

# About Notes from Nowhere

"But nowhere does exist. It's everywhere people dream of leaving capitalism behind." – from *Dancing on the Edge of Chaos*

"Men fight and lose the battle, and the thing that they fought for comes about in spite of their defeat, and then it turns out not to be what they meant, and other men have to fight for what they meant under another name."

– William Morris, *News from Nowhere*, 1890

The word *utopia* means nowhere, but also a happy or fortunate place. Our editorial collective, *Notes from Nowhere*, converged over a period of two and a half years to work on this project; now that it is over we will disappear once again like an affinity group melting into a crowd. We are activists, editors, writers, teachers, and artists. All of us have deep connections to the movement for freedom, autonomy, life, dignity, and democracy. Some of us were involved in the shut-down of the WTO in Seattle, others have worked in movements of the global South, or were involved in London Reclaim the Streets; some are deeply rooted in their local struggles, others are nomadic organizers; some spend time teaching, others writing; some work with Indymedia, several are raising children, and somehow we manage to juggle all of these things. Living in different countries, on different continents, we remain connected by our irresistible optimism and our insatiable desire to turn the world upside down.

**Notes From Nowhere is:**

**Katharine Ainger**, a writer, activist and co-editor of the *New Internationalist* magazine. She believes that releasing all the untold stories in the world might transform it. Half British and half Indian, she grew up between Asia and Europe, and over the years has periodically returned to work with and learn from Asian social movements. She has written for all sorts of outlets from serious broadsheets, to disreputable radical publications. She currently lives on an island in the middle of the Thames.

**Graeme Chesters**, a writer and educator based at Edge Hill College in the northwest of England. He is a co-founder of the Shifting Ground co-operative and is involved in a number of activist and academic networks, some of which curiously and sometimes fruitfully overlap. Presently researching and writing on issues as diverse as global complexity, civil society, and participatory democracy, his biggest challenge is figuring out how to juggle parenthood with paid employment and still remain on the streets. He continues to derive inspiration from the everyday acts of solidarity and defiance that sometimes go unnoticed amidst the more spectacular moments of contention, although he enjoys participating in either. He lives on the edge of the Lake District with Gwyneth and their two children Dylan and Joel.

**Tony Credland**, a London-based activist and designer involved with Reclaim the Streets, Indymedia, and the Cactus Network.

**John Jordan**, who spends his time trying to find a space where the imagination of art and the social engagement of politics can be brought together. For 10 years he was a co-director of Platform, an art and social science group, and also worked on a social art project about men and pornography. Since 1994 he has worked in the direct action movements, principally with Reclaim the Streets (1995-2001). He has written and lectured extensively about the anticapitalist movement and was a senior lecturer in fine art at Sheffield-Hallam University (1994-2003). He lives in London and mixes his time between trying to creatively overthrow capitalism and looking after his son Jack. He has recently fallen in love with the popular rebellion in Argentina and is involved in numerous projects to spread news and inspiration of the events unfolding there.

**Andrew Stern**, an activist and documentary photographer who has been involved in the anticapitalist movement in various capacities since a friend dragged him off to his first anarchist gathering some years ago. He can be found working on various photography projects in different parts of the world, including helping to organize a caravan of Indymedia activists to travel throughout South America soon after the economic collapse and popular uprising in Argentina. He is equally comfortable on the front lines of actions with camera in hand or not, and many times will leave his camera at home to play with creative forms of direct action in the streets. Like other members of the collective, the fusion of art and politics is a primary goal in anything he does, along with collecting and sharing stories that are not normally told. His work has been

shown in galleries throughout the world and can be found on various Indymedia web sites as well as in the many different publications he works with.

**Jennifer Whitney**, who is currently engaged in several balancing acts. She is reconciling her desire to bring thousands of people together in the streets for inspiring mass actions with her commitment to longer-term struggles of the local and everyday variety; merging her creativity and imagination through writing, dance, and music with her more technical and less sexy skills; and fulfilling her passion for travel, languages, cross-cultural skill-sharing and adventure, as well as her love of gardening, community-building, and other things requiring deep roots. She is a health care worker, and organizes clinics and street medic teams for direct actions. When she's at home in the US Pacific Northwest, she can be found working with the Black Cross Health Collective in Portland, or drumming with the Infernal Noise Brigade. She derives much inspiration from Latin America, where rebellion has penetrated many corners of society and erupts into the streets with increasing frequency, and she hopes to continue disseminating those stories of people shaping history.