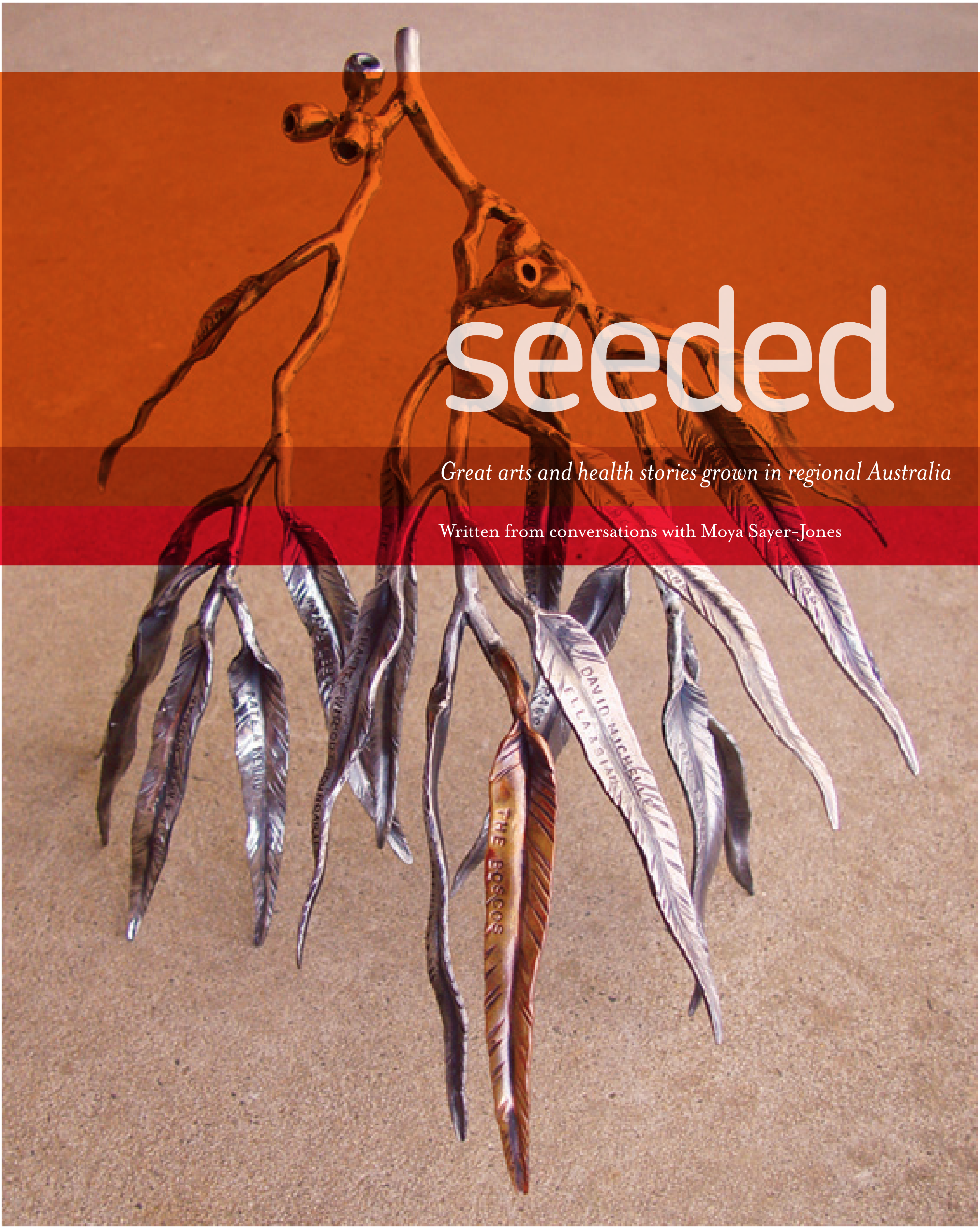

seeded

Great arts and health stories grown in regional Australia

Written from conversations with Moya Sayer-Jones

Cover image

ALL TREE PROJECT PHOTOGRAPHY: AMANDA GIBSON

THE TREE PROJECT

The Tree Project began as a post on an online blacksmiths' forum, a week after the Black Saturday fires in Victoria in 2009. An Australian blacksmith suggested that blacksmiths might each forge a steel leaf in memory of those who perished and to honour those who fought. Over the past eighteen months, blacksmiths from twenty countries have sent their hand-forged leaves to Australia.

In Victoria, local blacksmiths from the Australian Blacksmiths Association travelled to markets and festivals in the fire-affected communities with portable forges and anvils to demonstrate leaf forging. It was suggested that leaves could be sponsored to raise money for the steel, copper and welding needed for the tree that would hold the leaves.

The project took off: suddenly the tree grew from being a small sculpture to a major structure estimated to be nine metres tall when complete. Each individual leaf was stamped with a name or message chosen by the sponsor. People sponsored leaves with the names of those lost to the fires, pets, properties, Country Fire Authority fire brigades and with messages of hope.

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Special thanks are extended to all of the groups, organisations and individuals who provided information, interviews, copy proofing and images relating to the projects covered in the publication.

This book follows three earlier publications:
- *Big Story Country: great arts stories from regional Australia* (2008)
- *Heartwork: great arts stories from regional Australia* (2004)
- *The Great Yarn Event and other arts stories from regional Australia* (1998).

seeded

Great arts and health stories grown in regional Australia

Written from conversations with Moya Sayer-Jones

FOREWORD

FOR MANY THE ARTS AND HEALTH SECTORS SEEM AT FIRST glance to be worlds apart, but increasingly there is strong evidence that in working together we can provide not just creative outlets for people, but also support the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

As you read through the pages of *seeded* you will see incredible examples of how arts and health can work collaboratively in support of each other's goals.

You will read stories of grace and courage, sadness and good humour, and a willingness among people to forge new pathways and connections.

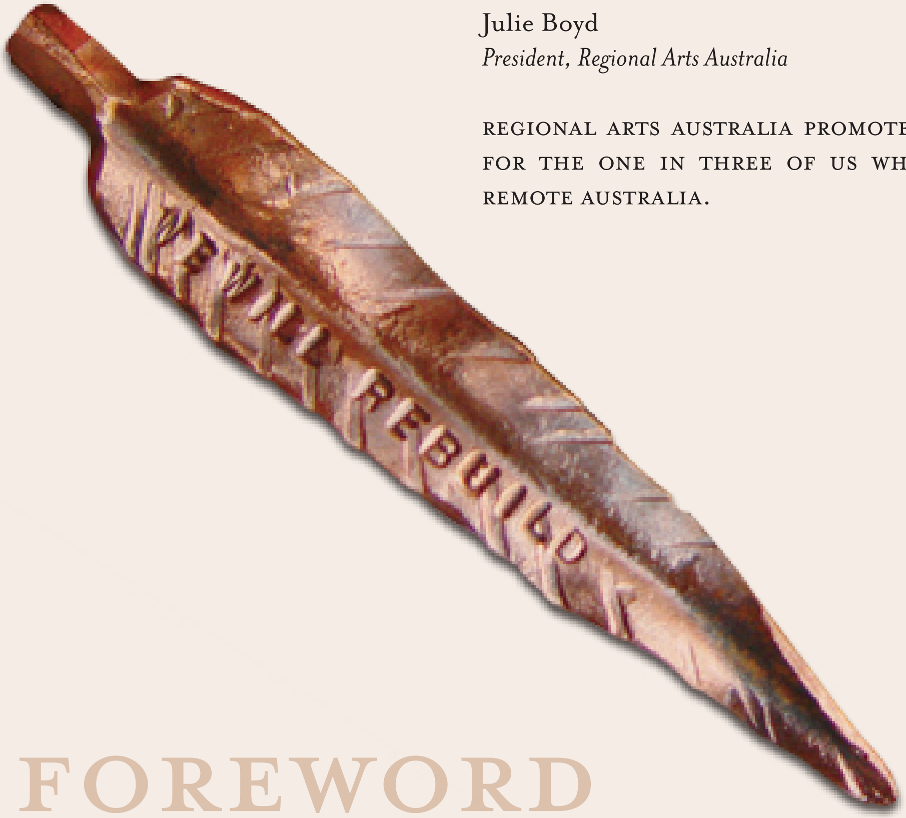
Through these pages we can see that the arts and creativity can help us further understand each other, share and explore difficult problems, and perhaps find ways to heal which are outside of traditional medical pathways.

I would like to especially commend the people in this book who have shared their stories with us and the people on the ground they represent, including the artists, health practitioners and community members who have participated in these fascinating projects.

This publication is a wonderful addition to Regional Arts Australia's growing collection of great arts stories from rural, regional and remote Australia and is again testimony to the depth and vibrancy that characterises the arts throughout regional Australia.

Julie Boyd
President, Regional Arts Australia

REGIONAL ARTS AUSTRALIA PROMOTES THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARTS FOR THE ONE IN THREE OF US WHO LIVE IN REGIONAL, RURAL AND REMOTE AUSTRALIA.



BEING WELL MEANS MUCH MORE THAN EXPERIENCING AN absence of disease. That is certainly an important pre-condition, but increasingly we are coming to understand that one's lifestyle and the psychological and spiritual aspects of being are critical elements of health.

Within this broad context lies the strong relationship between creative activity and health and wellbeing. Creativity and exercise of the arts that are involved are major contributors to living healthy lives. They also have an important role in supporting recovery from ill health. Leaders of the rural and remote health sector now accept the benefit of involvement in arts activities – whether as therapy, as a means of communicating important messages, or as community development.

The National Rural Health Alliance has long advocated the place of the arts in the healthy life of Australians. In its policy work the Alliance gives high priority to the social and economic determinants of health. It sees the adoption by the health sector of arts activities as one of the ways in which people stay healthy and their communities are kept sustainable and health-promoting places in which to live. In addition, the Alliance has promoted the narrower but critical role of the arts in providing therapy, social development, support and rehabilitation to those who experience poor health or disability.

The stories selected for this collection – a small fraction of those submitted – demonstrate the power of arts in health. They show that rural and remote Australians are heavily involved in creative responses to the health challenges they face. Most importantly, they show how effective arts and health projects can be in promoting health and wellbeing for individuals, at-risk groups and whole communities.

The National Rural Health Alliance is proud to be associated with this book. It is a fruitful outcome of our long collaboration with Regional Arts Australia. We hope these stories will inspire continuing arts and health initiatives into the future.

Jenny May
Chair, National Rural Health Alliance

I HAD JUST STARTED WORKING ON THIS BOOK WHEN I ATTENDED *Junction 2010*, the Regional Arts Australia national conference in Launceston last year. The sessions featuring arts health approaches were all full to overflowing and while it's probably a bit of a stretch to describe the arts health world as 'hip', it was certainly looking like the star of the show. I realised then that the seeds for *seeded* were already in the ground and sprouting. (A hugely comforting idea at the beginning of any project!)

The stories in this collection reflect the diversity of projects across the country and were chosen from hundreds of submissions. Some projects are huge in scope and vision while others were initiated by a single person, simply looking for a solution. There's the young podiatrist who secretly raided her supply cupboard for materials to make decorated foot casts; the mother who turned to her art to help understand her son's autism; and the two indomitable Western Desert sisters-in-law who found a new way (and a few million dollars) to tackle kidney disease and prevention. And many more.

All stories were written from transcriptions of my phone conversations with the artists, administrators, health workers, choreographers, writers and community members. They are in their own words. Some stories have been told from several points of view to reflect the collaboration that makes this work possible. All stories have, of course, been finalised with the help of the storyteller.

Thanks to all the participants for their generosity and time. And to the photographers and photo subjects for the use of these beautiful images. You never know, arts health work might turn out to be hip after all!

