

BELONG ING

»»» GREATARTSSTORIES
FROM REGIONAL AUSTRALIA «««





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This book follows four earlier publications:

Seeded: great arts and health stories grown in regional Australia (2011), **Big Story Country:** great arts stories from regional Australia (2008), **Heartwork:** great arts stories from regional Australia (2004), **The Great Yarn Event** and other great arts stories from regional Australia (1998)



COVER IMAGE:

Jason Dhamarandji from Saltwater Band on the road in the central desert on the Country Arts WA Sand Tracks tour 2010 PHOTO | MATHEW McHUGH

INSIDE COVER IMAGE:

Crowd at Rupanyup show 1954 (still image from Teasdale film archive)
PHOTO | JOHN TEASDALE

BELONGING

»»→ GREATARTSSTORIES
FROM REGIONAL AUSTRALIA ←««

written from conversations with

»»→ **Lindy ALLEN**

SNAPSHOTS based on interviews with

»»→ **Hélène SOBOLEWSKI**

edited by

»»→ **Moya SAYER-JONES**

REGIONAL ARTS VICTORIA | COUNTRY ARTS SA | ARTS NT | COUNTRY ARTS WA
REGIONAL ARTS NSW | ARTSLINK QUEENSLAND | TASMANIAN REGIONAL ARTS



Australian Government
Regional Arts Fund

The Regional Arts Fund is an Australian Government initiative that supports sustainable cultural development in regional remote and very remote Australia.



Australian Government





**Senator The Hon
George BRANDIS QC**
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS

Belonging: Great Arts Stories from Regional Australia will be a source of inspiration to artists and communities across the country.

These remarkable projects demonstrate the important contribution artists make to regional life, and how involvement in arts projects can help to build more integrated and resilient communities.

Belonging shows how arts projects have the unique ability to bring young and old together, join people from different cultural backgrounds and involve people with disabilities.

Communities that celebrate their own stories have the chance to develop deeper understandings of their past, present and future, and to bond and unite.

The creation of high-quality art is not confined to our major cities. From the Kimberley Region in Western Australia to Port Pirie in South Australia, these projects highlight strong and effective collaborations and partnerships, and feature the innovation and talent of contemporary regional and remote artists.

The Australian Government is proud to support this publication through the Regional Arts Fund and the Australia Council to showcase outstanding arts projects from our regions.

The Australian Government is a great supporter of regional arts in Australia, with accessibility being one of the key priorities of the Abbott Government's arts policy. The Regional Arts Fund makes a difference at the local level and has a real impact on people's lives and communities by supporting over 250 regional arts projects every year.

I want to congratulate Regional Arts Australia for, once again, delivering another great publication that promotes regional arts, and for its role in activating arts and culture for regional artists and communities across the country.



Tony GRYBOWSKI
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Australia Council for the Arts

Australian artists are ambitious. They inspire us with their storytelling and challenge us to better understand ourselves, our environment and the rich diversity of our nation. They are creative and innovative in their practice and daring in their vision. It is the work of our artists that will say the most about our time.

The projects showcased in this publication are a stunning example of creative vision realised with excellence. They capture the unique experience of regional and remote communities and the way the arts has enriched them.

The Australia Council supports a range of opportunities that enable artists and organisations from regional and remote communities to create, present and tour work across the country. These programs give us the opportunity to see vibrant work being made through dynamic collaborations and partnerships. The level of engagement and community participation ensures that the art is relevant, accessible and has real resonance.

Some of the most inventive work can be found throughout Australia's regional, remote and very remote communities. They highlight the vital role that the arts play in enriching daily life and contribute significantly to Australia's reputation for great art and artists. Their work forms a critical part of our national narrative and connects the experiences of individuals and communities.



Dennis GOLDNER
PRESIDENT
Regional Arts Australia

Welcome to the fifth publication by Regional Arts Australia (RAA) of great art stories from regional, remote and very remote Australia. These collections have proved to be very effective for RAA in celebrating the stories of regionally-based artists and sharing them with those who support us because they understand our value. These accounts clearly demonstrate how important the arts are in fostering community vitality. They are also themselves an invaluable record of so many wonderful people and projects. Call me old-fashioned but, even in the digital age, I still treasure the colour, the printed word and the sheer substance of a beautiful publication such as the one you're holding now.

RAA is a federation of the peak state-based regional arts organisations who work collaboratively at a national level to understand and resolve the issues, concerns and resource needs pivotal to the development and maintenance of a viable regional arts industry and a vibrant cultural life for the one in three Australians who live beyond city limits.

In 2014, our biennial summit, *Arts and Edges*, takes place in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Western Australia from 15-19 October, 2014. This is Australia's largest and most anticipated regional arts event and I am delighted that we are able to launch this beautiful collection of stories about the experience of living beyond the city limits here in this vivid and ancient landscape.

In all of the work we do, we are supported by the Ministry for the Arts and the Australia Council, and I thank them for their valued ongoing support and for the support they give to cultural practice in regional Australia.



Lindy ALLEN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Regional Arts Australia

The process of writing this book was far more complex than I had imagined. A lot of thought goes into interviewing people who have created and driven projects with their communities. We were looking for the idea, the passion, the commitment that drives these artists and organisers, often against considerable odds, to realise their vision. Telling their story was one thing, but trusting our process in terms of writing and editing these stories from an original interview was brave. It has been a privilege to have worked with all these contributors and I sincerely thank them for their stories and for their generosity.

I am grateful for the mentorship of Moya Sayer-Jones, who is the writer of two previous RAA publications, *Big Story Country* (2008) and *Seeded* (2011) and the editor of this book. *Belonging* has been based on the very successful style pioneered by Moya in the earlier books. This verbatim style allows us to feel we are in direct conversation with these amazing artists, directors, producers and people wranglers. Moya's deft hand with editing has allowed the stories to stay close to the heart and in the moment.

This book is about a profound love for the places where regional people live, where they feel at home. It's this sense of belonging that makes us want to gather with those around us and celebrate. When people feel connected to place, and to each other, they are more likely to want to look after these places for future generations.

My sincere thanks to both Hélène Sobolewski and Kerry Allen for their invaluable contributions to making this book a possibility; to Editorial Committee members Elizabeth Rogers, Kate Fielding, Dr Christiaan Willems, Hélène Sobolewski and Kyra Herzfeld; and to my stalwart colleague Cat Potter who has been a joy to work alongside. I also want to acknowledge the beautiful work of Lin Tobias at La Bella Design who has brought it all to life on the page.

Take it home with you and enjoy it.

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Sand Tracks

Various locations, remote WA, SA and NT

Country Arts WA has had a regular touring program, *Shows on the Go*, for eighteen years or so. We put out a menu of artists who are available to tour and communities get to vote, and from that, we put together tours of the most popular shows. In 2004, *Narbarlek*, an Aboriginal band from a remote Aboriginal community in Arnhem Land, was chosen to tour and we were unprepared for the reaction we got. Aboriginal audiences travelled hundreds of kilometres to see the show. People followed the tour from community to community; the local events were just huge.

In 2008, *Narbarlek* toured again to similar response, people travelling long distances and crossing borders. We realised there was a significant unmet need amongst remote Aboriginal communities: not just for big bands to tour but for unrecognised bands to tour alongside them to gain industry experience.

Sand Tracks was created in 2009 after discussions with people in remote communities and music and arts organisations. The idea is to tour a high profile band with an emerging band. The communities pay a performance fee, albeit more subsidised than our main program, and the communities partner in the program. They ensure there's a stage and an MC. They organise any support artists and we deliver workshops, a performance and on-road mentoring for the young band. We wanted to include South Australia and the Northern Territory on the tours as well because for these remote communities, there are no state boundaries; people and families are just connected across the country.

Taking remote touring up a notch had its challenges and tricky logistics issues. Sometimes rough terrain or rain makes roads impassable. In South Australia, there were no roadhouses like there are in WA, and I'd be saying, "Where's the accommodation?" and they'd say, "Oh well, sometimes there's workmen's dongs or sometimes the health department has a house you might be able to book." And while the band members are experienced drivers, quite often they haven't got enough English or access to a licensing place to actually go and get their licence. There was mounting excitement from all sorts of external people, so I became very protective of the program. I wanted to make it work for those remote Aboriginal communities first. They don't have the choice of people living in cities, so just from an audience equity point of view, it's important.

We partnered with the *Bush Bands Bash* run by Music NT in Alice Springs, an annual event where five or six young, emerging bands are chosen for three days of industry and music development including mentoring by the **Sand Tracks** profile band. The bands perform in the final concert and one of these is selected the following year to go on tour with **Sand Tracks**. One thing I think that is difficult for non-Aboriginal people to appreciate is that bands like *Narbarlek*, *Tjupi* and *Saltwater* are huge. They may not be as well-known to non-Indigenous audiences but amongst Aboriginal audiences to have them come to town is just so exciting.

We tour the two bands for four weeks. It's a huge amount of people to be travelling around countryside that doesn't have sealed roads. We spend a couple of days in each of six communities and our audiences are usually three or four thousand. The mentored band can observe the profile band first-hand, exercising the discipline of putting on a professional show. They need to prepare, to think about what they're doing for the workshop. They've got to look after their equipment, communicate to the sound engineer. When they come back from these tours, they're also starting to understand what needs to be done from an administrative and management side as well.

The professional mentoring has been really successful. Our 2011 support band, *Sunshine Reggae Band*, now called *Tjintu Desert Band*, has since completed their own east coast tour. The impact of **Sand Tracks** on remote communities is multi-level, multi-faceted. It's so important we go back year after year, that people can see consistency and continuity. Young people get to see that you can do workshops, you can develop cohesion and band identity, you can end up on a **Sand Tracks** tour. It's a career pathway for musicians, it's new buildings for communities, it's excitement and pride for communities.

And you can't underestimate the power of young Aboriginal people seeing people just like themselves as rock stars, either!



PHOTO | MATHEW McHUGH

Audience in Amata SA dance to the Tjupi Band during the Country Arts WA Sand Tracks tour 2012

PHOTO | MATHEW McHUGH



STEAM!

How often do artists get a canvas like this?



Beaufort, VIC

Ken EVANS Rebecca and I had just finished presenting a community performance as part of the *Illuminated by Fire* project in 2010. The rehearsal was perfect, but on opening night it snowed and we had to move the whole thing inside. Maybe our next project should be something smaller? We got interested in the idea of doing a historical photograph.

It was a wintry wet afternoon when we went for a walk through the Goldsmith site. We were feeling as muddy as our boots but we fell in love with the site straight away. It was huge. There were these big sheds with blokes, volunteer engineers, and their families almost living in them. The grandeur and the mud and the grease was all part of it. How often do artists get a canvas like this? I saw a mammoth 1904 Ruston Steam Shovel and suddenly I thought, ‘He’s got to be the hero of the photo.’ I could imagine the Ruston with several lights on it looking absolutely magical at night so, it just blossomed from there really.

We wanted a tableau of a photograph encapsulating all of the energy and expertise and engineering. We needed to stage it so we could get all the people and all the machines, all in the same space at the same time. The idea took off when we realised it would be just as much fun to make a show first and then take the photograph.

Rebecca started interviewing the engineers about their passion for the place and we thought, ‘Okay, we’ve got three or four scenes with a soundtrack that we could choreograph into a performance’.

The steamies couldn’t understand why or how this could become theatre so I was entering their world softly, gaining their confidence. They could see this was a chance to show off their engines but it wasn’t until we got on site and started building the set that they started to take us seriously.

We needed costume and I’d recently discovered Steampunk costumier Alexandra Chambers. Steampunk is a reverence to the whole Jules Verne sci-fi era. The performance troupe came to the site in their lace collars and top hats and started talking to the engineers who didn’t baulk at all, and that really helped us. The performers gave us a chance to link historical events in a non-linear sort of way, gave us that ability to tell a little story.

It was quite surreal seeing them putting on their lippy amongst antique lawn mowers in huge sheds. On opening night, the most gratifying thing was seeing the steamies’ reaction and realising they were actually having a good time. It was wonderful, just seeing them being happy. Before that night, they didn’t know what a curtain call was.

Rebecca RUSSELL As city people who had recently moved to the country, we were interested in collaborating with community, especially people who would not usually have much to do with the arts. This was an artistic response to our new environment and Goldsmith was part of that local exploration. It was all about scale and those characters you just don’t meet in a city context.

We learned a lot about how to respectfully create artwork in a regional community from our work on *Illuminated by Fire* with Donna Jackson. One of the things that was so important with **STEAM!** was to showcase the world they’re so passionate about. They call themselves steamies and they seemed to be happy for us to call them steamies too.

The interviews were really important in finding a common language, finding a way to connect with people who are not artists. Once they realised I was interested in the things they knew a lot about, they enjoyed the process. I tapped into their passion and realised we take power for granted these days. Working with the Steampunks

A large-scale, outdoor, site-specific visual theatre performance, **STEAM!** was a collaboration between artists Ken Evans and Rebecca Russell, the Goldsmith Steam Preservation Society, the Steampunk community from Melbourne and local community performers. It was staged for 3 nights on site at the 100th Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally, near Beaufort, Victoria in November 2012.

really cracked open the idea for me that if we value the old technology, it helps us to understand the technology we live with now.

There were lots of challenges working on this really isolated site. Ken was busy dealing with machines and it fell to me to look after the cast. I wondered how we were going to feed 24 people for three nights in a shed with sharp stones on the floor, grease puddles and machinery everywhere. At one point I had one of the women boiling six kettles on a wood stove, then Apex came through and gave us their kitchen.

Hundreds of people had travelled from a long way to come to this event because it was the centenary of the steam rally. Some of them camped or they stayed in the sheds.

On opening night we had mostly an arts audience who’d travelled up from Melbourne. They knew to get there early and get good spots. The next night, very early on in the afternoon all the Goldsmith regulars brought their seats and lined up along the front row and they held those positions until the show. By the end, when the steam traction engines left the staged area, the Goldsmith regulars just opened up. The crowd parted and formed this guard of honour as the engines drove through. They were cheering for their mates who’d been part of this spectacular event, clapping them and then followed the machines back to their shed.

It was a really powerful moment, the steamies were just beaming. They were really beaming.

And we got the photo!



“One of the things that was so important with STEAM! was to showcase the world they’re so passionate about. They call themselves steamies and they seemed to be happy for us to call them steamies too.”



The Hydro+Graphy Project

If you live in Streaky Bay, you're definitely going to have something to do with the water. It is a spectacular coastal environment with cliffs, great white sandy beaches and untouched bushland. Stunning. We're one of the few coastal communities in SA with a jetty pool. The pool was built about seventy-five years ago to protect swimmers from the sharks that followed the tuna boats. It's about fifty metres long with wood pylons, a steel frame and a wide gauge grill around the outside. On a hot day, it's the number one point of call for all our youth.

I'm part of the Streaky Bay Jetty Pool Committee and we've been raising funds to upgrade it. We were looking at new ways to fundraise and also to celebrate what goes on there. We have a lot of enthusiastic photographers who do landscapes and beautiful seascapes, but we really wanted to document what was happening under-water, in the water, and the fun we have when we're immersed in it! We partnered with Eyre Peninsular Natural Resources because while this coast is beautiful, it is also fragile.

As a school teacher, I know we can equip young people with shared, positive values around taking care of the environment. And it's important to enthuse regional kids about the directions they can take from school. Inviting a professional photographer to work with young people was a fantastic way to suggest the arts as a profession. And introducing them to environmental scientists who wear wet suits instead of white coats, suddenly made science a much more exciting career choice. We decided early on to use social media to keep young people engaged.

I found an underwater photograph online by Mark Tipple. The person in it looks tormented by what's going on, almost like he's above the ground and perhaps in the middle of a tornado instead of under a wave. It was that dramatic. I contacted Mark through his website and he agreed to deliver a weekend workshop. I used the same photograph to promote the training and almost immediately eight of the ten spots were filled. I think it was because the image showed such an unusual perspective: people want to see something they can't see everyday.

We had students from year six to year twelve, photographers from the community, plus local abalone diver, Tobin Woolford, who was able to provide a fisherman's perspective.

We chose an autumn weekend because water clarity is better even when it's stormy. It was a bit chilly getting in though! The tide and swell were far up and we were all there, goosebumped and laughing at each other being silly.

Mark lent us a lot of cameras, which was amazing. Some of us bought Go Pros with underwater housing and others borrowed from friends. Tobin had an underwater camera that he used to document his abalone diving. Mark had a Canon camera with a big glass dome housing which allowed you to be completely manual even when you were underwater.

We wanted to make the best use of Mark's time over the weekend. We did the first workshop at the Jetty Pool, to build the kids' skills and confidence and get them excited about being creative. Then we went to a natural lagoon, an open ocean location locals call Smooth Pool. We did the same the next day. Mark also taught Photoshop and editing skills in what he called the 'dry land' workshops.

Over the next six weeks, we all applied what we learned. Students could use the facilities at Streaky Bay Area School at the end of the school day. A lot of tips, techniques and tutorials were delivered via Facebook and kids were encouraged to post their work online to get feedback. Mark was also happy for people to contact him for more ideas, tips and constructive comments. We were blessed with great

The *Hydro+Graphy Project* used underwater photography to engage the tiny fishing community of Streaky Bay, on the Eyre Peninsula, in documenting the natural and man-made marine environment. The project invited acclaimed underwater photographer Mark Tipple, along with environmental scientists from Eyre Peninsula Natural Resources, to work with young people and community members to create exciting new work for an exhibition.

'Out of the Deep'
PHOTO | KAYLA PETTY

“Introducing them to environmental scientists who wear wet suits instead of white coats, suddenly made science a much more exciting career choice.”

weather during autumn, so some people decided to keep shooting and posting new photos.

The exhibition opened on Friday 16th May, 2014. For every print sold, ten dollars went to the Jetty Pool upgrade. About seventy people came, some driving for more than an hour to get there. Everyone was stoked. Cabe who's in year six said, 'This is the best day of my life! This is what I want to do.' One student is now considering the sciences as a profession, looking after marine animals. Another three students joined the year-long South Australian Certificate of Education Research Project to become better under-water photographers.

It's wonderful to have events like these in small communities because it brings so much happiness to people. This was an opportunity to influence people in a positive way about their environment, and also to celebrate those wonderful moments they remember from when they were little. Hopefully those memories can help us all to celebrate and protect the ocean.

And the best part is, next summer we'll be putting a brand new pontoon into the Jetty Pool.



Streaky Bay, SA





The Holbrook Yellow Submarine Project

Karen GARDNER

»»» **GENERAL MANAGER, Murray Arts**

L to R Johanna Bartels, Karen Gardner, Vivien Naimo and Carolyn Martin-Doyle



Holbrook was the last town to be bypassed on the Hume Highway and our cultural tourism group was discussing large-scale yarn-bombing as a cultural tourism initiative. We wanted to create a sense of pride in our community and to remember our heritage so we all thought a great way to focus the attention, would be to cover the town's submarine war memorial in yellow wool. We knew we had something special with the idea of the **Yellow Submarine**, but we had to bring the community along. While the public are allowed to climb on the HMAS Otway, it is a dedicated War Memorial. We wanted to make sure the community understood we weren't going to be making fun of the submarine, but celebrating it.

The curator of the submarine museum, Roger Cooper, understood this and supported the development phase and the feedback we started to get was really positive. I think people liked it because it's such a quirky idea. Yarn-bombing something the size of the submarine, I mean, it's ninety metres long and eight metres high. It is huge.

We did a big engagement program getting schools on board and the artists did sessions at the local nursing homes. We dropped baskets with wool, knitting needles and info about the project in cafés, doctors' surgeries and one at the chemo ward at the hospital. The submarine itself was commissioned and built in Scotland and we received knitting contributions from the wives of the men who built it. Cafés set up knitting stations, Stitch and Bitch groups got together, the community really got behind us. A lot of contributions came from knitting groups in Canberra too which was great.

I think one of the real successes for us was the decision to use Facebook. It was exactly the right medium for this project. People were posting pictures of their knitting and it allowed us to interact, generate a sense of community working together and it kept the momentum going. The installation took place over about five days. We laced it with baling twine and a group of volunteers laid it all out and stitched it onto the twine framework.

The unveiling on the 14th of June coincided with the centenary of Australian Submarines and fifty years since the Beatles visited Australia. The launch was a real community celebration with local people, plus a number of contributors who made the trip to Holbrook. One hundred and fifty local school children attended and sang **Yellow Submarine**. It had such an incredible sense of good will and community spirit about it, it was lovely.

Holbrook, NSW

Two communities on opposite sides of Australia turned to yarn-bombing as a way to easily engage a broad cross-section of the community in something big. Both projects drew new visitors and were a source of pride – and fun – for all involved.

Holbrook Yellow Submarine
PHOTO | NATALIE ORD



Homespun

Sue LEIGHTON

»»» **PROJECT COORDINATOR**



Homespun Cops L-R Snr Constable Chris NEALE, Sgt & OIC Allan SPICER & Snr Constable Glen Stoddart

Homespun Panels
PHOTOS | SUE LEIGHTON



Ravensthorpe is in a mining and farming area that is susceptible to economic and environmental fluctuations. The Galaxy lithium mine had recently closed and only a few years earlier the BHP nickel mine had closed, with a huge impact on local employment. The drought was causing a crisis in the local wool industry. Morale was low.

Our annual wildflower show attracts a lot of visitors. It's an internationally-renowned area for wildflowers. The idea was to put knitted flowers throughout the town to add some additional colour and actually, just to make people smile.

All wool used had to be up-cycled or pre-owned to reflect the *make-do and mend* values of yesteryear or if newly-purchased, it had to be Australian made to support our home-grown industry.

