

# The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability

29 - 30 November 2004, Melbourne Town Hall

## Conference Report



Photo: Marla Guppy Four Pillars in Paris

Economic Viability  
Environmental Responsibility  
Social Equity  
Cultural Vitality

Presented by



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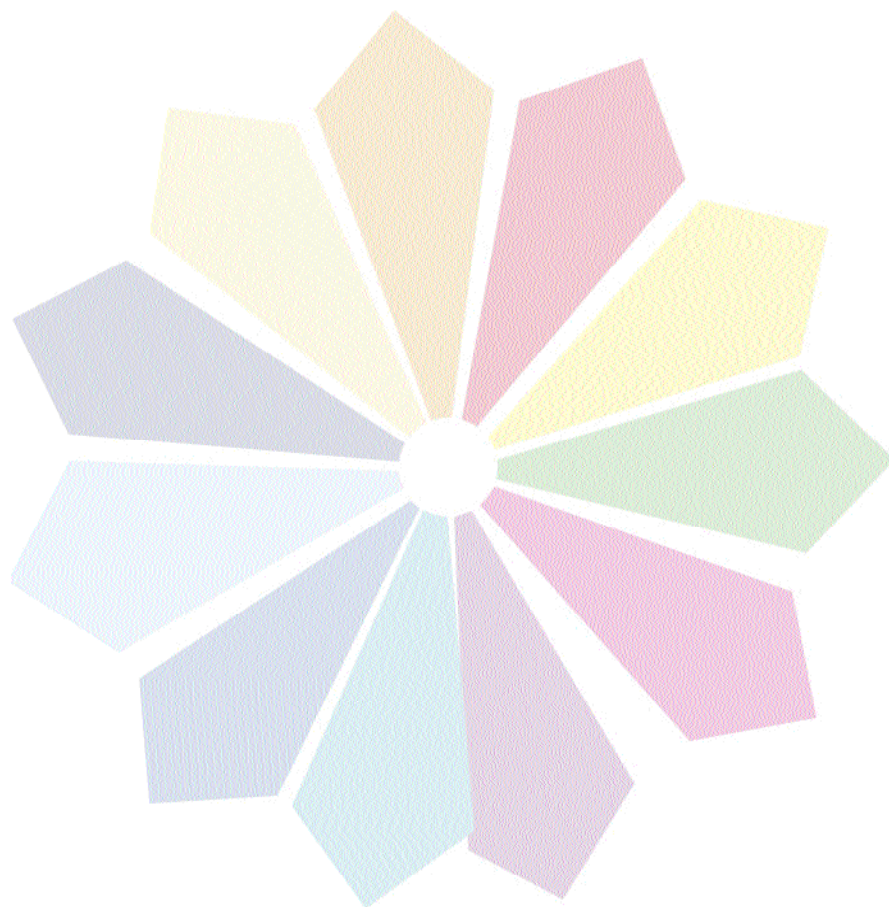
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## INTRODUCTION

### CULTURE, ENGAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

We convened this conference to explore ideas canvassed in our book, *The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's Essential Role in Public Planning* by Jon Hawkes. The book argues that the 'triple bottom line' model should be expanded to include 'cultural' along with economic, environmental and social factors in our planning for sustainability. It is an idea rapidly gaining currency around the world: governments in both Canada and New Zealand have adopted the four pillars model, and the idea is second nature to most non-western countries. In Australia, the City of Port Phillip is unique in its wholehearted adoption of this model.

Culture's place in the journey towards a sustainable society is increasingly acknowledged, but poorly understood. Advocates in government, corporate, academic and community sectors generally view the cultural dimension as a sub-set of the 'social' element of the triple bottom-line. There is also a view in public policy circles that 'governance' is the additional element in new planning models that aim to reorient us towards sustainable economies, societies and environments. A key task in this context becomes one of rebuilding of democracy itself – especially locally – to achieve sustainability. Implicit in this is the need to address difficulties governments (at all levels) have in effectively engaging their constituents – or communities. Action or participation in change relies on engagement.

Our view is that elevating cultural considerations to the same level as economic, social and environmental factors in the mindset and structures of public policymakers will help them to make effective and practical the linkages between all the 'bottom lines'. It is also vital, we believe, to closing the gap between the ideals and rhetoric of sustainability and the actions (at all levels) needed to achieve it. Recent global policy instruments such as Local Agenda 21 and the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and Human Development Report (2004) among many others, remind us that citizens and governments need to think and act in quite new ways; to focus on new priorities, new processes and new partnerships in order to shift from idealistic goals into practical actions for sustainable living.

Our view is that culture can play a unique and invaluable role in this immense challenge but it needs to be brought from the margins to centre stage in our efforts. Culture's diverse expression emanates from – and reaches into – the hearts, minds and souls of local communities – the very source of community values, identity and sense of purpose or meaning. These are essential ingredients to our capacity for genuine and deepening engagement with ourselves, with those around us (including those unlike us), as well with our local economy, environment and civic structures. Regenerating our increasingly fragile sense of civic 'engagement' is crucial to motivating and sustaining action for change by citizens and governments alike.

The sustainability challenge actually requires positive collective action by local communities informed by better understanding of globalisation, and fostered by local democratic processes and structures which citizens trust and can influence. The arts – at the very heart of culture – offer techniques and perspectives that uniquely can bridge the engagement gap, and enable communities to reflect deeply, critique vigorously, and respond energetically to important global and local issues.

Our local government pilot program 'Community Sustainability and Cultural Vitality' developed with the Local Government Community Services Association of Australia and RMIT's Globalism Institute aims to invest in and investigate this idea in a practical way in the next three years. The territory for us, and for others investing in cultural development strategies for sustainability, is new and filled with many more questions than answers. So, it is against this backdrop that we decided to convene this conference: to affirm the legitimacy of the questions themselves in the short term – and, longer term, to find the answers in collaboration with other sectors that are naturally converging as the sustainability takes hold.

We believe now is the time to deepen public discussion of Councils' role in nurturing cultural vitality – for its own sake first and foremost, but also in dynamic relationship with its other 'triple bottom line' responsibilities. Our purpose is not so much to resolve the question of how many bottom lines or pillars should underpin the new century public policy agenda but rather, to integrate distinctly cultural questions and approaches into the sustainability discourse as it affects communities and local governments. On behalf of the Cultural Development Network Board, members and friends, I thank you for your participation.

Judy Spokes  
Director, Cultural Development Network

*The Cultural Development Network is a small not for profit association generating new ideas and new connections for councils, communities and cultures. We work towards a society in which local communities, in all their diversity, have the resources and support they need to make and express their own culture. We advocate a stronger role for local government in nurturing cultural vitality and see the arts (at the heart of culture) as central to this vision. Visit our website: [www.culturaldevelopment.net](http://www.culturaldevelopment.net)*





## CONFERENCE THEMES

### THE FOUR PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY

- Economic Viability
- Environmental Responsibility
- Social Equity
- Cultural Vitality

### COUNCILS - COMMUNITIES – CULTURES

- A question of values - culture, inclusion, diversity, and democracy
- Creative approaches to nurturing community health and wellbeing
- Creativity and community engagement
- Indigenous culture - land culture and community
- Cultural policy and the 'triple bottom line' - the challenge of integration
- Interrogating the Arts / Culture split
- Place management, urban design and neighbourhood renewal
- Festivals and events - balancing cultural and economic imperatives
- Yesterday's news: animating heritage today



## PROGRAM

### MONDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2004

Start	End	Session Title & Presenter(s)
9:00	9:15	WELCOME Including welcome songs by Kutcha Edwards and Dave Arden Conference Facilitator: Sue Natrass A.O., Cultural Consultant
9:15	9:45	THE FOURTH PILLAR REVISITED - KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY Jon Hawkes
9:45	10:20	A GREAT, NEW, REVITALISING IDEA? Professor Donald Horne
10:20	10:50	THE GARMA FESTIVAL: AN INDIGENOUS CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE Joe Neparrnga Gumbula
11:15	11:45	CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NATIONAL AGENDA Jennifer Bott, CEO, Australia Council
11:45	1:00	THE FOURTH PILLAR IN THREE COUNTRIES Penny Eames, Managing Director, PSE Consulting Richard Holt, Cultural Vitality Project Officer, City of Port Phillip Judy Spokes (Cultural Development Network) on behalf of Yazmine Laroche, Cities Secretariat, Canada
2:00	2:10	PERFORMANCE FROM RAWCUS' PRODUCTION 'SIDESHOW' John Tonso & Nick Pappas
2:15	2:45	ALIVE TO STORIED LANDSCAPES: STORYTELLING, SENSE OF PLACE & SOCIAL INCLUSION Dr Martin Mulligan, Globalism Institute, RMIT University
2:45	3:15	NEIGHBOURHOODS TALKING: GRAFFITI, ART AND THE PUBLIC DOMAIN Dr Christine Dew, La Trobe University
3:45	4:15	SHIFTING GROUND: NEGOTIATING VALUES IN A GENTRIFYING COMMUNITY June Moorhouse, Moorhouse Consulting
4:15	4:45	RESTRUCTURING COMMUNITIES: ECONOMIC & SOCIAL POLICIES FOR A DIFFERENT SOCIETY Dr Onko Kingma, Director, Capital Agricultural Consultants Pty Ltd (CapitalAg)

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

5.00	6.00	Community Music, A Participatory Event 'Practicing What We Preach' Fay White, with the assistance of Jon Hawkes, will lead a session of group sound-making that will tangibly demonstrate the compelling attraction of voices in concert. Your voices. Location: Swanston Hall, Melbourne Town Hall
5.30		HereSpray: Children / Art / Graffiti / Public Space An Exhibition Preview and informal discussion A collaboration between street artists and young children produced by the City of Melbourne through its Community Cultural Development Program Location: City Library Gallery – 253 Flinders Lane, Melbourne

## TUESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2004

- 9:00 9:15 WELCOME AND REVIEW OF DAY 1  
Conference Facilitator: Sue Natrass A.O., Cultural Consultant
- 9:15 9:45 THE CULTURAL JOURNEY  
Anne Dunn, Consultant, arts, communities and organisations
- 9:45 10:15 THE SPACES BETWEEN THE PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY  
Marla Guppy, Cultural Planner, Guppy and Associates
- 10:15 11:00 FOUR PILLARS IN PRACTICE AT THE CITY OF PORT PHILLIP  
David Brand, Former Councillor, City of Port Phillip  
Sally Calder, Director, Community and Cultural Vitality, City of Port Phillip
- 11:00 11:15 'HEALTH IN PUBLIC SPACES' REPORT LAUNCH  
Dee Basinski Senior Project Officer, Mental Health and Wellbeing Unit, VicHealth  
John McLeod, author and evaluator

### PARALLEL WORKSHOP SESSIONS

- 11:30 12:45 Workshop 1: ANIMATING HERITAGE  
Room 1: Swanston Hall, Ground Floor  
Christine Burton, Senior Lecturer in Arts Management, Faculty of Business, University of Technology, Sydney  
Malcolm McKinnon, Artist  
Jared Thomas, Nukunu Peoples Council  
Dr Elaine Lally, Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney  
Tiffany Lee-Shoy, Regional Cultural Planning Coord., Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils  
Facilitator: Sarah Edwards, Coordinator Outreach Program, Museum Victoria
- 11:30 12:45 Workshop 2: THE CULTURE OF PLACES  
Room 2: Yarra Room, Second Floor  
Monir Rowshan, Living Streets Coordinator, Liverpool City Council  
Susan Conroy, Cultural Planner  
Craig Christie, No Mates Productions  
Gay Bilson, Creative Consultant, Eating the City Project  
Facilitator: Dr Martin Mulligan, Globalism Institute, RMIT University
- 11:30 12:45 Workshop 3: HEALTH AND WELLBEING  
Room 3: Supper Room, Third Floor  
Clare Meyers, Social Policy Officer, City of Wanneroo  
Dr Susan Thompson, Associate Professor, Faculty of the Built Environment, UNSW  
Linda Corkery, Landscape Architect and Head of School, Faculty of the Built Environment, UNSW  
Deborah Miles, Acting Program Manager, Regional Arts Queensland  
Glenda Masson, Senior Planning Officer, Community Renewal, Queensland Department of Housing  
Facilitator: Deborah Mills,
- 11:30 12:45 Workshop 4: ARTS / CULTURE: NEXUS AND SEPARATION  
Room 4: Condell Room, First Floor  
Marla Guppy, Cultural Planner, Guppy and Associates  
Matthew Ives, Community Arts Officer, Port Adelaide Enfield Council  
Suzy Stiles, Team Leader, Arts and Cultural Development, City of Marion  
Pat Zuber, Senior Advisor Cultural Services, Redland Shire Council  
Facilitator: June Moorhouse, Moorhouse Consulting
- 11:30 12:45 Workshop 5: ARTPLAY SITE VISIT / CITY OF MELBOURNE CULTURAL PROGRAMS  
Location: Off Site – meet at registration desk.  
Simon Spain, Manager, Artplay  
Morris Bellamy, Manager, Arts & Culture, City of Melbourne



## TUESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2004 - CONTINUED

- 1:45 2:45 Panel 1: FESTIVALS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT  
Room 1: Swanston Hall, Ground Floor  
Jason Cross, Artistic Director Big West Festival  
Jerril Rechter, Director, Footscray Community Arts Centre  
Tricia Cooney, Director/Performer Circus Solarus, Festival Entertainment  
Richard Bladel, Kickstart Arts Inc  
Facilitator: Lindy Bartholomew, Director, Regional Arts Victoria
- 1:45 2:45 Panel 2: MODELS OF INCLUSION (1)  
Room 2: Yarra Room, Second Floor  
Rosemary Joy, Access Arts Development Officer, City of Port Phillip  
Phil Heuzenroeder, Director, Club Wild  
Steve Payne, Director, The Torch Project  
Facilitator: Fiona Smith, Chairperson, Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria
- 1:45 3:55 Additional Workshop  
A COMMUNITY CENTERED MODEL FOR TOURISM  
Room 4: Condell Room, First Floor  
Frank Panucci, Rainwater Productions.  
Nat Trimachi, Rainwater Productions.
- 2:55 3:55 Panel 3: LOCAL GOVERNMENT - NEW THINKING  
Room 1: Swanston Hall, Ground Floor  
Jenny Merkus, Director, Social Development, Moreland City Council  
Jeanine Gribbin, Director, Creative Compass  
Jacquie Maginnis, Alderman, Glenorchy City Council & Health Promotion Coord., State Health Dept,  
Tasmania  
Judy Spokes, Director, Cultural Development Network  
Facilitator: Anne Dunn, Consultant, arts, communities and organisations
- 2:55 3:55 Panel 4: MODELS OF INCLUSION (2)  
Room 2: Yarra Room, Second Floor  
Professor Angela O'Brien, Head of School, Creative Arts, University of Melbourne  
Kiersten Coulter, Researcher, Department of Criminology, University of Melbourne  
Sharon Jacobsen, Community Theatre Worker,  
Natalia Valenzuela, Community Development Officer, Environment Team, City of Hume  
Facilitator: Jane Crawley, Team Leader of Cultural Development, City of Melbourne
- 4:30 5:15 Book Preview: 'Public Art Public Housing'
- Performance by 'The Voices of Atherton Gardens', a high rise community choir and Melbourne community choirs, *The Cleaners* and *Loose Arrangement*.

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

- 6.00 7.00 Aboriginal Heritage Walk  
Location: Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne (Meet at registration desk at 5.15 pm)  
The Aboriginal Heritage Walk is a rich and vibrant cultural experience. Participants are led by an experienced indigenous guide through Melbourne's magnificent Royal Botanic Gardens, which rest on a traditional camping and meeting place for the local custodians of the area - the Boonwurrung and Woiworrung people. On the way we will pass the wonderful new children's garden at the Botanic Gardens.



## SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

MONDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2004

### WELCOME

**Conference facilitator: Sue Nattrass A.O.**

Sue Nattrass AO has been working in the arts for forty years in capacities as varied as stage manager, company manager, lighting designer, director and artistic director. Sue worked at the Victorian Arts Centre from 1983 and was appointed General Manager in 1989. In 1996 she was appointed Artistic Director of the groundbreaking 1998 and 1999 Melbourne Festivals. She was appointed Artistic Director of the Adelaide Festival in 2001. Through the many projects to which she contributes Sue continues to play an invaluable part in the cultural life of Australia.

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### The Fourth Pillar Revisited - Key Questions about Cultural Sustainability

Jon Hawkes has been a vocal advocate for cultural sustainability. In this presentation he considers its potential and touches on some socio-political challenges and barriers to achieving it. He also considers the importance of culture and creativity as ends in themselves. How does the fourth pillar free culture from being shackled in service of the other pillars of sustainability?

Presenter: Jon Hawkes

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### A Great, New, Revitalising Idea?

Professor Donald Horne considers the nature of the productive life and the life of civic engagement; what are some of the difficulties, dangers, opportunities and challenges that are faced in defending and strengthening national and local cultural vitality? He affirms the need to address and understand such questions. However they should not stand in the way of 'getting on with' the business of cultural management and the stewardship of government at all levels.

Presenter: Professor Donald Horne

### The Garma Festival: An Indigenous Cultural Perspective

Regarded as one of Australia's most significant indigenous festivals, the Garma Festival attracts around 20 clan groups from north east Arnhem Land, as well as representatives from clan groups and neighbouring indigenous peoples throughout Arnhem Land, the Northern Territory and Australia. This presentation considers Garma, its cultural significance and value to the communities involved.