Moya Sayer-Jones
Writer, Only Human Communication

WRITER'S NOTE

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dis|assemble dance project

✻ Tim Podesta – *Artistic Director*

From the very beginning, I thought of this as a high level project. Something that would really push the boundaries…

It began as a conversation with Margot McCallum. Margot was working with some people with disability and she asked whether we'd be interested in taking a look at what she was doing.

I can remember standing in the studio that first day, watching these physically and intellectually disabled guys moving around the space. There were about ten or twelve people, teenagers through to adults and I don't want to sound clichéd but it was just incredibly pure. They were moving because they loved moving. They simply loved the sensation of moving from one space to another. No ego, completely unaffected: just pure, beautiful movement. It was exactly what trained dancers strive so hard for, but find so hard to achieve. ('Look, I'm not trying, I'm not trying…!') As I stood watching these guys, I saw nothing but potential.

My background is as a professional dancer and choreographer so, of course, I'm not naïve to what's possible in terms of physical capacity and the ability to retain a series of steps and so on… but I was still blown away. I sat down with Margot and told her I thought we should look at doing something together but on a much bigger level. It didn't interest me to do the 'dance for fun' kind of thing and I definitely didn't want to create a 'sympathy piece' where people looked at what we were doing and said, 'Oh look at how special these people are'. We talked about integrating our abled and disabled dancers and that became *dis|assemble*.

At that stage, I had absolutely no idea what was really possible with dance and disability but I knew we'd be moving barriers and expectations. And creating something new (choreographers are always wanting to do something new!).

Images from 2010 'embodied' performance.
PHOTOGRAPHY: KAREN DONNELLY

To get things started, and functioning well enough to apply for funding, I tried to find links between *dis|assemble* and what I was already choreographing professionally. When I was commissioned to do a work and a new piece of music was being created, I would find a way to use the music. Or maybe I'd use some of the choreography on the disabled guys too. Sometimes it simply meant we were using the same costumes. (As the project has progressed, this exchange has worked the other way too. The things I have learnt from *dis|assemble* I have been able to use working on professional dancers, exactly the same. And I think that will continue to happen.)

Margot is our rehearsal director. Together we created a skills development syllabus just like trained dancers have. Everyone worked very hard: the choreography is complex and demanding. We did a couple of shows and slowly people started to understand what we were trying for. That's when we approached Murray Arts to advise us about funding and we were successful from several sources. 2009 was our pilot year and in October 2010 we finished our second year: an eight-month season with a new show called *embodied*.

Our work is multimedia because we realised that not everyone is going to be, or wants to be, a dancer. We've included the film element so at least we could have people behind the camera, learning from that perspective. And then we started thinking costumes and marketing, illustrations, things like that: so that everybody has an opportunity at some level. One of the guys who was originally dancing in the program got a mentorship to create a short film: it's hard to grasp how much has happened in a short time.

There have been so many positive changes. For example, physically I've seen things like postural realignment and physical body awareness and confidence. Intellectually, we hear that they've said words they've never said before and they're communicating on a much more positive and clear level. And the emotional changes are significant too.

Often people with disability crave touch and I know for myself and the abled dancers, initially there was a real fear that we were going to do something that they would take the wrong way or would hurt their feelings or that they wouldn't understand. And it worked like that the other way too. The people with disability were certainly a little bit apprehensive as well because unfortunately, more often than not when they're mixed with young people, there isn't great integration or communication.

> *You see one person, struggling to remember three steps in a row and yet… he's not sooking about it… [And you realise that] you have been sooking because you couldn't hold your leg at 90 degrees for three seconds!*

But in our project, all these fears were gone very quickly. Dance just cuts through all that. It's so tactile. Straight away you've got these people who are holding hands and swinging from one side to the other and doing lifts and that level of trust just increases tenfold. And it doesn't only stay within the studio. That new trust has moved outside into the community: walking down the street, sitting down having coffee, being able to communicate about whether you're having a great day or a bad day.

If you were to talk with any of the trained dancers who are a part of *dis|assemble*, I think they'd say that they didn't know what to expect when they started but that the past two years has given them a completely different view. Not just about what's possible with dance but also of what they can achieve with their own bodies.

Young dancers are always trying to be perfect. They're training thirty-five hours a week to be the best they can and yet every dancer has something that blocks them in a sense. For me, it's my height. I'm quite short so my problem as a professional dancer was that I was never going to be the Prince or Romeo. Someone else might not have the best feet and someone else might find flexibility hard to attain. Whatever it is, it becomes something to sook about really. 'I don't have this. I don't have that…'

And then all of a sudden, you're in the same studio with a group of people who struggle to do basic things on their own. You see one person,

struggling to remember three steps in a row and yet it's not inhibiting him, he's not feeling bad about it and he's not sooking about it. Just a couple of hours prior, *you* have been sooking because you couldn't hold your leg at 90 degrees for three seconds!

I watched one of the able dancers doing a television interview not long ago. This guy, he's eighteen, six foot four, body of a Greek god and just incredibly charming. He was asked what he'd learnt and he articulated it in a way that you just thought, 'How did this come out of his mouth?' He said he'd learnt to be grateful and that, disability or not, we are all equal. He talked about how much a person with a disability understands and he said, 'They read us better than we read them'. And I thought that was so impressive.

We have a number of open days throughout the year where we try to get the schools involved but it's always a struggle. Always. Schools have a million things on and it disappoints me to say this, but often I think they see it as just doing the right thing. Rather than there's actually something to gain out of it.

I've always looked at what we're doing as an experiment and the experiment is purely about trying to open minds. We're trying to get people to look beyond themselves, and the norm, to see what is possible and what is achievable.

With dance, particularly contemporary dance, this is difficult anyway. It's difficult to get people to understand what we're doing.

But I think we're up to it, we're doing well. Just look at what these dancers have done.

Visit www.disassembledance.org.au and be amazed. *

Images from 2009 '6' performance.
PHOTOGRAPHY: KAREN DONNELLY

Rock Hole Long Pipe project

Community Arts Network WA (CAN WA) brought Alison to Australia as a Healthway Arts and Health Fellow to work on the Rock Hole Long Pipe project.

✻ Alison Clough – *Arts and Health Practitioner, UK*

I was so excited to be asked to come to Australia but I couldn't imagine what I would have to offer. I thought, 'Another white woman coming out from England? Just what they need!'

I hadn't ever really travelled before; I'd never done a long distance flight. I remember driving from Perth to Kalgoorlie with the artistic director, Lockie McDonald, and he kept having to pull over so I could have a look at the bush. Even the roads amazed me: nothing like that in Lancaster!

Quite often in my work, I make things out of natural materials, the things I find around me. For example, at home I collect willow to use in my lanterns. But this world I had entered was not mine. It was powerfully strong and I felt so respectful of it that I knew I couldn't possibly collect a single thing. I didn't know how I was going to get by. (In the end, I went to Bunnings!)

I started in arts health work, as an artist, back in the early 1980s. I was making lanterns in a community in the West Midlands and what I soon realised was that whenever people were sitting making them

Left: Participants from the Rock Hole Long Pipe parade with their tent lanterns

PHOTOGRAPHY: POPPY VAN OORDE-GRAINGER, COURTESY OF CAN WA

together, they'd be talking about things. Ordinary stuff: their health, their jobs, their families. And an extraordinary trust would develop. These were people who might live in the same town but who might never have chatted before. I just knew that being able to connect like this, as part of a community, was a really important thing for people's health. After that initial exploration, I was invited to do work with a specific focus: coronary heart disease and lung disease and diabetes and so on. That's a very long time ago now but still absolutely everything I do is around finding reasons for people to have conversations together. Helping people connect is the fundamental basis of my work.

I had just four weeks to get my bit ready for the big community performance. I decided that with the Aboriginal people, I would make waterdrop lanterns. Annette Stokes and I went and sat on the ground in the park and just started making. I knew I had to do that publicly and that people would come and talk and sit down with us. And they did. I was connecting with other members of the community too. One of my first conversations was at the bar of a 'skimpy' pub. I needed bottle tops to make the candleholders and I wandered into this pub full of men and these ladies with no clothes on. (Nothing like that in Lancaster either!) I was in there chatting to these half naked women and they were totally up for keeping the tops for me.

All of the artists who were involved in the performance also did workshops in schools around the shire. I was with schools in Kambalda and Coolgardie and deciding what to do with the children was quite difficult. I had come to Australia with no clue of what I was going to do. When you arrive from the other side of the world you have to be completely open minded about it. I had to NOT have any ideas! But in the schools, there are always other curriculum pressures and you've got to get the kids making something, really quickly.

The idea for the children's lanterns came from something I had learned in Coolgardie. During the gold mining period, the town itself was completely tented and apparently, it had been burnt to the ground a few times. There would be a fire and, suddenly, the tent cities would just disappear with many lives lost. I decided to base my bit of the performance on a story about those mining pioneers and my plan was that as part of the performance, the children's beautiful tent lanterns would be placed on the ground and burnt.

It's not easy asking children to make these wonderful structures and then give them up. They're very proud of this thing they've made and they want to keep it. There's no point in telling them they have to hand them over either: for the process to be worth anything, they have to want to do it themselves. It's this individual versus community thing, isn't it? Whether we keep something for ourselves or give it up for the greater good? The learning is that we can make things, which are for others, for all of us.

In the end, they all made the decision that they would give up their lanterns and they were happy to do that. On the night though, it was a huge thing for them to do. They'd said yes but then they come to the performance and they carry their lanterns in the procession and they see

My role was teenie weenie really, in terms of the huge amount of connecting that had to happen to make it work. I just felt so lucky that I had something to offer because normally, I don't think I have. Do you know what I mean? There is so much to learn

Alison is a pioneer and an internationally recognised artist and leader with many years experience of developing and delivering community based arts and health projects. She is founder of the arts and health charity, Pioneer Projects (Celebratory Arts) Ltd in the UK, and has provided the creative direction since is inception. In 1997, Alison opened the Looking Well Centre on a shoestring budget in an empty shop in her local rural community. Looking Well is now housed in its own premises and Alison is currently developing projects around stress and diabetes, supporting emerging artists, and developing an arts based outcome monitoring tool.

how lovely they look and they realise that they are not going to get to take them home. The time comes when they have to place them down. It was hard but I think it's that edge that you have to constantly put into things to make something that will resonate.

During the burning, the task was for everyone to remain silent in respect for all the people who had died and, you know, that's what happened. No giggling or whispering. Nothing. In the community arts work that I do, these are the moments you hang on to. Something is working: everyone feels it. It moves things in a way that endless discussion doesn't.

Lockie had created a performance space in the park that was both theatrical and real. It was theatrical in that it was beautifully lit and so on, but it was also a real place for people, with a fire burning in it. And that was where all the Aboriginal people were. Afterwards there was food to be had and a sort of party and I remember someone talking to me about it a few days later: an Aboriginal woman and she said, 'It was so amazing, the doctors were serving the food. Our white doctors were serving us food'.

Of course, loads of people in the town didn't come that night but there was a definite feeling, a special energy for a bit: a sort of flowering and seeing the potential of something. Connections were made and will continue to be honoured I hope.

The lovely thing about the creative arts is that we connect on another level. You don't even have to understand each other. The work's done for you. *

The Hedge Bandits with teacher Kiera Hill and students from Kambalda
PHOTOGRAPHY: MIKE GRAY, COURTESY OF CAN WA

✻ Pilar Kasat – *Managing Director, Community Arts Network WA*

Rock Hole Long Pipe was our first long-term project. We were over the moon.

We had over eighteen months to run the project and when we began, there was a great divide between the white settlement history and the local Aboriginal history. Our focus for the project was on the importance of water for those communities, the history of the traditional Aboriginal Rock Hole and the contemporary Long Pipe* and the relationship of the wellbeing of the land to that of the community.