It was amazing to see how many people of all ages got together to make blooms. People loved making them. Some people donated precious heirloom buttons to make the centre of the flowers and every flower was perfumed with someone's story in the community. Our aim was to make two thousand crocheted flowers and I had a tally board set up in the local shop. We met our target really quickly and eventually we had three and a half thousand woollen 'smile-makers'.

We saw the blooms as a metaphor for the town's ability to be fruitful. They reflected the resilience and sustainability of our community, very much like the wildflowers that we are famous for.

People were very proud of what we produced. They loved it. You could say, we just blossomed!

Ravensthorpe, WA



Price's Café



Moruya, NSW

Cheryl Davison, an Aboriginal artist, came in to see me one day and told me this story. She'd been working at Anglicare in Narooma and there were a group of Elders having lunch at the centre. Suddenly, one of the cooks came out of the kitchen and the Elders were excited to recognise her. Cheryl was struck by how thrilled the Elders were to see this woman named Pauline Grant. Turns out Pauline and her family had a run a place called *Price's Café* in Moruya for many years.

The Elders all had very strong memories of Price's. For over 40 years, it had been a meeting place for Aboriginal people living and working in town, as well as for those travelling on the coastal bus service, which stopped there twice a day. On Fridays during the bean and pea picking season the café was always packed. Jimmy Little grew up in Moruya and often came into the café with his guitar. People would drink milkshakes, eat hamburgers, meet friends and enjoy the latest hits on the only jukebox in town.

Cheryl just wanted to get this story of the café and this amazing family, out. She thought it would make a good exhibition and we agreed to work together.

We wanted to focus on the 50s and 60s, which was pre '67 Referendum, the period where children were still being taken from families. NSW had the Aboriginal Protection Board and racism was overt.

It's incredible when I think about it. If you were an Aboriginal person you had to have an exemption certificate, to be out and about and 'at large'. That's why this story of a place where Aboriginal people could go and were made to feel welcome and part of the family was quite a revelation.

It wasn't like the Prices went out of their way to create a place just for Aboriginal people – that sense of welcome was extended right across the community. They loved having teenagers in. There were lots of non-Aboriginal people involved in the struggle for reconciliation at the time, but the Price family just kind of lived it.

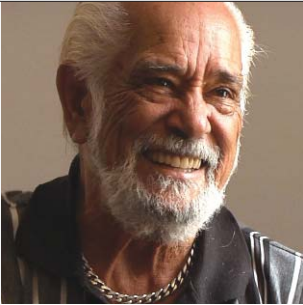
We decided early on to do video interviews of the Elders and Cheryl realised people had photographs too so we thought this could be a good museum-style exhibition. We also wanted to recreate the look and feel of the original café.

There were some challenges on the way, like when Cheryl had to leave the area for work, and I lost my key connection into the Aboriginal community. I met with Cheryl's sister, so there was at least someone I could run things by. There was still a lot of interviewing and editing to be done.

It was an important learning experience for me. Life for Aboriginal people during those times was varied. There were a lot of itinerant workers, but there were also families who had been in the area since pre European times who had houses and jobs, people involved in the labour movement and in Aboriginal rights. I wanted to include content that covered that part of the story as well. Often when we look at the history of Aboriginal people in Australia, we tend to go back to colonial times. And because this time is so long past, we don't really connect with it. This story was dealing with very recent history, and I think that's why it has such a big impact. It's living memory.

The exhibition was in the old Mechanics Institute in Moruya. We had about 500 people at the opening and they were slurping up the fresh milkshakes and café food in this re-creation of Price's. The Price sisters were there with their families and Jimmy Little's grandson, the musician James Henry, played a couple of songs. It was a real celebration and it was fantastic.

The Price family moved from Canberra to Moruya, where they established Price's Welcome Café in 1953. Phyllis and Thomas Price had two daughters, Pauline and Ella. They worked with their parents till about the early 80s when they retired and the daughters kept the café going through till 1993.



“It wasn't a thing where you'd say: 'I'll meet you at the Price's. They just met at Price's! I'd say, 'I'll see you in town,' and Price's was town. It's a time that I will never forget. I met my wife there ... probably the best thing that wever happened to me in my life.”

Elder Ossie STEWART

This was the first major project for South East Arts working with the Aboriginal community and what I'm most proud of is that it is a reconciliation story. This was a shared memory of an interesting time in Moruya's recent history and while it focused on the Aboriginal experience, other members of the community felt engaged in it as well. It was part of their personal history too.

The exhibition is full of wonderful stories. I get the feeling there's probably other Price's Cafés around Australia and a lot of positive stories to tell.

Phyllis and Thomas Price, 1964
COURTESY OF PAULINE GRANT



Clare Shannon (left) and Doris Moore in Moruya, 1960s
COURTESY OF DORIS MOORE



In the late 1950s: L to R, Jimmy Aldridge, Shirley Aldridge, Liddy Stewart and Ossie Stewart
COURTESY OF SHIRLEY ALDRIDGE

Prices
CAFE

First Coat

A place I want to live in

I've been working with two other local artists for nearly two years now setting up Kontraband Studios. The *Biograffiti* weekend was really exciting and encouraged us to think about growing the street art culture. The Toowoomba Regional Council is genuinely interested in change. They had heard about some funding and approached us to write the grant. We found out we were successful in late October 2013, so we had about five months to put it together.

Our initial proposal was fifteen walls and fifteen artists, with a mix of local and out of town artists, and doing all the painting over a long weekend. Having such a tight deadline was quite intimidating, but the project just kept gaining momentum. We soon had backing from Australia's leading aerosol company, Ironlak, and Analogue /Digital Creative Conferences. Master Hire offered us equipment that we had budgeted for so it meant we could take on more artists. We had to work and think quickly.

The first challenge was securing the walls. There were several disheartening moments. I approached a key figure in our community who had a lot of real estate in ideal locations and his response was, 'I'd rather see my walls blank.' But there were heartening moments like when we asked two older gentlemen who had been running an accounting firm for forty years. We wanted all the works to be on display for a minimum of twelve months and that might have been a deal breaker: obviously they didn't want to be attaching themselves to something that might upset their clients! But instead they said, 'Well, worst case scenario, we get a mural we don't like and we have to see it for a year. It's still a talking point and it's still a good thing for the town, so count us in!'

Another story is that our sister arts collective have this beautiful wall in an ideal location. They've been tenants for nearly two years and been asking their landlord for that entire time to let them paint the wall. I may have just approached it from a different angle but after few conversations, he was calling me every day saying, 'I've got this building over here that you could use.' He was handing out walls left, right and centre. The older demographic really understood what we were trying to do for the region. We definitely had a beer that night!

There were big highs and lows. We had some of Australia's, and the world's, best street artists and tremendous in-kind support with building and designing our online presence. That was exciting. But when you're working hard and you're tired and a business knocks you back you feel like you're right where you started. There was a moment too when we were getting a lot of Facebook 'shares' from people that I've admired for a long time and I wondered if we were getting ahead of ourselves. When you're doing a local project and something goes wrong, you're forgiven but when you've got the attention of key industry people travelling from overseas, 'sharing' it as a significant event for Queensland ...there's no backing out. You've got to step up to the plate, and that was scary.

In the week leading up to the *First Coat* weekend, artists were flying in from all over the country. Some locals were getting their walls ready and starting to paint and that got the media interested. There were three days of painting, an exhibition, an official launch party and an artist talk series on the final Sunday afternoon. We had thirty artists and twenty walls.

It was great to see the community out in force throughout the weekend, watching the artists paint and seeing these familiar places take on a new life. There is so much character in those old heritage buildings and it's great to be able to play with the fabrication of our town.

First Coat is Queensland's largest street art festival. Delivered over three days in February 2014, *First Coat* engaged Australian and international artists to paint large scale murals in Toowoomba's CBD. *First Coat* grew out of the 2013 Animating Spaces project, *Biograffiti*, (an initiative of Artslink QLD), which gave a contemporary face-lift to a city alleyway.

One of the best things was the partnership with the Toowoomba Youth Service. We've been working with five of these kids for two years and they've learned the basic skills of photography and film through ABC Open. Over the weekend they took on documentation. They interviewed the mayor, tourists, locals, artists, coordinators and volunteers, then edited it all. They each had a t-shirt with the *First Coat* logo on it which they wore for the full three days. They were almost in tears on Sunday because they had to go back to reality. They felt like they were part of something important and a part of the community. Seeing them being so confident and really owning it was one of the best outcomes.

Toowoomba is a funny town. I'm happy that we've turned people around but it's frustrating that it's so hard to get an idea over the line. The guy who wouldn't let us use his buildings said, 'If I'd known this was the kind of art you were talking about we would've said yes.'

I love Toowoomba. I used to be a little bit embarrassed to live where I'd gone to school. It would be the easy option to move to Brisbane or to Melbourne but to give something back my town and to show people things can happen here, that's exciting. I want to make this place somewhere I would want to stay, I would want to live in.

I could travel and do all that stuff but I'd come back and be thirty. I think, 'Why not give it a crack while we're young and a little bit stupid?' It's a rough, long road but I see a lot of benefit in it. I can't wait to see what it's like in five years' time.



Toowoomba, QLD



TOP: Fintan Magee's work in progress INSET: Damien Kamholtz putting on the final touches
PHOTOS | TIM CARACO, 40/40 CREATIVE



Silver Ball Screening Festival



Warrnambool, VIC

There are eight of us on the committee of F-Project Cinema and we'd been running film nights for a year. Helen and Des Bunyon came back from MONA in Hobart and were excited by outdoor projections, so we all became interested in the idea of screening films in public spaces. And supporting local people to make their own. Warrnambool is a really creative place at the moment – it's just buzzing. The council is really keen on revitalising the CBD and the businesses have this creative energy about them. It felt like people were ready to see their place differently. That's how the **Silver Ball** festival came about.

We named it in honour of a water tower in the centre of our town, known locally as the Silver Ball. It sits high on a forty-metre tripod and was created by Fletcher Jones. He had a social ethic and all the people who worked in the factory here were shareholders, they were all equal. He went to the New York World Fair in 1939 and was so impressed by the exhibition, particularly the Perisphere and Trylon, that in the 1960s he built his own. The factory has been in receivership for a long time but the silver ball remains.

We have a lot of experienced filmmakers in Warrnambool, so we planned a workshops program. It was a month of workshops in four separate streams. We wanted to cover animation, documentary, narrative and film art. I've been involved in lots of outreach programs but this is the first time I've been the doer. I'm a lecturer at Deakin University in Warrnambool in Alternative Pathways, so I teach students who wouldn't normally go to university. There were about twenty people in the workshops which all ran out of Deakin. We borrowed a lot of their equipment too.

For an outdoor festival, we needed short films that would allow people to move around quickly and drop in to businesses and coffee shops. The event was about the community, not just about coming to a place and sitting down and watching something. We love our city so we wanted something that would get people to stop and explore the architecture and the shapes.

It was a huge amount of work. We were really making it up as we went. For a while, I was worried we weren't going to get any films but thirty-three came in, so in the end we had to go through a selection process. We thought people would take the **Silver Ball** idea in a less literal way, but a lot of people made films about the ball and what it meant to the community. That was interesting.

I couldn't quite work out how we were going to install the projectors outside. We looked at some commercial options but they were too expensive. So I went back to the filmmakers and asked if they had any ideas and one of them, James Russell who's a carpenter, came back with this little sketch. He designed and made twelve portable boxes on stands that could be installed and uninstalled on the Friday.

Our install was a logistical challenge. I had this really detailed schedule. We were running power out of local businesses but there was one where we couldn't get the cord through the door and so I'm running down the street dropping off an extension lead somewhere, on the phone trying to get somebody else to find a site with power. It was crazy but we had this amazing network of people who were able to help and they all answered their phones! The way everyone pitched in was great. We had sixty volunteer guides all dressed up as Charlie Chaplin. The weather was a bit cold, but people came out and they were all rugged up and just so excited.

We had three films screening at each of the fourteen projection points in the laneways. People were all chatting about the creative process. The filmmakers were really proud and taking photos of themselves with their film in the background. Five hundred people moved through the laneways that night. The shop owners said

The Silver Ball Screening Project offered a month of community filmmaking workshops and a screening festival. The films were shown in Warrnambool's laneways one May evening in 2014 and twenty-two were screened at a judging event the next night. It was organised by F Project Cinema, a film society.

they'd never seen so many people wandering around on the streets in their whole time in Warrnambool.

One of the films was *Last Man in the Ball*, by Julie Eagles, and it was about the gentleman who had been the last man to clean the inside of the ball twenty years ago. He's a kind of local identity, a bit of a character and in the film he talks about how hot it was in the ball. He used to do most of his work in his jocks. He was there on the night and he got very emotional. Fletcher's sold in the week before the event so this film really struck a chord.

The film that ended up winning overall was by a nine-year-old boy and his Mum, Sam and Kate Artz. They made a Lego stop-motion animation telling the story of how the **Silver Ball** came to be and they used actual chickens walking through this Lego world. That little boy was the celebrity of the night.

In the end, it actually went to plan. Who would've believed it? It gives me tingles thinking about how good it was. I'm really proud of the way we all worked together and dealt with all of the obstacles. And sometimes, it's just nice to have fun.

“The filmmakers were really proud and taking photos of themselves with their film in the background. Five hundred people moved through the laneways that night. The shop owners said they'd never seen so many people wandering around on the streets in their whole time in Warrnambool.”



Charlie Chaplins: L to R Fiona Howland, Dave Mitchell, Kirsty Hawkes, Amy Haldane, Kiri Hawkes and (front) Tonia Wilcox
PHOTO | AARON SAWALL, THE STANDARD



Hunting for Foxes

Somewhere at the end of the wheat belt



Mullewa, WA

Mullewa is a community of eight hundred, about five hours drive north of Perth and a hundred kilometers inland from the coast, from Geraldton. It's the very end of the wheat belt. Recently we amalgamated with the City of Geraldton and that has caused quite a lot of angst for people about losing their local identity.

We were having our annual arts meeting and the ladies really wanted to do a book about the community. We'd done one before dealing with the drought. I said, 'Well if we're going to do another book we need to stretch our boundaries. Let's get a little conceptual, let's push ourselves creatively.'

I'd just been on a big arts funding panel in Perth and I came away feeling like our city cousins thought we weren't very cultured or sophisticated. I really felt that divide and wanted to challenge it. A lot of the women here have come from the city and married into farming families, and when you're riding around on the back of a horse, you don't get much chance to wear your pearls and ball gown. So this started off as a cheeky idea, an excuse to get dressed up, but it ended up being so much more than that. A way to get in touch with a fantasy side of ourselves, away from the harsh realities of living on the land.

We thought we'd have thirty Mullewa women involved, but once we started that number grew to fifty. We ran a series of workshops with a professional photographer because we wanted to give everyone involved the opportunity to learn these skills. Eight people took this up. We made it clear to the photographers we employed, that they might end up just being an assistant. In the end, one local lady ended up taking quite a few of the final photos.

We also had visioning workshops to help people develop their fantasy concepts. Who might I be? One lady really struggled with this. She said, 'I don't have any fantasies. There's nothing I'd want to change, nothing else I would want to do.' But we kept talking and she told us that, as a kid, they were really poor and she didn't have any dolls. Her cousin, who was an only child, had all these dolls but she was never, ever allowed to touch them. When she was old enough to buy her own, she started collecting china dolls and she said, 'This probably sounds really silly, but I've never had a tea party with my dolls and I would like to do that for my photo.' That is one of my favourite stories.

Some people were nervous wrecks about having their photo taken and it was always the people you didn't expect. One woman is a really confident rural ambassador but when we got her all dressed up as a burlesque dancer, her knees were knocking. I was one of the first to do my shoot. I was sitting on the bar in the local pub dressed as a wench but that was great because I could say, 'If I can do this, you can do it.'

A lot of the photos ended up being quite sexy and that's where the name came from: the hunt, the foxy lady, hunting for foxes, hunting for that part of yourself you don't get to express. One girl really loved *Sex and the City*. If she could've imagined an alternative life for herself it would've been living in the middle of Manhattan. She didn't want to change her life, she just wanted to bring some of that style into it. Most of the women strongly wanted to place themselves in the landscape but with a glamorous twist.

Towards the end of photo shoots, we were doing two images a day, the last few days we did four. It nearly killed us. I totally underestimated how physically and emotionally draining it would be. At the end of the shooting phase, we had a big dinner in a shearing shed, and we showed everyone's second best photo. They often didn't recognise each other, which was the gorgeous thing, because people looked so different.

Hunting for Foxes was a contemporary photography project, that aimed to build photography skills, develop local identity and provide local women with a unique opportunity to explore and develop a fanciful expression of themselves. The resultant photographs were exhibited in Geraldton in April 2014 and a book will be published later in the year.

The original plan was to show the photographs in Mullewa but we had nowhere big enough to hang it so we showed it in Geraldton. It was amazing to watch these people walk into the gallery, some for the first time in their lives, with their friends and families and see themselves on the wall. No-one had seen each other's final photos. They were just so proud of what they'd achieved. The energy was electric, it was absolutely buzzing.

The project has created the most incredible new bonds and connections. It's enhanced that local 'can do' attitude. People from Geraldton were blown away by the quality of the images. We were able to show them good stuff doesn't always come from the city or from large regional centres.



Casey Patten PHOTO | CARLO FERNANDES



Cathy McKenna PHOTO | PENE STEVENS



The Farmer’s Cinemathèque

A luminous community archive



Rupanyup, VIC

One of the things I’m always looking for when I’m making films with regional communities is good vision to illustrate complex themes. Photographs can be useful but if you can find good movie footage it’s even better.

Ten years ago I had an exhibition of work at Horsham Regional Gallery. A local farmer from Rupanyup, John Teasdale, came in to have a look. He told me he was a keen amateur cinematographer and asked if I’d be interested in having a look at his films. He’d made these films over a long period of time at his farm and around his community. His father, Relvy, had also been a cinematographer and the earliest films in the Teasdale archive go back to the 1930s. There’s footage of an Indian hawker with his horse and cart at the Teasdale farm and there’s film of sowing crops with really early tractors - material that’s historically very important.

When I saw his archive I was just gobsmacked. It was like coming across a gold mine: this archive is far and away the best collection of amateur cinematography I’ve found anywhere.

John was incredibly generous. When I met him he’d been recently diagnosed with cancer and didn’t have that long to live. He died within a year but during that time we developed a rapport. Since his death, I’ve maintained a good working relationship with his widow, his son and grandsons and his sister. They’re a really lovely family.

There’s about twelve hours of film in the archive – that’s a lot of material to work with. John had very good cinematic technique and did a lot of editing in the camera. Some of the films I like best are where John is filming a local event. He spends a little bit of time filming the spectacle but most of his time he’s filming the people who are there – beautiful portraits of people being together as a community. In the latter months of John’s life, he set up a digitising facility and he also recorded narration for some of the films. The narration is incredibly moving to me. He talks with the particular manner of a farmer and he does these terrific recitations of names of people and places. Many of those people are gone now of course, so in a sense these films are a litany of ghosts, even though family names often live on in the district. John’s intimate knowledge of people and how they relate together is one of the things that strikes me most.

My work with the film archive has evolved over a long period of time. Sometimes you’ve got to be patient and allow work to marinate slowly. I’ve used material from the Teasdale films within quite a few projects over the past few years. And I’ve had various collaborators who’ve brought their own perspective and skills to the project – that’s enabled it to develop a real depth and richness. The National Film and Sound Archive have agreed to acquire the celluloid films so ultimately they will be housed there, but the Teasdale family will still own the rights. Museum Victoria supported me to catalogue the archive. I’m currently developing a one-hour documentary film that tells the story of the collection and explores its underlying meanings.

Our working title is *The Farmer’s Cinemathèque*. A cinemathèque in this context is a film archive or library. We use the films as a kind of trigger and look for story-tellers who can add layers of meaning. Some of the characters in the films are still around: one of these is John Teasdale’s younger sister, Acey, now in her 70s. She’s worked as an anthropologist and a clinical psychologist and lived in various parts of the world but she still considers herself to be very much a farmer’s daughter, defined more than anything by her Rupanyup origins. She’s a great storyteller.

One of the things that the films reveal is an intimate knowledge of country held by multi-generational farming families. I reckon there are some interesting synergies here with the sense of country held by many Aboriginal people.

“These films document a level of social wealth that has been severely diminished. Yet the town and district have survived.”

We did a presentation of work-in-progress last year at the Wimmera Machinery Field Day. Rupanyup people could see their ancestors, people they might just know from a photo on a mantelpiece, suddenly walking and talking.

But this project isn’t just an exercise in nostalgia. The farming economy has rationalised so enormously in recent times: there’s half the number of people in Rupanyup now than there was in the 1950s. These films document a level of social wealth that has been severely diminished. Yet the town and district have survived. We want to highlight the resilience of this community while remembering what has been lost.

It’s quite unusual now to have a multi-generational connection to the place you live: the place where your parents and your grandparents lived and where your children might live too. This is a big issue for all of us. How do we care about and look after places if we’re just passing through? We can only do it properly if we’ve got a real connection. It’s all just scenery and airport lounges otherwise, isn’t it?

Dog tricks at neighbour’s farmyard, 1961
Dawn and Peter, 1965
Maypole at Rupanyup show, 1954
ALL STILLS | JOHN TEASDALE





Cowra Canowindra Art Project

We can create a space for sharing



Cowra, NSW

It is not just soldiers buried here. There are another two hundred Japanese people who were not soldiers and had nothing to do with the breakout. They were civilians living in Australia, who were interned as enemy aliens in various locations. Those who died in the camps were buried there, and then in the 1960s the Japanese government, with the Cowra Breakout Association and Cowra Shire Council, exhumed their remains and brought them to the Cowra Japanese War Cemetery. Indonesian political prisoners were also interned in Cowra and buried.