### Cultural Sustainability and the National Agenda

The Australia Council is Australia's peak arts organisation. How does the issue of cultural sustainability look from that perspective and how can national and local agendas be best aligned to achieve it?

Presenter: Jennifer Bott

\*\*\*

### The Fourth Pillar in Three Countries

Understanding what is meant by cultural well-being is a key to creating a peaceful and happy society that balances physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual well-being of its citizens. This paper will look at cultural well-being in the light of social, economic and environmental well-being and as a measure of the three other pillars of sustainable development. The paper will also note the dynamics involved in working with the arts and cultural sector, suggesting ways to celebrate all your community cultures. It will draw on the New Zealand Local Government Act 2002 which includes the need to promote cultural well-being as one of the purposes of local government.

Presenter: Penny Eames

In order to understand cultural sustainability as a component of planning and policy strategies it is important to first consider how the concept of sustainability can be applied consistently across the four pillars. This allows the interconnection of each of the 'four pillars' to be considered. It also allows the relationships between global, national, regional, metropolitan and local community perspectives to be better understood. In Australia the adoption of quadruple bottom line strategies is somewhat haphazard. There is a substantial level of awareness of and support for the concept but barriers appear to exist to its wide scale implementation. However state and local governments are increasingly adopting leadership positions in this regard, recognising the value of the fourth pillar as a driver of good public policy.

Presenter: Richard Holt

The Canadian government has embraced the value of vital, successful and creative cities. This presentation considers the strategies and outcomes of a bold policy position- the so-called 'New Deal for Canadian Cities' and the work of the Cities Secretariat that supports this agenda with a focus on all facets of sustainability, including cultural sustainability.

Presenter: Judy Spokes on behalf of Yazmine LaRoche

### **Alive to Storied Landscapes: Storytelling, Sense of Place and Social Inclusion**

Sense of place research enables us to explore how people form affective bonds that can turn spaces into places. However, certain stories can become dominant and restrictive and it is important to give voice to a diversity of place stories. This requires good storytelling skills, a commitment to social inclusion, and a willingness to negotiate complex and conflicting identities.

Presenter: Dr Martin Mulligan

\*\*\*

### **Neighbourhoods Talking: Graffiti, Art and the Public Domain**

This paper will reflect on the use, management and 'ownership' of public space by looking at the proliferation of graffiti in urban areas. Graffiti is a public expression of an arts subculture that is part of a municipality's diversity and contributes to its distinctive culture. Graffiti expresses a human engagement with the streets, parks and open spaces where communities meet, interact and express themselves to others.

Presenter: Dr Christine Dew

\*\*\*

### **Shifting Ground: Negotiating Values in a Gentrifying Community**

June Moorhouse will present the background to (and hot-off-the-press outcomes from) a project that grew out of two years research undertaken as part of a Community Cultural Development Board Fellowship. Exploring the felt sense of social and cultural change over the past 25 years in hours of interviews with members of the Fremantle community, June Moorhouse has teased out key issues, dilemmas, inconsistencies and heartfelt stories that will resonate in communities across Australia.

Presenter: June Moorhouse

\*\*\*

### **Restructuring Communities: Economic and Social Policies for a 'Different' Society**

We rely on our culture to give balance to our materialistic society. However, this strategy now lacks credibility as the direction of economic efforts is increasingly turning to our culture itself - cultural festivals, community events, the arts, sport and social and civic movements, are all becoming dominated by commercial enterprise. Culture increasingly

leads to questions about whether our society can survive with a much reduced government and cultural influence, and dominated by commerce as the main arbiter of our lives. New policy approaches are not likely to be evident within current systems since they largely involve us in collective solutions relying on cooperation, tolerance and sharing, difficult concepts to embrace in a society built upon individualism and competitiveness. We need to set out the conditions whereby citizens can participate in building more sustainable communities, but this means turning current policy on its head. Commitment to a different set of principles and actions directed at questioning our institutional base itself, can achieve this.

Presenter: Dr Onko Kingma

## **TUESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2004**

### **The Cultural Journey**

This presentation considers the transition, from a public policy point of view, through the movements and ideas that have informed the way organisations consider culture (community arts, cultural development, CCD, the arts business model etc) to the point where culture, broadly defined, becomes deeply embedded within the policy framework and in the psyche of public organisations. It raises the questions:- Where are we on this journey? What are the hurdles that remain? What is the prize at the end of the journey? (Or does the journey never really end?).

Presenter: Anne Dunn

\*\*\*

### **The Spaces Between the Pillars of Sustainability**

This paper presents a lively and informed perspective on the role cultural planning is taking in the changing landscapes of Australian culture; the neighbourhood, the city centre, the natural environment and the workplace. The realities of the triple bottom line approach are critically explored through an understanding of both the economic and planning imperatives that set the scene for cultural change. Cultural planning projects in significant cultural environments including the constructed and natural environment of Botany Bay, the reinvented neighbourhoods of Sydney's suburbs, the changing economic landscapes of industrial cities and rural towns are explored. This paper looks critically at the role of cultural planning as a driver of social, economic and environmental change. It argues that, in the real work of cultural change, it is the spaces and interactions between the 'pillars of sustainability' that articulate the capability of the cultural landscape - a landscape that is increasingly deconstructed and fluid.



### **Four Pillars in Practice at the City of Port Phillip**

The City of Port Phillip has embraced a four pillars approach to planning that is central to every decision the organisation makes. This has placed culture, front and centre, as a core part of the organisational philosophy. How has this integrated approach to sustainability impacted on the operation of the organisation and the Port Phillip community?

Presenters: Sally Calder and David Brand

\*\*\*

### **Animating Heritage**

All aspects of culture are informed by layers of heritage and by how those layers are understood and valued. How can the stories and experiences that make up the heritage of our communities be harnessed to strengthen communities today?

Presenters: Christine Burton, Malcolm McKinnon, Jared Thomas, Dr Elaine Lally and Tiffany Lee-Shoy

Facilitator: Sarah Edwards

\*\*\*

### **The Culture of Places**

Each place has its own culture, or rather mix of cultures, that contributes to its difference and to the sense its people have of themselves. Presenters involved in projects that consider the cultural importance of place discuss how the places we identify with contribute to our community well-being.

Presenters: Monir Rowshan, Gay Bilson and Susan Conroy  
Facilitator: Martin Mulligan

\*\*\*

### **Health and Wellbeing**

The link between cultural engagement and health has been recognised and is now the basis of much public health policy. This session looks at how this critical relationship works in practice to achieve healthier communities.

Presenters: Clare Meyers, Dr Susan Thompson, Linda Corkery, Deborah Miles and Glenda Masson  
Facilitator: Deborah Mills

### **Arts / Culture: Nexus and Separation**

The fourth pillar discussion challenges public administrators to move beyond an arts focused view of cultural policy. Nevertheless art and creativity remain important aspects of culture and extremely useful tools for engaging people and communities. This session considers the complex relationship between art and culture.

Presenters: Marla Guppy, Matthew Ives, Suzy Stiles and Pat Zuber

Facilitator: June Moorhouse

\*\*\*

### **Artplay Site Visit / City of Melbourne Cultural Programs**

This is an offsite session. Conference delegates are invited to tour the ArtPlay facility for children at Birrarung Marr, Melbourne's new riverside parkland, and to learn about this and other cultural initiatives of the City of Melbourne.

Presenters: Simon Spain and Morris Bellamy

Facilitator: Kim Dunphy

\*\*\*

### **Festivals and Community Involvement**

Festivals can be a fantastic way to engage communities. They can also be fraught with problems and risks. So what makes a good community festival and, when a festival really works, what are the rewards for the community involved?

Presenters: Jason Cross, Jerril Rechter, Tricia Cooney, Richard Bladel

Facilitator: Richard Holt

\*\*\*

### **Models of Inclusion (1)**

Cultural policies that do not create opportunities for all people fail to acknowledge the diversity that strong and healthy cultures possess. This is the first of two workshops that considers the creative projects of people who may not have access to many 'mainstream' cultural opportunities.

Presenters: Rosemary Joy, Phil Heuzenroeder and Steve Payne  
Facilitator: Fiona Smith

### **A Community Centred Model for Tourism**

Want to find the right 'fit' between community and tourism? Leading ccd practitioners Nat Trimarchi and Frank Panucchi of Rainwater Productions talk about their work developing community tourism in Australia. With the assistance of the Australia Council, Nat has developed a model that has the potential to expand work and business opportunities for people employed in all sectors that are looking to engage with tourism. It is applicable to, and has potential to produce economic benefits for all communities with particular relevance to regional areas.

Presenters: Frank Panucci and Nat Trimarchi of Rainwater Productions.

\*\*\*

### **Local Government - New Thinking**

Local government, because of its direct association with communities, is uniquely placed to deliver on the challenges of cultural sustainability. This session considers ways in which local government is introducing new thinking in order to create a sustainable future.

Presenters: Jenny Merkus, Jeanine Gribbin, Jacque Maginnis and Judy Spokes  
Facilitator: Anne Dunn

\*\*\*

### **Models of Inclusion (2)**

Cultural policies that do not create opportunities for all people fail to acknowledge the diversity that strong and healthy cultures possess. This is the second workshop looking at cultural inclusiveness and engagement.

Presenter: Kiersten Coulter, Sharon Jacobsen and Natalia Valenzuela  
Facilitator: Jane Crawley



## FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY

### Summary of Day 1 Papers by Sue Nattrass

The first speaker for the day, Jon Hawkes, felt that art is being used as an instrument instead of being equal in value to the social environmental and economic factors. He felt that cultural policy and arts policy are being seen as the same thing, when they're really two very different things and that we need both of them. That we need to nurture the creative capacities of ordinary people, not just make them consumers of professional work. We actually need that participation. He also stated very clearly that we need to facilitate the fulfillment of human beings by nurturing their creativity and that professional arts is really only half the picture, there's the rest of the population as well. Because of the methods of funding, communities are having to work to other people's agendas. We must look at that, and with a long term view.

Sustainability has become tied to conservatism in Jon's eyes, and that was something that struck a bit of a note with me. He commented that education should be unleashing creativity and that we need to remind all levels of government that kids need to learn to love life. I certainly agree with that.

And he asked the question: Can bureaucracies change their ways? The bureaucrats among you may think you don't need to, but it's certainly an issue for us to discuss.

Joe Neparrnga Gumbula told us about the Garma Festival, reminding us of the examples of Aboriginal culture and how it has been sustained or regained. Jennifer Bott told us sadly that Utopia is not in this world and that we need some other options. She believes that anxieties rule our daily lives and that therefore we are not a happy nation or a healthy nation, that happiness is elusive. People are disengaging and getting more inward looking. Certainly that issue of individualism was raised by a couple of other speakers.

She commented that we must sustain our values as people, our culture, identity and sense of place, describing how, in New Zealand, culture has been legislated into the Local Government Act. Culture is at the heart of the building of communities and real sustainability boils down to having a strong feeling of who we are. Indigenous people have held onto the cultural identity and this shows real sustainability against huge odds. And it is an intrinsic part of the identity of indigenous people. You'll notice that some themes are being mentioned again and again.

She stressed that culture underpins the other three pillars, as opposed to sitting beside the other three pillars. And she sees it as the missing link when things don't work. There are many sorts of Australian identities and they change with the stories of the communities. The indigenous model of sustainability is both cultural and commercial, in Jennifer's view. That indigenous people share the good and the bad times, and maybe we could learn from this.

She said that creative change needs to be proactive. Questions that need to be asked are, what needs changing? And what do we want to save at any cost? That we need to use plain English to get the message across and emphasize action not words. She talked about the need for better communication and marketing. And at the end she summed up, culture matters. It provides identity, creates space for other ideas. It can inspire and show us new ways of seeing and doing things. So then she thought that maybe Utopia was a space to fill with a sense of being.

We then got to the session on the Four Pillars in Three Countries, with Penny Eames from New Zealand leading the discussion. She said that culture is driven by voluntary and involuntary forces. The New Zealand Local Government Act's role is to promote social, economic and environmental culture and well-being, not to actually do it, but to promote it. We should celebrate unique identities and every culture and cultural identity is different. I loved the comment of hers that Bhutan measures the Gross National Happiness. I think that's the most wonderful concept, though some of the measures might be quite low, I think. She emphasised, as did others, that we must distrust the imposition of an artist or an arts project on a community, that impetus has to come from the ground up and not be imposed. Culture is a catalyst that brings a spark that makes a change. Culture is our identity. It is the way we are. It's the way we express ourselves.

Richard Holt began at the end and ended up at the beginning, I think! I don't know how he wrote that. He must have gone loopy doing it. He said, at the beginning which was really the end, that municipal governments have taken the lead in the Fourth Pillar concept. There's more to do, but there's some really good signs that things are happening and that the Fourth Pillar is shifting us towards cultural sustainability because in all the decisions, culture is part. The Fourth Pillar brings culture into the mainstream. A good life is the goal of government. This is the future.

Indy Secker, who was speaking for Yvonne Laroche from Canada, gave an overview of cultural sustainability in Canada.



fund communities so that they can make decisions themselves, rather than that imposition process that others mentioned. The rural secretariat they have is important because local and rural areas are different.

Another lovely comment: 'Culture is the poetry of Canadian cities'. Sustainability is the process of change to be consistent with future and present need. In Canada, they now have a model of agreements between three levels of government. Maybe that's something that levels of government here could look at? In Ottawa, people actually marched in protest against cuts to the arts. Has anyone ever seen a march in Australia for that? You certainly don't see anyone other than the profession itself marching for the arts.

And what do Canadians want their communities to look like? They want to have the freedom to determine how their communities should look. They also don't want imposition. Dr Martin Mulligan told us that every place has its stories. Aboriginal people have a real sense of place and we could work on our own whitefella dreaming with more respect for place ourselves. He quoted David Malouf in saying, 'Don't describe a place, mythologise a place'. I think he brought those points out very well in his speech.

We can't leave a sense of place to those who practice exclusion. We need to give voice to a diversity of place. And he gave examples of very rich stories of Daylesford and Broadmeadows and of Port Phillip fighting to maintain its social diversity. Gentrification has actually meant the resegregation of communities who have known social diversity in the past. I am someone who moved into St Kilda in 1981, when my house cost \$32,750! There has been a touch of gentrification since then! And certainly I have noticed in our street that the diversity has disappeared. And this has made for bland communities in some areas. We need the local idiosyncrasies.

In the question and answer session, someone pointed out that in our national stories, there are often Aboriginals present, but we have never heard who they are and or heard their sides of the stories. So we need to challenge those old myths. Other stories like that of the TV show Sea Change, is one that can suffocate, so we also need to challenge them. And stories have to be able to co-exist and give us multiple identities.

Dr Christine Dew told us to get to know our neighbourhood, which diminishes the fear of the unknown. And she obviously knows her neighbourhood inside out! She said that graffiti tells about the activity of the community. The bravery, rebellion, the artistry, the communicating. Those young people are really showing us how, and they make public spaces their own. They tell us about the types of community we are. And tellingly, graffiti is 'art in the wrong place', in her view. But it does get the neighbourhood talking. But then there was the bit of graffiti in the toilet, which I laughed heartily about, and I am sure others did too. 'Let's leave pessimism for better times'!

June Moorhouse told us her story of her project in Fremantle- a project for her Community Cultural Development Fellowship, which was in four stages; consultation, writings, exhibition and then the Community Conversations. Four and half years ago, she felt very disconnected from her community after years of feeling connected, so she hoped those stories would help generate ideas about what she could do to reconnect. And I think that she found those. Interestingly, she felt that the impact of America's Cup was that nine years of gentrification was squashed into three years. That would be a pretty aggressive and damaging thing to a community! She interviewed fifty people with unique stories, though there were commonalities of themes. But the questions she asked them were, what mattered to them and how do they live.

They responded that, although they had commonalities in what they really loved about it, that the place was changing and prejudices are fuelling divisions again. And the wonky back lanes were brought up. I thought that question of wonky bits defining a sense of place was an interesting comment. And the things that she and the community gained through the process was that it started a different sort of conversation in Fremantle. The gap between the rhetoric and reality and tolerances was shown up. Some young people were able to be engaged, and they felt it was very important to feel listened to. And she personally learned to stay true to her own process, and to write and talk and listen lovingly. She found that people are actually hungry for straight talking and listening.

Dr Onko Kingma commented that we're inclined to pigeon-hole culture and consider it as an add-on to material well-being, rather than having it as an integral part. The antithesis of a sustainable society if culture is enforced and managed. So sustainability if it is forced, will disappear. He believes that we are being bulldozed into the dominance of materialism, but we need to balance that with culture. He spoke of the dangers in having materialism dominant, because it erodes the base for a strong diverse culture. And our governments believe that our culture is not under threat, whereas he would argue that material society as a threat to our culture. He sees community development as inclusive and caring, whereas a market economy that

whole corporate and business market economy mentality is a threat to our community and culture.

He feels that, in future, our society will be pushed into collective solutions which is a good thing because individuals solutions won't help. So individualism in the long term will not be successful. He believes that culture is under threat by being commodified, as experiences change the product and the market in which it is being consumed.

He also said that the restructuring of the vision for rural communities won't work through a business plan. I know that no vision will work through a business plan! You'll end up with a business secular solution to a sacred issue. And he talked a lot about the balance between secular and sacred, and the need to reunite the day to day secular with the unique ability for creativity to occur.