The process was, at times, difficult and complex. There was a general lack of cultural understanding but Barb Howard, the project manager, who had been working with us from the beginning, was very persistent. She was absolutely uncompromising in making sure that the Aboriginal people had a say in all aspects of the project.

Lockie McDonald wrote and directed a fairytale, bringing together all the stories we had gathered from our community consultations and workshops and school visits. He wove it around a totem of the area, the tjilkarmata (echidna), with the performance being a quest to let the echidna free. This was of course a symbol for enabling the Aboriginal people to express their history.

PHOTOGRAPHY: MIKE GRAY, COURTESY OF CAN WA

The audience were all standing on the main road through this mining town, where normally these massive trucks would be rolling through, and everyone had to hold hands to create a safe path across the road. In the comments I read later, this was a very powerful moment.

This was a rare time where cultural elements of the Aboriginal people were being publicly acknowledged and that was very meaningful for the whole community. It was also the first time in something like forty years that the Coonana Dancers danced on that dry country. Perhaps there was a transformation at a deeper level that we cannot even comprehend. A level of connectivity where people sang country and danced on country.

The next day it rained. ✻

**The Goldfields Pipeline was commissioned in 1896 to bring water to the communities of the WA Eastern Goldfields. It runs from Perth to Kalgoorlie (530 km) and is one of the world's longest water mains.*

DUST

✻ Donna Jackson – *Writer/Director*

I came across the idea for DUST while I was researching a show for Melbourne Workers' Theatre. The building workers kept talking about asbestos. They suggested a book called *Asbestos House* by Gideon Haigh and when I read about the cover-ups and denials by asbestos companies, I felt really ashamed to live in a society where that can happen.

About that time, I met up with a lot of members of the Asbestos Diseases Society of Victoria (ADSVIC), including Liza Moran.

Liza grew up outside of Ballarat, one of nine children, and every time her family got a little bit of money, they built an extra room for one of the kids. When she was seven, Liza helped sweep up Hardiplank products and thirty years later, she was diagnosed with mesothelioma. Meeting Liza was a shock. She was in her early forties and she had a six-year-old daughter and that's when I realised that this wasn't just a building workers' disease. All sorts of people were affected: like people exposed through home renovations or people who just happened to work in the wrong buildings. Nurses are starting to get sick now. And teachers and maintenance men…

I developed the first show with Mark Seymour (from Hunters and Collectors), the filmmaker Malcolm McKinnon and students from the Ballarat Arts Academy. The students from the Academy helped us test the material. Most of the play is verbatim, from conversations with members of the ADSVIC.

My big challenge was how to write about such a serious issue and make it entertaining as theatre? And something we could sell tickets for. I had to find a way to have a humorous hook that was still politically strong.

When I was writing, I imagined the audience to be my Aunty Joyce. Aunty Joyce wanted a good night out, she wanted to laugh, she didn't like

Song writer Mark Seymour
ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: FERNE MILLEN

An image of now deceased member of ADSVIC, Geoff Whale, choir and Mark Seymour, Williamstown performance

anything too political and she hated whingers! So when I was working on one of our themes, that we expect to be safe in our own homes for example, Aunty Joyce was my guide.

In the show, I have a character from the board of an asbestos company and she goes to the hairdresser to have her hair bleached. Her hairdresser is asking her questions about people dying using asbestos products and she basically says she's not responsible: she can't really help what happens to other people. Then the hairdresser says she has a new product to try too, a bleach. She puts it on her hair and later, when the towel comes off, all the hair comes with it. At the end there's a scene where this same high flying woman has to present to the AGM with her hair basically stuffed by this product. It's a belly laugh moment but it also makes the point about responsibility: and vulnerability too. I had to find my sense of humour around this issue and many people I worked with at the Asbestos Diseases Society helped me do that. They've got this very black humour, which is fantastic.

The first show was put together with students from the University of Ballarat Arts Academy, some professional actors and people from around the Ballarat community. We opened in Ballarat and then brought it down to Melbourne for five sold out shows. That's when I thought it would be

Victorian Trade Union Choir, Willin Wimmin Choir, students from Ballarat Arts Acadmey and Mark Seymour at the Williamstown performance.

The Geelong Trade Union Choir was used to going to rallies and shouting songs and slogans… so they said it was very new for them to learn three- or four-part harmonies instead.

great to take DUST to different country areas. I wanted to do something that was linked into the community with a good community process but would also get a good artistic outcome. Regional Arts Victoria agreed to come into partnership producing it and we developed a show that could tour to Geelong, Sale and Shepparton.

There's a whole range of people living in regional areas who are really skilled. I wanted to collaborate with them to create really authentic local productions. To do that, I set up a system of 'Top Dogs' and in every community, I had a Top Dog of Choirs, a Top Dog of Acting, a Top Dog of Dance and a Top Dog of Production. We paid the Top Dogs a fee and brought them together in Melbourne for briefings and then they would go back into their local areas. They found the talent and they helped develop the local stories. They did some directing and I supported them when they needed it.

The local casts were a mixture of people who were politically motivated and people who were artistically motivated. In Geelong, for example, the Top Dog of Dance ran a dance school and she got all her dance students involved. Most of these young girls didn't really care about asbestos; they just love dancing and learnt about asbestos along the way. In Geelong, we linked up with the Trade Union choir. Overall, we had two professional actors and between sixty and eighty local players in each cast.

We performed in all these wonderful, big, old town halls. The first half of DUST has all these little side show tents telling different stories and the audience walks around choosing what they want to see. This is how we could include some of the local stories. Like in Geelong, they have a situation where asbestos has been dumped on a site near the sea and now there's a dispute about who put it there and who is going to remove it. In most shows we were able to find these local stories about the way things were and the way things are now.

The second half of the show is like a straight theatre performance where the main narrative thread about the hairdresser and her client, the board member, is played out by the professional actors and local cast.

Malcolm had filmed actual people telling their own stories and the film linked the show. Liza Moran, for example, speaks directly to the audience from a large screen and appears later, through an actor, on stage. Another person we filmed was a man called Tony Medina. Tony was a union rep with the Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU). He had lost thirty kilos or more in recent months but he came to the opening show. He spoke to the cast and audience afterwards, not about his own problems but about the importance of education and awareness. He managed to come again and speak after a Melbourne performance but died three weeks later.

At every venue the CFMEU built a scaff area covered in plastic (like the safety bubbles you erect when you are removing asbestos) and the audience can go in there and we've got Tony on television, talking about asbestos. For us, that's a memorial and it also enables Tony to keep spreading his message even though he has passed on.

One really strong aspect of this project was that it provided an opportunity for communities themselves to expand awareness. In Geelong, the Trades and Labour Council used it as part of a big campaign to show that there were a lot of people who were home renovating and leaving asbestos in the street, in open bins. They had articles in the local newspaper including a local builder who had been diagnosed with mesothelioma telling his own story. In Sale, which is quite near the La Trobe Valley, DUST was already pretty close to home for many people. There is a whole lot of illness and death because of asbestos in the power stations there, so we focused that campaign on young renovators moving into the area. In Shepparton, most of our cast were under twenty-five, and so the focus there was about how dangerous some workplaces can be and how to think safety at work.

At the beginning of this project, I had thought that I would need to protect myself from the sadness but, in fact, I was strengthened by the incredible grace and courage I found. The number of people we met who have some sort asbestos related disease and they're going through chemo and they're getting themselves out of bed, out of their pyjamas, getting dressed, going and lobbying some politician and then going back to their hospital bed again.

It was just really, really inspiring for all of us. (And I know Aunty Joyce would have been really inspired too!) ✻

'Miss Micronite and the Flamettes'. Miss Micronite appeared out of a giant cigarette box and danced a burlesque number. She is based on a real character used to promote asbestos micronite cigarette filters in Men's magazines in the early 1960s. The choreographer was Peter Matthews.

The Southern Ngalia Dance Camps


Enid


Tali


Jenine


Natalie

The Southern Ngalia Dance Camps is an inter-generational project, a large collective gathering, created and designed by the older Warlpiri ladies to pass on traditional knowledge. They come from the communities of Yuendumu and Nyirrpi. The project is just one element of a suite of services to assist with positive health alternatives and prevention of substance misuse.

- ✻ ENID NANGALA GALLAGHER – *Cultural Custodian*
- ✻ TALI LOW – *Jaru Pirrjirdi Coordinator, Mt Theo Program*
- ✻ JENINE MACKAY – *Executive Director InCite*
- ✻ NATALIE O'CONNOR – *Coordinator*

✻ —— JENINE —— ✻

One of the ladies was telling me that when she was a child living in Yuendumu they would go just out of town every night, just out of town… and they would sit down round a camp fire and sing and dance. Every night she walked out with her grandmother and now, that's gone. But these women, they still have the knowledge…

✻ —— ENID —— ✻

My mother Coral Gallagher and the other ladies wanted to sing the songs and dance with the young ones and they said, 'We'll go out onto country: this is the way we do it'.

✻ —— TALI —— ✻

Ever since I've been here, and I'm sure a long time before I came, the older people have been worried that they are passing away and the young people don't know the things they need to know.

✻ —— ENID —— ✻

Twice a year, the young girls and women climb into troopies and four-wheel-drives with food and swags and ceremonial materials and go onto country.

A long time before the camps, the ladies choose where it will be. We ask them what they want to do and what will be the song and dance for that camp and we ask them to give us support to get ready. Like the first one we did at Mission Creek, the ladies made the dreaming dance there. It belongs to that place. And this one we did at Wayililinypa, it's fire country. We do the Fire Dance there.

Margaret Napangardi Brown watches Nancy Napanangka Gibson for corrections whilst she paints Snake Dreaming for Virginia Napaljarri Simms at Mission Creek Dance Camp

PHOTOGRAPHY: JENINE MACKAY

* —— JENINE —— *

Enid is the Cultural Custodian of the project: she's the one who coordinates and manages all of that but she is guided by the older ladies. They hold the knowledge. The locations are associated with different dreamings and stories. When we go to those places we do the dance of that place, the dreaming that is associated with that land. The ladies are singing the story of that land. It's just such a gift. I'm just blessed. I'm starting to learn so much and it's just starting to make sense.

* —— TALI —— *

I'm not sure how many conversations Enid ends up having with those old ladies. I'm sure it's lots. She would have many, many conversations deciding where they are going to go, what they're going to sing and what they're going to need to do it. And that's where I come in. The logistics: the boring side of it I suppose! Usually a month before the camps start is when I really start talking about it so everyone is aware it's coming up. I spend time with the young people but also with the elders, making sure they have everything they need. Their medication, their blankets. It's difficult getting everyone out there, with their little swags and all their cooking utensils and things like that. It's really, really hard. We do a few trips out there on the day to prepare, to clear the area and get all the grass out: usually the old ladies do that which is really great.

NATALIE

The first camp was really magical. It had been raining for about five days leading up to it. We just thought, 'Oh god we're not going to be able to go out. Those older ladies, they're not going to want to go out in this rain'. But they did. They were so very, very keen that we decided to go anyway even though the site wasn't an outstation and there weren't any buildings.

We ended up getting out to the site, Mission Creek, at about 6 o'clock, which is really late. We dropped the first busload of ladies and young girls and turned around to pick up the second load. When I got back to the camp, it was such a beautiful scene: everything had been set up really well and there were candles everywhere and the younger girls had built little fires around the place and were actually cooking dinner for everybody: spaghetti bolognaise in woks!

After that, one of the older ladies, Lorraine Granites, she got everybody organised into skin groups and began a singing session. She stood up and she was invoking the spirits of the place, and while she was doing it and kind of using her arms, there was all this lightning. It was flashing on the horizon behind her: lighting up the sky. It was a dramatically beautiful moment: really beautiful.

When we woke up on the Saturday morning, it was teeming with rain again and the older women went out and chopped down mulga trees and built a big humpy. That was one of those great moments. I mean for me, it was just seeing all the power and resourcefulness of them providing for the young people, and doing everything that needed to be done to keep the camp going.