There was really very little signage at the cemetery and I felt uncomfortable that these civilians were not acknowledged in history. Cowra now has an international identity associated with peace and reconciliation but it's always been focused on the prisoners of war. I was in Cowra with a group of historians, and we talked about erecting an interpretive board. I knew most of the academics and I thought that I could work with the Cowra community to create a cultural production that could sit alongside a symposium about civilian internment in Australia during WWII.

I met with interested community people, and it emerged that young people in Cowra were losing interest in their own heritage. In the past, former guards or prisoners of war from Japan would go and talk to the school kids, but they are all passing on. The community needed a new way to engage young people in Cowra's international identity of heralding peace and reconciliation.

We invited David Hansen and Bruce Ryan to deliver documentary- making workshops with retirees and high school students. They learned story-boarding, interviewing and camera and editing skills. Older people brought their experiences and the younger taught the older about documentary-making through social media. They formed the Civilian Internment Documentary Team, and their films will be formally launched in August 2014 at the 70th anniversary of the Cowra Breakout.

I worked for about a year with the community, developing works to be performed alongside a symposium, including a ceremonial performance to be held at the cemetery. I invited a number of artists in. There was a core group of ten young people aged from about eleven to fifteen. It was difficult to coordinate everybody's time, so I needed to be flexible around people turning up, then dropping out for a while and then coming back.

Australian-Malaysian instrumentalist and vocalist WeiZen Ho worked with girls from the high school, using text from the oral histories of the interred Japanese civilians and they mingled this with their own family histories to develop a piece which would include calling out the names of all the buried civilians. Alan Schacher worked closely with WeiZen to devise movement that would accompany this performance. Indonesian shadow puppeteer Jumaadi worked with students to create a shadow puppet story about Indonesian political prisoners. Vocalist Ria Soemardjo joined in.

The workshops were held in this tiny little corner shop on the main street. One of my favourite moments was when Jumaadi decided to show the work in progress, just for the community. It was spur of the moment. The performance just came together and the little room was packed. The story line was about these Indonesian families that found themselves in a POW camp in Australia with details like how they had nothing to eat but meat and potatoes.

Just before the ceremonial performance day, origami artist Hiromi Ashlin from Cairns got in touch. She holds the Guinness Book world record for the fastest origami 'crane folder' and she wanted to help. In Japan, origami cranes symbolise peace and reconciliation. She came at her own expense and held eight workshops

Cowra's Japanese War Cemetery has been the focus for reconciliation between Japan and Australia since World War II and the tragic event called the Cowra Breakout. The breakout on the 5th August, 1944 was the largest prison escape of WWII. Three hundred and fifty-nine Japanese soldiers escaped from the prison camp *en masse* and two hundred and thirty-one died in the attempt.

in the local schools working with the kids to make two hundred yellow cranes. She placed them on the civilian graves.

The ceremonial performance was very moving. Many of the families of the civilians who are buried there were present, and a Buddhist monk from Sydney was chanting at each one of the graves to commemorate their spirits. WeiZen, Alan and Ria walked the audience in and the girls performed the text and movement piece. There was a lovely trans-cultural aspect to the performance.

In Australia there are people from a lot of other countries buried in what is, for them, a strange land. Their bones have become part of the land, and this is sacred land to the local Indigenous community. There is a deep sense for me that we need to begin the process with the Indigenous custodians to ask the spirits of this land to look after the spirits of these people who are not from here.

With community ceremony, we can create a space for sharing in a very beautiful, very soft, and I think, a deeper way.

“There is a deep sense for me that we need to begin the process with the Indigenous custodians to ask the spirits of this land to look after the spirits of these people who are not from here.”





My Heart is a Hall

Stompin is a dance company. We work with young people creating and presenting unforgettable performance experiences. I’ve been Artistic Director for four years now. The idea for **My Heart is a Hall** was born out of wanting to create a show, a site-specific show that we could tour. We came up with the idea of creating something out of the stories of town halls or little country halls: some still used, some forgotten.

We worked from the idea that the hall used to be where everybody hung out when they were young; they used to be really important, maybe twenty to fifty years ago in community life. These days they are used less and less in that way. So what places are important now? What are the old stories and the new stories? How could we connect our young people to the historical information around these halls and create an intergenerational link that would re-energise their use in the communities we were touring to.

We applied to six different municipal councils around Tasmania, for a small amount of funding to tour the work to their communities. Launceston, Sorell, Mole Creek, and Sandford were the four regions that we were successful in getting funding from.

In the research phase, myself and the writer, Finegan Kruckemeyer, toured to each of the regions and met with local stakeholders who were connected intimately to these halls. We sat down and had a coffee, shared some cake and had a chat about the history. There were lots of beautiful stories. In the past, the halls were the hub of the town if there was a disaster, a dance, a community meeting. It was often where people met their future husbands or wives. They were the heartbeat of the place.

From there, Finegan went away and wove those stories into little moments to take into the rehearsal studio and bring them to life with the dancers.

You’re kind of plunging into the unknown when you make performance and in this project, integrating text into my practice pushed me, particularly as a choreographer. I had never worked with a playwright before, so that was a new experience for me. We spent a long time in creative development, reflecting and building the work.

It wasn’t easy. I remember early on in the rehearsal process, I was thinking, ‘Wow! How am I going to do this? I’m stuck with all this text and all I really know how to do is work with bodies and movement!’

It was so new for me as a performance maker. And I had all these wonderful dancers, all incredible, really talented, creative individuals who were really good at remembering movement ... but terrible at remembering lines! A breakthrough came when we decided to prerecord the audio. This freed me up to generate movement, either in response to the audio or as a counterpoint to it. It allowed me to foreground the dancing, which was wonderful.

At Sandford, in the development phase, I took a workshop in the local school, to promote dance and also to have them learning actual phrases from the show. When they came and saw the performance they understood what we were doing in the studio and why it was in the work. All these students came to see this show at Sandford: it was our last stop of the tour and they were just so excited to come and be a part of it and meet the dancers afterwards.

I remember one wonderful experience. At Mole Creek, there is this absolutely stunning hall. It’s an hour away from Launceston and you drive through these winding roads, beautiful hills until incredibly, there’s this tiny little town in the middle of nowhere. We had no idea how many people were going to turn up and we didn’t think it was going to be a very well attended show. In the end the whole

At the heart of every regional Australian town, there is a favourite old building where your grandparents danced and your footy team celebrated. People kissed in that hall, and danced in that hall. They went off to war. Some moved to big cities. But for many communities, the hall is still there; its heart is still beating.

town came and we had to put in more seats! Afterwards the local community put on supper and it was then that everything really resonated.

In our rehearsal process, we’d talked a lot about how these halls were used to bring community together and how the CWA ladies would put on tea. Now these stories were being played out by the actual community after the show, doing what they normally do. It was a really wonderful moment. The dancers were blown away. They wanted to tour to halls with CWA ladies forever, they thought it was the best thing they’ve ever done! They were really proud of the work they’d made and saw they were making a difference in bringing these halls to life.

It is incredibly valuable to use performance and to use art to rebuild communities. It’s important not to rush community engagement: giving people the opportunity for real input over a long period of time is what makes the experience most valuable for everyone.

We’re hoping that **My Heart is a Hall** will have a second life either as a project that we develop in a new community, or as a finished product that we tour to new communities.

The heart of the halls beats on.



My Heart is a Hall
PHOTO | JASPER DE SEYMOUR



In the Saddle –
On the Wall

“They’ll remember us and they’ll
know we were great.” Patrick Mung Mung

This is the story of Aboriginal people and white people of the Kimberley working together to achieve amazing things. It’s about sharing with the younger generations who don’t necessarily know the stories. It didn’t start out as a big idea.

There are five main Aboriginal Art Centres in the Kimberley region and we collaborate to promote art and culture. In 2009, we were interested in building an archive of stories about our senior artists. They wanted to record the stories about their times living on the stations. We originally thought it would be an archive record for each art centre to have and that someone might want to listen to every now and again.

There were about twenty artists who met together to start with and they wanted to have an exhibition of their paintings as well. These were really important Kimberley artists in the region who had once been really important station people as well. Some had been head stockmen. It seemed there was an amazing correlation between people who were really important station workers and who were also quite significant artists. It wasn’t just about the stockmen and the ringers. There were a few women stock riders and women who were camp cooks or rearing children and working in the houses.

In 1969 there was legislation to introduce equal pay for Aboriginal people working in the pastoral industry, and the result was Aboriginal people were removed from the stations. Being removed from stations changed lives. Aboriginal people lost employment, their access to the land and were removed from their cultural responsibilities. That’s had a devastating impact on individual and community pride. Some of those people became artists and now perform their cultural responsibilities through painting those areas of country.

The project hasn’t been easy. Art Centre managers have come and gone. Two artists have died. We started recording the stories in 2010 and in 2011, there were big floods up here. People couldn’t necessarily get out onto country so morale was low but the artists kept asking, ‘When’s that exhibition going to happen?’

The interviews could sometimes take up to eight days, including the long drives, and we’d often stay with the families. The ABC Open producers, Beth Neate in the East Kimberley and Alex Smee in the West Kimberley, worked hard to make sure we had fabulous recordings. It was also about involving the younger members of their families in the interviewing and filming processes. Chris Griffiths, one of Alan Griffiths’ sons, learned a lot of skills and he now works as an arts-worker, so that’s been really good for him.

We launched the exhibition at the Ord Valley Muster at Kununurra in May 2014 with a huge corroboree performance. All thirteen artists came. They travelled from Derby and Fitzroy, Halls Creek and Warmun. Five hundred people were there under the starry Kimberley skies with dancers all painted up and we showed the interviews on a big screen. There were moments of absolute silence. It’s incredible that so many people didn’t know of these stories. Everyone was deeply affected by what the artists were sharing.

The exhibition travelled to Broome and opened at Notre Dame University in August. The project got onto the 7.30 Report and this has generated a lot of interest so we’d like to tour it to the eastern states. They’re beautiful stories and the artworks that go with them are so powerful.

Aboriginal people loved living on stations, and this is why the story is important. The stories are sometimes funny, sometimes tragic, sometimes shocking. As artist Alan Griffiths says, there wasn’t a station anywhere in northern Australia where Aboriginal people weren’t working. Patrick Mung Mung says in his interview, ‘When they listen to these stories, they’ll know we were great in this country.’

Until the 1960s, Aboriginal people lived and worked on every cattle station in the Kimberley. They worked for rations and the conditions varied greatly from station to station. They had tremendous cattle skills and horsemanship and loved their connection to country. *In the Saddle – On the Wall* is an innovative art and digital storytelling project which tells the stories of thirteen senior Aboriginal artists.

“Being removed from stations changed lives. Aboriginal people lost employment, their access to the land and were removed from their cultural responsibilities.”

Rammy Ramsey
PHOTO | MATT FALLON

Mervyn Street and June Davis
PHOTO | ALEX SMEE



Kimberley Region, WA





Gascoyne in May

The Gascoyne is one of nine regions of Western Australia, located in the remote north-west. It includes Carnarvon, Exmouth, Shark Bay and Upper Gascoyne. It is a vast area of almost 140,000 square kilometres, with six hundred kilometres of Indian Ocean coastline. *Gascoyne in May* aimed to create a festival circuit with key Gascoyne festivals to ensure the entire region could share resources, artists and costs.

I moved to the Gascoyne in 2008 and started to volunteer with local festivals. Not long after, I was employed by Country Arts WA.

There were five or six festivals happening throughout the region, spread out over the year, and people were so busy they couldn't go to each other's events. There had also been a drift away from volunteer community-based committees towards local government running them. Planning meetings would happen during working hours, which meant the community couldn't get there. So interest fell away and that's inevitable. People need to be included. They need to be listened to and empowered, taking both the ownership of risks and the dignity of risk as well. By 2010, only one festival happened in the entire region.

We all knew it was time to rethink the traditional way of doing things. There were too many demands across the year for experienced organisers, artists and production people and the region's festivals were competing with each other for funding.

We talked to all the shires involved and agreed to create a festival circuit involving all five festivals in the month of May, with me in the role of overall Artistic Director. I saw the role as supporting local ambition and initiative. A sort of cultural broker.

It was an audacious plan in the sense that we were asking local committees to give up control over their programs, but it was also the obvious solution to the problem of festivals dying. It offered a lot of positive outcomes. It had the potential to drive tourism to the region, it meant we could all make the best use of financial and human resources and it was a way to bond as one region, to get communities talking to each other.

In each community, there is a local engagement committee. We create a point of entry for local people. They register as volunteers, then during the first year, we ask them what their established skill sets are and what their aspirational skill sets are. We support them to develop these skills and in the following year, they become a Level One Contractor and we pay them a stipend. This is all about sustainably building the skills, employment and engagement opportunities for local people as artists and producers. The traditional model of bringing in visiting artists to deliver performances and projects works up to a point, but it doesn't allow for genuine long-term development.

While we're building the in-house creatives, we are also supporting collaboration between visiting artists and Gascoyne artists who have advanced their skills in this way. They work on an equal level. Mutual nourishment is part of the culture of *Gascoyne in May*. Nigel Martin and Louise Clark are international street performers and they have worked directly with the local Gascoyne Circus and Musical Theatre to build their performance skills over time. GCMT are now going out of the Gascoyne to perform in other festivals, which is wonderful. Mick Stirosi is a carpenter who's transitioned from volunteer to production manager. This year he collaborated with Karen Hethey, a master puppeteer and spectacle maker. He made this incredible octopus puppet with articulated legs. The mechanism he designed is mind-blowing. He's been able to bring his skills and problem-solve things in ways that Karen hadn't thought of, so that's stimulated her as well.

Our first festival was in 2011. By 2013, fifty percent of artists contracted to perform or exhibit were from the Gascoyne region. After every festival we do an audit with the in-house troupe. We ask them what they want to focus on in the off months. Leading up to the 2014 festival, we offered targeted workshops in fire-sculpture and large puppet making to our in-house troupe.

The road hasn't been easy. As a region, the Gascoyne isn't wired for arts and culture. We're a liquor, racing and gaming culture. Advocating to key people in shires is perpetual, but supporting this sort of activity is just so important. Festivals get people together, shoulder to shoulder, reflecting on what community is. These days, we're all engaged with the world through our i-Phones but we don't know our neighbours.

When I think about all the local talent that has been nurtured, I feel absolute pride and honour. When the internationals come and work alongside them, they go, 'Whoa! These people are so multi-skilled, they've got such good timing and they can do everything!' It's great they are recognised by visiting artists in this way.

The Gascoyne used to be this secret, unknown region. Now we're getting the word into contemporary vernacular for all the right reasons. People are beginning to understand that the wealth isn't in the ground, it's in the people. I know I'm biased about the Gascoyne. People who are born here or drawn here, who choose to have families and businesses here, they're just industrial strength.

Theaker von Ziarno performing her Aerial show 'Minerva' at TropiCOOL 2013
PHOTO | ANTON BLUME



Gascoyne Region, WA





Yarnin'

When our Elders pass on, it's like closing a library book

In 2009, Aboriginal Elder Bobby Nicholls approached theatre-maker John Harding about a project dear to his heart, recording his Elders' stories before it was too late. Filmmaker and media trainer Rebecca McLean invited them both to Open Channel to see the new Mobile Training Unit, and from this meeting *Yarnin'* was born. *Yarnin'* works with local Aboriginal communities in regional Victoria. It's a travelling digital-storytelling and training program focusing on Land Rights. *Yarnin'* teaches young filmmakers to interview their Elders and make short documentaries which are screened online.

I've been involved with Native Title in Victoria for fifteen years. We've been looking at Land Rights, education, employment, housing, incarceration and high imprisonment rates. For a long time, very little has been spoken about of any of these issues in Victoria.

When our Elders pass on, it's like closing a library book and that library book will never be opened again. That person has passed on with all that knowledge of the history of themselves and their country. We've had so many Aboriginal people pass away. The aim of the project was to record a series of interviews with our Elders. We agreed that it was important to have students participate in the recording because the project was about their cultural learning and identity as well.

The first site was Shepparton, Yorta Yorta country. I'd spoken to ASHE, the *Academy of Sport, Health and Education*, an alternative for Aboriginal and Torres Islander secondary students who don't fit into mainstream education. Leonie Dwyer and Phil Guthrie helped us arrange a two-week program with eight of their students. We interviewed Auntie Lorna Walker, who is the niece of Pastor Sir Douglas Nicholls and Lady Gladys Nicholls. We also interviewed Uncle Leon Saunders who works with Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative in Mooroopna, and Margaret Briggs-Wirrpanda, who sadly passed away not long after. They were the first three. We had a screening as part of the Shepparton Short Film Festival and we came away with two awards.

When we were filming, we got the students to put the camera on the interviewer as well. This gave them an insight into how it felt to be in front of the camera. And it somehow built confidence between the Elders and the students. You could see the Elders opening up, saying to the students, "The stories we've been talking about have been handed down from generation to generation". The students learnt a lot in terms of who they are, their culture and their traditions. It gave the Elders a lot of self-pride.

At the end of the two weeks, we have a wrap up with the students. It's a bit of a debriefing for us as mentors. It's great to hear the young ones say, 'I got such a buzz out of interviewing my Auntie and my Uncle and I found out I have many cousins and many Aunties and Uncles.' They've come away knowing a lot more about themselves, knowing who they are and where they fit into society. To see young people looking and smiling in a positive way, that to me is a winner.

We have now run the *Yarnin'* program with students and Elders in Gunditjmara Kirrae Country (Warrnambool), Wemba Wamba (Swan Hill), Wadi Wadi (Kerang), Yiti Yiti (Bairnsdale) and Gunai Kurnai (Morwell, Bairnsdale, Churchill, Moe, Drouin).

One of the things our young ones continually ask us is, 'How come non-Aboriginal people don't know the history of Aboriginal people?' In Canada and New Zealand, treaties have been established and the history of their nations is well documented. In Victoria, there's very little history written. People don't understand the impact on the Yorta Yorta people of events like the Cummeragunja Walkoff in 1932. People left the mission and either canoed or swam across the Murray River (*Dunghala*). They moved to Barmah Forest, Mooroopna, Shepparton, Moama and Echuca. Children of mixed blood were forcibly removed by the Welfare Protection Board and taken to Cootamundra and Lake Tyers.

Stories of family are just so important. Young people today are lost in terms of not understanding their culture. For our Elders, knowing connection to country and traditional roots is an extremely important part of upbringing. When I was young, we sat around camp fires and we were like sponges absorbing all the stories. Our young people don't have that opportunity – they're caught up in the 21st century and distracted by things. In all these interviews the Elders are saying, 'Your name is

so and so and you're related to so and so'. The Elders were also urging the young ones to continue with education because a good education will bring you good employment.

Twenty-five years ago the first Native Title Claim was lodged in the Federal Court by the Yorta Yorta and Justice North in his summarising said, "The history of time has washed your Native Title away". Every day I hear that, but we have always practised our culture. We still go hunting, not with spears but rifles. We still go fishing, but we don't do it in a bark canoe, we do it in a ten foot tinny. Today, when we're recording our history, we don't paint on rocks, we use computers. We've got technology and without the support and access to this technology from Open Channel the *Yarnin'* program would never have been possible.

My hope for *Yarnin'* is that it not only goes into Aboriginal communities, but it also goes into primary schools and secondary schools. This is the best way to hear our Elders talk about Land Rights and education.

I'm hoping some of these young students will study media and photography and come along behind us to continue the work. I'm hoping our stories are continually told and never forgotten.



Several Locations, VIC



Rebecca McLEAN

»→ Filmmaker and Media Trainer, *Yarnin'*

The focus originally was Land Rights, but it's more than that. It's about health, education and justice. Bobby grew up within the political realm with his Uncle Doug and his Auntie Gladys Nicholls both incredibly active community members and so he has a lot of knowledge. Everyone is interconnected. Bobby's thing is bringing those young people in with the older people so that they don't forget and they can overcome a lot of the pain of Bobby's generation. I think those lessons are going to be invaluable for the rest of their life.

The course starts with a master class from Bobby to introduce the concept and get all the students on board and focused on the project and what it means to them and to the community. I run with it after that and work with the students and the mentors to find the questions that will draw out meaningful stories from the interview subjects. We set five questions to start with that we know will give us the turning points for a five-minute short film.

We then visit each of the Elders and the student has a chance to be director, camera operator, sound recordist and gaffer (lighting) and experience the world of the film set. That all happens in the first week.

The Elders, when they're speaking to the young people, have a kind of honesty and urgency to impart knowledge. They put down their guard, and the kids get a



Bobbie Nicholls and Rebecca McLean



response that nobody else would get. They tell us stories they haven't told anyone, even their own family.

The second week is about the basics of the editing software and shaping the story. By the end of the course we have seven to ten interviews but only a few of them are cut to completion due to the time restrictions. Those interviews are then taken back to the edit suite and I work with an editor under the eye of Bobby, Johnny and Open Channel and we cut them into short films. The whole interviews are there forever and the families and future generations have access to them to learn from also.

Bobby's dream, and I share his dream, is to cover the whole state of Victoria. We go into a community and interview seven or eight people, but there might be fifty stories in each little area. We're only scraping the surface. We want to capture as many of these stories as we possibly can. I feel just totally privileged to be a part of that and learning these stories and having access to all this incredible knowledge.

