for 2007. As you will see from the amount of exciting material and images, we are beginning to fully exploit the online potential. Once again we are trying to link various disciplines and approaches to give a sense of similar patterns of thought and work in different media. In doing this we are presenting a greater volume of material. It may be that this is no problem for those on broadband but please let us know what you think about the volume and type of material. Remember, if you are on dialup you can request a CD to make your life easier.

The LAN is committed to bringing not just ideas but people together and this year looks very promising with the gatherings in Kirkby Stephen in April (see page 41), Portland in May and a potentially very exciting event at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park in August. We now have Bobbie Millar as Chair and things look set for a very positive year for our organization. In the broader picture, however, we can't and shouldn't forget the waters are set to rise – each day brings news that makes it seem as if a 2-3 degree temperature increase is inescapably in the system. What should our response be – Martin Spray has raised this issue before. Can and should we be trying to provide positive visions of a new kind of society? Global warming and the vanishing oil reserves point to the need for a radical rethink in our patterns of life before it is forced upon us as it undoubtedly will be if individuals and governments don't take action. Helping to develop our intellectual, emotional and visceral awareness of our relationship to the elemental fabric of the planet is surely a starting point for re-envisioning our future. That is the thinking behind the choice of all the material in this journal. The work is concerned in various ways with the elemental materials that make up the very fabric of our environment.

Debbi Lander's article on Janette Porter's work looks at the liminal interface of humans, earth and the edges of waters. Traditionally the margins are a place of transformation and spiritual exploration and as the coasts change we will need to redefine the nature of our relationship to these margins. Alchemical transformations - solids into liquids cooling into landscapes, formed like volcanic eruptions from molten elements of earth fusing into light and form - are to be found in the glasswork articles from Edith Slee and Janet Swailes. Very exciting images with a concern beyond the aesthetic. Andrea Olsen looks at ways of making the elements of our own bodies skin, tissue, bone and emotional heart more permeable to the natural landscape – to create a two-way flow between earth and body. This elemental theme continues with Alex Toland's article *Dirt Paradox*, presenting various creative responses to environmental degradation with a particular focus on the fecund and physical. As well as documenting various artistic approaches to environmental issues, Alex asks perceptive and important questions which I hope readers will respond to in the next issue. Our very existence depends upon this thin, complex organic skin covering our planet.

Jeff Higley