TALI

We had a few younger girls there who were ten, eleven and twelve and they were really into it but the older ones, they were maybe not as patient. In the first dance camp they didn't really get into it but then, in the next dance camp, they were more relaxed and really enjoyed it. We think that each camp the girls are getting more confident and we're hoping that the more we go, the more comfortable they will become...

JENINE

When they were getting painted up, we noticed a lot of the teenage girls were excited but embarrassed and quite shamed to be taking their tops off. This meant they didn't participate as fully as what they might have because they were shy of it. The older women were very patient and we all had a big meeting at the end and worked out that we needed to solve that problem and so for the second camp we got them boob tubes...

Left to right: Biddy Napaljarri White tying the feathers onto Shimaih Napanangka Granites' arm with string so it won't fall; Coral Napangardi Gallagher and Margaret Napanangka Brown dancing Jarrardajarrayi (Goanna Dreaming Dance) at Mission Creek Dance Camp April 2010; Marietta Nampijinpa Hargraves; Kalisha Napaljarri Ross is so proud to have the body painting designs. PHOTOGRAPHY: JENINE MACKAY

JENINE

They put the boob tubes on and then they didn't feel shame. The younger girls were standing there without them, getting painted and looking at the teenagers going, 'What's up with you? What are you going on about?' It was like yeah, sweet.

NATALIE

For the second camp, we brought much more ceremonial material like white feathers and wool and the women sat there in the afternoon and they created these headpieces for the girls. These were times when we were discovering what we needed to do and what we needed to change and we came up with these solutions together. Each camp we've progressed a little bit further and the experience has become richer…

JENINE

At the end of each camp while we're still there, we have a consultation meeting. A lot of storytelling and a lot of comments from the ladies and we make our future plans. They are very keen to share their stories beyond the Warlpiri region as well.

We're in this for the long haul. We know this will take time and we're not going anywhere. It takes time to build trust and that's the critical thing. The dance camps are about growing confidence, growing self-esteem; working in a group and hearing other people's ideas. Prevention strategies for substance misuse is at the heart of the Mt Theo Program and the comprehension of culture and the valuing of place is integral to young people's wellbeing.

There's the growing understanding too of the responsibility to look after the older people in the community: it's about the health of all generations.

These ladies, they've worked hard all their lives and it's good for them now to sit down, pass along their knowledge and be valued.

ENID

When the ladies are singing, they follow the dreaming: where the dreaming starts and where it ends. The girls know their skin groups and when they see their elders, they join in. They know who they belong to.

DRIVE

✻ **Bronwyn Purvis** – *Co-producer, Co-director*

Everyone talks about ‘six degrees of separation’ but here on the northwest coast of Tasmania, we say there’s only three. Just about everyone is connected. When something tragic happens, like the death of a young man, it reaches right through the community.

For DRIVE, we interviewed over 150 people and there was always just a couple of steps between one story and the next. In some areas, you’d meet young people linked in a circle of deaths: one girl talked about how she was ‘tired of going to funerals’. That girl, Jess, was twenty-two.

We have horrific numbers of car crashes and fatalities in Tasmania and young men are way over-represented in the figures. I live in Burnie and every week you almost expect to open the paper and see a photograph of another crash. This state has the highest rate of car deaths in Australia: we’re ahead of the Northern Territory in that. And we’re right up there, just behind the NT, for the rate of suicide… so they’re not great statistics.

Why are these young men driving as fast as they are? How is that they’re driving at 270 kilometres an hour, five times the speed limit, but they’re not thinking they’re going to die?

DRIVE is a fifty-five minute film with a series of additional short films. It was the final part of a *Big hART* project for the northwest of the state. The first part was a young mothers project, the second involved elderly people, and our brief was to create an educational resource for young men.

Process was always a key part of this project and the idea was to engage local young men behind the scenes in the actual making of the film. They were at the interviews: using the camera, working the audio and asking the questions. Among the participants was a big crew of skaters from the Burnie skate community who’d had a long running relationship with our co-director Telen Rodwell (who’s a skater too) and there were young men referred through local youth justice and others who had been working on the previous stages of the *Big hART* project.

At first, our emphasis was on stories about the young men who'd died: what they were like, how the crash happened and the grief that followed. The families were so generous in sharing their stories. I think everyone was sort of driven by a desire to help create something that might make a difference. The people who came forward most willingly were the mothers and the girlfriends and the sisters. They were able to articulate really honestly about the experiences they'd been through. We didn't have any fathers share their stories and I guess that's very telling.

All the time we were filming, we kept trying to answer our own questions: trying to get inside those young guys' minds to understand what made them tick. And then one day, we suddenly thought, 'Hang on, we've got all these young men right here, working with us day to day. What about them?' It was right under our nose. They were just about to get their licence! That was the really significant turning point.

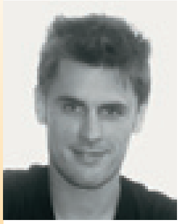
Through the stories of these very young guys now, DRIVE is trying to look at the energy of the young: the rites of passage and the testosterone. What is that need to take risks? To be on the edge? I think the film it shows that extreme risk-taking not just a negative thing. Sure, sometimes it might be about self-destructiveness and unhappiness. But there's another side: the positive side of risk that makes us feel more alive.

This was a long project and a very sensitive one for this small community. After twelve months, we did a work-in-progress screening with a few of the stories and a panel of local police, family and the services involved. We did it in a cinema in Burnie and it was packed. We tried to have a discussion afterwards but there wasn't a lot of conversation.

A year later, after Triple J TV had picked it up, we did another screening for the participants. They had all seen and approved their individual bits in advance but had not seen the film as a whole. There were obviously tensions. I think it was difficult for the community to watch it. Conflicts and deep wounds remain between some of the groups and strong things were said. We took on board some suggestions and made changes in deference to the concerns.

Since then the film has begun its life outside this community. It's gone to film festivals in South Korea, Iran and Copenhagen. It has played in the Sydney and Melbourne Film Festival and Adelaide and was broadcast on the ABC in January. The Road Safety Partnership has come on board and DRIVE is now in the Year 10 curriculum in Tasmanian schools.

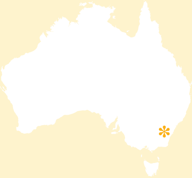
During the making of this film, I found myself spending a lot of time sitting on the side of a skate park, watching boys skate (when I would have really like to be doing it too). But there was engagement that came from me sitting there and I am really proud that a lot of young men did step up to the plate in the end. And tell their stories. I think for young men to reveal parts of themselves, that's probably one of the most terrifying things they could do. And in one way, the riskiest. I'm absolutely so grateful for that. *



In my mind, the most important thing was that we heard the voices of the present, of the living… there's all this stuff that young people are dealing with that just isn't being discussed…

TELEN RODWELL –
Co-producer, Co-director,
Co-composer and Cinematographer

BEYOND ROUNDABOUTS



✻ Rewa Nolan – *Multi Media Artist*

I remember the first time I met Nikki Rabbitte's Mums and Dads Group (MAD). Nikki is a youth worker in Cooma and she invited me along to one of their sessions in a local park. Nikki said that the group wanted to find a way to tell their stories and share their point of view and she thought I might be able to help.

I sat down with all these very young parents, their kids playing around us, and I asked them to think about what was unusual about the lives they'd lived so far. They came back to me with stories that blew me away. They had overcome such adversity at such a young age: things that many of us would be unlikely to experience in a whole lifetime. Drug addiction, post natal depression, mental illness, abandonment, death, violence – enormous things by the time they were twenty. Or even fifteen. I found it incredible.

All the parents were very different people: pregnancy was the thing they all had in common, maybe the only thing. But each and every one had a story and they all wanted to help other teenagers see that it's possible to improve your situation and think positively about being a parent: even if it wasn't your choice at the time.

Beyond Roundabouts didn't take long to get off the ground. (I'm a bit like a bull at a gate – if I know something's worth pursuing, there's no point waiting!) We made a short film with six young women telling quite comic stories about 'the day my waters broke'. That year, the theme for the local film festival was 'WATER' and our film, *Knocked Up*, won the People's Choice Award. That result got me thinking, 'You know what? This community's got a soft spot for this. I think we can pursue it'. So I used the film to bolster a funding application and we got SEAR (South East Arts Region) on board to help us. The next summer we were successful in a $20,000 partnering fund through the Australia Council for a project involving a film, photographic workshops and an exhibition.

To accommodate everyone, our filming process needed to be very flexible. We went to all the parents individually and filmed in their homes. I'd start by showing them some photography techniques, right then and

Left: Custody Battle. Below: Lights Camera Action.
PHOTOGRAPHY: REWA NOLAN

there, with their kids. We didn't worry so much about the technical stuff of taking photographs. It wasn't as important to us as the process of actually thinking about what you want to photograph and then capturing it with any sort of device you can get your hands on. We had a few digital cameras that we borrowed for people to use in the project but mainly they used their own phones and other digital devices. I think this is the best way to go: you have complete ownership that way and it allows everyone to be clicking away as an ordinary part of their day.

And that's what we wanted. We wanted this aspect of the project to introduce the parents to a visual narrative process that would help them see and value their lives on a daily basis. My process was to teach the parents how to look at images using a different perspective or point of view and hopefully that would open their mind to looking at their own lives and their own situations differently: more positively, less judgmentally.

The reflections come when we decide things like: what are we choosing to shoot in the first place? How do we decide to frame it up? What do we leave in the shot? What do we take out?

So, for example, one girl decided that she would take some photos of her young daughter putting some clothes on a doll. She said that normally she'd think this was just a really messy thing and not something worth looking at but, through this process, she thought instead of it being something unique: a little moment that would ordinarily pass her by. Other people chose to look at their lives from the bottom, a time when they weren't so happy about themselves and when they had gone through that process of composing the shot and taking it and standing back and reflecting on it, they were able to overcome some issues that were very deeply repressed. And that was very powerful too.

We filmed the young parents too, talking about their lives and what they'd learnt in a way that other teenagers could relate to. There's an incredible boost to self-esteem that comes from seeing yourself on camera, and listening to yourself. The entire process of being involved in making a film is just remarkable too. For many of these young parents, this was the first time that somebody had actually listened to them and they'd had time to reflect on their situation.

Nikki Rabbitte was present at every stage of the project and she has talked to me about how this process took her relationship with the parents to a whole other level. She was there when we were talking and filming and any health issue that came up, she was able to act on straight away and get the ball rolling for help. The word got around very quickly about the results the parents were achieving through talking with Nikki and how quickly she could help with their problems. The minute one or two got involved, everyone was up to say their thing.

I approached both the film and the photography from a positive viewpoint, always. My thinking was that if we show them in a positive light, they will see themselves in a positive light and the community will respond positively. And that's what happened. Once the community viewed the film and the photographic exhibition, they started to understand this group differently. And treat them differently. This goes from the GPs to the schoolteachers through to just elderly people walking up and down the street. This meant increased opportunities for employment and education: community members would approach the participants and say, 'I hear you're looking for a job'. Or 'There's a TAFE course you might like'. The project gave the group an identity and individuals too. One particular girl, for example, quit smoking after a woman had approached her and congratulated her on doing a good job with her situation. The girl had a cigarette in her hand at the time and she stood back and looked at herself and thought, 'I'm a good person and cigarettes aren't a good thing for me anymore'.

We collated the exhibition from the images the parents gathered along with some of my own. Several people said to me: 'We'll be blu-tacking the photos up on the wall, won't we?' And I said, 'No, we won't. These images are much, much better than that'. I had the expectation of a beautiful exhibition with fine prints, under frame, in a local gallery and we pushed and pushed and we pulled if off.