### Summary of Day 2 Papers by Sue Nattrass

This morning we heard Anne Dunn tell us about her goals of acknowledging and respecting cultures and the five I's that she uses, which are

- identity
- inspiration
- independence
- interdependence and
- ideals by which she lives

Some terrific ideals!

She talked about culture in all sectors being core to what organisations do. We then went through the decades and I found this fascinating because my career in the arts began in 1962, so I understood exactly what she was on about. I see it from a different perspective, because I was involved with different things, but I found it fascinating.

Between 1965 and 1975, the public servants were serving the public- do we remember that? Artists had nothing to do with what was going on with the government. Artists had nothing much to do as I recall, as there was no Australian culture, or that was seen on any main stages anyway.

In 1975 artists began demanding attention. Arts became the medium for awakening protests and rebellion. Arts became the way to empower people to have their own voice, a very important time. It was the time of the beginning of the breakdown of the Westminster system and there were the beginning of political connections between politics and the public service.

In 1985-95, we began valuing the differences. Indigenous and non-indigenous people, and people of non-English speaking backgrounds were listened to and respected each other through the arts. And people with disabilities found a new audience. The public service at that stage was being rationalised and reduced and we saw the beginning of the rise of the CEO. And for the first time, there were actually arts officers in local councils.

1995-2005 was seen by Anne as the building of communities time. And I think that the last two days are proving this. Arts became a vehicle for local government to build stronger communities. Arts became a way for small towns to build new economies, arts became a way for people to be healthy, and arts became a way for governments to solve problems. She talked about the Cultural Development Network's project with six communities who are tackling non-art problems using artists. These projects will take place over the next three years. The artists will be placed in the department where the problem is, not in the arts departments, and I think that will make a big difference to the outcomes.

She talked about the rise of caring for the environment and the planet. The question of resources and our responsibility for them and the social and cultural issues associated with that. She had another go at the rise of CEOs, (interestingly, she was a CEO herself), and the distrust of politicians that has grown over the last decade. The bit that horrified me was her point about World Trade Organisations having increasing power because governments are being sued by corporations because of the use or misuse of the World Trade agreements. So governments actually have less control, while corporations have more. So we are looking for leaders, and politicians are not the leaders, so the rise of the CEO has come about. But CEOs are answerable to others, but mostly to corporations, not the community. And we need leaders who are answerable to communities.

She thinks that artists are 'in' now, though not in charge, because bosses don't share our values. And to me, values are pretty well everything. I actually had a period working as a CEO where I didn't share one value with the Chairman of my Board. It was a very very difficult time, for both of us, I have to say. But also for the organisation, and it was in my view, very destructive. So I

stand for.

Towards the future: she looked at 2005-2015, when the arts become a normal part of organisational life, when cultures are acknowledged and small becomes beautiful. A time when creativity is valued above all and we have a common purpose.

Marla Guppy talked about the spaces between the pillars of sustainability and the fluidity of interaction in the spaces between the pillars. And really she was referring to the people of low income, the young people, the ethnic groups and the newly arrived. And the dialogue and fluidity between them filling those spaces between the pillars. She talked about the Living Streets projects which I know is picked up in one of the seminars this afternoon. She talked about the environment as being in the state of becoming. It is not yet an identifiable cultural identity in Liverpool.

She told us about Bonnyrigg that had strong and seductive cultural industries as a result of the religious parcels of lands that were handed out, the cultures that grew up around those churches, mosques and other religious buildings. About the working class communities in those areas and the multi-ethnic ethnicity with the dominant Vietnamese culture. She talked about Botany Bay where work on social values was being done but the council didn't want a community process. Bit of a terrifying thought, isn't it!

She talked about the very robust and ascendant economy in Botany Bay. This was making it hard to position robust sustainable culture, as it was an area of second, third and fourth generation ethnicity. This brought about tensions with the older profile of the cultural industry, between those and the new sorts of cultural industries. She felt it was hard to hold the integrity of the local community against the global directions for the area set by the city and the state. So the local was being dominated by other directions.

She commented that the Metro Strategy of Sydney doesn't mention culture. I truly can't believe that in this day and age, but I suppose I am naïve or optimistic. As a planner she has to argue for the fourth pillar all the time. For cultural identity, for cultural resources and for cultural sustainability. And I am sure that she is a person who does that very well.

Then we had the presentation of the four pillars in practice in the City of Port Phillip from Sally Calder. She told us about the St Kilda's Edge project and the methodology around the four pillars that was used for a framework of a new corporate plan, to try and embed the fourth pillar into all of their work. She said that they defined a goal in each pillar, like cultural vitality, and embedded cultural vitality into all their decision making and operational systems.

They had rituals and symbols and hosted a Cultural Vitality Symposium, but the impact was mostly upon the employees of Port Phillip. In fact, they got done what they wanted to, but that much at least was achieved, which was terrific. And they appointed a person three days a week to question and jolt ideas and to keep bringing them back to the fourth pillar.

And then there was David Brand who spoke to us from the politician's point of view, which I found fascinating. His view was that a city must be economically sound, deliver the social basics and maintain infrastructure, and also be environmentally responsible, before you can even begin to think about culture. Now that view could be argued for and against- that people really care about the cultural realm, at least in Port Phillip, but I am sure in all cities. And this was shown by the fight to retain the Espy Hotel. Then he told us about the Vineyard Bar that was supposed to be demolished but in fact was preserved because the decision was based on cultural factors. It was a 'wonky bit' that in fact meant that culture overcame the commonsense position. Because the commonsense position was to pull it down.

He also said that long processes can be corrosive. And there's no doubt that processes can be long in time in bureaucracies. He felt that the councillors were the ones who were actually the bridge between the workers in the council and the public. These parties are often at odds with each other because of the time things were taking. And he felt that real cultural vitality produces clashes. Social pillars sort things out equitably.

*(Ed's note: Sue's summaries of all the Workshops and Panel sessions appear in the last section of the report)*

And to finish, what I've gathered from the last couple of days is that we now believe we are at a stage where we can go forward. We've come to some understanding of what we've been trying to put our heads around for some time. This is the challenging time, where we have to go forward with new ways of working together. We must bring some of the things we've learned into a wider group of communities.

This conference was about listening to each other. Thankyou to the organisers and all those involved.





## PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S REPORT

### REFLECTIONS ON THE CONFERENCE

#### *Building a Foundation for New Cultural Thinking*

**Richard Holt**

I've been asked to make a few observations about the conference program. Rather than relying on an analysis of individual conference components I think a few observations about the progress of the fourth pillar conversation are important. Though it is clear that this is a dialogue in its infancy, the conference underscored the strong momentum that is developing around it. Cultural sustainability is now a policy discussion that is firmly embedded within the global aspiration for good government. The Fourth Pillar Conference provided an opportunity to inspire and challenge participants to become advocates for cultural sustainability within their own organisations.

The conference program reflected the breadth of the conference brief, exploring the relationship between cultural engagement and healthy, fair, equitable and lively society through a range of lenses (including local and central government, the economy, social theory, heritage and artistic creativity). The result, on the whole, was a lively discussion that enabled cross-pollination of ideas from different perspectives.

Though the drive and energy of so many committed arts professionals made the conference a success, one core challenge in regard to fourth pillar thinking is to ensure that the principles of cultural sustainability are applied broadly and that the critical link between arts and culture is not made at the exclusion of other contributors to a rich cultural life. In some circumstances this may require the relinquishing of a level of autonomy for the arts within cultural policy development, however the greater prominence given to culture as a whole should more than compensate.

Presenters showed a willingness to negotiate this, sometimes difficult, terrain. Over the course of the two days, prompted by the considered insights of presenters, I became much more aware of the need to acknowledge a continuum of cultural development – a rich history of practices that, by whatever name, have aimed to enrich the lives of people and, in doing so, to make communities stronger. I do strongly believe that fourth pillar thinking extends previous approaches to culture. Most importantly it requires people working across policy areas to consider culture. This represents a major leadership opportunity for cultural professionals and organisations - one that the Cultural Development Network has tackled enthusiastically.

Thanks are due again to all the program participants. Gathered here, their thoughts are a significant contribution to an important discussion. There are many things that the organising committee have learned through the development and presentation of this conference. At times we may have been over ambitious and timing over-runs caused some distraction and inconvenience. In spite of this and our attempt to cover as much of the relevant territory as possible, there were also some gaps that emerged in the conference content. And opportunities for discussion did not materialize as readily as we may have hoped. Nevertheless The Fourth Pillar Conference was an overwhelming success judged both by the feedback from participants and by the quality of the content. Importantly this conference is much more a beginning than an end. There will be more opportunities to further the impact of fourth pillar ideas, at which time the passions of this event will form part of a strong foundation upon which new attitudes and approaches to culture and society might take root.

Richard Holt  
Programming Coordinator  
The Fourth Pillar



## THE FOURTH PILLAR REVISITED: KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

*Let Them Eat Culture, or Here Comes Another Bandwagon*

Jon Hawkes

This presentation has a title. I've called it 'Let Them Eat Culture or Here Comes Another Bandwagon'. By which you'll realise that I'm not happy. I should warn you right now that I'm going to be curmudgeonly. It's been a while since I could claim to be an angry young man – this talk will expose me as a grumpy old fart. As usual, I will overstate my case, but only so as to balance the hyperbole on the other side of the scales. I hope that my spleen venting will help you to look both ways.

I'm not happy because, at least to this point, we, the agents of the pleasure principle, have failed. Elections here and in the USA have demonstrated that the forces of grey fundamentalism have mustered their polemics much more effectively than those of us that wish for a world inspired by joy, hope, love, trust and all those other mushy ideas.

Still, one election does not the apocalypse bring, and we mustn't discount the value or the power of the mushy ideas just because of one or two setbacks. But how is it that the values we promote – values that seem so obvious, so simple, so incontrovertible, so uncontentious – turn out to be none of these things?

Apart from the fact that, by promoting them, we are threatening the control of a gang who are control obsessives, I think we consistently make a tactical error. This is the error of debating from **within** the conceptual frameworks of the structures that are the cause of the problem.

I hope that I'll be able to demonstrate some of the consequences of this error. It's three and a half years since *The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability* was released. Have things changed much since March 2001?

- cultural policies have proliferated
- governments of all hues and levels have begun to recognise the importance of this culture thing
- there's something approaching full employment for cultural development workers
- more people are singing and dancing together than since the advent of television
- there is a growing recognition of the power of art to address social problems ...

Sounds like things are moving along quite nicely. But in quite a different direction than the one proposed in my slim volume. Let me remind you what I was suggesting:

Just as the social, environmental and economic impacts of initiatives that affect society need to be evaluated, so too do their **cultural** impacts. Not taking into account the relationship between planning and values is both silly and dangerous. We need normalised methods of dealing with this problem. Developing a cultural 'lens' through which ALL initiatives can be viewed is a way to achieve this.

The key issues that a cultural perspective could address include

- levels of **participation** in the development of an initiative,
- its **authenticity** in relation to the values of those upon whom it will impact and,
- the likely effect on the **vitality** of affected communities

That's the kernel of what I argued for in the *Fourth Pillar of Sustainability*. I'm not aware of this approach to culture having been taken up anywhere. Instead, the major development in the last few years has been the growing awareness that art can be used as a tool of social policy. That is, art as instrument, as a medium for the achievement of government policies in areas as diverse as (to quote from the subtitle of the recent publication, 'Art and Wellbeing') Health, Ecologically Sustainable Development, Public Housing and Place, Rural Revitalisation, Community Strengthening, Active Citizenship, Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity.

Sounds like a miracle cure, a universal panacea. Twenty years ago the 'arts industry' was claiming for itself similar capacities in relation to wealth creation – cities would be transformed through the arts, 'arts led recoveries' were the flavour of the decade. That brand of rhetoric proved unsustainable, so now a new wave of hyperbole is upon us. And likely, may I say, to be equally unsustainable.

changing. But art in the hands of the Social Engineer is another matter entirely, and apart from anything else, begs an enormous number of really important questions.

What are these questions? Here are a dozen:

- What's the difference between cultural policy and arts policy?
- Why do we persist in using the 'arts and culture' phrase?
- Does riding a bandwagon always end in a fall?
- What's happened to community art?
- How do we break the commodity consumption cycle?
- Is art becoming the new age opium?
- Must we persist with the project model?
- Can the words 'access' and 'participation' be un-weaseled?
- Is sustainability all it's cracked up to be?
- What's happening to our children?
- Is art a pathway to happiness?
- Can bureaucracies change their ways?

I'm sure that many of these questions will be addressed directly or indirectly throughout this conference. But this is my chance to get in first, so I'm not going to miss the opportunity.

### **What's the difference between cultural policy and arts policy?**

At the moment, absolutely none. Which is terrible because we badly need both – and heritage, library, education, communications, sports, recreation and public space policies. That is, policies that focus on the main areas of values maintenance and production in our society. The fact that the policies that go under the title of 'cultural' don't address the most significant areas of cultural production, namely education and communications, inevitably renders incoherent any claim about the important function of culture in our society. As unfortunate, is the fact that most of what goes under the name of cultural policy is arts (and heritage) policy – and bad policy at that. Bad because, by and large, it focuses on supporting the activities of professional artists, developing audiences/markets for their products RATHER THAN recognising, valorising and nurturing the productive and creative capacities of ordinary people.

That is, it reinforces the notion of cultural production as a specialist function to be undertaken by professional cultural producers while relegating the rest of us to being consumers of their products.

As well as being bad arts policy, the documents that go under the name of cultural policy undermine the potential to get culture on to the agenda in a meaningful way. Naming this stuff cultural policy removes our capacity to interrogate ALL public actions from a cultural perspective: to ask how all policy impacts on participation, authenticity and vitality.

Why do we persist in using the 'arts and culture' phrase? I have absolutely no idea. What I do know is that it is enormously confusing. Are they two separate concepts? Are they different names for the same thing? Are they equal or is one subordinate to the other? Does putting them together offer some sense of a discrete concept that can be distinguished from other concepts? In the current usage of the phrase, none of these questions is answerable. It's a nonsense concept and needs to be thrown out now. And now the mix is becoming even more confused with the introduction of 'creativity'. Foreign pundits are being imported to expound on their theories of the 'creativity led recovery' and policy makers are having to grapple with yet another fuzzy buzz word that promises much more than it can possibly deliver.

### **Can these words be given useful meanings?**

I think so, and so here's an attempt:

- **creativity**: the universal human capacity to explore the 'non-logical' areas of our existence and experience and to make intuitive, imaginative connections.
- **art**: the processes and results of transforming these 'illuminations' into tangible and intangible forms.
- **culture**: the social production of meaning.

Described like this, it would seem reasonable to link 'art' and 'creativity' as a suitcase concept, but clearly 'culture' is an idea that encompasses far more processes than those covered by the first two.

I've called culture, 'making sense'. In this context, art describes the processes of making sense through non-logical means, that is,

Looked at in this way, one can see that the processes we describe as art are an essential counterfoil to those we think of as rational. Without a healthy balance between imagination and plod, we'll be caught in the web of the engineers and the accountants forever.

### Does riding a bandwagon always end in a fall?

Yes. Opportunism may provide short-term victories but it always buggers you up because, ultimately, the truth will prevail: art-making has its own momentum, and its results are just as likely to be destructive as they are constructive. Many of the connections that art will make are pessimistic, nihilistic even (and no less valuable for that). Nurturing a society's capacity to universally engage in art-making guarantees nothing except insight. What will probably emerge is a society of beings with the capacity to see better; what they see and how they choose to act on the basis of that sight are unknowables.

There's no doubt that the 'social' bandwagon is a better bandwagon than the economic one, BUT we're still caught in the mire of trying to justify art from the perspective of a set of objectives that are fundamentally foreign to the actual practice of art-making. The impetus for art is neither financial (art will make us rich) nor social (art will make us powerful, or, according to the new age version of 'social', art will make us happy). Rather its impetus may be something as banal (and as important) as curiosity, or as mysterious as obsession or compulsion – it is simply just something we have to do.

Under the rationalist rubric, we persist in trying to justify art as an instrument for the achievement of some aspect of the business plan developed by the accountants.

We **MUST** develop our own expression of the value of this fundamental human attribute that demonstrates why a decent society is obligated to nurture the creative expression of all its members because, to do so, is to facilitate their fulfilment as human beings – they may not become rich or happy as a result, but they will be alive, in the fullest sense.

### What's happened to community art?

It continues to be ignored. We persist in believing that art is made only by experts. This attitude is almost as prevalent in the world of community cultural development as it is anywhere else. We also persist in believing that art is the result of individual enterprise. Community art questions both these claims. Everyday people making art **together**. Arts policies persist, despite the recent introduction of lashings of community rhetoric, in focusing on professional artists and the sales of their products. Professionalisation and commodification continue unabated.

Only when every local government supports the communal arts activities of all their constituents - as automatically as they do keeping the roads waterproof and the refuse re-cycled - will they be properly fulfilling their governance obligations. The fact that it wouldn't be all that difficult to do this makes it even more depressing that it's not happening. What's so hard about having a place where people can come together to sing, dance, paint, write and where there's a team of facilitators whose job it is to make welcome, to give confidence, to inspire, to suggest different ways? How is it that we've reached such a pass that this sort of activity isn't seen as both essential and normal?

Arts policies that focus on professionals and their products look at only half the picture – and the least important half.