Malika Kirby and Tyra Collis
PHOTO | REBECCA McLEAN

Robert PETCHELL
»→ MUSICAL DIRECTOR, *The Jam, the Mix, the Gig*



Port Pirie Music and Mental Health Project

The Jam, The Mix, The Gig frequently works in partnership with mental health organisations to support personal development through music. Music programs are often surprising in their capacity to shift local perception about mental health issues and this project has done just that. It has now received further funding to continue in 2014.

The Jam, The Mix, The Gig, is a music and mental health program, based in Adelaide. I've often been invited to go out to regional areas and do workshops. The local Country Arts Officer in Port Pirie, Kirstie Jamieson introduced me to Charisse Smith at The Hub and later helped us set up a partnership.

The Hub Mental Health Centre is a place where people are rebuilding their lives. People there are living in the community, not in hospital care. The Hub are keen to explore a range of approaches to integrate their clients back into the community and also to change some of the stigmas around mental health.

With a project like this, the artist needs to understand they bring what they do well, which is their art. They are not health workers; that's the responsibility of trained staff who know the participants and can manage any issues that emerge. The Hub were complete partners and collaborators and that was fundamental to the project having the impact that it did.

The first music session was in March 2013. I usually do a lot of planning but ultimately when you walk into the room, there are some things you can't predict. You need to work with whoever is there. It's very important to have a solid base where people feel comfortable and it's crucial to have staff who are going along on the journey, not there to just put out chairs.

Thirty people turned up, a good start but they were kind of hesitant – trying to work out if it was for them. The level of musical experience was not high. There were only a couple of people who already played. This meant that the first session was very much about just joining in, so we had a lot of percussion instruments. I encouraged people to sing with me and as the session grew they became more relaxed and keen to have a go. By the end of the session there was a very good feeling.

I would go to Port Pirie once a month, and in the alternative fortnight, a local musician, Anthony Sampson, would do the music session. Charisse would get people together for sessions too, making percussion shakers and writing poetry and songs.

After that first time, The Hub got a little donation and found some money here and there. By the time I got back, they had a drum kit, a PA system and some microphones. When I walked into the room I said, 'Where did all this come from?' I was amazed. In between my visits, they would set up their PA with a screen so they could do karaoke!

On any community-based project you develop a core of people who you're really nurturing. We ended up with a core of ten who wanted to make that next step. There's a moment when someone hears themselves make a beautiful sound for the first time and it's fantastic. There was one guy, in his forties, who virtually didn't speak and as the music sessions grew and he started to sing, he ended up speaking. He didn't express himself much, but he did say the music had been really wonderful for him. Those personal transformations happened across the year.

Three women decided they would like to learn an instrument. One of them had a go at the bass guitar, one at the acoustic guitar and another on the keyboard. Each of them had a personal story about wanting to learn as a child but having the dream taken away from them.

We scheduled a performance as part of Mental Health Awareness Week in October. We planned to perform in a park that faced onto the main street in Port Pirie, very much in public. Everyone was nervous because they'd never done anything like this before. The JMG Band is quite experienced and I knew that if even only a couple of participants wanted to sing, it would be fine. Still, it was a very big step.

On the day, Charisse created a fair atmosphere, with food and craft stalls, so it had that feeling of a community celebration rather than a concert. The response from the public was fantastic. We had a really great crowd and all our people were there,



singing and playing together. I felt very proud of what we had achieved, on stage and off. The Hub got great feedback from the health service and other organisations who were really blown away. They had never seen this group of people doing anything like this, never thought they could. It was such a boost for The Hub.

I felt very moved by the development of people in the workshops. The three women I mentioned have become a bit of a leadership group, organising things and getting others together. The guy who started singing now has far greater confidence and is much more engaged with the community.

I've been involved with music and mental health since 1993 and if I could characterise one common theme in terms of mental health, it's social isolation. These sessions sort of reignite social skills and once people start doing something together, other transformations can happen. More than any other art form, music has the power to engage people, boost confidence and self-esteem. Performing with others is one of the most satisfying things you can do.



Port Pirie, SA

Music has a unique capacity to create resilience in communities. It is easily accessible, rewarding and a lot of fun. It can build a strong sense of local identity, provide entry into the music business and it can help people recover from unthinkable disasters.

CAAMA

Micheal 'Miko' SMITH

»»» MUSIC MANAGER, *Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, Regional Music Development Program*

Music and song are a huge part of Australian Aboriginal cultural identity; they pass on stories of creation and lore since time first began.

Starting at CAAMA, I visited my first Aboriginal community to deliver music business training workshops. The first hurdle was language. For remote Aboriginal communities, English is often a third or fourth language so the idea of teaching music business was daunting. But one of the biggest problems I found was the state of the musical instruments. They all needed repair.

I started to think about how I could really help musicians in remote Aboriginal communities and decided they needed basic skills first, including instrument maintenance. I spent most of my time in the early days teaching people in remote communities how to restore their equipment. First things first.

Back in Alice Springs, I spoke to Bill Davis, the manager of CAAMA Music at that time, to see if we could develop a new training package that would really help musicians in these remote Aboriginal communities. It needed to deal with basic repair and maintenance, plus music business skills, literacy and numeracy skills and communication skills. This mix of accredited and non-accredited training would address the real challenges for these remote musicians and hopefully create pathways into the music business.



After many years of trips out bush, countless grant applications and a lot of coffee, the Regional Music Development Program was created. For three years, this program has been developing the talents of remote musicians so now they are experienced sound engineers, capable of mentoring others in their own communities and passing on those skills in their own language. We call them Music Industry Rangers. We've been able to expand the CAAMA Music record label and increase event staging. Last year the rangers worked on a huge variety of events setting up the staging, lighting and sound at the *Bush Bands Bash*, *Alice Desert Festival* and the *Mbantua Festival*.

The recently-released album by *Tjintu Desert Band* is a perfect example of the direction the music in NT can achieve. The touring support *Tjintu* received has influenced their music and now they've got a unique take on 'desert reggae'. They're using Spanish guitar and even dub beats.

That's the best musical training: give musicians independence, give them the freedom and knowledge to make their own music and organise their own events.

Alice Springs, NT

Miko Smith with Running Water at Bush Bands Business
PHOTO | OLIVER ECLIPSE



The Stringalong Club

Lynne PRICE

»»» PRESIDENT, *Burnie Arts Council*

There were two schools in the Burnie district suffering from negative profiles in the community and I thought they could benefit from a youth-focused string program. I play the violin and music has always been a great part of my life. In 2003, I visited a severely disadvantaged primary school in East London and saw a successful string teaching program operating for students in grades one to six.

In 2007, with a little bit of funding from the RAF, Margaret Hoban, a Launceston-based string teacher, agreed to travel weekly to teach the violin and cello to students at Havenview Primary School and Parklands High School. This was the beginning of the *Stringalong Club*.

Children who had never been encouraged to play stringed instruments were now taken under the wing of supportive mentors. Their parents began to see the value of music as part of their education. One parent told me that this was the first thing her child had shown any interest in. He's in year eight. He doesn't practise much but he turns up very enthusiastically. His mother and father are absolutely rapt.

By 2011, the program had captured the attention of five other schools in the district and they agreed to take over the teaching costs. *Stringalong* participates in masterclasses supplied by the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, the University of Tasmania Conservatorium and the Australian Chamber Orchestra. Burnie City Council regularly hosts concerts at the Art Gallery which include the *Combined Stringalong Ensemble*. This involves students from years four to ten. Parents visit the gallery for performances and are enthusiastic about their child's participation.

It would be true to say that *Stringalong* is now a recognised title in our community. We've taken it slowly and it's built its own exciting momentum.

Burnie, TAS



Members of the weekly "After School Strings"
PHOTO | EMILY PRICE



Passing the Baton

John MacINNES

»»» PRESIDENT, *Warrnambool Community Orchestra*

We have a great community orchestra in Warrnambool and we usually have plenty of players, but not always an abundant supply of conductors.

Our orchestra of about thirty players was formed in 1988. We wanted to ensure future generations would continue its legacy so we looked at how we could provide introductory training in the art of conducting. You really do need a conductor for an orchestra and you need one who knows the ropes. We called the project *Passing the Baton*.

We got in touch with Angus Christie, a professional conductor from Hamilton, about one hundred kilometres from Warrnambool. He was guest conductor for one of our concerts last year and he agreed to do it again this year. The idea was to get him to train some talented young musicians so they would know the rudiments. They could develop those skills and we could have some home-grown conductors.

We thought this scheme would provide us with a pool who could take the helm and keep our orchestra going. Three young people took on the challenge.

On Mother's Day 2014, we staged a performance in Warrnambool's recently refurbished St Joseph's Church, with each trainee conductor taking up the baton in a performance of the works they had prepared. They were quite confident in taking charge and telling the older people what to do, in a nice way of course. I think they got a big kick out of it!

We're glad we've been able to train some of our own. *Passing the Baton* has helped us secure the future of the group and it's raised the profile of the orchestra too. We've now got three new young string players on board. It's wonderful to see a new generation taking the reins. We're facing 2014 and beyond with renewed confidence and enthusiasm.

Warrnambool, VIC



WSO at Logan's Beach
PHOTO | JANET MacDONALD



Jennie MATTHEWS
» ORCHESTRA ORGANISER,
Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra

Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra



Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra 2014
PHOTO | MIKE SLATTERY

I've wanted to assemble a symphony orchestra on the Limestone coast for the last ten years. I play in the Mount Gambier City Brass Band and Concert Band and direct a local string group, so I knew there were many fine musicians in the area. Predicting the degree of interest for orchestral music though was another matter. There hasn't been a lot of it in Mount Gambier recently and even visiting groups like the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and the Australian String Quartet have stopped coming. I just didn't know how many players would step up.

With support from my husband Tom Dermody and friend John Pratt, both musicians, I put out an invitation through schools and community groups and before long, the orchestra seats were filled. Players came from Naracoorte, Dergholm, Penola, Beachport and Millicent. Fortunately, they volunteered in the right proportions so I wasn't dealing with forty clarinetists and seven violinists! We were also lucky to secure internationally-trained conductor Angus Christie, who conducts a number of orchestras in the Western Districts of Victoria.

Once rehearsals started, the momentum built and we arranged for our first performance. It was at the five-hundred-seat Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre in June 2013 and it was a sell-out. We've been offered an artistic residency there for the 2014 season. We will also be presenting a new orchestral composition by Dr Christopher Waite, who has worked closely with us to fine-tune the score.

In the first year, you can be sure the audience are coming to support people they know on stage, Aunty so-and-so. This year though, it was more that people chose to come because they love orchestra music. It's a lovely feeling to have been a part of this revival and to have made many more friends in the process.

Mt Gambier, SA



Fish Creek Tea Cosy Festival

Deidre GRANGER
» CONVENOR, *Fish Creek Tea Cosy Festival Music Program*

Fish Creek is a small and welcoming rural community in South East Gippsland. Whenever you pay a visit to someone at home, the first thing you will be offered is a good cuppa. The Festival started in 2010 as a lament at not being able to go *out* and get a good cuppa. We missed the refinement of that café culture.

Our annual ten-day program includes tea-related things like tea and symphony, tea dances, high tea, afternoon tea, bush-tea



PHOTO | ANDY ROGERS, THE WEEKLY TIMES

Triangle Steelbands

Rita SEETHALER
» ORGANISER, *Triangle Community Steelbands*

My husband and I live in Taggerty, one of the areas affected by the Black Saturday bushfires in February 2009. That was a significant day in the history of the Triangle area towns of Marysville, Narbethong, Buxton and Taggerty. Many lives were lost, communities almost wiped out and thousands of homes destroyed.

I have no background in music therapy but I felt intuitively that music would be a good thing to do. After the fires, whenever I played, I felt the pressure lift immediately and I felt my confidence return. I had played in Switzerland since the early 80s, and I knew that big bands are like a family, very convivial, a good place to be. I decided I could offer the community a project where they could find that space too, where they could relieve their stress and begin to rebuild their identity, to foster a new life and home. I thought that playing steel pans could be a way to do it.

Triangle Community Steelbands began as a bushfire recovery project. I asked my steel pan maker friend, Werner Egger from Switzerland, to help us make pans. This is quite a lengthy process and requires specialised skills. There was one young man, a firefighter, who was deeply traumatised. Being a welder, he was interested in the pan making process and started to work alongside Werner. Making the pan was a very uplifting thing for him.

storytelling. Our events are always highly accessible and give participants the opportunity to build stronger foundations for showcasing their talents.

The local primary school had recently lost its music teacher, so we decided to focus the 2014 program on music. We wanted to involve the whole community in playing and performing, including people who don't consider themselves to be musical. The aim was to put fun back into learning.

Program organiser Rebecca Bone taught workshop participants to make their own instruments from plastic tubs, pipes, sticks, tins and felted bands which created different sounds. They made guitars, harps, chimes, tambourines, all sorts of things.

The final concert was just lovely. It was entertaining, funny and really bad in places but always just delightful. The point wasn't for the performance to feel like a music exam! It was simply to perform and see what it felt like.

Each year you see the festival bringing more pride to the community. People are becoming more open to new things and inspired to make their own musical ensembles, like the new Gregorian chant group.

Fish Creek now has music again; the difference is we are making it ourselves.

Fish Creek, VIC



Bec's band
PHOTO | JOHN BANIKOS

Once a set of pans was made, we started offering music in our shed. Many people joined in several groups learning easy calypso tunes together. They said that the weekly rehearsals helped them a lot and they were always looking forward to them. People could take their instruments home. And they always took them. It's a very intimate relationship. It instantly puts you in a good place.

The longevity and magnitude of the steel pan project surprises me. When we started, it was just an attempt to help people in their recovery process. Now, there are two adult steelbands, a mums and kids band and a steelband in a local primary school.

Five years ago, as we sat around our shed on that first community demonstration day, we could never have imagined that we would play over seventy concerts, release our first CD with plans for a second, perform at the Myer Music Bowl and in the Moomba Parade, run the first Australian Steel Band Festival and prepare (as we are now) for our first concert tour of France. It would have been preposterous to have had such thoughts then.

Life can take you in unexpected directions sometimes, just as it did for us.

Taggerty, Narbethong, Buxton and Marysville, VIC

Pans on Fire steelband from Marysville PHOTO | VICKI MORITZ, MARYSVILLE PHOTOGRAPHY



One River was the vision of the Creative Director of the Centenary of Canberra, Robyn Archer AO. Robyn saw an opportunity to celebrate this milestone of the largest city in the Murray-Darling Basin by working with communities to capture the real stories of life within this most iconic of Australian waterways.

Donna Jackson was *One River's* Artistic Director, Malcolm McKinnon was Curator of Stories and Lindy Allen was Executive Producer. From March to August 2013, ten artist-in-residence projects were delivered in towns large and small, regional, remote and very remote, in Queensland, NSW, Victoria, South Australia and the ACT. The four projects featured here demonstrate the enormous diversity of people and places along the stretch of river they call their own.



Conflux
Kim CHALMERS
» ARTIST, *One River*
(Kim collaborated with Sally Hederics)

Sally Hederics and I had worked together on a number of projects around the themes of water and this was an opportunity to look at that material in a new way and to engage the community. I'm a composer and musician, and the starting point for me was to record interviews with people from different walks of life, different ages and demographics about their experiences of the river. So I built up a collection of stories from broad-acre farmers, children, irrigators, water police, Indigenous Elders and just all sorts of people in the region. Most people had fond stories rather than spiky ones. People talked about good times and hard times but what came out were positive stories. This was a pleasant surprise because our region, the Sunraysia, relies heavily on irrigation and this was the time when Parliament was debating the adoption of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

Our community engagement was through the dance school where Sally teaches. We wanted to work closely with the young dancers who have grown up here and encourage them to look at how the river has shaped them. It got them thinking in a new way about who they are and how they've become that person, but also translating those experiences physically into movement in a choreographic sense. This was really empowering for them. Our performance would be in two pieces. The first, *Conflux*, involved most of the ballet school. The movements were created by the students themselves in response to workshops. They played with ideas like



waterskiing (leaning your weight against a rope and back again) and the confluence of the Murray and Darling Rivers.

For the second piece, *Riverlife*, Sally spent three months working with a select group of six dancers who were fifteen/ sixteen years of age, intensively leading up to the March performance in Mildura. They rehearsed during the week and every weekend, sometimes all weekend, right through the summer holidays. They were so dedicated to the project. I think the idea of creating a work that's not just made to do an Eisteddfod or pass an exam but was made for a reason, with a real idea behind it, was a revelation to them. They felt really honoured to be part of it.

Riverlife investigated our relationship with the river across three dimensions, the natural, the domestic (which is about harnessing water for showers and cooking) and the industrial (looking at irrigation and big machinery). The dancers created their own choreography. There were some beautiful moments, for example in the domestic scenes with brushing their teeth, flushing the toilets, having showers. And in the industry scenes with interlocking movements like cogs in machinery.

Looking back, the moment that stands out for me was the curtain coming down! The kids had just worked so hard and they nailed it, they pulled it off. They were so excited and I could see they were just waiting for the curtain to come down so they could all high five each other. Little Nick was almost levitating with excitement while the curtain was still about a metre off the ground, and they were all hugging each other. They were just so proud of what they had achieved.

School of Fish
PHOTO | DANIELLE HANIFIN



Turn Back to the River

Heidi KENYON
» ARTIST, *One River*
River dirt is dirty dirt

Untitled (Murray Bridge Kaleidoscope) [detail], mirrors, mixed media
PHOTO | HEIDI KENYON



I grew up in the Riverland, in Loxton. We had a house that backed onto the riverbank so it was part of my childhood. We were always out on houseboats and walking the dog with him running off and doing silly things. In Murray Bridge, people don't think about the river in that way. It's the way the town is set up, the centre of the town is away from the river - you don't have those sight lines.

A lot of people I spoke to were keen to renew a connection or to think about the river in a different way, and because of my own experience, I really wanted to shift people's perceptions.

Murray Bridge has always been a port town. The Murray River was a major thoroughfare, a highway, so people thought of the river in industrial terms. Even in the 1920s, passengers travelling down on paddle steamers wouldn't drink the river water. I heard the story of a captain who promised his passengers he wouldn't give them river water to drink, but at night he would draw up the water and use Epsom Salts to settle the sediment and that's what they had with their breakfast in the morning.

I started the project by talking to a lot of people. I'm really interested in the fine grain of our lives. The library generously donated a space for me to use as a studio so I had a public presence. I was trying to think of a way to gather people's stories and I thought about the postcard. It's an easy way to share a story or photograph or drawing, and the form is visually consistent so it could be used in various installations.

It was a bit of a slow burn at the beginning but about two weeks before the exhibition I was flooded with postcards and photographs. It was a quite a thrill to be able to tap into such personal and meaningful experiences. There were a lot of stories about the drought, and about the 1956 floods. Someone remembered seeing a haystack floating past with chickens on top! One woman recalled her mother being furious with them for playing by the river, because river dirt is 'dirty dirt'. It stains and you can't get it out.

The biggest challenge was finding the best exhibition space. I wanted a different kind of space to a gallery, somewhere familiar, near the river, but a place people normally engage with. I saw these old railway carriages that were quite neglected and had been vandalised with a lot of broken glass and rubbish, and I sort of fell in love with them. They were right on the wharf and there was a little stage area outside. I wanted to create some giant camera obscura boxes, big pin-hole cameras where people could come inside and see the river projected upside-down, see it in a different way. Of course it would have been easier to work with a white cube gallery space, but these carriages just had all the history and the 'dirty dirt'.

It was really hard getting through all the red tape at Council. I had never done that level of risk management, paperwork and planning but I was determined not to dilute my ideas. The Murray Bridge Regional Gallery and Riverboat Rail and Steam Group really helped get through the red tape.

For the exhibition, I used three carriages. One I made into an installation of postcards that you could view from outside and the other two I turned into pin-hole cameras. I blocked out all the light and hung fabric for the image to be projected onto. The fabric needs to be curved so there was a lot of putting it up and pulling down and putting it up again to get it right.

At the opening, the kids really cottoned on. They got their friends to run outside and they'd appear on the screen upside down. In one, I used a vintage telescope lens that made the projection about 3 metres wide so you come and sit down and absorb the much larger moving image of the world outside. One woman was quite moved and said that it enabled her to think about some personal issues in a different way.

Having her perspective shifted had really helped her. It was so amazing to hear, and for me, it confirmed my commitment to using the carriages. It wouldn't have had that effect if it had been in a pristine gallery space.

You could see that it worked. It's very ordinary and everyday, it's simple but complex and that's what makes it beautiful.





Unravelling the Maranoa

Jude ROBERTS

» ARTIST, *One River*



Mitchell, QLD

When I started this project it was just on a year after the greatest recorded flood that Mitchell had ever experienced. Most of the town had been inundated and the bridge almost destroyed. This was unknown territory – the water just kept coming. A flood can be devastating but it can also bring a lot of joy because it fills all the dams and is good for the land. This last flood deposited piles of white sand, which formed beaches along the banks including one that the locals nicknamed ‘Mooloolaba’.

I had been experimenting with soaking large pieces of paper in the river to capture different stains. There is something about the way a roll of paper unravels and flows into a shallow river, soaking up the river's story through the mud and sand and mineral deposits that is so fundamental.

I thought working with the community like this could be a good way of capturing their diverse experiences, from the pastoralists and the Indigenous community, and it was also important to involve young people.