It was held at the Raglan Gallery and Cultural Centre in Cooma and it was phenomenal. It was a really horrible winter evening and yet the place was packed. A lot of the participants don't have vehicles because they don't have their driver's licences, so Nikki had ordered every taxi in Cooma to bring them to the gallery. We had a film screening and forty photos under lights and it just looked a million dollars. I've never seen an opening with that many people. The local obstetrician who delivered a lot of these babies gave the opening speech. In 2011 the DVD will be trialled in GPs' facilities across the Southern General Practice Network, using it as a tool, if you like, to connect young people to services locally and nationally. The film is thirty-seven minutes long, just the right length to fit into a school period (I am a trained teacher too) and we're using it with key community groups as well.

There is a huge difference between having kids and not having kids. It changes your life heaps but you also have to make the effort to change.

Colin Wilson
MAD *group member*

Left: Baby Blues. Above: MAD Dolly.
PHOTOGRAPHY: REWA NOLAN

We see this project as an opportunity for change. A lot of the participants came from families where their mothers had them when they were really young and their mothers' mother were really young. There were a couple of parents who were fourth generation: all telling the same story.

Cooma is a town with four roundabouts and no traffic lights. It's a community that basically has one road running straight through it to the snowfields. *Beyond Roundabouts* was intended to show that we have options, we can go in different directions. You can discover a road that takes you somewhere you haven't been before and, if you take it, you might uncover something beautiful to help you along the way. ✻

IN 2010 THE MAD *Beyond Roundabouts* PROJECT WON BOTH THE STATE AND NATIONAL ARTS HEALTH FOUNDATION AWARDS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS ARTS FOUNDATION.

SEE A PREVIEW AT http://www.rewanolan.com

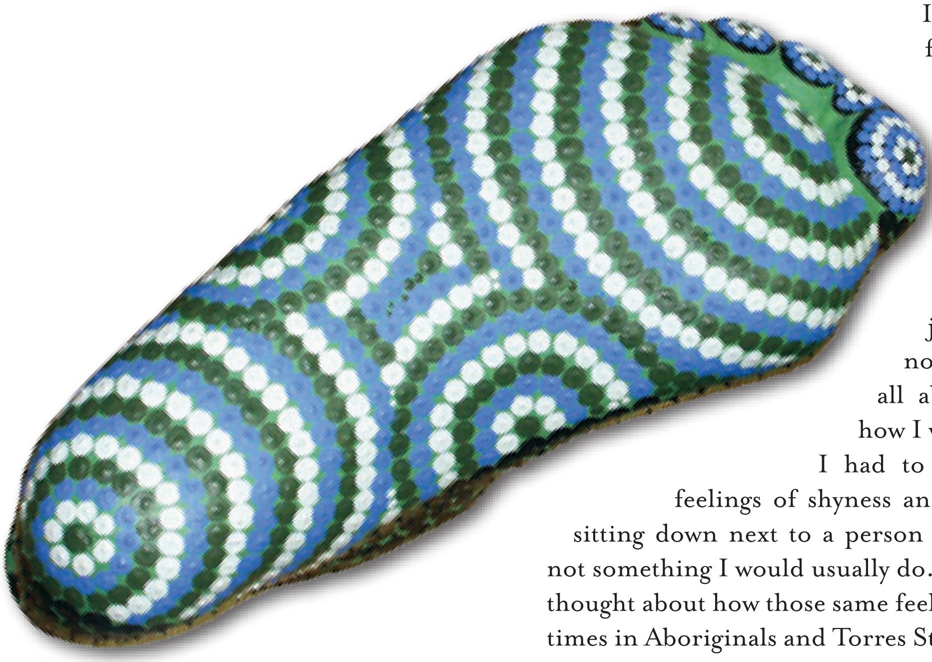
Art and Sole

Bronwyn Venning – *Podiatrist*

Art and Sole grew out of my frustration, really. It happened like this…

My background's in podiatry. On Tuesdays the Aboriginal health team in Gawler were running a lunch program for the local indigenous community and so I thought I'd run a drop-in foot clinic at the same time. I thought people could drop in and have an assessment or whatever and I'd always be able to fit them in. But the problem was that I didn't get anyone. People just didn't come.

Looking back now, I chuckle at myself, my old self and how I went about everything. I used to think, 'Here I am! I'm offering this fantastic service. Why won't they come and see me?' I was putting the blame onto the community, like it was their problem, instead of looking at the way that I was doing things.



I reckon I'd been doing it like that for twelve months when I was invited into the lunch to do a bit of a talk. The aim was to increase my effectiveness but I had a feeling that me coming into the room for one day, chatting about foot care and then leaving once again with, 'You can come around and see me…', just wasn't going to cut it. It didn't. Still no one came. I knew that the answer was all about relationships but I didn't know how I was going to build those relationships.

I had to really examine myself and my own feelings of shyness and discomfort: going into a room and sitting down next to a person and just striking up a conversation is not something I would usually do. I get sort of really anxious. And then I thought about how those same feelings are probably magnified a hundred times in Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders because of all the normal gate keeping that goes on in those sort of services. I wanted to find a way to ease all that.

I was thinking about how I could use my skills as a podiatrist and that's when I came up with the idea of foot casting. It's what we do anyway to make orthotic devices and we had all the materials right there.

One of the Aboriginal Health team members, Lizzie, kicked it off. I sat with her in a corner, a very messy plastery corner, and then, because Lizzie did it, we had a few others. Gradually, week by week the numbers grew.

Left to right: Footcast artwork by Jane Rigney, Kerry Rigney, Peter Taylor.
PHOTOGRAPHY: BRONWYN VENNING

Some people didn't want to get their feet out; there can be a bit of shame around that, so we started doing hand impressions. Being flexible about what people wanted was the key: we were doing impressions of week-old babies' feet and beautiful old hands and over the seven weeks that we ran it, we did about fifty-four feet and eighty-three hands.

We did all that with just one day a week. When I look back at it I think I was absolutely crazy because once you've got the impressions you have to fill it up with plaster of Paris to get a positive cast, the actual shape of the hand or the foot. And because I wanted people to have a nice, smooth surface to paint, I just about had holes in my hands from sanding every spare moment I got. But Lizzie would come and help out and then during the lunch program, we'd have a painting table and their casts would be there with their names on them and whenever they felt like it they could do a bit of painting between chatting and eating their lunch and it was fantastic really. I was answering questions and juggling plastering and scalpel blades all at the same time.

Originally my idea was to put all the artworks in the garden as a feature, sort of footsteps to reconciliation but people didn't want to let go of their artwork once they were done. We found artists in the community who perhaps didn't know they were artists at all.

This was my first project and it started with me having to get out of my own comfort zone. I read somewhere once that being white is like having an invisible passport and I reckon that's true. But when someone sits at your feet, as I was doing, there's a power shift. And that was very significant for this community.

When someone sits at your feet, as I was doing, there's a power shift. And that was very significant for this community.

The flow-on effect at the clinic was huge attendance wise. In fact the clinic itself has now grown: we have a doctor and a nurse on board and now there's access to dental and audiology. And that's all on a Tuesday during lunch!

I have a different role now. I'm the Health Promotion Facilitator but I'm still involved in that Tuesday podiatry clinic. I'm seeing more people all the time and the trust is still building. And it's funny, when I come back from holidays now I always get, 'Where were you?' Which is really nice. It's lovely to be missed. *

Through the Looking Glass

✻ Melanie Jai – *Artist*

This was never intended as a project, really. It was never intended as anything other than something that I was doing for me and my family. It was only at the opening of the show that I understood the impact it might have on others. The response amazed me: there I was in this room surrounded by all these people who were in tears.

Many were people I had never met before and I realised that they weren't crying for me or my son: they were crying because what I was doing somehow connected with what they were going through. They were people who have a child with an illness or a child who is different and they saw we were on a similar journey. The same 'rip-your-heart-out-and-put yourself-back-together-again' sort of journey...

My son Miller is nine now. He's the most challenging and the most delightful child you'd ever meet. All in one. He was running by eight months, talking in full conversations by the time he was one and sitting with adults analysing other children's behaviour at two. About that time I contacted mental health and we found out that Miller has Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Above: Miss Communication
Below: Curiouser and Curiouser
ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: KATRINA ELLIOTT

When mothers go through something like this, they become their child's best advocate. They research and research until they almost know more than the specialists. They totally immerse themselves in it so that they can understand what's going on. But that doesn't always work. In fact, there is no answer to a lot of things: it's not all explainable. As a parent you have to learn how to vent some of the emotion that comes with that. My way was through my art.

I've always painted, that's all I've ever done and all I've ever known. I have a complex personal life and for a long time my artwork was very impersonal. When I started drawing about my life with Miller, all that changed.

It began almost as therapy, just for us: Miller, my daughter India and me. Even so, I didn't want it to be too confronting for Miller or make him feel under the microscope. I didn't want to leave images of him sitting around against the walls, for example. So that's why I decided to make it my journey. I devised a very stylised person, that was me, who would be the vessel through which to tell his stories.

Each artwork tackles a powerful, base emotion that everyone experiences at some time but which ASD sufferers might experience all the time. They definitely helped me to understand my son more but there was also another side that I didn't expect. The drawings gave Miller an outlet to talk about things too. He could talk about the emotion without being at the centre of it. We shared it: part of the images were about me, part about him and part were even about my daughter India and how she's coped through it all. The amount of communication we've had, as a family, through the art is incredible. Every piece helped us talk about what we couldn't understand.

I had made about four or five pieces and there was interest from the Gladstone Gallery: it kind of grew from there. I applied through

Queensland Arts Council for the show to be part of a tour through regional Queensland and I was accepted. To me this was all incredible.

I had about a year to prepare before the exhibition and the tour and I realised that I had a huge responsibility. It was one thing to talk about me and my kids from a little house in a small town but now I'd be speaking more about the show being 'A mother's journey with Autism Spectrum Disorder'. My whole life as a mother has been about making my children as comfortable with who they are as they possibly can be. And constantly trying to make other people understand so that my children can be who they need to be without being discriminated against. Once I started compiling the text and putting the exhibition together, I knew I needed to get the information right and I had an obligation to get the best messages out.

I contacted a few organisations and sent them a couple of images and just waited for a reply to see if anybody was interested. And of course, I guess I could have been anybody so none of these organisations ever got back to me. Only one person did: a man named Tony Attwood. He took me under his wing and he has been incredible. It was only later that I realised he is Professor Attwood and is a renowned expert. Everything I wrote and every piece that I did, he has looked at, he's read through and he's given me his okay from a clinical point of view.

The exhibition consisted of sixteen very personal artworks and next to each was text, the story behind it: the reason I made them. That is extremely important to me. Those words came from a journal I wrote throughout Miller's life. I work mixed media: so I'm mainly acrylic but if you look closely, sometimes I use bitumen, or wood panelling, or Selleys No More Gaps. I even used paper doilies for her dress. I just use everything that I believe adds to the story. If I think it will do that, I put it on there!

The same figure, me, is in all the drawings. I didn't want different figures because I wanted people to get used to her: to move past her and deeper into the ideas. You start not to see her. At least that's my hope, that the viewer gets used to seeing the same person and gets immersed in what the drawing is really about.

One mother in NSW wrote that she just wished people could see the show so they could understand that her child wasn't just a naughty boy. And you know, that's the truth of it. A lot of people look at these kids and the really negative behaviour and they don't understand what's behind any of it.

Left to right: Chaos Theory, I Believe You, Hidden Aggression, According to You, Hunter or Hunted, In Pieces

Standing in the gallery that opening night, surrounded by the artworks about our life and these people examining them, I felt… just very vulnerable. It probably sounds naïve but I hadn't realised that it was going to feel like that. It was the first time I'd realised what I'd done. How extremely personal it was. It was a shock.