Until the art of ordinary people is respected and nurtured ...

Until **making** art becomes more important than **consuming** art ...

Until the creative capacities of ALL people are recognised, respected and nurtured ...

Until the MAIN focus of public arts policy is on the support of UNIVERSAL creativity ...

NOTHING WILL CHANGE

### How do we break the commodity consumption cycle?

I don't know. Perhaps only when we run out of stuff to consume, or of the means to purchase the stuff. And in the meantime promoting art, and culture, as **activities**: things one **does**, not things one consumes. Citizens continue to be viewed as fundamentally **passive** subjects of the democratic process. Their function is merely consume the commodities manufactured by the various industries engaged in making stuff for the market.

This view of the role of the citizen has to be overturned. Recognition must be given to the fact that it is in the making of art that the primary sites for personal and social development occur – NOT in the presentation of art. Because we are in thrall to an ideology that believes that ALL human transactions can (and should) be subject to market processes, we have accepted as a given that the key to art is the transaction that takes place between the maker (or her agent) and the consumer. This is a nonsense.



Our culture remains PASSIVE, and will continue to be so unless CONFIDENCE can be generated.

- CONFIDENCE in the intrinsic value of art
- CONFIDENCE in the capacities of communities to make their own culture
- CONFIDENCE in our capacity to argue the case for what we believe, IN OUR OWN TERMS
- CONFIDENCE in the 'internal' outcomes of active participation (that is, in the process effects, in distinction from the product effects)
- CONFIDENCE in the fact that, if communities have the tools, they can make their own way
- CONFIDENCE that creativity doesn't need another bandwagon
- CONFIDENCE in the value of working together.

If we had these confidences, we'd be sweet. And as we all know already, confidence comes through practice. So let's get to it.

### **Is art becoming the new age opium?**

Yes. And the main purveyors of this drug are the middle people. Those that make a living selling art product. Constantly on the look out for another market, another opportunity to justify their existence by mediating between the product and the consumer. And the new set of mediations is about convincing governments that if they let artists loose on the marginalised, the poor, the infirm, the disabled, the unemployed, the alienated, the angry, the depressed, the dispossessed, the isolated, the illiterate they'll become more manageable, less strident, in fact, even more invisible and certainly less of a drain on the taxpayer. Ignore the problem, just cover it up. Culture as band-aid. Of course I'm overstating the intent, but I don't think I'm overstating the likely response.

We are in danger of becoming complicit in a 'let them eat culture' conspiracy.

Culture both as something to be consumed AND as a universal panacea for all ills. Whacking in an arts project will become a way of avoiding the need for systemic change, of not putting in tangible resources, of avoiding confronting root causes, of giving a voice without having to listen...

Of course it won't work, because if communities do start to recognise that they can express their own values, make their own meanings – who knows where that will lead. We need to make sure however that when the shit does hit the fan, that we're on the right side.

Which means embracing community cultural development as community expression rather than as a means of achieving government objectives.

### **Must we persist with the project model?**

Please no. The only people who consistently benefit from projects are bureaucrats. All their requirements are fulfilled: a predicted outcome within the prescribed accounting period, a short, sharp intervention capable of being described in whatever are the buzz words of the day, a beginning, a middle and an end, instant gratification.

Apart from the extraordinary pressures this form of support puts on artists, let's consider some of the possible 'field' effects:

working to other people's agendas: how much time do community groups spend trawling for grant opportunities and then twisting their dreams to fit the convoluted eligibility criteria of whatever this week's opportunity is? An enormous amount of community resource is spent, often with no result.

scraping off scabs: communities have to live with their divisions. This isn't great but it is life. Outsiders come in, stir the pot, expose semi-healed wounds and then leave. What's the benefit? They have a more profound understanding of the issue? They are better able to appreciate the perspective of the other? They are better able to negotiate a settlement? Are these qualities achievable through a three month arts project? I don't think so.

the candy man: most lives are hard yakker, full of frustration and disappointment. Outsiders come in, engineer a profoundly joyful and cathartic experience and then leave. What's the community left with? An unreplicable memory of heaven? A feeling of dependence for joy on external agency?

It's quite reasonable to argue that these effects are negative – more harm is done than good. No initiative should be implemented without considering its impact on the long-term capacities of its participants to continue.

### **Can the words 'access' and 'participation' be un-weaseled?**

It will be very difficult. Access in current usage means 'there's a shop near you' and participation means 'buying something at it'. There was a time when these were honourable words. They described ready availability of resources and active engagement. No longer.

But, if 'building community capacity' is ever going to be more than empty rhetoric, we have to rediscover and reactivate the original usages of these two words. If communities are to have the opportunity to make their own culture, to have power over their own visions, and in particular, the power to make their own culture independent of state intervention, they will need access to a range of empowering resources. Many of these resources are already held within communities – they just need uncovering. The capacities are there; what's needed is confidence, training, recognition, networking.

What this implies is a complete reversal of the current methods of supporting arts practice. No longer a focus on the Artist on the pedestal but on the artist in all of us; a focus on locally-based arts making, not on 'excellent' product; support through meeting ongoing needs rather than through one-off innovations; perhaps even leaving the flagships to fend of themselves while concentrating instead on nurturing everyday art. I can't imagine this proposal being taken seriously, but that makes it even more important that it be stated – too often do we bite our tongues.

### **Is sustainability all it's cracked up to be?**

Absolutely not. What's the point of sustaining something that's destroying the planet? Or, for that matter, even engaging with it. Many artists have certainly felt that way. Perhaps our society is so decadent that disengagement is a legitimate, or at least understandable, response. Which is to say that the problem lies with the way our society is organised, rather than with its disengaged members. Pondering on how to get people to become more engaged is missing the point.

But of course, it's me that's missing the point, isn't it? The entire subtext of the sustainability push is that if we wish to continue, we have to change. But I'm increasingly sure that it's this subtext that's going missing. Sustainability is becoming interchangeable with conservatism. How do we maintain our standards (moral, economic or whatever)? is becoming, - perhaps, already has become, - the question.

I'm not (necessarily) suggesting that you lot are thinking this way. I'm just suggesting that you bear in mind that many on the sustainability bandwagon are. In the matter of culture, the same issue emerges. 'Cultural sustainability' means very different things to different people. There's a school of thought that uses it to mean 'preserving the canon'. Which is why my focus has been on 'cultural vitality' even though this phrase is, in grammatical terms, a redundancy. If culture is not alive, it isn't.

We make and re-make culture every day: how we do it, and who does it – particularly public culture - is what's important. Are there eternal values? Ones which we should sustain, no matter what? Probably, but even these won't be, unless they are regularly and democratically debated and tested.

A vital (and sustainable) society has a vital culture – one in which all members actively contribute to the constant to-ing and fro-ing that affect the way we think and behave.

### **What's happening to our children?**

How can someone who doesn't truly believe that they are creative be expected to believe that other people, just like them, are? It is entirely 'normal' that adults who have spent their whole lives having their own creativity trivialised and denied, will then do exactly the same thing to the next generation.

**WE HAVE TO BREAK THIS CYCLE!!**

This is particularly difficult within an education system that is increasingly focussed on preparing the young to join the 'work force' rather than to examine and enjoy life. So, by age 13, art in schools is no longer an exploration and celebration of a group of children's creativity. Instead it's an elective focussed on skill acquisition accompanied by the occasional and terribly serious public performance/exhibition, a semi-academic examination/appreciation of historical technique and/or an extra-curricular activity. The fun, the joy, the creativity, the improvisation have been abandoned in favour of 'preparation'.

We simply must ensure that the creativity of our children is not enveloped (the opposite of developed) the minute they become teenagers. Continuing to perpetuate this crime would be the worst of obscenities.

input into school policy – there's work to do.

Third, through public action: every level of government has a finger in the child-rearing pie; we must remind the authorities that we expect our children to emerge from their clutches not just as people able to earn a living but as people with the capacity to love life, to engage, to build relationships and who had a lot of fun while learning all this. Perhaps the key to this is the sort of TRAINING that those responsible for nurturing the creative activities of children receive.

### **Is art a pathway to happiness?**

Sometimes, but it's hardly the be all and end all, and it's certainly not guaranteed. Getting into art because you think it will cure your ills (or those of your constituents) is a tricky business. What's a safe dose? Can it be self-administered or should one call in an expert? Are the experts registered? Should there be a prescription? Who's to say which brands work and which are snake oil? How does one determine which brand is suitable for one's particular illness? How long does the course need to be?

And what about side effects? What vile questions to apply to an activity that, as children, we did, just because. Surely, we should be encouraging ourselves and others to get into art because its exciting, moving, challenging, risky, scary and often even painful - like bungy jumping. Fact is, much of the 'best' art is terrifying, disturbing and disorienting – the very opposite of well-making. AND, much of the most affecting art does not inspire generalised cohesion, but the opposite.

AND, much art is inspired by alienation, an inability to make one's way in an inhuman world, a failure to adapt to the pressures of daily life, anger with the way things are, pain and loss.

I doubt that clinical research would reveal that Artists are a happier than average sector of our society. In fact, I'd be very surprised if it didn't reveal the opposite. Why then wish art upon everyone? Because happiness isn't everything, or to put it another way, there's a lot more to happiness than being well. We don't live in a perfect world, and we never will. Art offers us a way of coming to terms with this fact. The moments of illumination, of connectedness, of catharsis that we achieve with others help us through the night. Making art can give us insight, not necessarily communicable, but often sufficient, within oneself, to struggle on – to cope for another day. In these times, that's worth a lot.

### **Can bureaucracies change their ways?**

While institutions continue to operate in the ways that deny both the creativity of their own staff and the creativity of the people they're meant to serve, they will continue to be millstones around our necks. No-one can take seriously the rhetoric of an institution that operates at odds with the ideas it is propagating. Unless the institution itself embraces and operates according to culturally active principles, its attempts to encourage others to do so will inevitably fail.

Officials need to rediscover the power and effectiveness of the non-rational, the imaginative, the intuitive, the creative; to rediscover modes of relationship development and communications that go beyond the exchange of officially sanctioned language. Then perhaps they will be heard, then perhaps they will become able to hear. What I'm saying, is practice what you preach.

This evening, Fay White, one of my colleagues at Community Music Victoria, will be facilitating an hour of participatory singing. I urge you to join in this gathering, not just because I know you'll have fun, not just because I know that, like I have, you will discover that you can make nice sounds, but mainly because theory don't mean shit unless it co-exists with practice – and not other people's practice but your own. I'll see you there.

Thank you for listening.

*Jon Hawkes is an independent advisor specialising in cultural issues. He is author of **The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: culture's essential role in public planning** (Cultural Development Network & Common Ground, 2001) and has been Director of Community Music Victoria since early 2001. He was the Director of the Australian Centre of the International Theatre Institute for eight years (1991-1998), Director of the Community Arts Board of the Australia Council (1982-1987) and founding member of Circus Oz and the Australian Performing Group.*

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## A GREAT NEW REVITALISING IDEA?

**Professor Donald Horne**

Let's hope ... You never know ... that today we're about to see the beginning – or the beginnings of the beginning – or explorations of hints of the beginnings of a beginning - of the articulation of a revitalising idea that could lift the lives of many of our fellow Australians, whether as individuals or as communities. Since the idea is set in public policy, we have to talk the talk, as Jon Hawkes did so successfully in his seminal book on the role of culture in public planning. Then we can turn it into the kind of plain English he talks himself.

In jargon terms this revitalising idea means extending the concept of sustainability. At present in local councils there is wide, thoughtful and fruitful recognition of three 'pillars of sustainability' – a 'triple bottom line', as the words go, of economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and social sustainability. But something is missing. It's been there all the time. But it hasn't been talked about. It's cultural sustainability and we should see it as the fourth pillar of sustainability. This conference is going to have a go at that.

But before talking about culture let's consider how local public planning is finding some of its meaning in the places where we live and in the ways of life of which we are a part. With this it can strengthen a sense of belonging, although we must recognise that, in our diversity, there are many ways of belonging. To use even more extravagant language: this approach could be extended to add something to our imaginations with personal and social discoveries; it could give us a chance to engage more actively with the enlightenment of the arts and general intellectual life – and with liberal, tolerant, democratic life, and productive life as well. And all this as part of the active, creative Australia in which at least some people see not primarily as the lucky country, nor primarily as an information society – not that there's anything wrong with either luck or knowledge – but as an imaginative country, extending human potential.

You might think I'm overdoing it. I probably am. But there's another way of looking at it. For the moment in Australia, aren't we underdoing our potential? At a time when few are speaking boldly why not seek to put the word vision back into our normal vocabulary. Isn't there something wrong if we think it's overdoing it to imagine that we can be more engaged, resilient, strong and creative in our communities?

This sort of thing is being carried out by many of you anyway, but it needs putting together as a fully articulated idea. Essential to that idea is that its implementation be encouraged in localities in which there is practical interest in taking it up. In these different localities there would be different kinds of programs – depending on the kind of people who live in them, and on the specialties of local talent. There would be no tightly expressed attempt at national uniformity, except in a very broad and loose statement of the general operative idea. It would be the tactical how of a program that would make the difference and that would vary from one place to the other.

(However there would need to be some sharing of information about tryouts and experiences. And there could also be a more general cumulative effect. If an increase in local vitality increases, in its diversity, that can have overall effects on the general tone of the country.)

I said cultural. Let's clear the ground. Imagine I am about to perform a small but effective smoking-out ceremony about that word. I come in with my fire stick and I'm about to do an act of exorcism that will sort out ideas about what is meant by 'culture'. The word has two meanings. One is connected with the arts and intellectual life. We'll come back to that. The other has a much wider sense – a broad, social anthropological sense. That's the one we'll begin with. In this sense 'culture' is a list of habits. The habits of, say, an organisation or a neighbourhood or a community, although it can also be the habits of a family, or a profession, or a school class or a tennis club: there's no limit.

It's connected with what a group of people do and what they believe in. You can look at the group, whether as organisation, or neighbourhood or community or whatever and ask: what are its repertoires of being human? What are the ways its members do things, whether in their workplaces, in their homes, in how they do politics or sport, in all their varying ways of handling this and that? What are their varying conventions of knowledge and wisdom? What are their varying faiths, whether secular or religious? What are their values? How resilient and tolerant are they? What are the meanings they give to existence? Then you can come up a bit closer: What are their varying ways of life? How and what do they eat? How do they relax? How do they crack jokes? How do they dress? How do they talk to each other?

you want to get something done - how can you see yourself as practical unless you face up to the people in that organisation or that neighbourhood or that community and see their actual ways of going on and how they see things? It's one thing to say what you think is desirable. But what happens won't just depend on what you want. It will also depend on what people make of it. And if you think about the realities of their life not only will your policies work better; they will also be liberating an existing cultural vitality, or a cultural vitality that for the moment is not encouraged at all.

After all, all social, economic and environmental policies are also cultural (whether or not you use the word 'culture'). How the policies will work will depend on the values people already have and on the ways they already do things now. That is the reason Jon Hawkes suggested a general 'cultural framework' approach that means considering what effects a policy may have on the ways of life and the hopes and habits of the people affected by it.

This might apply particularly, at its most concrete and every day, to questions of place management, urban design, heritage sites, urban renewal, but it can be extended wherever you see a workable chance. It may involve people's perceptions of where they live, or where they work or where their shopping centres and recreational centres are, or any other places where they follow their interests. It must mean taking into account the human diversity of a locality. (We should always remember that just because people may share the same space that doesn't mean they are all the same.) It must take into account the human need for sociability, conviviality and dialogue – for mixing with others, and having a talk, or dancing or singing or playing games – along with places of recreation and/or edification, including performance spaces, exhibition places where you can look attentively at things, places where you can read or talk. Coffee shops, restaurants, pubs, picnic grounds, can be (and have been historically) part of it.

Of course, this involves 'community consultation', and that can be done so boringly that the very thought of it might send people shuddering back to sleep. But consultation is only one way. Perhaps the planners should also be out there picking up new moods, articulating new possibilities that people haven't themselves clearly put together but that they may recognise and take over as their own.

That's what people have been doing over the last few years, for example, with neglected rural halls in small country towns or subsidiary hamlets. These buildings, usually of wood and tin, were once centres of community life. Then they became looked down on: they were often too shabby, too unpretentious, to seem true 'heritage'. Now they are being turned to new communal purposes. I remember a few years ago visiting a dozen or so of them scattered around Wagga Wagga. It was a lesson in change. Wagga is now a large regional centre, but these places are part of it – with more traditional inhabitants and with commuters to the regional centre, the old rural halls can now provide new communal uses to new, more diverse communities, and some of them also put on shows that can bring people out from the centre.

Or consider the North Richmond Housing Estate, where there has been strong Vietnamese and East Timorese settlement. Ten years ago some Vietnamese families put on a simple lantern procession around the local Health Centre at the time of the Moon Lantern Festival. It has now become a significant local celebration, with arts events and community discussions – and recently the East Timorese were blended in with themes from Timorese celebrations of the moon as well. Or consider how the City of Port Phillip took over the Vineyard restaurant (which started life as a boat shed but became a 'happening place with great food, where locals gather to eat, talk and listen to music'). Because it was run down they renovated it and leased it out as part of a planning project that deals with the uniqueness of the St Kilda Foreshore. Or consider how at Deloraine in north-west Tasmania, to give the town a bit of a move along, they started what was boldly named 'The Tasmanian Crafts Fair' which, a quarter of a century later, is now spread over 15 venues and, as well as bringing in a million dollars a year has replaced mutual indifference and isolation with a sense of district togetherness.