I did several workshops with students from Mitchell, Dunkeld, Mungallala and Begonia State School. The Murray-Darling Basin Committee gave me a series of 25 maps that showed the river in various locations from the Carnarvon Gorge where the headwaters rise, down to St George. Many students see their river in Mitchell but have never imagined how far it travels. We laid out the maps and used them to create a new drawing of the river on a long roll. They added their home locations. We talked about how the Great Artesian Basin works. It was important for me to include this in the exhibition so that the participants could see their work hung and maybe think about the river in a different way. A couple of students helped me install their part of the show and that was good experience for them.

I worked with the community to choose significant sites along the Maranoa River. I wanted to capture a lot of different stories and the locations needed to reflect this. Some sites were geographically significant. It was important to include the head waters and the historically interesting sites like the spot where Sir Thomas Mitchell set up camp at the 22 Mile.

The Yumba, only a couple of miles out of town, is important Gunggari country. Elder Aunty Irene Ryder and her niece Lynette Nixon have a direct connection to their ancestors along this river. It has been a place of births, deaths, burials and corroborees. For these women and many others, the Yumba is home. Lynette recalls her father telling her about *marda*, the hand, which signifies the headwaters of the five rivers that begin in the Carnarvon.

The community were keen to show me particular sites, helping with the paper or taking photographs, and gradually they started sharing their stories. I began to record them and used this as a sound track in the exhibition. One resident, Estelle, travelled with her mother on the maiden voyage of the Westlander in 1954 and they were met at the station by her brother in a truck. They got bogged in the wet sand when they were crossing the river and he had to walk ten miles to pick up the tractor to pull them out. It makes you realise how difficult life was for those early pastoralists.

The pastoral industry relies on the water. The property owners were really enthusiastic and allowed me to stay on several of them. When I soak or bury the paper, I need to be there to check on it. In one place I left the paper for five days, so it was very important to have that support.

I was anxious about how the idea would work because you have so little control when you put the paper in the river. I left my first roll in too long and we lost a third of it. I thought that was a failure but two weeks later, that roll really showed the

fragility of the river. At the confluence of the Topaz Creek and the Maranoa, the flow is only inches deep. When we put the paper down overnight, we captured that trickle, but when we took it back to the homestead and flipped it over, on the back were markings of iron from the groundwater. It was wonderful to see this connection to the Great Artesian Basin. As we did more of these, it was exciting that people could see the river making its own mark.

During the making of the last roll, I asked the site manager who was overseeing the building of the new bridge, Neil Braden, if he would help me capture a tyre mark of one of his cranes because this was also part of the river's story at this time. He really wasn't sure what I meant but he was happy enough to say yes. At the opening, after seeing the work installed, you could see that he did understand, could relate to the whole project.

Looking back, the amazing thing for me is that if we did the project now it would be completely different. The community was recovering from the worst flood in living memory then and now water hasn't flowed for eighteen months. If I did this project today, it would have an entirely different outcome.

“... if we did the project now it would be completely different. The community was recovering from the worst flood in living memory then and now water hasn't flowed for eighteen months.”





Lake Suite

Carmel WALLACE

» ARTIST, *One River*

Stitching us all together



Lakes Hawthorn, Hattah and
Mungo NSW & VIC

This project was about three lakes in the Mallee: Hawthorn, Hattah and Mungo. All of them hold different stories about the river system and about our treatment of the environment over time. I believe that if people develop a close relationship to the place they live in, then their will to protect and look after that environment is strengthened. When that's done through stories and art we get a rich connection to place.

I hadn't considered the lakes in artistic terms before but thought, 'If I can strengthen my own connection through this project, really think about the environment that gave birth to me, then I can take other people on the journey as well'.

I was born in the Mallee and still have a lot of family living there. My grandfathers from both sides cleared the land and established fruit blocks not far from Lake Hawthorn. Both of my grandmothers would be out there in that red dirt caring for gardens and trying to grow roses as they raised their children. It was a pretty harsh environment.

I thought really carefully about the form I could use as a vehicle for expression of place through the people who lived there. The challenge was to enable lots of entry points so, whatever their artistic background or skills, people could get involved. The form of a cloak seemed ideal. As a nurturing garment it protects you from the elements. It has been used across time and cultures and worn by all classes, from poverty-stricken people trying to keep warm, to queens and emperors for ceremonial purposes. The cloak has an external, public side and a private, personal lining that you hold close to yourself. It can represent who and where you are and is an ideal repository of memories.

Choosing this form made me think about the exhibition process. I work in galleries and I also work on community art projects. Mostly these parts of my practice don't coincide, but I thought if I could do this project in a professional gallery, in the Art Vault in Mildura, I could bring the two together. I started the process by inviting people to come in and work with me. This led to a finale event where the cloaks were the focus of a major exhibition. This way, the gallery was a welcoming space for the project – people could see the work being created and be a part of it.

I was also able to take the project out into the community. The cloaks were perfectly portable and were often worked on in people's homes or in public institutions, including the Lake School. My mother was eighty-six and in a high-care facility and I also saw this as an opportunity to spend more time with her. I could take a cloak with me to her room and tease out stories about her experience of Lake Hawthorn and the Mallee.



Five cloaks were made for **Lake Suite**. Perhaps the one that means the most to me is the *Flower Cloak*. The outer side is green velvet with artificial flowers sewn on, in reference to the green of the lawns and the flowers that are grown in front gardens, on public view. Friends would sometimes give Mum artificial flowers and she loved them because they would remind her of those friends. We used some of Mum's flowers to embellish the outside, along with many flowers of special significance to others, gifted to the project. The inside of this cloak is pink silk, representing the interior and personal. I like to source materials that have had another life so that their history becomes another layer of meaning in the work. The silk was given to me from my sister and I also used a beautiful embroidered antique table setting.

On each silk placemat is a story about a flower. I asked different people to write something about their connection to their mothers and the area through flowers. They wrote in pencil directly onto the placemats and then their writing was embroidered by machine.

Lake Suite rapidly grew into a large project. Many people came to look, to share, to write stories and sew – often all at once! The art and memories articulated pride, concern and knowledge. Indigenous Elder Auntie Lottie Williams shared many stories, and on the inside of the *Metal for Water* cloak she wrote the poignant words, 'Water is Gold'. The finale was a fantastic celebratory event that included music and performance. My family and the community were all there. The students from the Lake School came to see the *Water for Lakes* cloak they had worked on. They all felt connected to the cloaks. It was sort of a way of stitching us all together.

Lake Suite cloaks worn by Mildura dancers in Canberra
PHOTO | SEAN DAVEY



Lake Suite: Flowers for Gardens cloak (detail), velvet, thread, artificial flowers
PHOTO | CARMEL WALLACE



Water 2013



Renmark SA

I moved to the Riverland from Melbourne in May of 2010 and it was right at the height of the drought. There were a lot of shop closures and people were moving out of the region. You’d hear a kind of sigh when someone learnt a friend had left the region. Many families were isolated. There was a pervasive sense of hardship but there was resilience too. People in the community were really galvanised and supporting each other.

A lot of organisations in the region wanted to deliver an arts project to help bring some hope and optimism to the community. I knew that this would be a fabulous opportunity for Riverland Youth Theatre to deliver the things that art does best in a time of crisis: unite communities and celebrate life in their region. The river unites the Riverland and water was the obvious theme for our major project in 2013.

Loxton Lights UP and *Renmark Christmas Pageant* traditionally attract a huge and diverse crowd, babies right up to the elderly. There are new migrants, the backpacker community, the group of growers and people from business. Pretty much everybody goes along to these events and I thought if we were going to do something, then this is where we needed to do it.

During 2012, we conducted interviews to gather multi-cultural perspectives about water. Joey Ruigrok van der Werven, director of *Woodford Folk Festival Fire Event*, mentored me in community engagement practice in large-scale fire sculptures and *Open Space*, an outdoor spectacle company, were partners in the overall project, providing artists to mentor local artists.

We developed a year-round workshop program with schools, Indigenous youth and health and welfare organisations. We ran workshops during key events like *NAIDOC Week*, *the Rose Festival* and the *South Australian Living Artists Festival*.

In our workshops with the Migrant Resource Centre and migrant literacy class in Renmark, a large number of new arrivals, mostly from the Afghan community, took part. Some of the Afghan men who were skilled welders and tailors quickly finished pieces, including plasma cutting, to make these beautifully stencilled forty-four gallon fire drums.

From January right through the year there was a gradual build-up of interest and activity. By the time the events happened in November and December, everybody knew about it.

Loxton Lights UP is normally a fireworks event, but we added a beautiful precursor, a procession of a hundred lanterns carried by primary students from the Loxton region with a big central lantern, Pondi the Murray Cod, and a local choir on stage. Audience numbers doubled to ten thousand. People were gobsmacked by the high level of participation.

In recent years, the *Renmark Christmas Pageant* has struggled to attract the region’s schools, but in 2013, we had all but one! Over 100 students walked together in the procession.

Members of the Riverland Youth Theatre’s Indigenous dance group *Nunga Rhythms* carried backpack puppets telling the story of the Little Blue Wren. The riverfront in Renmark is spectacular. It’s a natural amphitheatre and so it’s perfect for this kind of performance. In the past the people just sat along the very long frontage and waited for the fireworks. In 2013, at sunset, we launched two hundred floating lanterns onto the river as well as a seven-metre-long lantern of a Pondi mounted on a dinghy. To reflect multi-cultural stories, there were silhouettes pulled by canoeists down the river – an African woman with her water vessel on her head, a fisherman with a net, some children jumping into the river.

Riverland Youth Theatre worked across the Riverland in Waikerie, Berri, Barmera, Renmark and Loxton, to explore the shared significance of water through cultural stories and folklore. Lantern-making workshops were delivered throughout 2013 culminating in two public celebrations.

The Walkandi-Woni Art Group from Loxton worked with designer Kathryn Sproul to create a seven-metre-high fire-rope sculpture of the Moolyawongk, a water spirit who warns children not to go to the river alone. When the Moolyawongk was lit there was a big gasp and a huge round of applause. I don’t think they were applauding the spectacle, they were actually applauding themselves and the different aspects of their community that were represented in the performance. That was wonderful.

The power of walking in a procession as a community, though it’s fleeting, is very powerful. It’s a way of saying, we’re all in this together and that’s what makes us strong. That is really something to celebrate.



Water 2013 Renmark
PHOTOS | TRACEY CHAPMAN





L to R Melissa Kerl and Franca Barraclough

24hr DANCE Marathon

Stepping out of the ordinary

[Franca] I used to watch a lot of ABC and SBS documentaries as a kid and I remember seeing quite a few about the dance marathons of the 20s and 30s during the Depression: dancers with numbers on their backs in these big halls all hanging off each other in a disintegrating way. People who didn't have enough to eat would go into the contest because they got six meals a day. They were harrowing experiences. I'm fascinated by the endurance element – people pushed to an extreme, not in a way that's damaging but in a way that can be transformative. For me, it's about finding a place on the edge, stepping out of the ordinary and finding the extraordinary.

In Alice, there's a real division between sport and art. We wanted to bring that competitive edge of sports and mix it with play and creativity. *24hr DANCE* was in a relay style. We hoped to attract a broader audience, with businesses and organisations forming teams. We were surprised when it turned out to be quite a challenge to recruit people. We couldn't understand why they weren't just knocking down the door to join up! We were a bit stressed but in the end, it all seemed to happen at the last moment. We put out a media release and it was picked up really quickly. People got curious. They were on the phone in one second: 'What is it, tell me, I want to know more!' Suddenly, all these teams appeared out of nowhere.

The marathon was set inside a shop in the central business district – the shop was the dance floor. Once you were on the lino floor you were in the competition and once on the floor people didn't want to leave. The next team member would come on and the whole team would be on the floor dancing the night away. Hardly a relay at all! That was unexpected. We had four facilitators, Mel, me, Doug and Elspeth and we held the whole space together with constant activities, motivations, directions, games, antics and dress ups. All these things kept everyone going and there was this lovely social flow. During the day we had lots of kids coming in. Every section of the day and night attracted different people. For example, a disability group came in for a couple of hours. It was very much a melting pot of the whole community.

Families came and stayed. People brought their swags. Half the shop was blocked off so they could sleep. We had people who don't go to discos and nightclubs anymore and that was exciting for us. We'd created a new outlet for dance that's not about alcohol, drinking and drugs.

The central business district of Alice Springs is usually a dead zone at night but we'd put couches and chairs in the mall. This enlivened the area and created a happy atmosphere. Soon we had lots of people dancing out the front. We wanted to keep it open enough so that unsuspecting passers-by could just drop in and contribute. One of the really nice moments was when this young group of Indigenous kids just happened to stumble upon the event. They were beat boxing on the mikes, and rap dancing. It was a very special welcoming, creative, supportive, fun space. So many unexpected things happened.

I was really impressed by people's ability to embrace being in the experience. I was facilitating the four to seven am session when the dancers were at the lowest energy ebb. I started doing animal walks, trance, circle, tribal work in the silliest possible way and people loved it and got so into it, that suddenly it was seven am. Every hour, something amazing happened.

It gave me faith in mankind again. I just love that aspect of humanity that is willing to explore and experiment and I think that's where all the best experiences come from.

Franca Barraclough and Melissa Kerl created the *24hr DANCE Marathon* in Alice Springs. It was an endurance dance experience inspired by the dance contests of 1920s and 30s. People registered teams to dance non-stop for twenty-four hours in a vacant shop in Todd Street Mall from 10:00am Wednesday 11 September to 10:00am Thursday 12 September, 2013.

[Melissa] Adult play is very prescribed. Adults play after work, after they've had dinner and a few drinks, but dance and play any time of the day is not something we usually do.

That sense of play became a major part of what made the marathon so successful. People would go, 'Yeah, soul train! Let's go!' We did limbo, time warps, even your super daggy nut bushes. I put on *Chariots of Fire* and everyone was running, one at a time, down the dance floor with their pretend victory. It was just one hundred percent play.

A couple of people danced for the whole twenty-four hours. Shannyn is about thirty-five. She went in with the idea that she would dance for as long as she could and found this joyous energy which pushed her through. Dave learned about the event the day before. He's a bit older and not super fit but when he started his team's relay session, he just got it. There was nowhere else he wanted to be. The rules were as long as you continue to move a body part, you were dancing. Dave spent the late night hours sitting on the edge of the stage finger dancing. When he completed, he was so proud. He crossed the finish line with, 'I am a hero! I am a dance hero!' The mayor came and rewarded all of the marathon competitors with medals. All the media embraced Dave. For twenty-four hours, he was the town hero.

I feel proud that we presented something artistically challenging but so universally inclusive that anyone could and did join in. Just knowing and believing the idea would work and inviting people to step into the unknown with us was all we had to do.



Alice Springs, NT



“I just love that aspect of humanity that is willing to explore and experiment and I think that's where all the best experiences come from.”

Soul train PHOTO | STEVEN PEARCE



Bogong Electric



Bogong, VIC

Many years ago Philip thought he'd like to establish a centre for sound culture. He liked the idea of it being in the snow area and one day, in 2008, we were driving in the mountains and we discovered the old Bogong school house was for sale. Bogong is very small and the population is mostly transient. There are thirty cottages hugging the mountain alongside the hydroelectric system. We bought the schoolhouse and it took a long time to restore but we finally opened the Bogong Centre for Sound Culture in 2010.

The hydroelectric scheme begins at Falls Creek, at Rocky Valley and Pretty Valley reservoirs where snowmelt is released into a series of power stations and dams distributed along the Kiewa Valley. Here at Bogong, we're in the middle of quite a few stations and the infrastructure is incredibly beautiful. We're surrounded by national park so it's this juxtaposition of industrial and natural beauty. We just felt that it would be fantastic to have a festival that actually honoured the location that we were in. Sound can respond to both the space and the environment so it was the perfect medium.

We decided we wanted artists to work in different locations within the catchment, from Falls Creek down to Mt Beauty. There were sixteen artists all up: seven from Victoria, plus Philip and myself, and two international artists, Michael Vorfeld from Berlin and Klaus Filip from Austria. We also had other international artists contribute works. The Victorian artists all came up early in 2013 for a three-day site visit and stayed at the school. I took them to all the locations and they responded with proposals. The international artists came over for a week before the actual festival.

Philip and Michael did a performance in the Bogong Outdoor Education Centre called *Light Bulb Music*. It opened the festival and it was extraordinary. Michael moved through the Recreation Room, with these blinking and buzzing amplified light bulbs, swinging and moving and highlighting different places on his body. The light bulb images were reflected onto the walls. That was one of my favourites. The performance was repeated later on the lakeside under the stars. Klaus Filip wired a series of small suspended lights to cordless headphones and the audience could swing the lights to create amazing sounds. To listen to Christophe Charles' piece you had to take a canoe ride on the lake while Lizzie Pogson devised recorded instructions that took the viewer into the insides of the Junction Dam walkway.

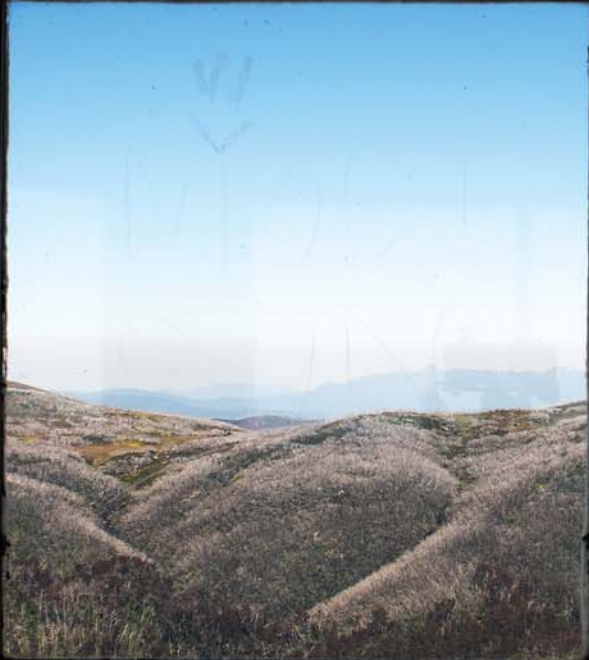
Bogong Electric was a site-responsive festival located at Bogong Village and Mount Beauty in North-East Victoria. The festival artists created new works in response to the Kiewa Hydroelectric Scheme.

John Billan created the most amazing sound projection. We all walked in single file through the inner passage of the dam wall around to the opposite side of Lake Guy for the performance. Flashes were going off and there was this hurdy-gurdy playing across the lake – the sound was amplified by a large metal disk called a sound mirror. It was a very short piece but very moving. We were all clapping and yelling and of course John couldn't hear us because he was on the other side of the lake. So I rang him on my mobile and said, "You've got to do an encore!" Oh, it was fabulous.

Working with the Kiewa Historical Society to create the historical exhibition meant we met people from the old days of the State Electric Commission who have extraordinary historical knowledge of the town and the scheme. Not everyone could make it to the performances over the weekend but a lot of people came to the information centre for the exhibition. The combination of historical information and contemporary artwork extended the meaning of the festival to a much larger demographic.

We had an incredible bunch of beautiful artists, and also a great group of volunteers who contributed so much because even though it was pretty bizarre, out-there art they also felt its power. They saw it was worthy. With any festival, you need more than just the idea, you need to have that collaboration with people: artists, volunteers, and the audience as well. Everyone is as important as the other. They're all required to make something a successful and rewarding experience.

I've experienced lots of overseas residencies and worked with lots of different artists, but I'm really proud that we can expose local audiences to these ideas. It moves me when I think about it.



“With any festival, you need more than just the idea, you need to have that collaboration with people: artists, volunteers, and the audience as well. Everyone is as important as the other.”

OPPOSITE: Signal site, Lake Guy, Mount Bogong, 2013 PHOTO | JOHN BILLAN
ABOVE: Windows PHOTO | DAVID BURROWS



Dusk Mantra

Sowing a seed



Eudlo, QLD

We'd just had a meeting of artists and creators and we realised that all of us work outside our community. We rarely create work in our home area. We're all passionate about engaging the next generation, so when the opportunity came up to develop something with the community as part of *Animating Spaces*, we were right onto it. I was happy to project manage, so I put in an expression of interest. It was successful and soon after, we held a community forum. I was overwhelmed with how many people turned up.

Eudlo is a small timber town and one of the most iconic places is the old red gum. It's at the junction of all the roads into town. I suppose being English, the village square is an important symbol to me and having this beautiful old tree to perform under seemed perfect for something new to happen.

But the gum tree is very contentious because it's next door to the tennis court and its roots cause problems for the court's surface. It's one of those issues that can divide the community. When you put your ideas forward in a small town, on some level you keep waiting for someone to ask you, 'Who gave you permission?' And I did meet a fair bit of resistance until I started to think about the project in a different way. After all, we were all working towards the same outcome and we all wanted the same thing - to make Eudlo proud. As logistic issues cropped up, I learned to say what I wanted, but step away and allow other people to come into that space and solve the problem. This is all part of understanding how we work together as a community.

I think one of my major hurdles was simply getting it all done. I hadn't anticipated how much administration and communication I needed to do. There was a point I remember thinking, 'This is just too hard. It's bigger than Ben Hur'. There were lots of sleepless nights.

Dusk Mantra was first performed in Sydney at the Opera House as the millennium clicked in. It's about bringing people together, harmony, reconciliation, peace. It's a mixture of languages, Japanese, Indonesian, all our central neighbours, and of course, indigenous languages too.

We had over one hundred community singers, from local choirs including school choirs. We also had four principal professional musicians. The most important connection for me was partnering with *Gubbi Gubbi Dance*, the local Indigenous group who presented a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony and provided didgeridoo for the first part of the performance. One of their Elders told me later this was the first time they had ever been invited in to do this in Eudlo.

