



Art & Conversation countering climate change silence

With Artist, Facilitator and Jeweller **Janine Combes**

Special Guest Presenter at the TCC January meeting was Artist, Facilitator and Jeweller Janine Combes. Janine's wonderful talk gave an overview of her recent research about how art and conversation can counter silence about climate change.

CLIMATE CHATS

Tasmanian Climate Collective

To follow Janine's work

www.janinecombes.com
www.instagram.com/janinecombes_jeweller_artist/

AWEAR project

Short video of a sculpture made by Janine called Put Yourself in the Climate Change Picture, installed at *Art Farm Birchs Bay* as part of their Sculpture Trail

Some suggested videos & books:

Hayhoe, K 2018, "The most important thing you can do to fight climate change: talk about it", TEDWomen,

The Climate Majority Project: How to have and spread effective climate change conversations, 12 September 2025

Huntley, Rebecca, 2020, *How to talk about climate change in a way that makes a difference*, Murdoch books, Sydney and London.

Janine's presentation talked about how, while people across the world and in Australia are **worried about climate change** and **want stronger action on it**, there is evidence to show that **they do not talk about it** in their everyday lives.

Janine provided information about **why talking about it matters** and how the challenge is to move beyond an approach which relies on telling people about the science or using fear to motivate.

Evidence suggests that only 8% of Australians don't believe in climate change.

Most people are in the group Janine referred to as '**the silent middle**'. She emphasised that until the silent middle demands better action on the part of our leaders we may not get the momentum which is needed to act quickly enough.

Janine made the distinction between 'messaging' and 'conversation', both being useful but for different purposes. She thinks that we need to consider having more conversation, particularly with people in low income and rural communities.

As part of her presentation Janine told us about how she is working to engage communities using art and conversation as the mechanism to involve people.

By combining art and conversation on projects like **AWEAR: making wearable gestures of hope** about climate change, she hopes to build momentum in this conversation.

Janine noted that art can foster climate conversations because it can help people to make both a cognitive and emotional response to the issue.

Janine's project involves multiple components including the AWEAR workshops, working with other artists to create and engage communities, a research trip funded through a scholarship from the University of Tasmania to Paris in 2026 (researching French Art/Climate Change organisations and artists), collation of conversation 'tools' and possibly more formal research on this topic.

www.tasclimatecollective.org