Now imagine what ordinary living would be like if cultural frameworks had been applied imaginatively to every new shopping mall or shopping plaza in the country.

I now want to speak more generally – of '**The abundant life**' – and move into what, to some, may seem some more contentious approaches. Something to have a think about, anyway. When I first spoke on this at Port Phillip last year I recalled how, at the time Barry Jones was pushed out of the presidency of the ALP he said: 'My main preoccupation in public life, has been the promotion of the "abundant life": the conviction that the overwhelming majority of people are capable of responding to a far greater richness of experience than is commonly recognised.' Then he recalled an English radical pamphlet dating from 1821, which said: "The first indication of real wealth and prosperity is that people can work less. Wealth is liberty - liberty to seek recreation, liberty to enjoy life, liberty to improve the mind."



grants categories improvised in Australia in the late 1960s and early 1970s so that there would be appropriate forms to fill in.) We should spread out all over the whole range of imaginative life, and that includes speculative intellectual life as well as the more narrowly defined 'the arts'. Jon Hawkes has spoken of shocks of lateral connection, conceptual leaps, lightning strikes at illumination. He knows that these can include the conceptual leaps and lightning strikes at illumination of intellectual speculation. One can be concerned not with categories but with wonder, curiosity and the imagination.

I'll now link up with a device I used at the Port Phillip conference, when I imagined some strange posters that begin to appear all over Australia. (Although this year I'll use this device somewhat differently.) So now I'll tell a new story about the posters. It begins by imagining that some mysterious posters appear with a word, just one word, little used in Australia at present, where we seem to prefer to call ourselves 'consumers' or 'taxpayers'. That word is:

### **Citizens!**

This strange word is an attention-getter. Why is such a funny word up there on posters? Some letter-boxed flyers arrive asking what use the strange word is in sustaining belongingness and cultural vitality?

The surprise answer is that if you want belongingness and cultural vitality you should start with a believable civic principle. What makes an Australian? Not social sameness and, certainly, not ethnic oneness. All that can effectively do it is acceptance of core civic beliefs. As it happens some of the words are there already – in the oath that is made at the ceremonies where people become Australian citizens.

I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people  
Whose democratic beliefs I share,  
Whose rights and liberties I respect,  
Whose laws I will uphold and obey.

The letter box flyer asks why every Council in the land doesn't put those words up in its own buildings and encourage other organisations to put them up, too. Why not encourage people to have a talk about them? And when there are ceremonies why not use them there too? Another mysterious poster appears. It is:

### **Citizens! Tell Us Who You Are!**

This time the flyers say that this is above all about finding out how people in a locality or a community group see themselves. They can hold forums about it or turn it into drama or satire or cabaret or puppet show or video. They can dance it out, or paint pictures of it, or make sculptures of it, or photograph it. They can sing it or turn its moods into instrumental music. They can argue about it in community-based media or on the net. They can use cultural tourism to say who they are.

They can present their locality, or group, in theme exhibitions, sometimes of art, sometimes of real things, sometimes of both of them together, preferably done by creating powerful images or demonstrating how an object can have different meanings. They might, at times, might bring some of their own stuff and show it off.

They can show it in the many forms of design. They can learn to 'read' heritage buildings and sites, perhaps recognising that any building, any site, has its heritage (or variety of heritages). They can make speeches about it or listen to others make speeches. They can do it in oral history. They can write or read about it, in verse, or in prose - as fiction, history, autobiography, social sketches, essays, bits of economic or political inquiry or general cultural critique, perhaps including popularisations of the physical sciences and natural sciences; and, whether they know it or not, there will always be a touch of philosophy about it too.

And on all these occasions, as Jon Hawkes has put it, they can 'describe the sensation of sharing, of belonging, of connectedness, of common cause'. When a group wishes to explain itself to itself, and to the world – in any of these ways - this sensation of common cause can be a great moment of cultural vitality.

But there's a danger in using the word 'community' too loosely. It should be distinguished, for example, from 'neighbourhood'. 'Neighbourhood' is easy. It's the locality where people live, or work, or whatever. 'Community' is related more exactly to groups, to people's beliefs and ways of life. A community can share a religious faith, or a secular faith, or a profession, or a passion for sport or the arts or some other enthusiasm, or a sense of ethnicity, or a sense of social class – one can extend the list almost indefinitely: but they don't necessarily live in the same area, and to make it even further complicated they may belong to several communities, in fact in a modern society they usually do.

Most people can see themselves as all belonging to a neighbourhood of differing communities, learning to live together, or perhaps not learning to live together. And this can be equally profound, although more complex. A subsidiary poster comes out

### **Citizens! Discuss Conflict, Learn the Tricks of Tolerance!**

In the letter box flyers the point is made that true harmony comes not from suppression of difference, but from facing up to it, to negotiating it. These are the techniques – the tricks, if you like, of tolerance, essential to a harmonious society in which difference is accepted. People's beliefs and habits may not all be respected. It is their right to be different that is respected – although there are limits even to that. There are some beliefs and habits that can destroy a liberal-democratic society, as so much of European society was destroyed in the age of the dictatorships. Then another subsidiary poster comes out:

### **Citizens! Enlarge Your Horizons!**

The flyers warn against the provincialisms of knowing nothing other than the here and now. Change is the key to our age, they say. You may not understand a locality if you know nothing other than the locality, or the present if you know nothing of the past. Knowing something of what's gone on before offers a chance to question how you see things now. It can make you a sharper observer. Knowledge of people who are different from what you are can give new perspectives on your own condition.

And past works of earlier intellectual and artistic imaginative endeavour are there to draw on. You can learn to use them. You don't have to sit for an exam in them. You can use them as you wish to make up your own views of existence. Then another subsidiary poster comes out:

### **Citizens! Engage Critically!**

The flyers explain that 'engagement' doesn't just mean doing something yourself. It also means acts of critical engagement with what others present to you, and this, in itself is an act of imagination. It can be in itself a participatory and creative act. It is something, however, in which people may need some encouragement. Working out how to do this is one of the most important lead-ins to the abundant life. This theme is then developed in a wider poster campaign:

### **Citizens! Pursue Things For Their Own Sake!**

This time flyers say that artistic and intellectual activities should not be used simply as an appendage to other programs, as if they had no value in themselves: their greatest value lies in the vagaries of the imagination and of the critical spirit. They may play a part in other programs but, even when they do, if there's no life and creativity in it they may not do the job convincingly. They are not simply a tool. (For one thing they can be a cutting tool: if you try to 'use' them too casually they can slip out of your hand and give you a nasty bite.)

Artists and intellectuals are not necessarily, or even usually, boosters. They can be, and often are, critics of the way things are.) We live in a nervous, bullying utilitarian age but we should recognise that to pursue things for their own sake can be one of the most creative parts of human beings and that the extent to which enterprise is spread throughout a society is one of the most important measures of that society's freedom.

We should recognise the transformative magic of the intellectual and artistic imaginations. By making things appear different – by presenting new worlds and possibilities – artists and intellectuals can give us new myths, new 'models' that open the way to things actually becoming different. They can be one of the most practical agents of change. Another poster appears ...

### **Citizens! See Yourselves As Producers!**

I'll speak to this one myself. It reminds me of how when I was editing *The Bulletin* at the end of the 1960s I began to write about the liberations that might come with what was being called 'the post-industrial age'. The overwhelming bases of the labour market were becoming what were technically seen as the 'service industries': just as industrialism had reduced labour in the production of foodstuffs, fibres and minerals it was now reducing the labour involved in manufacturing. To some this was seen as an opportunity for an opening out in recreational and cultural activities, in general quality of life, in which people would have greater opportunities to create things for themselves. It began to revive aspirations towards a productive life, cooperative and self reliant. But now the word 'aspiration', once given so many generous human connotations, can seem little more than a tightening of mortgage belts in a 'consumer society'.

We have been living through the greatest changes in the labour market since the industrial revolution. These changes are shaking

emphasising narrow vocational training when this, as 'training for obsolescence', may be the opposite of the wide general education that is needed. There are new divisive stereotypes of fear – 'dole bludgers', 'geriatrics', 'working mothers', 'the elites'. For the lucky there are once unbelievable opportunities. For the unlucky there are junk jobs. There is 'down-sizing' – shovelling employees onto the rubbish heap, sometimes with bad economic consequences – and with the flood of affluence of the consumer societies there are also forecasts of floods of mental depression. But there is also 'downshifting', those people ready to swap some of their income for what they see as a better way of life – an act of treachery to prevailing standards.

Now I'm not too sure why I have thrown all that at you. What are you supposed to do with it? Well, I think it's worth thinking about replacing ideas of a narrow-based 'information society' with talking about an imaginative, knowledge-based productive society. So what do you do? I suggest you look not for problems but for opportunities. And perhaps you can seize back the word 'aspiration' from consumer society ambitions for McMansions on every suburban block and put aspiration where it used to be – the belief that the overwhelming majority of people are capable of responding to a far greater richness – in the prospects of an 'abundant life'.

*Professor Donald Horne is the writer of more than twenty books including the landmark *The Lucky Country* and has contributed to many journals and newspapers in Australia, Britain, Europe and the United States. As an academic, he became a professor at the University of New South Wales and subsequently Chancellor of the University of Canberra. He was twice editor of *The Bulletin* and also edited *The Observer* and *Quadrant*. He was contributing editor to *Newsweek International*. He has played an active part in a number of cultural organisations, including the Australia Council, which he chaired for six years.*

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## THE GARMA FESTIVAL: AN INDIGENOUS CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

**Joe Neparrnga Gumbula**

(This presentation is not yet available.)

*Joe Neparrnga Gumbula is a leader of the Daygurrurr Gupapuyngu clan and holds a consummate knowledge of Yolngu intellectual traditions. A retired First Constable of the Northern Territory Police and Galiwin'ku Town Councillor he is also Liaison Officer for the Galiwin'ku Indigenous Knowledge Centre. He has lectured in Australian Indigenous Studies and Education at the University of Melbourne and Monash University, spoken at conferences in Canberra, Melbourne, Gunyangara, Gulkula and Newcastle, and has co-authored articles on musical creativity in north-east Arnhem Land. He has played an important role in the success of the Garma festival, North East Arnhem land.*



## CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NATIONAL AGENDA

**Jennifer Bott, CEO, Australia Council**

Firstly I'd like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people, the traditional owners of the land on which we stand.

In the current Boyer Lectures on ABC Radio National, the Australian expatriate writer Peter Conrad quotes the inimitable Oscar Wilde. 'Maps of the world,' said Wilde, 'must leave room for Utopia.' Most people in this room I suspect have spent much of their lives and passion on building if not seeking Utopia. It's a wonderful sentiment, but the reality is that Utopia - even a sense of Utopia - seems further than ever from these shores and just about everywhere else. Utopia is a straightforward existence and all the good things in abundance. It implies simplicity, but the world - our world - is growing more complex by the day.

Anxiety rules much of what we do, and blurs much of what we see - as we navigate between the global and the local, between embracing the world and retreating from it, between a sense of engulfment and a fear of abandonment. Not only individuals but whole nations, and indeed cultures, have trouble adjusting, or just keeping up. I begin with these rather gloomy perspectives not to put a damper on proceedings - I'm a fully paid-up member of the Optimists' Club - but to set the stage for real-world solutions. Utopia has its place, but - as far as I'm aware - it's not in this world, so we need to look at other options.

We're all searching for some clarity, and security. And beneath the often-slick surfaces of modern life we know there are problems that simply aren't responding to the usual formulas: the carefully targeted application of public monies, the injection of well-chosen professionals, complex infrastructure programs to attract either people or jobs. The best-laid plans of economists and social engineers can work, but in many cases they seem afflicted from the outset. Everyone is left wondering - why didn't it work, where did we go wrong?

Or is it: What part of the equation did we leave out?

By world standards, Australia is a highly stable, successful nation; its economy is strong, unemployment is relatively low, our political system - for all its frustrations - is the envy of many. Yet anxieties continue to frame and rule our daily lives. And no matter how wealthy or powerful, an anxious nation cannot be a healthy nation. Around us our population is ageing, our families are getting smaller, our friends are more scattered - across the country, across the world - and happiness (that old-fashioned word) seems all the more elusive.

As the sociologist Hugh Mackay has pointed out, a lot of Australians are reacting by disengaging, turning from the 'big picture', becoming more inward looking. When it all gets too much, renovate the home and fix up the backyard, preferably all in two days. This can lead to isolation, prejudice, less tolerance and compassion, selfishness. So from a national perspective, the need for sustainability is not only about retaining industries and jobs and local services, it's very much about sustaining our values as a people. It's about sustaining our culture, our identity, and our sense of place.

There is a more positive side to what's happening. The global pressures that unsettle us can also produce a heightened desire for community - for more local involvement, local activity, local solutions, things we can relate to. We see this happening: book clubs and reading groups are spouting up, teenage friendship networks, movements focused on local issues.

For the past decade, the Australia Council - as the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body - and ALGA - the Australian Local Government Association - have promoted community arts and cultural development as a core function of local government. The arts are central to Australian identity, and nowhere more so than in local communities, where they reflect all the energy, courage and resilience that make Australians such a unique people. By the way, while I'm mentioning ALGA, I'd like to congratulate the Mayor of Darebin City Council here in Melbourne, Councillor Rae Perry, who's just been elected the first woman president of ALGA. Well done Rae!

So - our links with local government are crucial to getting culture onto local agendas. We're looking to Australia's local councils to foster cultural identity and diversity, to protect and enhance cultural heritage, to build greater civic identity and involvement, to promote social cohesion and reconciliation, to create paths to environmental renewal and better health.

Across the Tasman they've gone a step further.



communities, and (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future.'

That approach puts culture not at the end of the value chain, tacked on 'if and when' funds are available, but right at the start - and the heart - of community building and engagement, where it belongs. And here in Australia too, cultural initiatives can grow on a solid base. They may not always admit it, but Australians are very strong supporters of the arts.

Research shows we spend \$10 billion annually on arts goods; 85% of Australian adults attend cultural events or performances; 78% read for pleasure on most days; close to 30% of Australia's children are involved in after-school arts activities. We also know that 85% of Australians want the arts as part of the education of their children, and that above all Australians want to participate and learn not to only consume and subscribe. How are we as an arts community to respond? So when we speak of developing arts as a force for community sustainability, clearly we're not starting off a low base; it's not alien territory. In most cases the commitment and raw material is waiting to be tapped, to unlock the creative energies of the community.

Economically, the arts and related industry groups are annually worth about \$8 billion plus to the Australian economy. Even in the smallest outposts, the arts can be relatively big business - they've saved many from economic decline, and brought others 'back from the edge'.

But sustainability is about more than economics, health, education, welfare, security, the environment. A community struggling to pay its bills is hardly on the road to longevity, of course; a community lacking in jobs is more worried about its immediate survival than ten-year plans. These can be critical concerns, but real sustainability boils down to something even more fundamental: having a strong sense of who we are.

Our culture as contemporary Australians. Our identity. What do we mean when we say 'culture'? UNESCO's 2001 Declaration on Cultural Diversity noted: 'culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.'

Culture gives us identity, and without identity, two essential questions remain unanswered: Who are we? What are we doing here? History shows us that the most disadvantaged, the most oppressed societies can hang on - so long as they retain their identities. That's surely the basis of the remarkable survival in the face of enormous challenges of our Indigenous people - who for all their suffering, have held onto their culture and identity. They have the world's oldest culture, nobody can take it from them - it's the essential component of their past and future.

If non-Indigenous Australians want a prime example of sustainability based on culture and identity, they really don't have to look very far. And the message is abundantly clear: culture is never an 'add-on'; it's intrinsic to who we are.

But talk of culture and many Australians will run a mile. They equate culture with S.O.B. - not that S.O.B., but the symphony, opera and ballet! And culture with a capital 'C' sometimes gets a bad press, although our research shows that more Australians attend performances every year than attend football games. I hasten to note I'm also a fully paid-up member of the Rugby-Is-The-Game-They-Play-in-Heaven Club, so don't get me wrong. I'm passionate about sport - but I'm equally convinced the arts are relevant to our daily lives, in fact central, and that equally we need to broaden our narrow definition of culture.

If culture - Jon Hawkes' Fourth Pillar - doesn't speak as loudly as the three other pillars - economic, social and environmental - that's largely because of the fluidity of culture, the way culture influences and absorbs and affects, rather than pushes, shapes and hammers home its messages. But make no mistake: culture is not only a key driver behind the other pillars, it underpins and pulls together every factor in the sustainability equation. And more often than not it's the missing link in why things don't work. And conversely, why some things work brilliantly.

Let's take two examples, cultural in one sense but also fusing the three other pillars: economic, social, environmental. One is the focus of global interest, the other quietly beaver away but no less interesting and potentially more important in terms of what we're discussing.

By the late 1980s, the Spanish port of Bilbao was in serious trouble, its recession-plagued economic structure unable to compete with larger and more dynamic European cities. I'm sure you're all aware of what happened next. In 1991, the Basque authorities contacted the Guggenheim Museum with an unlikely proposal to create a new cultural icon, a major gallery in itself but also a

corrugated cardboard lounge chair, got the job.