We didn't expect the turnout. Almost a thousand people came to a very small intersection in the middle of nowhere to celebrate community. Men walked back to their sheds to get step ladders because the kids couldn't see. There's something wonderful about looking out and seeing a crowd of every age. At the end of the performance the audience were spellbound.

There was one nine-year-old girl who was in the Oriana Youth Choir. She came up to me at the end and gave me a big hug and said, 'Thank you. I now know what it feels like to be part of something bigger than me.' As a musician, that moment is electrifying. That moment when you realise you might have a small part to play, but that part is integral to the whole.

I now have a lot more confidence as an arts worker to lead projects, to realise that my work can be valuable and there is support for things I want to do. People will come out of the woodwork and be part of it. I had a very important personal reason for doing this. As a mum to two young boys in this village, I wanted something for

Animating Spaces is a RAF-funded multi-arts project produced by Artslink Queensland to revitalise significant and unusual spaces in regional Queensland. In 2013, Eudlo selected three spaces to animate, including parkland in the centre of town. *Dusk Mantra* was a community performance featuring a recent composition by Ross Edwards and Sarah Hopkins.

them to be able to remember and be part of. It was a way to teach them about community.

One beautiful little ripple in this story is that the tennis association partnered with us and changed their perception of what that tree means. They've resurfaced the courts and are planning around the tree rather than thinking it needs to go, which is a very exciting outcome. Art can spread a message even if it's subconscious.



Ceremonial Parade Choir and The Seed by weaver Rene Bahloo
PHOTO | KERRYANNE FARRER



The Left Field Project

Bringing up Culture



Kandos, NSW

My partner, Georgina Pollard, and I had been in the Sydney Artists' Run Initiatives scene for a number of years when we took on a residency in Kandos. Kandos is a small industrial town in NSW, a cement town. Along with Ann Finegan, who runs *Kandos Projects*, we cooked up this plan to put on a biennial contemporary arts festival, with artists from Sydney and from this region. That's how *Cementa* started. We came up three months before the first *Cementa* festival in 2013 and fell in love with the place. If you'd told me I'd be living in the country five months before that, I would have said you were nuts!

In that first year, we accepted that it wasn't going to be feasible to have an Aboriginal component. I had no real experience with Aboriginal culture or protocols and we knew this was a great gap in our program. When we started to think about the next festival, it was the first thing on our plate.

One of the strongest components of contemporary art in Australia is urban Aboriginal art. It's diverse, intelligent and socially engaged. It's oriented around advocating for recognition and social justice for the Aboriginal community, so there's this very rich language. I thought *Cementa* could be a platform for bringing this language out and making it available to Aboriginal artists living regionally.

I was having a conversation with the Regional Art Development Officer for Orana Arts, Alicia Leggett, who had just opened up the Fire Station Arts Centre in Dubbo. I told her I'd love to unearth a few local contemporary Aboriginal artists. My idea was simply to bring up four established, practising contemporary Aboriginal artists from Sydney and engage them with four regional Aboriginal artists. For me, disseminating contemporary art culture requires more than just bringing up art. You have to actually bring up the culture and the dialogue that happens around it. Alicia was looking for a cornerstone project to launch the art space in March 2014 and so the **Left Field Project** was born.

I didn't know what to expect going into it. My perception was that Aboriginal art in the regions is predominantly understood as traditional and I thought it was going to be a challenge to convince artists to take a leap into new mediums. As it turned out, two of our younger artists, Paris Norton and Dylan Goolagong were already working with photo manipulation

Four regional Aboriginal artists were selected through an expressions-of-interest process. The process of getting the mentor artists from the city was a bit different. I knew a few of the Sydney artists; they weren't close friends then but we're all good friends now.

Paris Norton is a young woman from Coonabarabran and one of our mentors, an artist named r e a, came from the same town. Their country is *Gamilaroi* and their families knew each other so it was just an easy match to do. It was exciting and passionate and the level of connection was very strong.

We paired Dubbo artist Dylan Goolagong with Adam Hill. We wanted to challenge Dylan a bit, draw him out. Adam has a strong political voice. Dylan is not outspoken but he's an excellent draftsman and we thought he'd relate to the way Adam worked.

We matched Mudgee artist Aleshia Lonsdale with Jason Wing because they are both very soft spoken, but they're both very strong. Jason was able to give Aleshia the confidence to go in the direction she wanted to go.

Sandra Peckham is from the small, abandoned town of Dandaloo. Her mother bought the property in the 60s and now Sandra lives out there raising her family. It's amazingly rich culturally. We teamed her with Karla Dickens who has just won the NSW Parliament Aboriginal Art Prize. One of the great moments was to travel out to

One of the strongest components of contemporary art in Australia is urban Aboriginal art. It's diverse, intelligent and socially engaged.

Sandra's property and wander around with her and hear the history of her people and of white settlement. Hearing this intimate intertwining of Sandra's family, the land and the history was a really rare experience.

I was worried about how we were going to get artists who had worked predominantly in traditional forms to make viable contemporary art and it surprised me to have it happen so quickly. I'm most proud of Aleshia Lonsdale. She just nailed it. She was painting Elders and doing quite well. She attempted to do more engaged work early in her career but faced too much of a backlash so decided to put it into the closet. Aleshia ended up with six works in the exhibition: wonderful pieces. She cut a car in half, painted it white and filled the boot up with all the papers that are required for Aboriginal people to establish identity. She hung documents on the wall and put comments around – conflicting forms of identity that Aboriginal people have to negotiate. Her work explores the tension and conflicts from both internal and external forces that Aboriginal people can experience around identity. There is a complexity to living in a society with competing codes which can be difficult to negotiate.

It wasn't an easy project to manage. Communication was really, really hard and using Skype, telephone and emails was frustrating. We learned that even though it's difficult to travel these artists out from the city, it was important for the artists to spend more time with each other, establishing trust.



Another lesson for me was that while I like a loose structure and to be free to do what I like, this wasn't the best way to go for this project. The artists said they needed more structure, more balance. I was trying to give them the space they needed to see the network, but they needed incremental deadlines.

There are often divides between the Aboriginal community and the white community but when I think back to the opening of the exhibition in Dubbo, the first word that comes to me is friendship. I had all these new friends and we were all really excited about it, even the mentors. They really enjoyed coming out and hanging with the regional artists who are so engaged in their communities, socially and politically, so generous and intelligent.

Karla Dickens and Sandra Peckham
PHOTO | ALEX WISSER



Prepare to Exchange

Prepare to Exchange is the first international arts exchange led by a regional arts organisation. This project aimed to build the skills, experience and portfolios of Central West NSW artists to prepare them for international exchange with artists in Derbyshire, UK. The exchange took place in 2013 in two phases.

As a Regional Arts Development Officer (RADO) in the Central West I've become increasingly aware of the challenges for artists living and working remotely. Ken Hutchinson is a local sculptor with loads of experience. He's worked on some really interesting projects, but it was increasingly hard for him to survive on his practice to the point where he'd hardly done any work for about a year. This is a common story. Regional artists often feel isolated. For a whole range of reasons, a lot of artists feel it's important for them to be regionally based. They don't want to move but it's difficult for them to share ideas and collaborate. Finding opportunities through the major metropolitan centres in Australia is perpetually challenging.

In 2012 I was visiting Derbyshire and had a number of conversations with people there that led me to think, 'Why not bypass the metropolitan step and explore an international artists' exchange?' I used my contacts in Derbyshire, including the *Wirksworth Arts Festival*, Derbyshire Eco Centre and Derbyshire County Council.

It was important to make sure that our artists were ready to make the most of the opportunity. **Prepare to Exchange** was created to do exactly that. Collaboration and creative partnerships aren't skills that come naturally to a lot of people and it was important for everyone involved that they felt confident in their ability to acquit themselves well.

We called for expressions of interest. We had the funding to put ten people on the program and we wanted it spread across art forms and across experience level.

The first part of the exchange was in Australia. We brought everyone together for a residential two-day workshop. When you've got great people to work with, things fall into place. Two people from Derbyshire came over, Kim Johnson and Debi Hedderwick, both full of ideas yet very practical. The workshop was led by a world expert on creativity, Matilda Joubert.

We were in a fantastic setting, out at the *Corridor Project* near Cowra. It's a big woolshed with shearers' quarters and a dining room so the environment was really conducive. Matilda was leading and several people presented on their international experiences, including Kim and Debi and one of our artists from Orange, who has presented at the *Florence Biennale of Contemporary Art*. It's so important in professional development to give people a challenge. Local filmmaker Christine Sweeney has worked internationally but, since being regionally-based, has felt on the edge of artistic life and suddenly here she was in the midst of it all, being challenged and extended. The response was fantastic. Some people sat on the sidelines and watched and waited, but once they were ready they just lapped it up. Other people just were in it straight from the word go.

After the workshop, the NSW artists were required to put the skills they had learned into practice by designing and running collaborative workshops in the Central West. They could work with an organisation or group or with other artists. We wanted them to understand how to work in a genuinely creative way. Even artists who had been delivering workshops for a long time stretched themselves and experimented with new art forms or new styles of delivery.

We went over to Derbyshire in August 2013. Several of the artists featured in the *Wirksworth Festival* program. We also created an exhibition called *The Australian Pavilion* at the Derbyshire Eco Centre and the festival launch party was to be our opening night. When we arrived, Kim Johnson had matched every one of our artists with a Derbyshire artist and they'd organised a whole program of events and activities.

Sculptor Ken Hutchinson was paired with stonemason Richard Hickton who works for the National Trust. Ken is a laconic larrikin in a truly Australian way, and has lots of ideas. Richard has all these really detailed, fine-honed skills that have to be carried out with great precision and they learned so much from each other. It was a

fantastic match. Aleshia Lonsdale, our Aboriginal Arts Development Officer, is a *Wiradjiri* woman and she worked along-side staff at the Derbyshire Eco Centre. She has such deep knowledge of cultural protocols in Australia and I don't think they could get enough of her. They really respected her ideas and her willingness to share.

There were challenges. We'd flown in and had no time to recover before we were straight into mounting the exhibition. But our opening was sold out, and looking back on it now, watching all of that fall into place was just lovely.

I was really proud of the performances we took, *Lingua Franca* and Kim Deacon. Both of them did fifty minute shows, so it was a long night of theatre. Kim's was on the life and loves of Henry Lawson; it's very Australian. *Lingua Franca's* contemporary physical theatre work is a very stylised, strong work. Somebody I know, who is on the board of *Wirksworth Festival*, came up to me at the end of and said, 'Tracey, in all the years I've been involved in the Festival, that is one of the best performances I've ever seen'. That was a really great moment!

I think it worked because we stayed true to the reasons we were doing it, the need to give people more opportunities and address some of the isolation issues. The benefits you get from international exchange are major. As an example, I have seen young artists that we took to the UK applying for other things and being taken seriously because of this experience. Regional artists should be getting better opportunities because whatever they learn, they bring back and put into their communities.



Bathurst, NSW



Australian Pavilion participating artists at Chatsworth House, Derbyshire UK
PHOTO | CHRIS WEBB



Women of the World Festival, Katherine

Everyone gets to go over the moon



Katherine, NT

At the beginning of 2012 I moved to Katherine to help get the brand new Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre up and running. On staff was just myself and Project Officer, Jane Nankivell. The Centre, with its philosophy of cross-cultural exchange, had been a long time coming. It had taken more than a decade of persistent pressure from a group of long-term residents who pursued the project despite enormous resistance from a small group of loud critics.

We inherited a completely empty building and the work of bringing the community together in a new inclusive environment began. We are a bi-cultural centre with six Indigenous and six non-Indigenous board members. In Katherine it's very rare for the different groups to be in the same space together: the pastoralists, the business community, the Indigenous women from Katherine and the remote communities and the artists. Our mission is to bring reconciliation to the area and that's one reason why we were all so excited about WOW.

The **WOW – Women of the World Festival** is a global festival started by Jude Kelly, artistic director of London's Southbank Centre. It's an event for people of all ages and backgrounds to celebrate women's achievements and learn what stands in their way. It's just the most exciting and inspiring event: a festival of fabulous stories from the arts and many other fields. It's been held in Baltimore, Derry-Londonderry in Northern Ireland and in 2013 as a part of the *Sydney Writers' Festival*.

Cathy Hunt, the consultant who prepared our business plan and was involved in the very earliest visioning for the Centre, is a friend and colleague of Jude's. She thought, 'What about doing a WOW in remote Australia?' So we spoke with Jude on Skype and I was invited to go to WOW in London in 2013 to have a look and see whether it could translate. I thought, 'Yes! We can do this in Katherine and we'll make it different!'

We decided to get straight into it. Following the London WOW format, two community meetings (or Think Ins) were held. We got good Indigenous representation, and we got the community on board. We asked them, 'What it is you want to hear? What do you see as the big issues that affect you as women in this place? Who would you like to see?' The WOW program of panel debates, short talks, workshops and performances had to reflect their voices and their creativity. We told them: Think big!

Myself and Jude Kelly were the co-artistic directors. We have a dynamic little team and everybody got excited by it. This was just about the time when all this stuff was coming out about Julia Gillard and the misogyny speech and so we wanted to do something about women in leadership. We wanted to hear about female leaders in the Northern Territory. Clare Martin, who was the first female Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, was invited to deliver the keynote speech. And we had all these very powerful women sharing their experiences including Bess Price the Indigenous MLA; Lisa Mumbin, local Indigenous leader and Shirley Randell, who worked in Rwanda during the genocide.

A major challenge was our location. In Katherine, there's no airport. We were bringing people from the Central Desert, but we also had people coming from down south. People are so happy to come here, to the middle of nowhere, but then the logistics take over and it's not cheap and it's not easy.

I felt a terrible responsibility because I put everybody in the position of having to deliver this major event. But once it started with these incredible women around, it was fine. It had a life then and it just took off.

By focusing on culture, stories and skills, we were able to discuss issues from a shared perspective that traditional forums do not allow. Things like the challenges of living in remote communities, women taking on the roles of 'men', the relationship

This landmark event was a partnership between one of Australia's newest and smallest cultural centres, the recently opened Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre, and one of Britain's most established cultural centres, the Southbank Centre in London.

to land from both the Aboriginal and the non-Aboriginal perspective, and the courage and resilience required to live in the Territory.

We had about 400 attendees. People didn't yet know what it was and it's an unusual concept to explain: it's not a festival, it's not a conference, it's this amalgam of things. But the response was amazing. All the *Banatjarl* ladies were there. The pastoral women were there, the Stolen Generation women spoke for the very first time. It was so moving just looking at that audience from the very sophisticated, high-powered women, to the very salt of the earth women, Indigenous and non-Indigenous and thinking, 'Wow, we've brought all these people together'. As Jude Kelly says, when you give people space to think big, everyone gets to go over the moon.

Cathy HUNT
» Director, **Positive Solutions** and author of the feasibility study and business plan for the Centre

What became clear to me as the weekend progressed was that the Centre was not only a welcoming but also a neutral space, where people could shed the baggage of their own cultural background, drop the defensiveness built up over years and engage with something new. **WOW** made it possible to detach ego from past failures and focus on current issues impacting on the lives of the women living in this remote region. Existing community 'agendas' were left at the door – there was no right and wrong, no us and them and no black and white. In Katherine, there has never been an outing like it.



Natalie Pa'apa'a and band
PHOTO | KARA BURNS



INSET: Tjanpi Desert Weavers
PHOTO | KARA BURNS

Most major cities, and many large regional towns, have established writers' festivals that draw a lot of visitors and stimulate wider interest in the literary arts. A lot of smaller regional communities are looking at inventive ways of tapping into the power of words at a local level, either for a bit of fun or to address a more serious social issue.



Estelle PATERSON
»»» ORGANISER

WRAP Beechworth

We wanted to organise an event that celebrated literary stars in a similar fashion to the way we recognise sports stars. After all, scholastic sports take a lot of training, skill and energy too. Beechworth is strongly focused on the visual arts and it has a pretty full year-round calendar of events, but there was a lull in February so we snapped that up. To extend the sports metaphor, we decided to use the laurel wreath to award our champions of poetry and writing. Fortunately, a couple of people in Beechworth have big laurel trees and we enjoyed getting together to make all the wreaths.

We delivered our third *Writers, Readers and Poets Weekend (WRAP)* in February 2014. The program included poetry readings, guest writers discussing their work, master classes, workshops in things like memoir and short-story writing and this year there was a conversation between writers Tony Birch and Eddie Paterson over dinner, as well as a poets' breakfast. People really got in the spirit of words. The workshops were really popular.

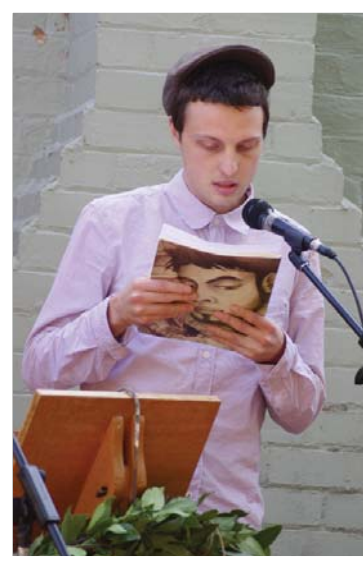
I think *WRAP* has shown the broader community that poetry and writing can be entertaining and enjoyable as well as thought-provoking. It's been wonderful having the support of Melbourne University's School of Culture and Communication who have helped us bring really excellent writers to our small country town. And it has been good to show locals who are really into the literary arts that you don't always have to go to the city to enjoy a writers' festival of this calibre.

Beechworth, VIC

Pam Crossthwaite



Josh Comyn



Tony Birch



Amy Brown



PHOTOS | WENDY STEPHENS

Writing on the Wall (WOW)

Mars DRUM
»»» ARTIST/FACILITATOR



Abraham Rajput, Army Lane wall, Horsham

I moved from Melbourne to the Wimmera in 2012. At the time, Horsham Rural City Council were keen to create a project that would engage the growing number of young people from culturally-diverse backgrounds. I was commissioned to develop a writing project that could show where they've come from, where they are and where they are going.

Working with local multi-cultural and Indigenous networks, I created a writing club aimed at exploring the themes of place and belonging. Sujatha Umakanthan, originally from India, brought her daughter and friends to the first session, which was held in an indoor studio. Sujatha is the facilitator of Oasis Wimmera, a volunteer organisation which provides support for new migrants. Another coordinator for migrants in the region, Nkandu Beltz, brought two older teenagers of Tanzanian background to the second session in the studio.

We got permission to use a laneway wall as a public backdrop for the WOW members' writing. I extended the invitation to culturally-diverse teenagers through schools and agencies, and soon we had seventeen participants. They were all excited and couldn't wait for our regular Tuesdays, so they could write on the wall after school.

Working in the laneway meant community members and passers-by could see meet the *WOW* writers, as well as learn about their sense of place through their writing. Here we were, drinking hot chocolates from a café and writing on the wall near the café tables. It was fantastic. We eventually sent off their stories and poetry to be cut into stainless steel lettering and these were placed permanently around the town.

Putting up the steel lettering was a little harder than any of us had imagined, but once it was up, the participants started taking their family and friends around the town to show them. It was incredibly heart-warming to see them all make such a beautiful mark connecting them to their new community.

Horsham, VIC



The WOW club writes on Army Lane wall, Horsham, April 2013

PHOTOS | MARS DRUM



Tjanpi Minyma Tjanpi Punu

Filled up with stories
from the land



Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara
Yankunytjatjara lands, NT

PHOTO | RHETT HAMMERTON © NPYWC AND RHETT HAMMERTON

[This translation from Pitjantjatjara, by Linda Rive, has been provided by NPY Women's Council.] **Tjanpi = grass**

We have held our ancient stories and law strong: we grew up with them, we want to keep them strong. Nowadays there are many different ways we can transmit our stories. One way is to do paintings, but this sculptural way (working with *tjanpi*) is a whole other new way.

How it happened was that we all attended the same workshop once. We found we all clicked when it came to making *tjanpi* works. We fired each other's imaginations. We got excited by each other's works. We enjoyed each other's company. We are all, of course, related to each other, but that's got nothing to do with why we make a good team. We were all equally creative and we all grew together and built up our skills together. We have made works for major exhibitions together. Though Niningka and Tjunkaya are from Ernabella and the rest of us are from Amata, we have stuck together as a team, because of our long and creative history together.

We go out into the country to the actual place where the stories take place, where those dreaming tracks move through the country. We go there and we find the materials. Those trips to country and making the sculptures involve all the family. Our children watch us doing this and they learn directly from us. They are all getting to know the stories now, but in a really different way. It is for the *malatja malatja tjutaku*, the descendants of our children, that we are very concerned. We believe that the absolute power and strength of these sculptures and the community involvement in making them, will keep our stories as strong as ever.

It is a big thing for us to make these sculptures though it is also very joyful, and very special. We have got this focus and we are all there out in the bush: we camp for two weeks and it is really lovely for us to do that. We have to take all this equipment: we have to take crowbars and axes and shovels and needles and thread and camping equipment. We spend a lot of time walking through the bush, looking for particular shaped branches that we want to incorporate, so we wander around and look for those branches. We have to dig up certain grasses, or cut them off. Dig or cut.

Then we bring them back and we will work all day and into the night and then go to bed in our camps, in our swags. All through the night we'll hear the dingoes howling, and then in the morning all the birds will start singing, because we think that they are aware that these figures are here, perhaps half made, and the birds are all telling each other about them, and the dingoes are all howling, because there are these weird new features in the bush.

The sculptural pieces are filled up with the story from the land.