Miller of course was so in his element that night. He just fitted perfectly and even though he was extremely over-energetic it didn't matter. Every person in the room accepted him. It was such a delight to see that. They knew what the story was about and they accepted him and he absolutely loved that.

And, of course, the medium itself made sense to him. One of the things I've discovered about Autistic Spectrum Disorder is that people with ASD see things in visual format and from what Tony has told me, I believe this is the first time, anywhere in the world, that a parent has shown the journey with a sort of, visual map. He has talked about using it in his clinic. He believes in the therapeutic benefits and the value of helping other people understand what families go through. He has been the driving force to get a book published.

So this all started as something about us but now the sharing of these experiences, as a family, has enabled us. The process of creating these works has enabled us to work through so many emotions that are degrading in many ways. And I found the process of standing bare in front of everybody, with my soul on the wall, while frightening… was strengthening too. I realise that perhaps in some way, I've been able to make those feelings okay for others too: even the negative feelings. Because everyone has them…

This process has helped me see it as it really is. I know what a struggle it has been for us and I know how isolating it is to feel like you're the only one… even when there are millions of people in the world going through exactly the same thing. What I'm hoping is that what I've done will help other people realise they are not the only one too. ✻

Through the Looking Glass BEGAN TOURING THROUGH REGIONAL QUEENSLAND AND NSW IN JANUARY 2010 AND, IN RESPONSE TO THE HIGH DEMAND, WILL NOW CONTINUE THOUGH TO THE END OF 2012.

Western Desert Kidney Health Project

Christine and Annette first met in 1991 when Chris went to Kalgoorlie to help set up the Maternal and Infant Health Service. Annette started the first Aboriginal playgroups in Australia as part of that project. The two have been working together ever since and even became sisters-in-law. They are telling this story together…

- Christine Jeffries Stokes – *Associate Professor*
- Annette Stokes – *Chief Investigator*

We kept going to funerals; lots of funerals and people were dying young. Even people who were doing the right thing were dying and the most common cause was diabetes and kidney disease. Then, our young nieces started getting kidney disease and their children, who were only about ten or eleven, were developing very early onset Type II diabetes. And people were talking to us and saying, 'What's causing this curse on the Aboriginal people?'

Left to Right: Bradley Ashwin, Mariah Ashwin, Am-boy Ashwin, Stanley Ashwin

PHOTOGRAPHY: POPPY VAN OORDE-GRAINGER

Some friends who are endocrinologists had told us about a study showing that *Acanthosis Nigricans* was a sign of high insulin levels. (That's where there's a darkening of the skin where it creases in places like the neck and underarms.) As it happened, there was a kids' basketball carnival here and we went to it and all the kids were playing in their singlets and their arms were up, reaching for the ball, and it was just a sea of black armpits. We thought, 'That can't be right; these are slim, fit, healthy eating, well cared for kids'. So we got some kids tested in our family and sure enough, they all had high insulin levels. That was when the whole family started working on this concept of early identification and education around kidney health. And by the whole family, I mean we're talking about two thousand people.

There was another significant turning point for us early on when a Minister in the previous government was approached, he said that it wasn't a big priority for his government and if we wanted something to happen we probably needed to do it ourselves because it would be a long time coming.

That's how governments work but it was interesting for us because we knew we had this hugely urgent issue but on the scale of things in the whole country, it probably didn't seem like such a big priority. Of course, when it's your own nieces and nephews dying, and people you've spent your whole life with dying, you can't afford to wait. We raised $5 million through a whole range of strategic alliances and it's been a slow (and sometimes arduous) road. In 2007 we ran a pilot project and in September 2010 we hit the road.

We have this unique combination of key people: Christine has the medical and research background, Annette is medical too and is a huge force with the cultural and family stuff. Annette's the one who just knows how to make it happen and she has a lot of authority. (If Annette says someone should do something, then they do it!) Lockie McDonald is the link to artistic expertise and then there's Saulie, Annette's brother. He's a musician: if Saulie's involved then people know it's going to be good fun.

We will be visiting ten communities a year, seven-and-a-half thousand people in all, in two vehicles. One is set up as a clinic and that's where we do the screenings. We have special machines so we can give an immediate answer rather than the blood having to go away to the lab and get an answer in a week. This is really important because we can explain everything straight away. Often people aren't very mobile and can't always get back for their results.

The other truck is set up as an arts vehicle. From here, we run arts workshops where we teach about what causes diabetes and what you can do about it. The big focus is prevention. We work with the community to develop their own health promotion materials and the process of that is probably even more important than the materials themselves. The participants absorb the messages and then teach the rest of their community.

We look a bit like the circus is in town: lots of pennants and flags and positive messages. It's good fun. You sit, you talk and you make things.

We look a bit like the circus is in town: lots of pennants and flags and positive messages. It's good fun. You sit, you talk and you make things. And then it's like a party.

Diabetes and renal disease aren't just problems for Aboriginal people but are rising on a world scale. It's just a bit earlier and deeper in indigenous populations.

And then it's like a party. We set up at the park and everyone likes to go to the park. If there's some music on, they'll come and sit and jam. They get involved. And of course, it's important to remember that we're not just this group rolling in to someone's town. What we're doing is, we're coming home and visiting family. People come because it's Annette and Saulie: they want to see them, they're pleased to see them. And then they're even more pleased that we've come to help them.

So far, we've seen about two hundred people in two small communities. There are good programs already in place for management of these diseases once you're identified but the problem with both diabetes and kidney disease is that often you don't know you've got it until too late. So we're looking for people who actually do have the disease but aren't sick yet but, really, we need to see everyone. We're telling people that it's important to come even if they're healthy because we need to work out why some families are more likely to be affected. That makes them proud to come along.

Left to Right: Associate Professor Christine Jeffries Stokes, Chief Investigator Dr Stephen Wright, Carissa Stokes, Chief Investigator Annette Stokes,
PHOTOGRAPHY: POPPY VAN OORDE-GRAINGER

Above: Krystal Stokes, Stanley Ashwin.

Below, left to right: Bradley Ashwin, Am-boy Ashwin, Stanley Aswhin, Graham Stokes

PHOTOGRAPHY: POPPY VAN OORDE-GRAINGER

Some people are afraid that we'll be finding out things about them that they don't want us to know, particularly young adults. (Saulie's good at getting around that!) And we're not testing for drugs or alcohol, it often comes up in the conversations so that's a good opportunity too.

We've always used the arts in our health work. In the pilot project in Laverton, we did a shadow puppet show with painting and dancing and music. Last week we had a festival in Coolgardie where we had a story written by one of the Aboriginal health workers about a tooth fairy who gets diabetes. So all the kids were tooth fairies in a lantern parade and the bigger kids worked on a sand animation video using traditional story wire techniques.

When Alison Clough came out to Australia on the WA Health Way Fellowship, she also worked with us as artist in residence. She was working with Lockie McDonald one day and some of the women sat down and showed them how they tell stories using a story wire. It's a way to teach the children, tell stories of the dreamtime or even just give directions to people when they're travelling off road. All the girls make their own wires and wear them around their necks. They sit down on the ground, with this piece of wire like a wand with a little hook on one end to put their thumb through and slap it on the ground to draw stories. So, for example, when we said we were going to travel through ten communities, the girls did ten dots and they joined them up with lines and then the dots turn into smiley faces and the dots are waterholes. It speaks to all cultures.

The sand animations are one way of creating culturally appropriate and meaningful materials. We expanded on the traditional form by making it into an animation that you could watch on YouTube. It's quantum leaping: like taking an ancient thing and using technology to make it into a modern thing. We have animation artists and four laptops and some second-hand cameras and we connected them up and off we go. Annette and Saulie are learning the technique and they'll be the ones who will take it over. The latest film is on YouTube now (you can find the link at the end of this story).

This project is just beginning but already we are feeling the power of it. And it will grow. We're just about to employ a community development officer to help the communities build on this new awareness depending on their priorities.

At the very beginning when we started thinking about this project, we went to a conference in Melbourne and we took one of our nieces with us. She's not medically trained or anything but after all she'd heard she said, 'I think this diabetes is really about forgiveness. Our people carry such a burden of grief and guilt and they just accept it's what they deserve'.

That stayed with us and now the whole idea of forgiveness runs through everything we do. We're using the arts as a way to reach people, inspire and teach them: and give and joy, too. *

GO TO THE YOUTUBE LINK AT http://fullsky.com.au/?page_id=29

Weaving wellbeing

✻ **Meg Simpson** – *Area Coordinator for Health Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention (Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Services, Western NSW Local Health Network)*

I spent many years as an actor and then in arts administration and now here I am working in mental health. I could tell you about a lot of projects, wonderful projects we've been doing recently: for example, a choir called *The Symptomatics* that we developed with the Orange Regional Conservatorium of Music. Or a photography project called *Through My Eyes* where we gave out disposable cameras to all the staff and asked them to invite people to take photos to tell us about their world… but really, if we can only tell one story, I just have to tell you about Bloomfield.

> *When we thought about developing this strategy we were looking as well for the flow-on benefits that come with increasing pride and confidence amongst the staff and the broader community.*

Bloomfield Hospital is one of those traditional, old psychiatric campuses. It's set on beautiful grounds, lots of space. (The first Inspector General of Lunacies wanted to have no more than two patients per acre!) It's all of five minutes from the centre of Orange but it's been a world of its own. When we heard that there was going to be a major hospital redevelopment: expanded facilities, two hundred new mental health staff, and the relocation of the Orange Base Hospital onto the grounds, we suddenly realised that the world as we knew it was about to change. This would be especially the case for the people with mental illness who have lived here long term and see this quiet campus as home.

Above: *Courtyard Design Cowra to Forbes*

PHOTOGRAPHY: GABRIELLA HEGYES

Left: Bloomfield Hospital from the Bloomfield Historical Collection

PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

PHOTOGRAPH OF MEG SIMPSON BY DR GANAPATHI MURUGESAN

First up, we held a visioning forum, open to all staff, which we ran with an arts and cultural development facilitator, Justin Byrne. The idea was that we should start talking about the key values of our service and our campus, that we didn't want to lose. In this forum, we would air what we were worried about and begin to plan how to solve it. We knew the new hospital development would bring a wonderful opportunity to de-stigmatise and raise awareness of mental health and drug and alcohol issues; but it would bring challenges as well. About fifty people came to that first session and the things that came up were both practical and emotional.

One of the big issues that emerged was about how our people would find their way around this new big campus. Our thinking was that we'd need to develop way finding and signage that connected the new and existing facilities, and we'd need to make the combined campuses safe for pedestrian traffic. Our old campus was so quiet that people could walk right up the middle of the road. Not anymore. Did we need to have an internalised pathway system?

That's when the idea of making terrazzo pathway pavers took hold and this was really the beginning of an all encompassing strategy. We were able to bring Justin Byrne in as an advisor and he, and artist Gabriella Hegyes, worked with us to develop a proposal for a whole range of arts and cultural projects.

Above, left to right: Goanna Design by Bev Coe; Cleaning out casting for Courtyard 1 Cowra to Forbes
Below: Goannas and Eagle
PHOTOGRAPHY: GABRIELLA HEGYES

From the beginning, we built partnerships with local organisations (including the Gallery, the Library, the Conservatorium, the City Council, Arts OutWest) and formed a working party that included representatives from health and mental health, drug and alcohol and several retired doctors and psychiatrists. Our governance structure allowed us to work together and report at senior management level, where decisions for the whole development were being made. It took a bit of time but we've built the credibility and that makes a great deal of difference.

And now that you know the back-story, I suppose I should tell you what we've done so far…

We wanted to build a skill base of local emerging artists, particularly Aboriginal artists to ensure a sustainable, long-term strategy. Our first successful application was through Regional Arts. It was called *Weaving Wellbeing* and was an artist exchange between Gabriella Hegyes, who was interested in the terrazzo technique, and Beverly Coe, an Aboriginal artist from Condobolin, who is a wonderful traditional weaver. We thought these two techniques would be the linchpins to build skills in the community, even in people who have no experience at all with the arts. The idea was that anyone could be working side by side with the artists. We started with workshops in Orange and Condobolin for Aboriginal people, staff, the general community and people with mental illness.