The Guggenheim Bilbao opened in late 1997 and less than one year later had already received more than 1,300,000 visitors. The upshot of this now-familiar story is that the once-rundown Atlantic port city now receives an additional 5-million visitors a year, which generates another \$US160 million annually and has created nearly 4000 new permanent jobs. It's become a textbook example of how imagination, free thinking and technology can combine not only to create economic sustainability, but how the cultural dimension can sustain, shape, and define - and even redefine - local identity.

Closer to home, an Australian example. On the mid-north coast of New South Wales, the town of Wauchope had been a cedar logging centre since the mid-19th century, and as the trees were cleared, it evolved into a dairying centre. Ultimately it became the commercial and administrative heart of the Hastings region.

But in recent years, restructuring of the timber and dairy industries threatened the town's existence. It also left a deep sense of loss and disillusionment within the local community. Working on the belief enunciated by Roman poet Horace - that 'prosperity conceals genius, and adversity reveals it' - the 5000 citizens of Wauchope were determined not to be another statistic of economic rationalism.

Their solution? They created a community arts festival to 'revision the town', replacing the negative impact of timber and dairy restructuring with a more creative focus on arts and locally-grown produce. The Wauchope farmers' market is now driving production of gourmet produce, ranging from wine to bush herbs, goat meat and even edible bamboo. A key activity was Bago Stories, a storytelling project built on the relationship between the people of Wauchope and the local Broken Bago mountain range. And eco-tourism has taken off!

Again, the vital factor was the breadth of involvement, the cooperation between authorities and the local population: the Hastings Council, the Wauchope Chamber of Commerce, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Wauchope Community Arts Council, the Hastings Gazette local paper, small business, local artists, landholders, Indigenous groups, the local Scouts, the local photographic society. One measure of Wauchope's success - for the first time in years, its population is rising.

Note that in both these cases - one of them spectacular and highly publicised, the other proceeding quietly at its own pace - the core driver was culture - a new museum, a community arts festival. When change happens, when change is forced upon us, our culture can be the first thing to go - or the last thing to go. Here we see culture as a catalyst of change. Evidence too of the concept that 'breakdowns can create breakthroughs' - and our response to that is very Australian, an integral part of our culture, to pick ourselves up and start again.

Who are we, what are we doing here?

Those questions not only shape our identity, they're the foundation of culture, of the great sustaining narratives that weave through our culture, the unique stories that tell us who we are as Australians and how we got here and where we're going, the always-unfolding stories that shape our communal destiny. In his 1998 Boyer Lecture, David Malouf suggested we take a quantum leap away from the same old issues of fussing and fretting over identity. 'Perhaps,' he said, 'it is time we discovered a new shape for the story we have been telling ourselves.'

That was six years ago. The need now is even greater.

We're compelled to keep moving forward, reassessing the stories we've shaped our lives around, and that applies no less to communities than to individual artists. David Malouf was right, of course. There's no such thing, if there ever was, as the Australian identity: there are many. But Australian communities do have unique identities - not fixed in time, but changing and evolving identities, built around stories that evolve with their changing fortunes.

It's those stories we need to create - and listen to, more than ever. Those Australian stories are our clues to cultural identity, and to cultural sustainability - and without them, communities in trouble will drift further from the national flow, into isolation and even despair.

As Indigenous Australians know well, sustainability is both cultural and communal. In the tribal world, sustainable isolation is simply not an option. People learn early that to survive, they must work together, share good and bad times, share a common culture to sustain them through bad times and to celebrate in good times. From a truly national perspective, these are lessons that

Recently the Australia Council agreed to fund a four-way partnership that takes these issues right into the realm of local government. The project, called Community Sustainability and Cultural Vitality, brings together the Australia Council; the Cultural Development Network (CDN), which promotes innovation in locally-based cultural development; the Local Government Community Services Association; and on the evaluation side, the Globalism Institute at RMIT, with its world-class work on cultural diversity and sustainability issues.

We're funding the feasibility stage through our Regional Arts Fund allocation for projects of national significance because we agree there's enormous scope at national level to integrate local government support for arts and heritage more strategically with social development programs. We saw that potential explored at the LGCSAA biennial conference in Townsville last year, which I think positively influenced many delegates, including me.

What Judy Spokes and Anne Dunn and the team at CDN are trying to achieve here is I think absolutely critical to the concept of cultural sustainability in this country. Importantly they're not rushing headlong into things, looking for a quick fix - because cultural sustainability isn't about headline-grabbing programs and it's not about instant solutions. It's literally about changing culture, and experience shows that 'speed kills' - that throwing money or formulaic programs at problems isn't the answer.

CDN's feasibility stage runs across eight months, consulting with participating councils and communities, listening to their problems, to their needs and their visions - the 'bottom-up' approach' - and developing the terms and the scope of longer-term sustainability programs in six Australian communities.

The pilot programs to follow aim to invest in medium to long-term cultural interventions of at least three years, well beyond the usual six to twelve months of many community arts projects. That's the key. That, and focusing hard on cultural questions more than purely economic issues - asking local communities about identity, belonging, a sense of place: the markers of cultural sustainability, and the starting point for any serious attempts, I believe, to overcome systemic social problems.

Creative change is proactive, not passive. If they're to survive, communities that are contracting or under threat need to face up to tough questions, questions literally about their survival. Why are people leaving, and what can we do to make them stay? How can we draw new people to our community, how should we treat them when they arrive? What do we want to preserve here, and what are we prepared to give up, to change? What needs changing - and just as importantly, what must we save at any cost? It takes a lot of community courage to ask such basic questions, but for those brave enough, using creativity to promote the dialogue on difficult issues can produce real breakthroughs.

So what of the more traditional inputs: of national, state and local government, of public authorities, of experts and advisors? None of this seeks to exclude those already engaged; rather it calls for greater involvement, but within less narrow confines. It argues strongly that the days of siloed activity are numbered, that the only worthwhile and lasting solutions are likely to come from more integrated responses, from whole-of-government, whole-of-society approaches - and that we need to target whole communities, in all their diversity, rather than tackle sub-sets of intractable problems with one-off, short-term solutions.

To achieve that, we need to regenerate civic engagement, and offer encouragement. Creativity creates its own bandwagon, but its often-loaded jargon can easily turn people off. The man who founded MacDonald's, Ray Kroc, used to say that creativity was 'a highfalutin' word for all the work I have to do between now and Tuesday'. And he was right: successful companies are, by definition, creative companies. In a recent edition of *Overland*, Jon Hawkes also referred to the language issue. 'The rhetoric of public life,' Jon noted, 'is increasingly spiced with notions of energy - participation, engagement, vitality, vibrancy, activity, innovation and participation'.

It can make you dizzy, and as Jon Hawkes says, not a little cynical. We can turn the rhetoric of community building to democratic advantage, but we have to convince the unbelievers that we're talking about something that's more than babble - and show them what's possible. As arts consultant June Moorhouse says about hype, 'Let's get some reality into our processes and the way we talk about them.' And we also have to empower people, give them the tools to make things happen.

Some Australians will argue that the pursuit of culture is a luxury they can't afford. Before we label them philistines, we should listen to their case, and survey the landscape as they see it. Many are happy to throw another sausage on the barbie and live the unexamined life. It's a free country and that's their right. Others look around and see a blighted landscape of salination, degradation, drought. Or the spiral of drug-related crime, of teenage prostitution, of youth suicide. Often their first response, their only response, is to call for more cash, not culture.

I can imagine that many Australians - well-meaning, hard-working Australians - would hear our appeals for greater cultural input and scratch their heads. And that's not their problem, it's ours. It's a problem of getting the message across, bridging that divide - not with grand promises and visions splendid, but with the determination of, say, Scott Rankin's rigorous work with BIG hART, which helps to create art with people suffering from marginalisation in rural, regional and isolated areas.

And here again, the emphasis is on action, not words. 'The arts,' says Scott Rankin, 'bring nuance, the arts can act as a canary in the coalmine, the arts allow for the maverick vision, the arts ignore committee, the arts don't stay on message': all vital for keeping the discussion of the future inclusive.

We need to reach out to the unconverted with concrete examples of how culture can build creative communities, creative cities, and truly sustainable economies. And above all, showing the intrinsic value of culture - not as an adjunct to the other pillars, but as something of value in itself. I've never met a person who didn't buy into the value argument - if you can show someone the value in doing something, and concurrently the cost of not doing anything, you've got their attention.

So I think there's a need here for greater communication, for greater marketing of these ideas. In my experience, 'If you build it they will come' only applies to Hoyts multiplex cinemas and Westfield shopping malls. In the cultural sphere, you really have to go out there and sell it, market it with all the professionalism you can muster, because it's never been an easy sell, and in an age of wealth and distractions, it's getting harder. Solutions are hard and distractions are easy. Going to the latest movie won't solve the issue of salination or the loss of local industries, but it will reduce anxiety about that - at least until the movie's over.

One of the key messages we need to get across is how culture - in its positive form - really can reduce anxiety. It can do that first by giving people something they can relate to and believe in. It can bring them into contact with other people who believe in the same things, the same values. It can reinforce those values, and bring in new values. It can visibly make people come alive, by reducing their anxiety and raising their hopes. Get the culture right and the rest will follow. And the impact across whole communities can be quite extraordinary.

All this points to why culture matters - any culture, in any society, in any period of history - and why it now matters more, not less, than ever. Culture provides us with identity. It's why the Pharaohs built the pyramids, why Americans produced both the Marx Brothers and Miles Davis, and why in the millennia before that, Indigenous people who inhabited this land carved fertility circles on rock canyons in the Flinders Ranges. Cultures create their own unique identities, and leave their mark. Cultures create spaces that are filled by other ideas, even bigger ideas about how we can live to the fullness of our potential. Often those ideas can inspire whole societies to change dramatically.

Cultural sustainability is one of those seminal ideas.

Sustainability implies stability, but in fact is dynamic. It's not only about the continuation of culture, but also about applying creative solutions to our problems, and about improving our lives not only through economic, social and ecological moves, but also through cultural dimensions - through new ways of doing things, new ways of seeing things.

Maybe Utopia isn't so far away after all. Maybe it just doesn't look like Utopia. We may live in an imperfect world but so long as the frontiers are not closed and the doors are not shut, we live in hope. Maybe what Oscar Wilde meant was that Utopia isn't a place, but a space we need to fill with a sense of our being.

On that basis, Utopia is about knowing who we are, what we want from our lives, and how - by working more closely together - we can convert our aspirations into reality.

Utopia may well exist, in our own communities.

Thank you.

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## THE FOURTH PILLAR IN THREE COUNTRIES: NEW ZEALAND: *Cultural well-being in New Zealand*

Penny Eames, Managing Director, PSE Consultancy

Tena koutou tena koutou tena koutou katoa, Greetings.

Before I start I wish to acknowledge the first people of this nation, their land, their ancestors and the history of your country, including the pioneers who came to Australia from the four corners of the earth over the last three centuries. I wish to share with you my perceptions about cultural well-being policies in New Zealand, and to place an understanding of 'culture' in the context of economic, social and environmental well-being. This presentation will look at the Local Government Act passed in 2002 and the implications of that Act. It will briefly note New Zealand cultures and make a brief attempt at looking at a method of measuring the outcomes of interventions aimed at enhancing cultural well-being.

Firstly we need a definition. I use the UNESCO definition adopted in the 2001 Declaration on Cultural Diversity<sup>1</sup> to guide this discussion. That definition is:

*...culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs<sup>2</sup>*

In this context we are conscious that Culture is a dynamic force and a crucial part of our makeup that cannot and should not be confined. Although culture and development<sup>3</sup> are inextricably linked, it is culture that plays the crucial role because it is: "the sum total of original solutions that a group of human beings invent to adapt to their natural and social environment<sup>4</sup>". I note that not only do cultures have emerging, dominant and residual, phases but that:

*...all cultures are in a state of flux, driven by both internal and external forces. These forces may be accommodating, harmonious, benign and based on voluntary actions, or they may be involuntary, the result of violent conflict, force, domination and the exercise of illegitimate power<sup>5</sup>.*

What is equally important is the need to acknowledge and respond in New Zealand and Australia, to the fact that all cultures are different. Myths, ideologies and values vary. Whether you look at a town, a part of a city, a workplace culture, a disability culture or the culture of a gang, sports club or family. They all have unique cultures.

For New Zealand the values will be different from those in Australia – and we should and do celebrate those differences, including our relationship with our first people and their values, ideologies and their rituals.

In New Zealand these are now to be celebrated through the processes set up in the Local Government Act 2002<sup>6</sup>. The purpose of local government is—

- (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and
  - (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future.
- This is an exciting Act. It takes Local Government beyond 'rates, roads and rubbish' and asks territorial local authorities to think about their communities, and the ways to enhance the well-being of their citizens. It has also involved discussion and debate surrounding the meanings of the words and the relationship of the words in the Act and well-being in general.*

This debate also leads to thinking about the three other 'well-beings' particularly in relation to

- sustainable development
- resource identification and management
- celebration of unique identities

Thus we should be able to develop indicators of social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being. We have in New Zealand a challenge. There is an understanding, but also a fear of the meaning of 'culture'. In my address to the 2004 Local Government New Zealand Conference, I defined the words 'culture and well-being'. It was a surprise to me to see the response. The speech received considerable feedback.

My assessment of this response showed the misunderstanding and 'fear' of the cultural well-being objective in the Act. While I believe this is an unfounded fear, I do acknowledge that it is linked to a perception by many local government officers that they



Zealand (Creative New Zealand) and possibly the Ministry of Arts Culture and Heritage. While this could be true, it is only part of the objective.

Hence when I use the UNESCO definition, the perception of greater flexibility in the definition enables them to acknowledge the unique values, rituals, history and ideologies of each their regions and with that the ability to celebrate what makes them special; but also the recognition of the resources in terms of social capital that comes from the spiritual, intellectual, physical and emotional activities engaged in by all their citizens.

Culture is just so inclusive, it gives meaning to the whole of our life – history, ideologies, values and the way we express who we are. To understand culture in New Zealand we need to understand our values, our history and our ideologies.

While we are discussing today the Fourth Pillar – I think it is also relevant to place it alongside the other words that link the pillars; the words, well-being and development. The pillars are not alone – Culture is not something isolated. This has been much of the trouble. Culture has been seen as apart – in the muse (Museum) with the academic (Academy), in the theatre, in the Opera House. It has to be seen in the shopping mall, the football field, in the churches or at the barbeque or family rituals associated with birth, 21st birthdays, marriages and funerals. Hopefully this debate will enable us to celebrate the word and measure its importance.

It is now important that in the New Zealand Local Government Act we link the four pillars with the word well-being. The links with well-being are perhaps the most important as they ensure that we consider well-being as: health, happiness and prosperity. Of particular importance to me is happiness. While this is also hard to define, we could note that in Bhutan in the Himalayas there is a Ministry of Happiness – and they are trying to measure ‘gross national happiness’.

This is I would suggest, undervalued in our western style societies and maybe we should try to measure it in the same way as we do for gross national product. This conference is not a time to look at the measurements of economic, social and environmental well-being. There is lots of work being done on that. But there is also work being done on ‘measurements of cultural well-being’ – some of this is significant and exciting.

I have worked hard on this as well and have produced lists to help with the measurements. I will certainly not use today to discuss them, but I do believe this work is significant and can aid the debate. They do include measurements of:

- participation in society
- improved quality of life
- happiness and contentment
- diversity, long life and experiences
- balance for all in intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being
- access for all to resources – venues, sport, arts, religion
- opportunities made available to celebrate one's own arts
- freedom of speech for all
- everyone able to exercise their right to speak in their own language
- opportunities in place for all to paint, dance, play an instrument, write a poem
- opportunities in place for all to exhibit their art, perform their plays, tell their stories
- histories respected from all viewpoints
- policies in place that recognise different values and aspirations of the community
- respect being shown for values and ideologies
- freedom and opportunities available for the celebration of birth, marriage, and death in accordance with people's religion
- freedom to worship whatever god or higher being.

Is there a measure of how we work and give freedom to our ethnic or disability cultures? Is this about incidence of violence, of festivals, multicultural festivals and most important, our celebration of indigenous people? Or is it about how we make our towns and villages safe though enhancing our environment using the arts – and our interplay with those art works? Or is it something about trying to achieve an improvement in quality of life, diversity in life and experiences, community participation, balance between intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being?

Is it about giving all people access to resources – venues, sport, arts, religion and opportunities being made available to celebrate one's own art? Is it about people with disability also having the resources to express themselves, or people in prisons, or setting up the wonderful Creative Spaces where people with intellectual, physical and psychiatric disabilities can express their own cultures.

controlling or prescribing change - set out to enable people to express in the most appropriate form, their ideals, views and values. Our territorial local authorities and arts organisations should be setting up partnerships and networks to enable programs to be established and owned by our citizens. The enhanced cultures will include those of ethnic, youth, disability, older adults, families, churches and sport groups. This is not to be a speech about the development of the 'third place' - another theme of your centres which celebrate the places people go to be themselves celebrating who they are.

But to culture, and as a conclusion:

Although culture and development<sup>7</sup> are inextricably linked, it is culture that plays the crucial role because it is: 'The sum total of original solutions that a group of human beings invent to adapt to their natural and social environment'.<sup>1</sup> The creative spark – added to sustainable development and resources. Original thought, imagination and the over-used word, innovation.

Increasingly people are seeing culture in the same way as Maori and North American Indian populations have seen culture. Not as something isolated:

Culture is our identity - not an add on

Culture is our identity – not a mirror or exhibition of who we are.