Michelle YOUNG
»→ MANAGER, *Tjanpi Desert Weavers*

Tjanpi artists are between forty and seventy years of age and come from twenty-eight Aboriginal communities across 350,000 square kilometres of land. The camps allow the women to go into country which is a crucial lifeline for them. They renew social and family ties, go hunting and collect bush medicine.

***Tjanpi Desert Weavers* is a social enterprise of the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (NPY) Women's Council. *Tjanpi* was commissioned by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney to create a work for their 2013 exhibition, *String Theory: Focus on Contemporary Australian Art*. Between April and June 2013, three dedicated artist camps were held in bush locations across the NPY lands to create new work.**

They are energised and informed by being in country, which is where they love to be. Usually there are younger generations in tow and they get to learn about *tjukurpa*, sites of significance, about the country they're on and their responsibility to it. It's always been a priority to attract younger women to take up *Tjanpi* work because there are so few employment opportunities out on these lands.

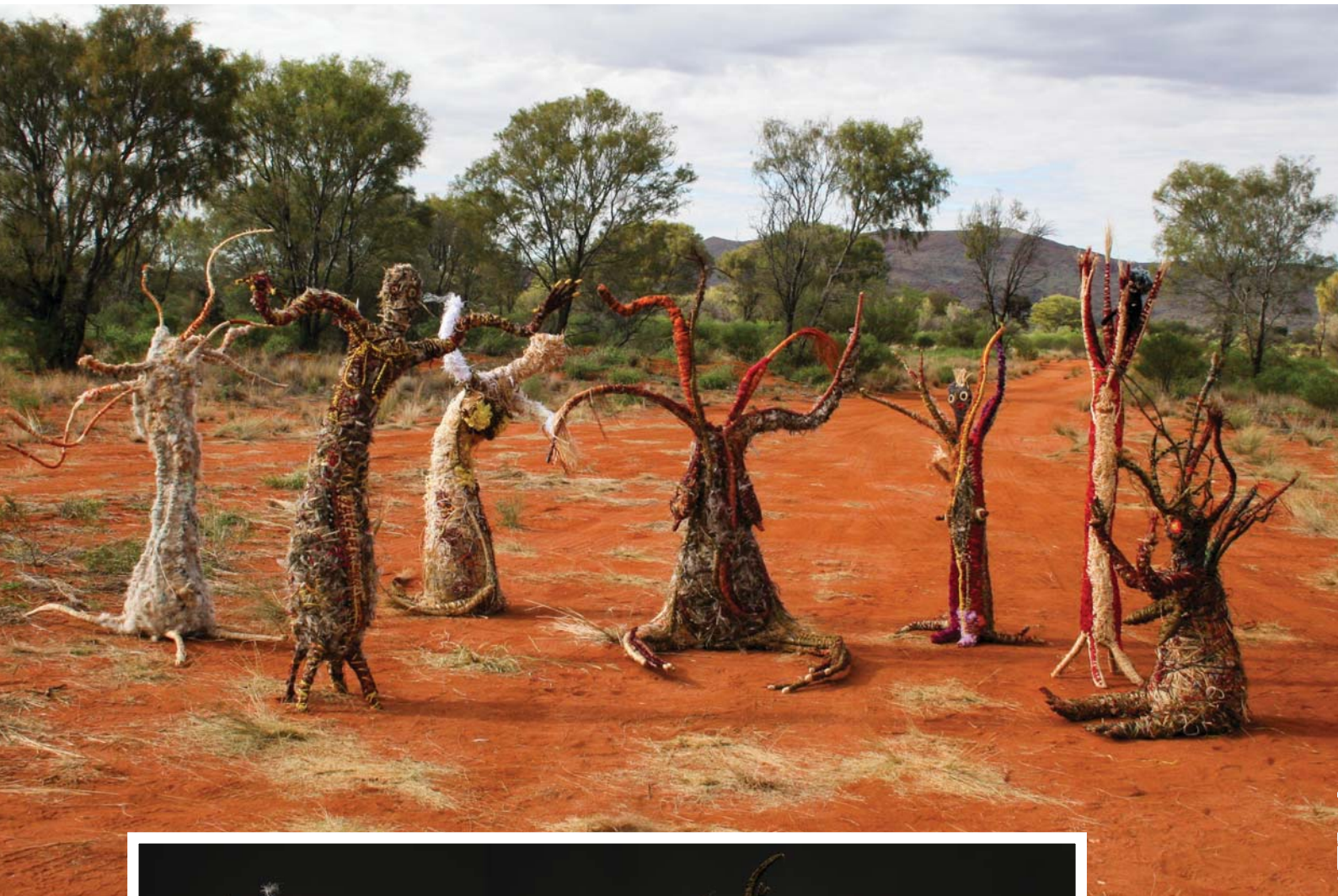
I travelled down to the opening at the MCA with three artists, Nyurpaya Kaika-Burton, Mary Katatjuku Pan and Niningka Lewis. Just seeing these works coming out of the bush into this very contemporary setting, you couldn't help but get chills. The artists worked really hard and stretched themselves because we'd been given this really large space but they filled it and the works just sang in that room.

There was a huge crowd for the opening weekend. The women talked to the jam-packed room and rose to the energy and the enthusiasm for their work. We took a translator with us and the women talked with such eloquence, authority and joy in their own language. The acknowledgement from the audiences about how much the work resonated showed the women they had created something exciting and created a real energy and buzz. It set a new benchmark for *Tjanpi*.

For me though, it's not so much about the glory public moments. I think it's about the camp activity itself and what values it brings to those women. It's always about the camp.

OPPOSITE: Bridget Jackson from Warakurna collecting grass for the MCA artist camp near Warakurna, 2013
PHOTO | JO FOSTER © TJANPI DESERT WEAVERS, NPY WOMEN'S COUNCIL





TOP: Yaritji Young, Mary Katatjuku Pan, Nyurpaya Kaika-Burton, Carlene Thompson, Niningka Lewis, Tjunkaya Tapaya, Ilawanti Ungutjuru Ken. *Minyma Punu Kungkarangkalpa*, 2013 PHOTO | CLAIRE FREER ©TJANPI DESERT WEAVERS, NPY WOMEN'S COUNCIL

Mary Gibson, Jubia Jackatee, Tjukaparti James, Nyinku Kulitja, Pantjiti Mackenzie, Patricia Orgula, Rosalind Yiparti and Yvonne Yipati, *Kangkuru Punu Minyma Kutjara* at the Museum of Contemporary Art PHOTO | ALEX DAVIES ©TJANPI DESERT WEAVERS, NPY WOMEN'S COUNCIL

CREDITS

» BELONGING
[Great Arts Stories project background details]



»→ **24HR DANCE MARATHON** [page 48]

LOCATION
Alice Springs, NT, empty shopfront on Todd Mall

ARTFORMS
Live Arts/Dance fusion

INITIATED BY
So Real: Franca Barraclough and Melissa Kerl

ORGANISED BY
Co-produced project by So Real and Alice Desert Festival

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
\$3,000 from ADF

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Alice Desert Festival: in kind production support
Mbantua Galleries: Free use of empty shopfront

ARTISTS
Artist Director, Franca Barraclough
Director, Melissa Kerl

DANCE MCS: Franca Barraclough, Melissa Kerl, Elspeth Blunt, Doug Suter

DATES
July - September 2013

Event: 11th – 12th September

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Mary Jane Reynolds
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BOGONG ELECTRIC [page 50]

LOCATION
Bogong Alpine Village and Mount Beauty, VIC

ARTFORMS
Sound Art, Performance, Video Art, Photography, Spatial and Installation Art

INITIATED BY
Madelynne Cornish and Philip Samartzis

ORGANISED BY
Bogong Centre for Sound Culture

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Arts Victoria, Australia Council for the Arts, Institute for Foreign Affairs, Berlin, and Austrian Embassy, Canberra

Non-financial support
AGL Hydro, Alpine Shire, Bogong Outdoor Education Centre, Kiewa Valley Historical Society, Mount Beauty Information Centre, RMIT School of Art, and West Space Artists

John Billan, David Burrows, Christophe Charles, Rod Cooper, Madelynne Cornish, Les-

ley Duxbury, Klaus Filip, Byron Huang-Dean, Martin Kay, Norbert Moslang, Lizzie Pogson, Geoff Robinson, Philip Samartzis, Bill Sutton, Synchronator, tarab, Michael Vorfeld

DATES
1 November to 1 December, 2013.
An additional exhibition titled Electricity: Watts the Story was presented at the Mount Beauty Information Centre over the months of November and December.

CONTACT
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Philip Samartzis
philip@bogongsound.com.au

COWRA CANOWINDRA ARTS PROJECT [page 24]

LOCATION
Cowra and Canowindra, NSW

ARTFORMS
Documentary/Film, Movement, Voice, Shadow Puppet, Story-telling

INITIATED BY
Cowra Breakout Association, Cowra Musical and Dramatic Society, Mayu Kanamori

ORGANISED BY
Mayu Kanamori

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Arts NSW, Japan Foundation (Sydney), crowd funding (Pozible), the Regional Arts Fund

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Cowra Breakout Association, Cowra Musical and Dramatic Society, Rosnay Organic Farms, Arts OutWest, Cowra Bowling Club, Cowra Neighbourhood Centre, Cowra Family Services, Cowra Japanese Gardens and Cultural Centre, Cowra Shire Council, Nikkei Australia

ARTISTS
David Hansen, Bruce Ryan, Weizen Ho, Alan Schacher, Jumaadi, Shigeki Sano, Ria Soemardjo, Hiromi Ashlin, Mutsumi Tsuda and Mayu Kanamori

DATES
July 2013 – July 2014

CONTACT
Mayu Kanamori
mayu@mayu.com.au

DUSK MANTRA [page 52]

LOCATION
Gum Tree, Rosebed Street, Eudlo, QLD

ARTFORMS
Indigenous Ceremony and Dance, Music, Weavery (Eco Art), Local Cultural Story Telling

INITIATED BY
Louise King, Eudlo Cultural Collective

ORGANISED BY
Louise King

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Regional Arts Fund, Artslink QLD grant

ANIMATING SPACES, Sunshine Coast Council, Sunshine Coast Creative Alliance

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Event and Workshop Volunteers, Music Coaching, Workshops at Schools and Art Gallery, Local Media Support, community volunteers

ARTISTS
Louise King, Rene Bahloo, Lyndon Davis, Louise Kennedy, Anna Stoddard, Tunji Beier Danni Jones, Elizabeth Gaedke, choral coaches from Chevallum State School Choir, Eudlo State School Voices, Oriana Youth Choir, Eudlo Community Voices, Heath Moore, D W Sound, Bibianna Stanfield, photography

DATES
Workshops for 6 weeks leading up to performance, 7 September 2013

CONTACT
Amy Martin
eudlocc@live.com.au

Louise King
info@cello dreaming.com.au

THE FARMERS CINEMATHEQUE [page 22]

LOCATION
Rupanyup, north-west Victoria

ARTFORMS
Film, video and digital multi-media

INITIATED BY
Malcolm McKinnon

ORGANISED BY
Malcolm McKinnon, in collaboration with Teasdale family and other artists

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Arts Victoria (through the Culture Victoria initiative), Museum Victoria, Film Victoria

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
National Film and Sound Archive, Wimmera Regional Library Corporation, Teasdale family

ARTISTS
Malcolm McKinnon, Ross Gibson, Ben Speth, Chris Abrahams and Annie Venables

DATES
2008 – ongoing
(probable conclusion 2015 – 2016)

CONTACT
Malcolm McKinnon
malcolm@recklesseye.com

www.cv.vic.gov.au/stories/john-teasdale-chronicle-of-a-country-life/

FIRST COAT [page 16]

LOCATION
Toowoomba, QLD

ARTFORMS
street art, graffiti, large-scale wall paintings

INITIATED BY
Grace Dewar

ORGANISED BY
Kontraband Studios, in partnership with Toowoomba Regional Council

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
A Queensland government initiative, Graffiti STOP

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Ironlak, Analogue/Digital Creative Conferences, Masterhire, 40/40 Creative, Bunnings Warehouse, Dulux, Toowoomba Youth Service, the GRID: Hybrid Arts Collective, No Comply gallery, Coopers Pale Ale, the Irish Club Hotel, the Spotted Cow, Raphael Briskie, Ground Up Espresso Bar, First Coat logo: Jasmine Dowling

ARTISTS
Ewok (USA), Mr Wany (Italy), Hitnes (Italy), Wubik (Italy), Fintan Magee, Shida, Gimiks Born, Stoops, Twolaks, Damien Kamholtz, Fuzeillear, Alice Weinthal, Quench, The Grid, Yesma, Arms, Sofles, Tues, Meks, Reals, Treas, Tarn McLean, John Kaye, Jay Rock, Teens on Acid

DATES
21st–23rd February 2014

CONTACT
Grace Dewar
nocomplygallery@gmail.com

GASCOYNE IN MAY [page 30]

LOCATION
Region: Gascoyne (North West WA) including these festivals:
Burringurrah remote Aboriginal community's Festival of Fire | Gascoyne Junction's Gascoyne River Music Festival | Carnarvon's TropiCOOL Festival | Exmouth's Ningaloo Whaleshark Festival | Shark Bay's Barefoot Black Tie

ARTFORMS
Multi-media, Festival, Performance, Site Specific, In situ, Circus, Installation art, Community Cultural Development, Puppetry, Projection Art

INITIATED BY
Gascoyne Focus Region – Country Arts WA, Gascoyne Development Commission: Theaker von Ziarno (as the Gascoyne Regional Arts ‘Wrangler’ with Country Arts WA 2010 – 2013)

ORGANISED BY
Theaker von Ziarno

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Core funding was secured through the Looking Forward Fund, a WA Department of Culture and the Arts grant, which provided 3 years support for an Executive Officer and an Artistic

Director, Gascoyne Development Commission, Healthway, Lotterywest

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Community Members of Denham, Carnarvon, Gascoyne Junction, Burringurrah Remote Aboriginal Community, Exmouth and Coral Bay, Festival Committees, Local Government and the Carnarvon Civic Centre, Shark Bay and Exmouth Art Councils, Gascoyne Arts Council, Gascoyne Circus and Physical Theatre

ARTISTS
Artistic Director/Creative Producer Theaker von Ziarno, Director of Photography Anton Blume, Musical Directors Dave Mann, Rebecca Schofield and Sam Thomas, Technical Director Alan Surgener, and mentor, Gascoyne Circus and Physical Theatre and Pundara Dance

DATES
May 2010 to present

CONTACT
Theaker von Ziarno
theakervonziarno@hotmail.com

www.gascoyneinmay.com.au/

HUNTING FOR FOXES [page 20]

LOCATION
Mullewa, WA

ARTFORMS
Conceptual Photography

INITIATED BY
Mullewa Arts Development Group

ORGANISED BY
Rachel McKenzie on behalf of the Mullewa Arts Development Group

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Regional Arts Fund, Community Arts WA and the City of Greater Geraldton Community Grants

ARTISTS
Local participants and paid photographers and stylists

DATES
March 2013 – June 2014

CONTACT
Rachel McKenzie
rachmckenzie@hotmail.com

THE HYDRO+GRAPHY PROJECT [page 10]

LOCATION
Streaky Bay, SA

ARTFORMS
Underwater photography, digital media

INITIATED BY
Young Artists Collective, Streaky Bay

ORGANISED BY
Lauren Karp, Project Coordinator

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Regional Arts Fund, Natural Resources Eyre Peninsula

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Streaky Bay Area School (auspicing body), District Council of Streaky Bay – Community Library and VIC Gallery, Elliott’s Bakery and Café – Artspace, volunteers

ARTISTS
Mark Tipple, Documentary Photographer

DATES
Development, January – March 2014, Project, 15 and 16 March 2014, Dual Exhibition, 16 May–25 July 2014

CONTACT
Jayne Holland [author of the EOI]
jayne.holland@countryarts.org.au

Lauren Karp
ebbflowdrift@gmail.com

IN THE SADDLE – ON THE WALL [page 28]

LOCATION
The Kimberley Region, WA

Artforms
Visual Arts and digital media

INITIATED BY
Waringarri Aboriginal Arts

ORGANISED BY
Kimberley Aboriginal Artists Alliance

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Regional Arts Fund, Aboriginal Benefits Foundation Limited, Lotterywest, Gelganyem Trust, ANKAAA

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
ABC Open, Waringarri Aboriginal Arts, Warmun Art Centre, Mangkaja Arts, Mowanjum Art and Culture, Yarliyi Art Centre

ARTISTS
Alan Griffiths, Peggy Griffiths, Minnie Lumai, Peter Newry, Freddy Timms, Rammey Ramsey, Shirley Purdie, Mabel Juli, Patrick Mung Mung, Gordon Barunga, Mervyn Street, Daisy Andrews, Stan Brumby

DATES
December 2010 – May 2014, ongoing tour dates TBA

CONTACT
Cathy Cummins
admin@waringarriarts.com.au

PORT PIRIE MUSIC and MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT [page 35]

LOCATION
Port Pirie, SA

ARTFORMS
Music

INITIATED BY
The Jam, The Mix, The Gig Inc (The JMG)

ORGANISED BY
The Jam, The Mix, The Gig in Adelaide in conjunction with The Hub Mental Health in Port Pirie

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Regional Arts Fund

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Jam, The Mix, The Gig and The Hub
in-kind support

ARTISTS
Robert Petchell, Anthony Sampson

DATES
1 March 2013 – 19 December 2013

CONTACT
Robert Petchell
rpetchell@optusnet.com.au

Charisse Smith
charisse.smith@health.sa.gov.au

LEFT FIELD PROJECT [page 54]

LOCATION
Dubbo City, Gilgandra, Mid-Western Regional,
Narromine, Warrumbungle Shire Councils, NSW

ARTFORMS
Visual arts

INITIATED BY
Orana Arts

ORGANISED BY
Orana Arts

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Funding provided by the Indigenous Cultural
Support program, Ministry for the Arts

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Galleries around the region who were part of
the touring exhibition: Gilgandra Gallery,
Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre and
Gallery, Pandora Gallery (Coolah), Pilliga Forest
Discovery Centre (Baradine), Narromine
Historical Museum, Number 47 (Rylstone)

ARTISTS
Mentor Artists: Adam Hill (aka Blak Douglas),
Jason Wing, Karla Dickens, r e a

Mentee Artists: Dylan Goolagong, Aleshia
Lonsdale, Sandra Peckham, Paris Norton

DATES
August 2013 – August 2014,
Exhibition opened 13 March 2014, Dubbo

CONTACT
Alex Wisser
lenscap105@gmail.com

Melissa Ryan
aado@oranaarts.com

MY HEART IS A HALL [page 26]

LOCATION
Launceston, Mole Creek, Sorell
and Sandford, TAS

ARTFORMS
Dance and Physical Theatre

INITIATED BY Stompin

ORGANISED BY
Emma Porteus and Sarah McCormack

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Arts Tasmania, The Estate of WD Booth, the
Regional Arts Fund, Australia Council for the
Arts, Launceston City Council, Meander Valley
Council, Clarence City Council, Sorell Council

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Autech, Rae and Partners, SDS, Examiner,
Café Bozzey, Launceston College

ARTISTS
Emma Porteus, Finegan Kruckemeyer,
Jess Devereux

DATES
14, 15, 16, 21, 22 March 2014

CONTACT
Emma Porteus 0422 370 667
emmap@stompin.net

PREPARE TO EXCHANGE [page 56]

LOCATION
Central West NSW and Derbyshire, UK

ARTFORMS
Visual arts (sculpture, painting, fibre art,
photography), performance (music, dance/
theatre), digital storytelling, writing

INITIATED BY Arts OutWest

Organised by Arts OutWest

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Regional Arts Fund, Derbyshire County
Council (UK), Arts OutWest, NAVA (National
Association for Visual Artists), contributions
from participating artists

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Derbyshire Eco Centre and Saddler's Cottage,
Wirksworth Festival, Derbyshire County Council

ARTISTS
Kim Deacon, Harrie Fasher, Merrill Findlay,
Ken Hutchinson, Lanny MacKenzie, Nyree
Reynolds, Adam Deusien, Alison Plevy,
Aleshia Lonsdale, Christine McMillan, Tracey
Callinan, Tony Lonsdale, Genevieve Carroll,
Bill Moseley, Becky Russell, Graham Sattler,
Dylan Gower, Alex Pye, Heidi Lefebvre, Tim
Winters, Nicole Welch, Joy Engleman

DATES
Prepare to Exchange weekend: 7-8 March 2013

Prepare to Exchange artist run workshops:
March-May 2013
UK Exchange: 2-22 September 2013

CONTACT
Tracey Callinan
artsoutwest@csu.edu.au

PRICE'S CAFÉ [page 14]

LOCATIONS Moruya and Eden, NSW

ARTFORMS
Museum-style exhibition: text, graphic design,
video interviews, set design

INITIATED BY Cheryl Davison

Organised by South East Arts

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Indigenous Cultural Support: Ministry for the
Arts (Federal), Arts NSW, Eurobodalla Shire
Council, philanthropic and donations

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Mordek, ABC South East, Clinton Walker

ARTISTS
Andrew Gray (Curator and writer) Mark
McKenna (writer) Arketype (design and
construction) Lou Glover and Toni Houston
(video), Cheryl Davison (original concept)

DATES
17 to 26 May 2013 (Moruya)
26 Oct to 5 Nov 2013 (Eden)

CONTACT
Andrew Gray
agray@southeastarts.org.au

SAND TRACKS [page 6]

LOCATION
Perth, WA (project coordination),
Alice Springs, NG Lands, APY Lands (tour)

ARTFORMS
Indigenous Contemporary Music

INITIATED BY
Country Arts WA

ORGANISED BY
Country Arts WA

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Department of Culture and the Arts WA,
Australia Council, Department of Water,
Housing and the Arts, Country Arts SA,
Ministry for the Arts, Healthway, Mental
Health Commission WA, in different
combinations over the years, each of the
communities listed above.