We experimented with a range of terrazzo tiles and Gabriella documented it step by step, so now we have a 'How To' guide and a process for sustainability. The test tiles were set up in a consultation forum for everyone to give feedback and there was a lot of enthusiasm.

'This'll work, this is good.' From there, we invited about eight or nine local artists, some well known and successful, who gave their time to work together to design the first stage of the work. (Three courtyards in the Lachlan Building, our new Mental Health inpatient facility.) The Lachlan River was chosen as the theme: the design followed the river (and surrounding birdlife and landscape), from Cowra to Lake Cargelligo.

The day after the pavers were put in… one of the patients said to the consultant, 'Oh you were here yesterday… you brought us our river.'

An important thing for us (again so we would have sustainability over time) was to get the clinicians – the nurses and allied health staff – involved. We went where the enthusiasm was. We have a ward here called Manara, which is a rehabilitation unit, and we organised a system for those patients to be a part of the project by making the frames. The staff got excited because those simple things like mixing concrete and hammering and screwing things in, create involvement and build the skills that enable reconnection. After that, the TAFE woodwork group at the O'Brien Centre got involved and the ball was rolling.

Word spread. Then the media got interested and we started getting calls from all sorts of people who wanted to come. For example, there's an organisation called Care West that supports people with dementia and those people would come down regularly. They loved doing all the detailed work that other people didn't have the patience for, so that was fantastic. We have had great feedback about their participation: for these folk, it wasn't just the interaction and the feeling useful but it was being part of something that is genuinely beautiful.

While the fifty-three pavers were being made, our cultural development consultant was negotiating with the project company who was laying the concrete in the courtyards. And when the finished pavers were delivered, the landscape team from the company laid them out.

The whole length of the Lachlan River now runs through those three courtyards and it is just beautiful. The day after they were put in, I was there with the consultant and one of the patients came up to him and said, 'Oh you were here yesterday… you brought us our river'.

So yes, it's just… it's just pretty special.

We've secured an Australia Council grant for another three stages: one is a similar terrazzo project, another is a weaving project in partnership with general health involving hanging sculptures for the void landscaped spaces (already underway); and the third is a terrazzo artwork for the Aboriginal Gathering Space near the new general hospital.

An important thing for us (again so we would have sustainability over time) was to get the clinicians — the nurses and allied health staff — involved. We went where the enthusiasm was.

The energy is building amongst the staff and supporters for visual art on the walls as well. People are now thinking about the possibilities for art right through the campus… 'We need a sculpture for that courtyard… the walls look too sterile… what about a big sculpture for the main entrance?' If you are doing really good community participation, it doesn't happen overnight. It's a long, slow process and process is just as important as the outcome. I guess one thing that we're really proud of is that even though it's been little steps, it's been little steps where the process has been quite impeccable. We are getting huge support now in terms of future commissions: there's trust and confidence and an interest in going further.

From that first day of thinking about building a path, we've found a beautiful and sustainable pathway. ✻

Two hats, one head

✻ Simone Gillam – *Arts and Mental Health Project Officer*

I first lived here in Port Lincoln when I was in my twenties. I was the arts officer for Eyre Peninsula Cultural Trust until I left to go to uni in Adelaide. Three years ago, I was back in Port Lincoln visiting friends when I saw this position advertised in the paper. Straight away I thought, 'That's my job.'

The first six months were pretty daunting. I set up the office from scratch and basically, just got out there and met as many groups as I possibly could. I more or less gatecrashed them actually! Any community organisation that I heard was doing anything to do with art and I was there.

I wear dual hats: I have my arts officer hat, and my mental health hat. People have embraced what we're trying to do and local artists are putting their hands up and are comfortable to be a part. Projects range from the challenging end of mental health, where people are actually recovering from a mental illness to the rewarding end, where the natural benefits of engaging with the arts is used as a tool for prevention and early intervention. Everyone from the community is invited to join our workshops and this philosophy of social inclusion has opened more doors and led to more activity.

So, for example, we had a ten-week program called *Arts Journey*, which was not only for people who identified with mental illness but for the broader community too. We sourced a really good local artist who had personally experienced postnatal depression and we had quite a lot of the local art group members coming along just to work with her. The program finished with an art exhibition for Mental Health Week. Some of the participants had never been to the gallery and there they were with their artwork on the walls and their friends and family present. Another project, *Buried Treasures*, taught positive parenting skills through journaling and lino printing. It was created for mothers at risk and had really strong community support. In my role, I can assist groups plan a project, access funding, find artists, and help fill out the forms. Once they get their projects up and running, I'm in the background. I'm there for any bumps along the way but, really, the group takes ownership.

Simone is an Arts and Mental Health Project Officer based in Port Lincoln. She is funded through a partnership between Country Arts SA and the Country Health SA Mental Health Services. Simone has been an artist, a teacher, a community arts worker, a small business owner and a yoga instructor.

From a workshop with "No Strings Attached Theatre of Disability" and "Urban Myth Theatre of Youth" and MIFSA (Mental Illness Fellowship SA).
From left to right back row: Sarah Baillie, Sonja Dorje, Fiona Graham, Peg McCann, Phyllis Jane (PJ) Rose, Christine Houweling. Front row: Glenn Hayden and Michelle Casserley.

PHOTOGRAPHY: SIMONE GILLAM

A lot of my role is linking people together and identifying opportunities. For example, the other night a play called *Red Sky Morning* came through town. I don't know if you've heard of it but it has a strong mental health message. It's about suicide in a regional setting and afterwards, I thought, 'If only I'd known about this. We should have had mental health brochures on all the seats!' So before the play hit the next town, I was able to contact *beyondblue* to get their brochures into the theatre. Being on the ground in an area means you can pick up on even tiny opportunities. If I was trying to run this job from a laptop and an office in Adelaide, there's so much I would miss. (You'd be surprised how much business is done in Woolies on a Friday afternoon!)

Here's a good story about how my role works. About six months ago, Country Arts SA funded Alex Broun to come over and run a scriptwriting workshop. I told everyone I knew: MIFSA (Mental Illness Fellowship South Australia), all the drama groups, writers, the staff at the local newspaper, the ABC reporter. And they all came. As a result of that, the people who came from MIFSA said they'd like to put on a mental health play. Three months later, I heard that 'Urban Myth' was in town to do a workshop with the kids at the school. I asked, 'Could you do one with MIFSA too?' They did and since then every Thursday, at the church hall, the group have been developing their own play. Recently, they had a grant approved (Arts SA) for professional workshops with 'No strings attached' theatre company and 'Urban Myth'. This will take it to the next level and there is talk they may even go on tour. So, that's the sort of thing that happens. It evolves: one little thing leads to another.

Sometimes in my role, I'm allowed to get my hands dirty. (Which is good for a frustrated artist!) This week I worked with a group and I showed them how to throw on a potter's wheel. It's probably my favourite part of the job: seeing someone discover this world for the first time.

That's where the buzz is… *

> *… I can assist groups plan a project, access funding, find artists… Once they get their projects up and running, I'm in the background. I'm there for any bumps along the way but really, the group takes ownership.*

Additional information

The Tree Project

ARTFORM
Stainless steel and copper gumtree

HEALTH ISSUE
Dealing with trauma

BENEFICIARIES
Communities affected by the Black Saturday bushfires

INITIATED BY
Blacksmiths from I Forge Iron online forum and from The Australian Blacksmiths Association (Victoria) Incorporated

ORGANISED BY
The Australian Blacksmiths Association (Victoria) Inc

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The community, especially those directly affected by the Black Saturday bushfires, VBRRA and Regional Arts Victoria

ARTISTS
Blacksmiths from Australia and around the world

PROJECT DATES
Commenced 14 February 2009

LOCATION
Strathewen

CONTACT
Amanda Gibson
M: 0431 795 099
E: 20years@abavic.org.au

dis|assemble dance project

ARTFORM
Contemporary dance with film, projections and drama

HEALTH ISSUE
Disability

BENEFICIARIES
People with disabilities, young people

INITIATED BY
Margot McCallum and Tim Podesta

ORGANISED BY
Murray Arts Inc

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Vic Health Community Participation Scheme
Australia Council Community Partnerships
Country Energy Sponsorship
Arts NSW
Arts Victoria
Regional Arts Fund
Regional Arts NSW
Regional Arts Victoria

NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Murray Arts Inc
Skills Innovative Training Enterprise (SITE)
Regional Academy of Performing Arts (RAPA)
HotHouse Theatre

ARTISTS
Tim Podesta, Artistic Director
Helen Newman, Filmmaker
Chris Harrison, Composer
Margot McCallum, Rehearsal Director

PROJECT DATES
'6' May 2009, 'embodied' October 2010

LOCATION
Wodonga, Victoria

CONTACT
Vivien Naimo
PO Box 7142 Albury NSW 2640
T: 02 6021 5034 M: 0409 454 119
E: info@murrayarts.org.au

Rock Hole Long Pipe

ARTFORM
Community arts including: costume design, sculpture, lantern making, music, acting, animation.

HEALTH ISSUE
Community health and wellbeing, Type 2 Diabetes.

BENEFICIARIES
Indigenous

INITIATED BY
Community Arts Network WA

ORGANISED BY
Community Arts Network WA,
Barb Howard, Project Manager

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Healthway, Wongutha Birni Aboriginal Corporation, FaHCSIA, The Rural Clinical School of Western Australia through the University of Western Australia, Notre Dame University and Community Arts Network WA.

ARTISTS
Lockie McDonald (Artistic Director), Poppy van Oorde-Grainger, Steven Aiton, Peter Docker, Alice Haines, The Hedge Bandits, Sanjiva Margio, Umberto Margio, Fiona de Garis, Peta Jurgens, Joe Mecurio, Melanie O'Donoghue, Annettee Stokes, Catherine Howard, Lorraine Sholson, Alison Dimer,Trevor Jamieson, Barry McGuire

PROJECT DATES
August 2007 – December 2008

LOCATION
Coolgardie and Kambalda, Western Australia

CONTACT
CAN WA
King Street Arts Centre
357-365 Murray Street Perth WA 6000
T: 08 9226 2422
Toll free: 1800 681 021
E: admin@canwa.com.au
W: www.canwa.com.au

Dust

ARTFORM

Theatre

HEALTH ISSUE

Diseases from exposure to asbestos

BENEFICIARIES

General population, especially workers in the building industry

INITIATED BY

Donna Jackson, Hubcap Productions

ORGANISED BY

Hubcap Productions with The University of Ballarat, Peter Matthews and Regional Arts Victoria

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Arts Victoria
Regional Arts Fund Strategic Initiatives
Incolink (joint enterprise of employer associations and unions in the building and construction industry)
CBus (Building Industry Superannuation Fund)

NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT

CFMEU, Regional Arts Victoria, The Univerity of Ballarat Arts Academy

ARTISTS

Donna Jackson, writer/director
Mark Seymour, composer
Malcolm McKinnon, filmmaker
Peter Matthews, choreography
Tracy Bourne, musical director
Robert McKenzie, production manager

PROJECT DATES

October – November 2008, October 2009

LOCATION

Geelong, Shepparton and Sale, Victoria

CONTACT

Donna Jackson
125 North Road Newport Vic 3015
T: 03 9399 2451 M: 0438 166 465
E: donna@hubcapproductions.com.au

Southern Ngalia Dance Camps

ARTFORM

Music and dance

HEALTH ISSUE

Substance misuse prevention

BENEFICIARIES

Indigenous (Warlpiri) young people, Warlpiri young women and older women/elders, The Warlpiri Nation

INITIATED BY

Coral Napangardi Gallagher, Nellie Nangala Wayne, Mona Napurrula Wheeler, Peggy Nampijinpa Brown, Gretel Taylor and Natalie O'Connor

ORGANISED BY

InCite Youth Arts and The Mt Theo Program

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund, The Kingston Sedgefield (Australia) Charitable Trust and The Teen Spirit Charitable Foundation, namaged by Perpetual Foundation, FaHCSIA Indigenous Women's Program, Australia Council for the Arts, The NT Government – ArtsNT

NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Mt Theo Program and InCite Youth Arts

ARTISTS

Yuendumu and Nyirrpi Senior Women and Younger Women

PROJECT DATES

April and October 2010. Planned camps for April and September 2011

LOCATION

Yuendumu and country, NT

CONTACT

Brett Badger
Operations Manager, Mt Theo Program
Yuendumu LOP NT 0872
T: 08 8956 4188 M: 0418 511 276
E: brett@mttheo.org

Drive

ARTFORM

Film making

HEALTH ISSUE

Young male driver fatality and suicide, mental health, drug and alcohol abuse.