Culture is our identity – not just a way to express or define that identity. Culture is our identity.

Finally in conclusion:

Cultural well-being is the key to social, economic and environmental well-being; the spark of development is creativity, and creativity is linked to the nature of culture and cultural development. It can be measured as the links to social, economic and environmental well-being and sustainability. More work needs to be done to enhance our understanding of cultural well-being and that work should focus on social, economic and environmental well-being, and not be seen as an add-on.

1. UNESCO, (2001), *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, p. 2

2. This definition is in line with the conclusions of the World Conference on Cultural Policies (MONDIACULT, Mexico City, 1982), of the World Commission on Culture and Development (*Our Creative Diversity*, 1995), and of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development (Stockholm, 1998).

3. Claxton Mervyn, (2000), *Culture and Development revisited: Culturelink Unesco special edition*

4. De Varine, Huues, (1976), *La Culture des Autres*, Paris, Seuil,

5. De Cuellar, Javier Perez, (1995), *Our Creative Diversity*, UNESCO Publishing, ISBN UNESCO 92-3-103423-5

6. 2002 Local Government Act: 10 Purpose of Local Government

7. Claxton, Mervyn, (2000), *Culture and Development revisited: Culturelink Unesco special edition*

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## THE FOURTH PILLAR IN THREE COUNTRIES

### AUSTRALIA: *The Australian Context*

Richard Holt, City of Port Phillip, Australia

This paper attempts an argument in reverse. It begins with an assumed understanding of the notion of cultural sustainability and analyses the adoption of cultural sustainability principles by Australian policy makers. It asks how the agenda is progressing and what we have learned in these early stages of the journey. This leads to an admission that perhaps we're not always entirely sure what it is we're pursuing. Upon this realisation the structure of the argument dissolves into conjecture. Certainty gives way to a suspicion that the premises of the argument are less well established than we may have assumed and there may be some that we haven't been paying enough attention to. So I'll attempt to regain a grasp of the topic by returning to the language and the history of it—by establishing first principles for cultural sustainability.

I want to start by telling you a story. But the slightly back to front structure of this presentation means that it will have to wait. I'm not nearly at the beginning yet. Eventually I'll get to my story just before I take my seat again.

So, in summing up, within the lexicon of Australian local government cultural sustainability, cultural vitality, the four pillars and the quadruple bottom line have gained a strong foothold. Local governments throughout the country are using the language and grappling with the concept. It is clear that, in this country, governments at the municipal level have taken the lead on implementing the cultural sustainability agenda. Even within the 'rates, roads and rubbish' framework of our local government associations the concept is gaining credence. Nevertheless I'd argue there is a leadership role waiting for those organisations that they have not yet taken up.

At a state and, to a lesser extent, at a federal level there are encouraging signs. And non-government organisations are playing a pivotal role in driving the changes. But Australia is a long way from reaching the 'across the board' commitment that may be required to ensure that, in a complex globalised world, our cultural strengths are preserved and enhanced for coming generations. That is the challenge that lies ahead.

To reach this conclusion requires examples of course, and I'm aware that any list will be inconclusive. So please, rather than harbouring disappointment if the work of your council or organisation isn't mentioned, come and tell me about it and tell everybody else that you can. The preceding list (which I'm about to get to) is just an indicative snapshot of the levels of engagement in this topic in Australia.

Councils like Marion and Port Adelaide Enfield in South Australia demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainability that is supported in that state, on a statewide level, by Local Agenda 21. While Marion encouragingly describes Local Agenda 21 as a 'framework for Council to start the ball rolling in becoming more responsive to integrating environmental, social, cultural and economic goals' the focus of this project, which has the support of the LGA and State Government departments, leans strongly towards environmental sustainability.

This should be regarded not so much as a problem as an opportunity, as ecological issues offer a ready point of engagement for an expanded notion of sustainability. In fact the four pillars model is often put forward, at least initially, as an extension of either the existing sustainability model (the triple bottom line) or the existing dominant cultural models (CCD and the like). Though there is an element of compromise in such cautious approaches, both have proved effective as ways to insert cultural sustainability into organisational policy frameworks and the all important minds of senior bureaucrats and politicians.

Once established, the language and the message can gain traction and find their way into core policy documents. Community Plans such as Sutherland Shire's 'Shape the Shire' or Cultural Plans such as Brisbane's 'Living in Brisbane 2010' are good examples, incorporating the fourth pillar agenda and shifting the planning focus towards long-term cultural sustainability. Elsewhere the fourth pillar is particularly evident in strategic documents such as health plans and urban planning frameworks.

At the City of Port Phillip in Melbourne the four pillars (including 'cultural vitality') apply to all decision making and, as such, feature in all council documents from internal budgetary considerations to the City Plan. This level of integration and commitment represents a more aggressive approach to cultural sustainability, embedding it deeply into the organisational and community psyche.

scope of sustainability agendas is expanding beyond the notion of ecologically sustainable development. For example the background papers of the Policy Division of Western Australia's Department of Premier and Cabinet indicate an acute appreciation of urban design and economic policy drivers as well as the cultural sustainability work of Jon Hawkes.

At a federal level, a similar path through an expansion of either the existing cultural or ecological sustainability frameworks is more evident than the whole-hearted embrace of the four pillars that many in this room would champion. Uptake is spasmodic but there is evidence of an emerging agenda and it can be found within all facets of public policy. Capital infrastructure and construction, for instance, might not be the first place one would expect to find a commitment to cultural sustainability. Nevertheless the Australian Procurement and Construction Council, sum up the interconnection of the four pillars very neatly, 'Sustainable development ... meets the needs of the present without endangering the needs of future generations. ...'

Sustainable development has four primary objectives:

- minimised risk of environmental damage arising from incomplete knowledge;
- ecological sustainability;
- socio/cultural sustainability; and
- economic sustainability.

Any action that promotes one of these objectives in a way that undermines the long term net viability of another is not sustainable development. (From Australian Procurement & Construction Council Inc, Asset Management 2001, <http://www.apcc.gov.au>, 2001)

It would be grossly remiss not to acknowledge the role of the Cultural Development Network in promoting cultural sustainability. The Network, through conferences such as this, through the publication of Jon Hawkes' important work and through constant lobbying of key bodies has done more than any to engage the cultural sector in the pursuit of the fourth pillar. Other social welfare, planning and policy organisations have also promoted the concept or incorporated the thinking behind cultural sustainability into their own agendas. Examples include the recent work by Jesuit Social Services in the area of community resilience. There is a growing recognition of the need to address the ongoing cultural strength of our communities and the nation as a whole, that has been reinforced by the economic theories of Richard Florida, who, regardless of the criticisms that are levelled at him, has placed culture squarely on the mainstream political and policy landscape.

Experience elsewhere suggests that the Australian system of government, with its traditional tensions between federal and state governments and bureaucracies, its duplication and its cost shifting, may be a barrier to broader implementation. The Canadian example of a national government setting out an agenda for renewal of cities throughout Canada or the capacity to implement universal sustainability requirements across local governments nationally (as occurs in New Zealand) would be difficult to replicate in Australia without cultural and political change on the part of the agencies concerned. Nevertheless there are many opportunities to contribute to the cultural sustainability of this country though they are reliant on first building a broad acceptance of the notion and what it means. Now that we understand what cultural sustainability is we can begin to find new ways of working together to achieve it.

As I've demonstrated (shortly) defining culture is a challenge in itself. We can get too focussed on it at the expense of the overall fourth pillar notion. I suspect there is more value in the consideration of the other component of the phrase, 'sustainability'. Sustainability, in its original incarnation as ecologically sustainable development, was a response to the realisation that the resources of the planet were finite. From this idea sprung the triple bottom line, expanding the scope of corporate responsibility to also include social impacts. The balance sheet metaphor of the triple (or quadruple) bottom-line provides a clear indicator of what is meant by sustainability. Quite simply sustainability means retaining assets or replacing expended assets so that risks are reduced and long-term viability is secured. On behalf of future generations it would seem the least we could aim for.

Culture, in a nutshell, is what defines us. Individually it helps us understand our place in the group. And as a group, or at least a multitude of interconnected groups, it identifies what we aspire to be. It is also the way we live our lives—the things we fill them with that give them meaning. It is not a singular thing but rather a constantly evolving web of activities and practices and understandings.

It contains not just the bits that we love to talk about as culture—arts and creativity, community engagement, and sport and recreation (even though we often include the last two as something of an afterthought). I suspect there's a cultural 'too hard basket' that actually contains some of the things that would be the first that someone from another place or time would consider when asked, what is Australia's culture like? Surely they'd talk about our political system and our system of trade and the way we record and report our stories. So why don't we include those things up front when we think about culture?

from across the country and from all walks of life in the pursuit of their creativity. It provides a platform for casual involvement but also for instruction, support and even professional opportunities for those who are identified through the process as having particular talents. It is demonstrably egalitarian and is broadly embraced by both active and passive participants alike.

For those who work tirelessly to engage the creative energies of people at a community level it's a tantalising proposition. But, of course, we don't have to imagine too hard—the example exists—it's called Australian Idol. It may not be a perfect vehicle for cultural development but to deny its significance would be foolish, and not because of its undisputed impact but because it would narrow, at the point where culture happens, the way we define it. The fact that *Idol* is driven by advertising and media industry concerns and is the local incarnation of a global formula should not diminish it as a cultural product.

But when we talk about culture we sometimes still shy away from accepting, as part of our culture, those elements that we feel are beyond our control, beyond the capacity to influence locally. That is a core challenge in a globalising world—one that we ignore at our peril ['ignore at our peril' - now there's a common phrase that really sums up sustainability]. I suspect it's a point that other speakers might wish to contest but, as driving forces within the interconnected systems by which we organise ourselves politics, media and business are essentially cultural.

I'm not arguing that we should turn our attention away from the community strengthening and development roles that have been a significant part of cultural work in recent decades. But our frame of reference in understanding culture needs to recognise both local and global contexts. In fact, far from devaluing the role of cultural development practices, the fourth pillar brings culture, in all its manifestations, into the main flow of policy, creating for all cultural initiatives, including traditional community based activities, a position of strength. And a position of strength is a great place to start—which means I'm nearly done.

It leaves just one question... why all the nonsense about writing this presentation in reverse? Yes, it has been a conceit on my part to try to keep you all awake. And its success, I'll acknowledge, has been partial at best. But more importantly proceeding backwards is symbolic of our capacity to find new ways to conceive things across time—which is exactly what makes sustainability the challenge that it is. It obliges us to conceive the implications of our actions on a world we don't yet know. It inverts the tendency of policy to be essentially reactive and places it instead within the realm of imagination. At a time when so much of the policy agenda in Australia is regressive and insular or dominated by economic agendas, negotiating a course towards becoming truly sustainable as a nation in a sustainable world will require political dexterity, commitment and, quite possibly, a degree of good fortune.

Which brings me to the end of my story. The story I want to begin with. Like the murder scene at the start of some grainy film noir the end is often the best place to start. The story, of course, is topsy-turvy.

My son Thomas is fifty now and in my dotage I look back fondly on a point in time when I dared to imagine what his life would be like. The world today has a peculiar equilibrium. Sure there are problems, but that's life. We got together, nations and governments, and sorted out electricity generation and the internal combustion engine and temperatures are finally starting to stabilise. How could we have thought it would somehow solve itself?!

Even though the century got off to an inauspicious start, we held on to a core set of national values. Our democracy seems to survive whatever we throw at it. The new constitution has strengthened it after the protocols that held the old one together became so brittle. It acknowledges our past so that we can believe truly in who we are. It also incorporates a commitment to the future and makes it clear that the good life of all our generations is a goal of government beyond the goals of prosperity and care.

I love talking with my granddaughter now about her future. In between our gloating about the Bomber's 24th premiership she's been telling me about the stuff they do at school for Australian heritage. Republic day is coming up and she wants help designing a 'twenties costume to celebrate. I'm more comfortable now about the life she'll have because her community is strong. It provides her with lots to do, with friendship and support and with access to the creative expressions that chart her aspirations and those of her country.

Around the time of the global security scare, just when national politics seemed a darkly apprehensive thing, a model of considered action for the long-term good of the country emerged. It wasn't embraced immediately—old habits die hard—but it did influence leaders and influenced people, their constituents, to expect more from them. Maybe that was a turning point.

Anyway you know the rest of the story. In fact you know it backwards. Communications and IT in the 1990s, big hair and corporate greed in the eighties, disco and punk and a bloke called Gough, feminism, Vietnam, post war immigration, the second

displacement and exploitation.

And as the story concludes, right at the start of it all, there are, as in many works of literature, multiple endings. In one a large group of hardened men and women and a smallish band of soldiers, the last of their kind, load themselves into rickety square rigged boats and sail to an island near France. On disembarking they go about the populace performing acts of kindness and civic honour, returning handkerchiefs and small change into the pockets of unsuspecting merchants and restoring dishevelled officers of the crown to a state of regimental formality.

Another ending takes place not far from here. A family group breaks open oysters and mussels gathered that day. The kids can't sit still—they race around kicking up the dust and making a racket. But the older people relax. As they eat and talk they warm themselves around the coals on which eels are roasting. As the oily flesh of the fish singes it fills the air with a pungent reminder of the wonderful bounty of this place.

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## THE FOURTH PILLAR IN THREE COUNTRIES

CANADA: Adapted from the Keynote Address to the Creative City Network, Canada

Judy Spokes on behalf of Yazmine Laroche, Head of the Cities Secretariat, Canada

The first thing that needs to be said is that Yazmine Laroche, Head of the Cities Secretariat, Canada, was to present on the Canadian experience with cultural sustainability and the four pillars approach. Unfortunately her Prime Minister, Paul Martin, trumped us, insisting that Yazmine remain in Canada to complete some important policy work for him. As you'll see, that is one of the strengths of cultural sustainability policy making in Canada—it has been embraced across all tiers of government and is embedded in the national political agenda.

We then approached Nancy Duxbury, Director of Research and Information for the Creative City Network, to present a paper as she had already been booked to be part of our local government workshop. However for family reasons she had to cancel her trip at short notice. We were obviously disappointed not to have her involvement as her organisation has played an important role in supporting the fourth pillar approach in Canada.

Fortunately Nancy, Yazmine and their staff have assisted us by providing recent papers and helped us put together this presentation.

This presentation of the Canadian Fourth Pillar experience is based, in particular on Yazmine's keynote address to the Creative City Network conference which (due to Yazmine's late unavailability) was presented by the Cities Secretariat's Adam Ostry. It also draws on Adam's own panel presentation at the same conference.

The content of those presentations (ideas and facts) has been reframed to address the purpose and context of this conference – to provide an overview of cultural sustainability in Canada, its focus, the infrastructure and thinking that supports it and the progress of its implementation. Where appropriate the language is taken, with only minor changes, from those sources.

As it has contributed much to the momentum of this topic, the New Deal for Cities and Communities seems an appropriate place to begin to contextualise the fourth pillar in Canada. The New Deal is a national planning and infrastructure support agenda that has been championed by the Prime Minister since at least 2002, before his elevation to national leader.

Recognizing that culture plays an important role in the long-term health and prosperity of a community and acting on that realization are two different things. That's where the New Deal for Cities and Communities comes in. It's a commitment that extends beyond rhetoric to practical ways to fund communities now and into the future so that communities can confidently begin to set their own course. As Prime Minister Martin stated recently,

Our New Deal for Cities and Communities is about making the lives of Canadians better by making the places they live better. It began in our first budget with a rebate for municipalities on the GST – which translates into a federal investment in communities of some \$7-billion over 10 years. It will continue this fall as we work with provinces, cities and communities on the mechanism and ramp-up for our transfer of a portion of the gas tax – which will mean an additional federal investment of \$2-billion a year when fully implemented.

Paul Martin, Prime Minister's Reply to the Speech from the Throne, October 5, 2004

Because the New Deal is such a prominent expression of the policy aspirations of the Canadian Government, and because it intrinsically acknowledges the contribution of culture to sustainable cities it is a cornerstone in construction of a significant national cultural policy agenda. Canada is fortunate to have a developed network of government and non-government agencies who are contributing to the implementation of both the New Deal agenda and the broader notion of cultural sustainability. It's what Adam Ostry refers to as the 'Federal Family'. I think you'll agree it's an impressive list.

Firstly there is the Department of Canadian Heritage and its portfolio agencies with a cultural mandate (which include the Canada Council for the Arts, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the National Film Board among others). Canadian heritage plays a key leadership role and its experience and research in community-based cultural initiatives (such as the Cultural Spaces and Cultural Capitals programs) is greatly valued. Complementing this work are agencies such as Parks Canada, Public Works and Government Services, and the Department of Infrastructure and Communities which incorporates the Cities Secretariat, the agency directly responsible for implementing the New Deal strategies. These are important partners in the area of

Departments such as Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), Department of Social Development (SD) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) look after the social inclusion dimension of culture particularly the needs of immigrants, youth, Aboriginal people, the voluntary sector and the social economy. Regional Development Agencies create links between creativity and innovation and regional development issues. The Rural Secretariat is an important office because it recognises that the scale and scope of issues differ across big and small communities and require different approaches.

Statistics Canada's groundbreaking work on a project reporting on trends and conditions in Canada's twenty-seven Census Metropolitan Areas is important. The nine chapters provide in-depth analysis based on 20-year time series of census data, 1981-2001, and represent the first time such a comprehensive statistical study has been undertaken on Canadian cities. The Culture Chapter has just been released (October 22nd).