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Sand Tracks Advisory Group, in different
combinations each year

ARTISTS
Pilot Project: Yabu Band and Moanna Dreaming,
2010 Manuel Ngulupani Dhurrkay and Iwantja,
2011 Nabarlek and Sunshine Reggae Band
(now called Tjintu), 2012 Tjupi and Blackstone
Band, 2013 Nabarlek and Sandridge Band,
2014 Blekbala Mujic and Running Water

DATES
Tour: September 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012,
2013, 2014
Project: February 2009 – ongoing

CONTACT
Philippa Maughan
pmaughan@countryartswa.asn.au

SILVER BALL SCREENING FESTIVAL
[page 18]

LOCATION
Warrnambool, Victoria

ARTFORMS
Film, Sculpture, Dance

INITIATED BY
F Project Cinema

ORGANISED BY
F Project Cinema

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
F Project Cinema, the Regional Arts Fund,
The F Project (funds allocated for the Hidden
Histories Laneway Festival), State Government
Victoria, through Warrnambool City Council, in
partnership with Warrnambool Art Gallery and
RMIT, Prize-givers: South West Credit Union,
The Standard, Good Guys, Dale Cleves,
Multicomm, IGA

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Deakin University, South West TAFE,
Emperor's House, Jarrod Hawker, Taylor
Made, Soulsby and Struth Pharmacy, House,
Capricorn Records, Ozone Bazaar, Sweezy's
Emporium, Extreme Life, Sound and Auto,
Piccolos, Warrnambool Traders Market, Lady
Bay Resort, Brophy, WAG, WCC, WDEA,
James Russell, Nic Downes, Juli Lynch, Emma
Charlton, Barb and Derek Guille, Des and
Helen Bunyon, Gareth Colliton, Megan Nicolson,
Barry Peters and Bernadette Walker Gibbs,
SWTAFE electrical students, 48 Charlie Chaplin
volunteers

ARTISTS
Filmmakers: James Russell, Colleen Hughson,
Nathan Pye, Tom Walter, Emily Bissland,
Sid Sprague, Murray Adams, Sculptors: Sarah
Gubby, Jennifer Allen, Johan Diedericks, Jason
Eldridge, Jane Lie, Bronwyn Arnold,
Dancers: Melissa Dance with 8 dancers.

DATES
Filmmaking workshops February-March 2014,
Projection Event 9th May 2014

CONTACT
Emma Charlton
e.charlton@deakin.edu.au

STEAM! [page 8]

LOCATION
Lake Goldsmith, VIC

ARTFORMS
Theatre

INITIATED BY
Ken Evans and Rebecca Russell

ORGANISED BY
Ken Evans and Rebecca Russell

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Regional Arts Fund, Arts Victoria and the
Pyrenees Shire

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Lake Goldsmith Steam Preservation Society

and individual members, Steam Punk movement
Melbourne individual members

ARTISTS
Ken Evans, Rebecca Russell, Wayne Parker,
Alexandra Chambers, Phillip Lethlean, Lynden
Nicholls, Neil Newitt

DATES
3rd and 4th November 2012

CONTACT
Ken Evans
ken13@tpg.com.au

Rebecca Russell
rhr28@tpg.com.au

TJANPI DESERT WEAVERS [page 62]

LOCATION
Near Amata, SA, near Kaltukatjara, NT,
near Warakurna, WA

ARTFORMS
3 dimensional fibre sculpture installations

INITIATED BY
Museum of Contemporary Arts, Sydney

ORGANISED BY
Tjanpi Desert Weavers

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Museum of Contemporary Art, Gandel
Philanthropy and Nelson Meers Foundation

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Tjanpi Desert Weavers, Ngaanyatjarra Media,
The Amata Family Wellbeing Centre, Health
and Aged Care Services, NPY Women's
Council Youth Program, Bungala Aboriginal
Corporation, Warakurna Community
Development Employment Project

ARTISTS
Tjanpi Minyma Tjanpi Punu, Minyma Punu
Kungkarangkalpa: Nyurpaya Kaika-Burton,
Ilawanti Ungkutjuru Ken, Mary Katatjuku Pan,
Tingala (Yaritji) Young (Amata, SA), Tjunkaya
Tapaya, Carlene Thompson, Niningka Lewis
(Ernabella, SA) Ngankari Tjukurpa: Naomi
Kantjuri, Ilawanti Ungkutjuru Ken (Amata, SA)
Kanguru Punu Minyma Kutjara: Jubia Jackatee,
Tjukapati James, Nyinku Kulitja, Pantjiti
Ungkari Mackenzie, Patricia Orgula, Marthy
Protty, Rosalind Yiparti, Yvonne Yibarti
(Kaltukatjara, NT), Mary Gibson Tjilkamarta
Minyma Kutjarra Munu Wati Ngirntaka Warta:
Dorcas Tinnimai Bennett, Dianne Ungukalpi
Golding, Bridget Jackson, Nancy Jackson,
Anna Porter, Eunice Yunurupa Porter, Dallas
Smythe (Warakurna, WA), Annie Farmer,
Tjawina Porter (Tjukurla, WA)

DATES
April 2013 (Amata and Ernabella), May 2013
(Docke River), June 2013 (Warakurna)

CONTACT
Michelle Young
tjanpi@npywc.org.au

Glenn Barkley
glenn.barkley@mca.com.au

WATER 2013 [page 46]

LOCATION
Loxton and Renmark, Riverland, SA

ARTFORMS
Theatre, Visual Arts, Craft, Design, Music,
Photography

INITIATED BY
Riverland Youth Theatre

ORGANISED BY
Riverland Youth Theatre

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Regional Arts Fund, Australia Council,
Local Government, Multicultural SA, Arts SA,

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Riverland High Schools and Primary Schools,
TAFE SA Migrant Literacy Class, Department
for Education and Child Development (DECD)
Regional Office (strategic partner), Parent and
Community Engagement groups (PaCE Winkie
and Loxton), Renmark Aboriginal Families
team (RAFT), Migrant Resource Centre of SA,
ABC Open, Loxton Waikerie Council, Renmark
Paringa Council, Loxton Public Library, Loxton
Chamber of Commerce, Business Riverland,
Loxton Hotel, Renmark Arts Depot (Roz Dyer),
Vall's Styrene, Riverland Fire and Safety, River
Murray Auto Wreckers, Think Water, Vardaro
Studios, Country Bakehouse, Neverfail Water,
Stageright Solutions, May's Sound, Destination
Riverland, KneeHigh Puppets SA, Loxton
Terrace Gallery, River Lands Gallery, Riverland
Camera Club, Walkandi-Woni Art Group,
Loxton Community Choir, McCormick Centre,
Loxton Club, Renmark Christmas Pageant
Committee, Loxton Lights Up Committee,
Riverland Multicultural Forum, Renmark Cubs,
CFS Loxton, Renmark SES, Renmark Dinghy
Club, Renmark Rowing Club, Loxton Living
Water Christian Community, Riverland Field
Days, Carers SA, School and Beyond

ARTISTS
Kathryn Sproul, Paula Gallagher, Mark
Timberlake (KneeHIGH), Tim Baulderstone,
Yvette Frahn, Suzanne Macpherson, Christopher
Bartlett (RYT), Harold Lindsay, Aaron McArthur,
Karen Skewse, Matthew Timmis

DATES
1 July 2013 to 31 December 2013

CONTACT
Olivia Allen
0414 348 884

Danyon de Buell
danyon@ryt.org.au

WOW FESTIVAL KATHERINE [page 58]

LOCATION Katherine, NT

ARTFORMS
Exhibition, performing arts, workshops, speakers program

INITIATED BY
Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre, Katherine, and Southbank Centre, London

ORGANISED BY
Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Arts NT, NTG (REDF), Inpex, FARE, KTC, Office of Women’s Affairs

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Roper Gulf Shire, Victoria Daly Shire, ABC, Imparja, ANKAAA

ARTISTS
Natalie Pa’apa’a, Sietta, Steffie and Foxyy Empire, the Borrooloola Dancers, Therese Ritchie and textile artists from Jilkminngann

DATES
20 – 22 September 2013

CONTACT
Cath Bowdler
www.gyracc.org.au/

YARNIN' [page 32]

LOCATION
Regional Victoria, including Swan Hill, Shepparton, Warrnambool and Gippsland areas

ARTFORMS
Film and Digital Media

INITIATED BY
Yarnin Pictures

ORGANISED BY
Yarnin Pictures and Open Channel

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Ministry for the Arts Indigenous Cultural Support Fund, Film Victoria

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Open Channel

ARTISTS
Rebecca McLean, Bobby Nicholls, John Harding, Marc Gracie

DATES
2012 – present

CONTACT
Ally Curtis
marketing@openchannel.org.au

Rebecca McLean
Rebecca@yarnin.net

SNAPSHOTS:
MUSIC IN COMMUNITY [from page 36]

SNAPSHOT MUSIC: CAAMA MUSIC

LOCATION Remote NT

ARTFORMS Music

INITIATED BY CAAMA Music

ORGANISED BY CAAMA Music

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
FaHCSIA, Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR)

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Charles Darwin University, MacDonnell Shire + more

ARTISTS
Aboriginal youth workers and musicians

DATES
2013 – 2015

CONTACT
Nicola Pitt
cmpromotions@caama.com.au

Micheal Smith
m.smith@caama.com.au

SNAPSHOT MUSIC:
FISH CREEK TEA COSY FESTIVAL

LOCATION Fish Creek, VIC

ARTFORMS Music, textile art, sculpture, theatre

INITIATED BY Deidre Granger

ORGANISED BY
Fish Creek Tea Cosy Festival Committee

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Regional Arts Fund, South Gippsland Shire Council, Madame Flavour, Toora Lions, South Gippsland Community Health, Main Street Revelations, The Fish Creek Hotel

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Fish Creek community, Andrew McPherson, Country Fire Authority

ARTISTS
Rebecca Bones, the McCrackens, Margaret Watson

DATES
18 May to 25 May 2014

CONTACT
Deidre Granger
info@teacosyfestival.com.au
dgld@bigpond.com

SNAPSHOT MUSIC: LIMESTONE COAST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LOCATION Mount Gambier and Limestone Coast, SA

ARTFORMS Symphonic music

INITIATED BY Jennie Matthews

ORGANISED BY

Jennie Matthews, Tom Dermody, John Pratt

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Country Arts SA, Mount Gambier City Band, City of Mount Gambier, Stand Like Stone Foundation, Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Seventy Limestone Coast musicians, their family and friends, supporters of symphonic music from the general public. Majella Wines, Kanawinka Wines

ARTISTS
Hamilton-based Orchestral Conductor Angus Christie

DATES
Concerts June 28 and 29, 2014, preceded by ten weeks of workshop rehearsals

CONTACT
Ms. Jennie Matthews
Imestonecst.symphony@gmail.com

SNAPSHOT MUSIC:
THE STRINGALONG CLUB

LOCATION Burnie, North West TAS

ARTFORMS Community Music

INITIATED BY
Lynne Price, President Burnie Arts Council

ORGANISED BY
Lynne Price, Volunteer Co-ordinator

Financial support
Various grants (total \$95,000), Education Department

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Volunteer Organising Committee, Volunteer tutors

ARTISTS
Teachers: Josie Riches (primary), Stephanie Perry (secondary)

DATES
Commenced July 2007 ongoing (7 years to date)

CONTACT
Lynne Price
klprice@bigpond.com

SNAPSHOT MUSIC: TRIANGLE STEEL BAND

LOCATION
Marysville, VIC

ARTFORMS
Steelpan Bands

INITIATED BY
Rita Seethaler

ORGANISED BY
Rita Seethaler

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Regional Arts Victoria (RAV) and the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) – bush-fire affected communities fund, Bendigo Bank, Murrindindi Shire, Private and Corporate Donations, Band Member Contributions. In addition, the 2013 Australian Steelband Festival

(organised by TCS) received funding from Festivals Australia, Tourism Victoria, Regional Arts Fund, Multicultural Commission Victoria, private and corporate Sponsorship, and ticket sales

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Marysville and Triangle Communities

ARTISTS
Approximately 20 players in each of two adult bands, plus 2 kids’ bands

DATES
November 2009 – ongoing

CONTACT
Rita Seethaler
rita.seethaler@tuti.com.au

SNAPSHOT MUSIC: PASSING THE BATON

LOCATION
Warrnambool, VIC

ARTFORMS
Music: orchestral conducting tuition

INITIATED BY
Warrnambool Symphony Orchestra

ORGANISED BY
John MacInnes, President WSO

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Regional Arts Fund

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Volunteer labour, admin, rehearsal venue provision

ARTISTS
Principal Artist: Angus Christie, Qualified orchestral conductor, Conducting scholars (Mentees) Melodee Herbert, Dominic Dwyer, Laura Thompson

DATES
Commenced Feb 2014, completed May 2014

CONTACT
John MacInnes
billows@bigpond.net.au

ONE RIVER [pages 40 – 45]

OVERALL FINANCIAL SUPPORT
One River, a Centenary of Canberra project, supported by the ACT Government and the Australian Government, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, The Sidney Myer Fund and the Australia Council for the Arts

OVERALL ORGANISATION
Executive Producer, Lindy Allen, Artistic Director Donna Jackson, Curator of Stories Malcolm McKinnon

ONE RIVER: CONFLUX

LOCATION
Mildura, VIC

ARTFORMS
Contemporary dance, music, oral history

INITIATED BY
Kim Chalmers for One River, a Centenary of Canberra project

ORGANISED BY
Kim Chalmers and Sally Hederics

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Centenary of Canberra as above

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Mildura Ballet and Dance Guild

ARTISTS
Kim Chalmers and Sally Hederics

DATES
Jan – August 2013

CONTACT
Kim Chalmers 0400 261 932
Sally Hederics 0410 737 921

ONE RIVER: LAKE SUITE

LOCATION
Based at the Art Vault in Mildura, the project focused on Lakes Mungo, Hattah and Hawthorn (NSW and Victoria)

ARTFORMS
Sculpture, textiles, ceramics, photography, music, performance, poetry

INITIATED BY
Carmel Wallace for One River, a Centenary of Canberra project

ORGANISED BY
Carmel Wallace

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Centenary of Canberra project as above

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Art Vault, Parks Victoria, MDBA, Merbein Historical Society, the Lakes Primary School, Sacred Heart Primary School (Mildura), LaTrobe University, Regis Aged Care Facility, EcoVoice online publications, Mildura Native Nursery

ARTISTS
Carmel Wallace, Ben Rogers, Nikki Scarlett, Jack Rogers, Jennifer Gadsden, Val Robinson

DATES
Residency/exhibition 15 May – 3 June 2013, performance 1 June 2013

CONTACT
Carmel Wallace
cmwallace@ansonc.com.au

ONE RIVER: TURN BACK TO THE RIVER

LOCATION
Murray Bridge, SA

ARTFORMS
Site specific installations, camera obscura, digital media

INITIATED BY
Heidi Kenyon for One River, a Centenary of Canberra project

ORGANISED BY
Heidi Kenyon

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Centenary of Canberra project as above, Qantas Foundation, plus own funds

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Rural City of Murray Bridge, the Murray Bridge Regional Gallery, the Murray Bridge Library, Tony and Glenda Rowett’s Sunnyside accommodation, the Davery Establishment, the One River team and fellow One River artists, Melinda Rankin, Renè Strohmayr, Carol Bath, Candy Davis, Leanne Price, Lee Millsteed, Dean Davidson, Adrian Kenyon, Michelle and Steve Moritz, Detlef Baumer, Rob Strohmayr, Sugar Strohmayr, Talia Wignall, Sue Davidson, Leanne Kenyon, Amanda Kenyon, Kristel Britcher, Jasmine Symons, David Phillips, Melanie Terrett, Margie and Allan Goodman, Sarah Kenyon, Aaron Grindlay, and the Murray Bridge Regional Gallery and Murray Bridge Library staff and volunteers.

ARTISTS
Heidi Kenyon plus generous individuals and community groups (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) who contributed to, inspired and enriched this project through sharing their knowledge, stories, memories and photographs.

DATES
Residency dates: January 29 – April 14
Exhibition dates: April 12-14

CONTACT
Heidi Kenyon
heidikenyon@gmail.com

ONE RIVER: UNRAVELLING THE MARANOA

LOCATION
Maranoa River, Mitchell, Qld

ARTFORMS
Seven 9-metre rolls of paper stained and marked at seven locations on the Maranoa River with audio installation

INITIATED BY
Jude Roberts for One River, a Centenary of Canberra project

ORGANISED BY
Jude Roberts

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Centenary of Canberra project as above

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Various groups including Maranoa Council and Maranoa Youth, Mitchell on Maranoa Gallery, Dunkeld State School, Mitchell State School, Gungarri community Yumba, Mitchell, Landcare Mitchell, Mitchell Museum, Murray Darling Basin Committee Roma, Mitchell Marimba Group

ARTIST
Jude Roberts

DATES
December 2012 – August 2013

CONTACT
Jude Roberts 0427 738 424

SNAPSHOTS:
WRITING IN COMMUNITY [pages 60-61]

SNAPSHOT WRITING: WOW PROJECT
VICTORIA

LOCATION Horsham, VIC

ARTFORMS Literature, Public Art, Community Engagement

INITIATED BY
Horsham Rural City Council Public Art Advisory Committee

ORGANISED BY
Artist/Creative Producer: Mars Drum, Project Management: Horsham Rural City Council

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Horsham Rural City Council, School Focused Youth Service

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Horsham Regional Library, Wimmera Uniting Care, Oasis Wimmera, Horsham Disposals, Thipitiy Café, Wesley Performing Arts Centre, Ace Arts and Stationery Supplies

ARTISTS

Mars Drum

DATES

March – July 2013

CONTACT

Mars Drum
marsium@gmail.com

Jillian Pearce
jillian.pearce@hrcc.vic.gov.au

SNAPSHOT WRITING: WRAP BEECHWORTH

LOCATION Beechworth, VIC

ARTFORMS

Reading, Writing and Poetry

INITIATED BY Beechworth Arts Council

ORGANISED BY Beechworth Arts Council

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Regional Arts Fund, Indigo Shire Council, WAW Community Credit Union

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT

University of Melbourne, School of Culture and Communication, Beechworth Neighbourhood Centre, Quercus Community Bookshop, Hotel Nicholas, Pennyweight Winery, Beechworth Bakery, Beechworth Secondary College, Beechworth Chamber of Commerce and Beechworth Traders

ARTISTS

Tony Birch, Kevin Brophy, Eddie Paterson, Beverley Lello, Kate Rotherham

DATES

Friday 14th to Sunday 16th February, 2014

CONTACT

Estelle Paterson
beechworthartscouncil@gmail.com
estelle@netc.net.au

SNAPSHOTS: YARN BOMBING
[pages 12-13]

SNAPSHOT YARN-BOMBING:
The Holbrook Yellow Submarine

LOCATION Holbrook, NSW (and beyond!)

ARTFORMS Yarnbombing

INITIATED BY

Murray Arts and our Regional Cultural Network Partners: Albury City, Greater Hume Shire, Corowa Shire, City of Wodonga, Indigo Shire and Towong Shire

ORGANISED BY Murray Arts

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Greater Hume Shire Council

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Holbrook Submarine Museum and the Holbrook Sheep and Wool Fair, in kind support provided by Panda, Bendigo Woollen Mills, Sunspun, Landmark Pitzen, Spotlight, Creamers Art Supplies, Nifty Engineering Holbrook

ARTISTS

Donna Pinder, Libby Alexander and Michelle Oxlee

DATES

Project: February 2014 – July 2014

Installation: 12 June – 14 July 2014

CONTACT

Karen Gardner 02 6021 5034

SNAPSHOT YARN-BOMBING: Homespun

LOCATION Ravensthorpe and Hopetoun, WA

ARTFORMS

Crafts of crochet, knitting, spinning and felting

INITIATED BY

Amber Perryman, Ainsley Foulds and Melissa Daw

ORGANISED BY Sue Leighton

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Ravensthorpe Wildflowers Show Committee, Wool Agency, Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network (RAIN), Landmark Ravensthorpe, Ravensthorpe District Art Group

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Love Media (Amber Perryman, marketing and branding)

ARTISTS

Community volunteers, no professional artists involved

DATES

Launched on 5th May 2013 at the Hopetoun Handmade and Homegrown Markets, crochet circles organised across the community until the official opening at the High Tea on 8th September 2013

CONTACT

Melissa Daw
rraccoordinator@westnet.com.au

Regional Arts Australia is the national advocacy and industry development body for the arts in regional Australia. Arts and culture are at the heart of community life across regional Australia. Regional Arts Australia promotes, convenes, facilitates and resources arts and cultural activity for the one-in-three Australians who live in regional, remote and very remote Australia.

Regional Arts Australia's member network includes | Arts NT | Artslink Queensland | Country Arts South Australia | Country Arts West Australia | Regional Arts NSW | Regional Arts Victoria and Tasmanian Regional Arts.



REGIONAL ARTS VICTORIA | COUNTRY ARTS SA | ARTS NT | COUNTRY ARTS WA
REGIONAL ARTS NSW | ARTSLINK QUEENSLAND | TASMANIAN REGIONAL ARTS



Australian Government
Regional Arts Fund

The Regional Arts Fund is an Australian Government initiative that supports sustainable cultural development in regional remote and very remote Australia.



Australian Government