BENEFICIARIES

Young people

INITIATED BY

Big hART through a National Community Crime Prevention grant

ORGANISED BY

Bronwyn Purvis & Telen Rodwell

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

AER Foundation, ANZ Foundation, Australian Broadcasting Commission JTV, Australia Council for the Arts, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FACSIA), Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTARS), Federal Attorney General's National Community Crime Prevention Project, Fosters in Community, Foundation for Young Australians, Headway North West Inc, Lighthouse Film Society, Regional Arts Fund, Screen Australia JTV, Screen Tasmania, Tasmanian Community Fund, Tasmanian Government Youth Advisory Services, Tasmanian Government (DHHS Gambling Support Program DPAC Community Capacity Building Program), Tasmanian Regional Arts

NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Ashley Youth Detention Centre, Burnie City Council, Burnie Drug & Alcohol Unit – Community Connections, Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation, Community Corrections – Youth Justice, Community Road Safety Partnerships, DHHS – Child Protection, DHHS – Devonport Community Health Centre, Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, General Practice North West, Hellyer Campus Tasmanian Academy, Journey Beyond Road Trauma, North West Residential Support Service, Road Trauma Support Tasmania, Start Program, Burnie Polytechnic, Tasmania Ambulance, Tasmania Fire, Tasmania Police, Wynyard-Waratah Council

ARTISTS

Written by Bronwyn Purvis, Scott Rankin, Telen Rodwell; Produced & Directed by Bronwyn Purvis, Telen Rodwell; Edited by Adrian Warburton, Vanessa Milton; Associate Producer/Researcher Stephanie Finn;

Cinematographer Telen Rodwell; Sound Designer Leah Katz; Original Score Composed by Dudley Billing, Telen Rodwell; Interactive Designer Natasha Dwyer; Web Designer Matthew Price; Sound Mix /Online Editor Michael Gissing; Project Consultant Catherine Marciniak; Titles Adrian Warburton; Photographer Lisa Garland; ABC Commissioning Editor Amanda Duthie; Screen Australia Creative Consultant Karin Altman; ABC Executive Producer Kath Earle; ABC Online Producer Dominic D'Souza; Contributing Interviewers Andrew Dixon, Aaron Heald, Brad Jones, Billy Mercer, Dillon Roberts, Jim Stedman; Contributing Writers Dillon Roberts; Assistant Editors Olivia Kent, Jordon Latoa, Ethan Haywood, Jim Stedman, Nathan Gelston; Composer/Assistant Sound Designer Paul Corfiatis; Second Camera Sarah Davies, Matt Davis, Bronwyn Purvis, Ethan Haywood, Billy Mercer, Kade Redmond, Dillon Roberts, Jim Stedman, Ellen Tsoi; Sound Recordists Billy Mercer, Stuart Thorne; Music by Leigh Anderson, Dun Dingo feat. J2ske, DJ Cutloose, Bad Kid, Jason Bakes, Dudley Billing, The Dudley Nightshades, Kim Bush, Ben Dundai, Deadeyehorizon, Orak Frohmader, Aaron Garwood, Cass Gladwell, Ava Pickett, Quirk the Gimp, Kade Redmond, Telen Rodwell, Brent Rowley, Jim Stedman, Julien Timmins, Tom Vincent, Luke Wood, Dawn Yates

PROJECT DATES
2007-2010

LOCATION
North West Coast, Tasmania

CONTACT
Telen Rodwell
PO Box 901 Devonport Tasmania 7310
T: 03 6423 4577 M: 0417 012 859
E: telenrodwell@hotmail.com

Beyond Roundabouts

ARTFORM
Photography and film making

HEALTH ISSUE
Young parenting issues

BENEFICIARIES
Young parents, GPs, youth workers, teachers, community members, teenagers, parents

INITIATED BY
Nikki Rabbitte, Youth Support Worker, Southern General Practice Network

ORGANISED BY
Nikki Rabbitte and Rewa Nolan

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Funded by the Community Partnership Program from the Australia Council for the Arts, and Housing NSW

NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Produced in 2008 in partnership with the Southern General Practice Network and the South East Arts Region

ARTIST
Rewa Nolan

PROJECT DATES
2007-2008. In 2011 MAD dvd resource is being trialled in General Practices across the Southern General Practice Network

LOCATION
Cooma, NSW

CONTACT
Rewa Nolan
870 Jones Plain Road
Shannons Flat NSW 2630
T: 02 6454 5150 M: 0416 183 724
E: rewa@rewanolan.com
W: www.rewanolan.com

Art and Sole

ARTFORM
Plaster casting and painting

HEALTH ISSUE
Foot care, mostly relating to prevention of complications from diabetes or renal disease

BENEFICIARIES
Indigenous community

INITIATED BY
Bronwyn Venning

ORGANISED BY
Bronwyn Venning and Aboriginal Health Team (Gawler)

NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Inkind support by Country Health SA Gawler

ARTISTS
The Aboriginal community

PROJECT DATES
May to July 2008

LOCATION
Gawler, South Australia

CONTACT
Bronwyn Venning
14 Scholz Avenue Nuriootpa SA 5355
T:08 8561 2100 M: 0419 855 641
E: bronwyn.venning@health.sa.gov.au

Through the looking glass

ARTFORM
Painting and writing

HEALTH ISSUE
Autistic Spectrum Disorder

BENEFICIARIES
Children with disabilities and their families

INITIATED BY
Melanie Jai and Queensland Arts Council Ontour Onexhibition

ORGANISED BY
Melanie Jai

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Queensland Arts Council Ontour Onexhibition and Regional Arts Development Fund

NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Professor Tony Atwood, Katrina Elliott Photography, Mia Kempel, Carl Brandes, Tricia Vacher

ARTISTS
Melanie Jai

PROJECT DATES
December 2009, ongoing

LOCATION
Gladstone, Queensland

CONTACT
Melanie Jai
M: 0438 780 489
E: melaniejai1@gmail.com
W: www.melaniejai.com

Western Desert Kidney Health Project

ARTFORM
Multiarts

HEALTH ISSUE
Kidney disease and diabetes

BENEFICIARIES
Indigenous people

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Western Desert Kidney Health Project Funding partners include: WA Healthway; WA Department of Culture and the Arts; Rural Clinical School of WA – University of Western Australia and Notre Dame University; Australia Council for the Arts Community Partnerships; Wongutha Birni Aboriginal Corporation; Department of Health and Ageing – Auspiced by Bega Garnbarringu Health Service; National Rural and

Remote Infrastructure Program – Department of Health and Ageing – Auspiced by Goldfields Esperance GP Network; BHP Billiton Nickel West; Goldfields Esperance Royalties for Regions Fund

DONATIONS
Lotterywest
JT Ried Foundation
Health Check – Medicare Income

LOCATION
Kalgoorlie, Western Australia

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Weaving Wellbeing

ARTFORM
Terrazzo, weaving

HEALTH ISSUE
De-stigmatising mental health, improving access to health services, building connections between health, mental health, arts organisations and the community

BENEFICIARIES
Community, emerging artists, health service

INITIATED BY
Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol Services, Western NSW Local Health Network

ORGANISED BY
Justin Byrne, Arts Consultant contracted to Western NSW Local Health Network

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Regional Arts NSW, Arts NSW, Australia Council, Orange Regional Arts Foundation, Western NSW Local Health Network

NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Western NSW Local Health Network, Western Plains Regional Development, Arts OutWest, Orange City Council (Orange Regional Gallery, City West Libraries), Orange Regional Conservatorium

ARTISTS
Gabriella Hegyes, Bev Coe and a wide range of community artists

PROJECT DATES
March 2010 to December 2011

LOCATION
Orange and region, NSW. The first project – terrazzo artworks were installed in the three courtyards of the Lachlan Building, one of the new mental health facilities on the Bloomfield Hospital Campus, Orange NSW

CONTACT
Meg Simpson
Sun Lodge, Bloomfield Hospital
Locked Bag 6008 Orange NSW 2800
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Two hats, one head

ARTFORMS
All art forms (this story – script writing and acting skills)

HEALTH ISSUE
Mental Health & Wellbeing

BENEFICIARIES
Community, artists

INITIATED BY
Mental Illness Fellowship SA

ORGANISED BY
Peg McCann, Sonja Dorja, Aileen Pluker, and Simone Gillam

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Arts SA, Country Health SA Mental Health Services, Country Arts SA, City of Port Lincoln, Mental Illness Fellowship SA (MIFSA)

NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Civic Hall Management Board

ARTISTS
Phyllis Jane (PJ) Rose, Glenn Hayden, Aileen Pluker, Alex Broun, Jo Coventry

PROJECT DATES
During 2010 workshops in script development and theatre skills. Theatre workshops with No Strings Attached Theatre of Disability and Urban Myth 1-3 February 2011

LOCATION
Port Lincoln, Eyre Peninsula, South Australia

CONTACT
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Glenorchy Moves

ARTFORM
Circus, contemporary dance, a'capella voice, sound art

HEALTH ISSUE
Active community, disability and sports

BENEFICIARIES
Whole community, disabled community members

INITIATED BY
Glenorchy City Council

ORGANISED BY
The Works Festival

FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Festivals Australia

NON FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Derwent Entertainment Centre

ARTISTS
Ruby Rowat, Adam Wheeler, Dean Stevenson

PROJECT DATES
March to May 2010

LOCATION
Glenorchy, Tasmania

CONTACT
Michael McLaughlin
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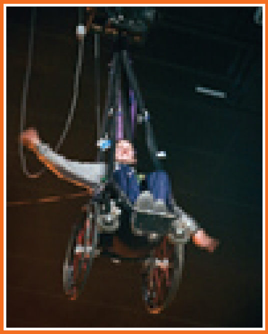

Back cover images:
Finale to Glenorchy Moves, 2010 Works Festival, Tasmania

PHOTOGRAPHY: LUCIA ROSSI

GLENORCHY MOVES

Glenorchy Moves was the centrepiece of The Works Festival's People's Day Celebration at the Derwent Entertainment Centre, Glenorchy on Sunday 23 May 2010. The aim was to explore ways in which arts and cultural projects could promote 'a physically active community'. The final outcome was a high energy performance celebrating sporting and physical movement skills. And the passions that drive them. *Glenorchy Moves* featured sports and sportspeople from across the community.

One of the distinct features of the show was the creative pairing of more marginalised sports activities (such as wheelchair basketballers) with mainstream sports; the pairing of older people's sports action such as tai chi with high action sports such as karate; and a broad mix of performance styles (including trapeze and silk artists).

… in working together we can provide not just creative outlets for people, but also support the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

JULIE BOYD, PRESIDENT, REGIONAL ARTS AUSTRALIA