Working with these national agencies are a range of important organizations such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities—a key partner for municipal engagement. Their readiness to become involved has been reflected by the increased profile of creativity, cultural planning and development issues at their most recent AGM in Edmonton. The Creative City Network itself plays an important role, is a valuable resource on all fourth pillar issues and publishes an excellent biweekly e-newsletter. Interest groups and think tanks, such as the Canadian Policy Research Network also play an important part (including interesting work by Neil Bradford on Creative Cities).

Providing a conduit between government and communities is the PM's Advisory Committee on Cities and Communities with a mandate to provide advice to the PM and the Minister on the New Deal. This committee is chaired by a former premier of British Columbia (Mike Harcourt) and includes 14 members with regional and sectorial experience and expertise in different domains. The Cultural Subcommittee of this group will be devoted to an exploration of cultural sustainability.

One of the acknowledged challenges of the Fourth Pillar in Canada is its relative infancy as a component of public policy. Even those with a keen interest admit that the cultural pillar is at an earlier stage of development than the other pillars and that to some degree it is the least defined and is less well understood by decision makers. There is some work to do to make this pillar more resonant and robust. And, not surprisingly, Canada is looking to the international context, including the work being done at a local government level in Australia.

One area in which decision makers are still coming to terms with the Fourth Pillar is in defining its scope. In Canada the focus is on the role of arts and creative practice in making communities that are robust and sustainable.

It is said that culture, for all the rich meaning with which Canadians imbue the word, is one of those things that are easy to take for granted. But the fourth pillar substantiates the role artists play in the fabric of towns and cities, and the colour and texture they add to neighbourhoods. It confirms the value of the great diversity of the Canadian community, with immigration now accounting for more than 50% of total population growth—the different dialects, foods and lifestyles that are encountered every day. Culture, as one Ottawa city councillor put it, is 'the poetry of a city's existence'.

In the Speech from the Throne that opened the most recent session of Canadian parliament on Oct 5th, the Government recognised that 'what makes our communities vibrant and creative is the quality of their cultural life'. The word 'culture' can refer to an all-encompassing notion of 'ways of life' or a more traditional view by discipline (arts, heritage, cultural industries, etc.). There is, in Canada as elsewhere, no single, universally accepted definition for culture that applies in the term 'cultural sustainability'.

So perhaps the starting point, rather than focusing on 'culture' should be to consider sustainability—'meeting the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland Commission 1987). Sustainability is not a fixed state of harmony, but rather a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs. It is a concept that, in a governmental context, also recognises the importance of community involvement.

Therefore a Canadian definition of cultural sustainability that might also work in other jurisdictions could be:- the highest attainable level of creative expression and participation in cultural life, measured against the lowest impact /disruption to the environment, to social aspects of society, and to the economy.

Canadian cultural agencies see increasing acknowledgement and inclusion of cultural dimensions in international sustainability discourse, including, in some jurisdictions the identification of a distinct 'fourth' pillar dedicated to 'culture', expanding beyond

cultural policy. Also of note is the extension of the triple bottom line to a quadruple bottom line for municipal planning purposes in parts of Australia and the Melbourne Principles for Sustainable Cities, Principle 6 which states 'Recognise and build on the distinctive characteristics of cities, including their human and cultural values, history and natural systems'.

While seeing culture as a distinct dimension of sustainable communities is significant progress, a challenge with culture sustainability is to not diminish its importance by seeing it as a 'frill' pillar - in other words, nice to have if the other, more pressing social, economic and environmental issues of a community are being addressed. Rather, we can view cultural sustainability objectives as part of the process of meeting a community's basic needs, particularly where they relate to social sustainability and quality of life. The close inter-relationships between the four pillars of culture, environment, social equity and economy are seen as extremely important.

Canada has made much of the linkage, exposed in particular by Richard Florida, between the cultural life of cities and their economic success. The Creative City Network also shares this view, stating that: 'Strong, creative communities attract business and industry, which bring employment opportunities and add to the wealth of the community'.

It's fascinating to see this kind of process in action, and Canada offers a number of living laboratories where the magnetism between people and place is occurring quite naturally. You can see it in Old Montreal, an area that not long ago was the preserve of souvenir shops and restaurants that catered to the transient tourist crowd that dominated the area. Today, the area is being rapidly transformed into a residential neighbourhood, as actors, photographers, musicians and artists take up residence in the area's old stone buildings.

Along with them has come a burgeoning mini-economy of funky coffee shops, bars and boutiques. You can literally feel the energy on the streets. Another example of this was highlighted this past summer by Ontario's public television network when it set out to find Ontario's most creative community. The winner - chosen from some very impressive entrants - was Bancroft, a small community that sits just south of Algonquin Park. Best known for its rich mineral deposits, Bancroft is literally teeming with culture from amateur theatre to artists and craftspeople. Virtually everyone in the community is involved in some form of cultural pursuit it seems. The draw for most of those featured in the documentary that the town put together as its contest entry was the pristine, healthy environment, the rural lifestyle and the fact that they could make a living with their art there.

As with the economic benefits the social pay-offs for addressing cultural sustainability can be great- positively influencing social cohesion/social capital, capacity building, inter-cultural trust, public safety, youth engagement and community health. For example the National Longitudinal Study of Children and Youth (1998/99) found that Canadian children who participated in activities like music, arts and clubs had reduced risk of obesity, higher self esteem and better social interaction, greatly reduced likelihood of smoking and overall better health.

Given the fairly broad understanding of cultural sustainability, there is a capacity, in Canada, to work cooperatively across the various levels of government. Examples such as the recent Winnipeg and Vancouver Agreements providing national, provincial and local governments with a framework for cooperation. The Vancouver Agreement, for example, is a commitment by the federal government, the Province of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver to work together to support sustainable economic, social and community development in Vancouver. The Agreement addresses three main themes: community health and safety; economic and social development; and community capacity building. (<http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/planning/dtes/agreement.htm>).

Cooperation around the issue of cultural sustainability is also demonstrated by Culture Montreal's engagement of Catalytix Inc. (Richard Florida's research company) working with three levels of government to do an extensive statistical and qualitative study of the Montreal region's role in the creative economy, including assessments of its talent, technology, tolerance and territory assets, and qualitative and quantitative assessment of its creativity assets.

Broad support for the cultural agenda does not end with the role of government. Evidence of the community's passion for culture can be found in the furor that arose in Ottawa when arts funding was threatened during the city's budget deliberations early this year. Signs proclaiming support for the arts went up on lawns and in store fronts, and more than a thousand people marched on City Hall to protest the proposed cuts.

Wisely, Ottawa City councillors took the arts programs off the table. With good reason, too, since Ottawa is home to some 35,000 people who work directly or indirectly in the cultural sector. As the spectre of another Ottawa winter approaches it's not the weather that keeps those culture workers in the city. Weather - no matter how inclement - is no match for the pull of those

Canada's vision is of a shared, long-term concept of what Canadians want their communities to look like. It will require applied planning, purposeful planning, planning that looks way out into the future, yet is rooted in the reality of the community, and is built by the people with the most at stake. Vision is a critical piece in making long-term planning effective and purposeful, but equally important is the need to include multiple stakeholders in the planning process, and to have clear and measurable outcomes. The need to look beyond the short- and medium-term... to 100 years out and beyond... presents a challenge, but it's worth rising to. The challenge is first to have the opportunity to dream and then to construct the roadmap to make the dream real.

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*Judy Spokes is Director of the Cultural Development Network, an independent non-profit group that links communities, artists and local councils across Victoria. The Network has played a key role in expanding the understanding of cultural vitality in the local government sector.*

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## ALIVE TO STORIED LANDSCAPES:

*Story-telling, sense of place and social inclusion*

Dr Martin Mulligan, RMIT University

Stories can help create a sense of belonging to local places that can (I don't say will) encourage people to treat their local lifeworlds with more respect. However, I want to start my journey towards that point at a rather unusual place – an undefined spot on a lonely stretch of highway where you might join poet Mark O'Connor in getting out of the car, '...not because here seems special,' O'Connor notes, 'but because no place is real inside a car'.

From the verge of the road the grass in the adjoining paddock looks monotonous but as you enter it you notice a beaten wallaby path and begin to wonder how a hunter once contemplated the same scene.

'But you cannot focus – your attention is global  
Crushed grass has no meaning on Tokyo's computers....

You could walk on a snake  
with your mind on another continent.'

You soon feel a need to get back into the car

'But for now you are in this place and of it  
and all its million years'

O'Connor's poem, *The Visit*, reminds us that nowhere is nowhere and that every place has its stories if we can attune ourselves to them. However, we live in a society that has a low level of attentiveness to the particular places we dwell in or pass through. I wonder, for example, how many people in this room will know the story of how the street or suburb you live in got their names and I wonder how many have pondered the relevance or otherwise of the place names we have inherited.

Yet, the complex processes that are often lumped together under the title 'globalization' appear to be increasing our appetite to have a sense of belonging to one or more locales in the world; to know where 'home' is at any one time. In the Globalism Institute we are interested in identity politics and the politics of belonging and not belonging. These things have a big impact on social tensions and the prospects for social cohesion. They have a major impact on the sustainability of local communities. And sense of place, or the lack of it, is a good place to begin an exploration of issues related to belonging and not belonging, and of social inclusion and exclusion. It is the ground on which questions of environmental sustainability and social sustainability of local communities overlap.

In Australia it is always instructive to compare the deep and complex sense of place that underpinned the identity of Aboriginal people with the more shallow sense of belonging that non-indigenous people have had. As the anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner observed in his Boyer lectures in 1968, Aboriginal people tend to feel sorry for the rest of us because 'the whitefella has got no dreaming' and it's a pity that remark was not taken more seriously before now. Of course, we cannot replicate the depth of place relationships that Aboriginal people built with their modes of living over many thousands of years – and nor should we try – but we can work on our own kind of whitefella dreaming that will 're-enchant' the places in which we live and we can sensitise ourselves to the stories that are embedded in those places.

In a series of paintings completed in 1953 and 1954, Russell Drysdale tried to capture the strength and resilience in the faces of Aboriginal people who refused to be separated from the land. In the painting called 'Shopping Day' we see a group dressed up in their 'finest' for a trip into Cairns. In this image it's the buildings and the exaggerated war statue that seem surreal and, as Geoffrey Dutton has suggested, the suggestion is that a colonization that worked from the head down failed to disrupt the connection of bare feet to ground.



Getting our feet to the ground can be a useful metaphor for sensitizing ourselves to local places and landscapes that we might otherwise glide across. And I think it is useful to combine that with the idea that anywhere we do stop to pay attention we can dig up the stories that

have turned spaces into places. As the Nobel-winning poet Seamus Heaney has put it, places are both 'humanised' and 'humanising' at the same time.

The prevailing discourses on 'sustainability' tend to be a bit dry and a bit stale. The word 'sustainability' has been used glibly by many; overworked by enthusiasts; partially corrupted by others. It is not a word we can abandon because it fills a void in our language and consciousness. However, I welcome the idea that cultural work can add a 'fourth pillar' to the discourse and I would even go further in suggesting that the pillar should be a wedge that will penetrate the rest of the discourse and then infect it with colour, feeling, creativity and intense dialogue. I think David Malouf had an important point when he told an interviewer in 1996 that the job of a creative writer should not be to simply describe a place but rather to mythologise it so that readers will think more deeply 'the lives we live here'. We westerners have debased the concept of mythology, even trying to deny that our consciousness is shaped by our prevailing mythologies, transmitted through our cultural practices. Perhaps another way to talk about the fourth pillar is to say that we need to work on a mythology that can inspire people to live with more respect for the natural environment and other people. Is that another way of saying we need to work on our 'whitefella dreaming'?

Much of what we learn and communicate takes the form of stories, even though attempts have also been made to marginalize the importance of stories on the basis that they are 'not reliable' ways of constructing and communicating 'the truth'. Fortunately, the modernist belief in a single road to a universal 'truth' has been exposed as a dangerous illusion and stories are making a powerful comeback, even for social scientists. We have all experienced the power of good storytelling – in books, films, even in advertising when it works. For my purpose today, the important thing about rich stories – like any good 'art' – is that they only purport to offer partial insights and tend to defy universal interpretation. They might be manipulated for particular purposes but they can also be 'read' in other, perhaps contradictory, ways. So they stimulate — rather than close down — thought, reflection and dialogue. They can be interpreted and reinterpreted, recycled and revised as the 'data' for collective attempts at meaning-making. Through rich stories we can build a mythology that can connect the past to the future; an evolving mythology that can challenge, inspire and reinspire. And, of course, good stories – lived and 'found' – can be told by all kinds of people in all modes of communication (from a yarn to an art installation). They can make a serious discourse more aesthetically pleasing and this makes the discourse more sustainable.

I think it is safe to say that more and more Australian writers, film-makers, visual artists, and musicians are interested in stories emanating from particular people-place relationships. Specific places, or kinds of places, are more likely to feature in the stories that are told. This might range from the romantic escapism of something like the very popular *Sea Change* to the more satirical take on a kind of undifferentiated form of suburban life in the equally popular *Kath and Kim*. Leading writers, such as Tim Winton and David Malouf, are very place-conscious in their work and in Melbourne we have writers like Shane Maloney trying to mythologise places they know and love. I think that Arnold Zable's work is particularly important for contemporary Australia because he is exploring some complex — sometimes painful — ways in which different peoples and places have changed each other. Employing some of the traditional skill of a good Yiddish storyteller, he is interested in how people might adapt to new circumstances without necessarily losing a sense of identity that originated in other places. Some of his characters feel profoundly dislocated (a good word for my purposes); others try too hard to remake themselves; and some manage quite well to sustain multiple identities. Their lives are not easy but they sometimes find 'scraps of heaven' (to quote the title of his recent book) within the new lifeworlds they are forging in Melbourne. Public performances by Arnold Zable often feature wonderful songs and music by local musicians working with Yiddish, Greek and Italian musical traditions and when he launched *Scraps of Heaven* the day after re-election of the Howard government, he made the point that just as John Howard heads into his ninth year as Prime Minister, his book is set in 1958 when Bob Menzies was also in his ninth year in charge. Perhaps we can take heart from the fact that the local community in Carlton continued to find ways of making multiculturalism work through the long years of anglo-centric conservatism coming out of Canberra.

Zable's work reminds us that we don't have to romanticize the past in order to bring it into our contemporary discourses on belonging and not belonging. One of the leading scholars on sense of place research in the 1990s, Doreen Massey of London's Open University, has warned against what she called 'place essentialism', in which dominant images of a place, that usually hark back to a 'more glorious' past, hinder an understanding of how a place is changing under the impact of broader socio-economic and demographic changes. Stories from the past can be used to create images of a place that can exclude women and minority communities, so sense of place is an area of contestation that should not be left to those who would practice such exclusions.

In some work I am doing at the Globalism Institute I am trying to use an inclusive approach to the collection of place-related stories. This involves asking the opinions of lots of people about the people I should be talking to (before shortlisting from all the suggestions) and then offering some commentary on what stories were easy to get and what the gaps appear to be. Let me illustrate this with some examples from the research I have done in Daylesford and Broadmeadows for a report we wrote for VicHealth on sense of place and community 'resilience'.

Daylesford and Hepburn Springs are popular with domestic tourists because of the hilly terrain, cool climate and 'old-world'



migrants who extoll the health benefits of mineral waters and the two towns have long had a surprisingly cosmopolitan feel to them. During the 1960s and 70s the area fell out of favour as a tourist destination with its European linkages probably unfashionable. The story of the Swiss-Italian families who came to Victoria for the gold rush and chose to settle the area where the springs are found probably had little appeal at the time and visitors would have wondered at the prevalence of Italian names on local businesses. Now the Swiss-Italian heritage is very much in fashion and the story is used heavily in selling the area to tourists; with the Swiss-Italian Festa being the biggest cultural event on a busy calendar. I spoke to a number of people with Italian surnames and very broad Australian accents who were very keen to discuss the relevance of the Swiss-Italian heritage. This is a good story, and it is probably unique in Australia, but it was much harder to find out about the community of Cornish tin-miners who clustered on Cornish Hill during the gold days, or the Chinese gold-diggers turned successful market gardeners who were displaced from their valley to make way for the artificial lake that is now a major attraction of Daylesford. Towns that now want to present a cosmopolitan image of themselves are ambivalent about the past dominance of the logging industry or even the textile factories, the last of which closed down last December. Few visitors to the town would realize that the pleasant hilly terrain you pass through as you approach Daylesford from the south is largely the result of the huge mullock heaps created by intensive gold-digging.

And the stories of the Aboriginal people who lived in this area are largely hidden from view, although some work has been done on the story of the failed 'settlement' at Franklindford (just north of Dayleford) where a number of Aboriginal families were lured in the early part of the 19th century to learn about European farming practices.

Of course, history is used selectively, that can't be helped, but a narrow use of history can make a place seem much more one-dimensional than it needs to be. A number of people I have interviewed in Dayleford hate the fact that Tourism Victoria uses the phrase 'Pure indulgence' to attract visitors to Daylesford and Hepburn Springs – arguing that it gives a very misleading impression of what the community is like – but this is partly a product of the way the area has marketed itself in recent years through the selective use of stories.

I think many Victorians are surprised to hear that Broadmeadows is an area of significant natural beauty with a rich and interesting history. The prevailing image has been of a depressed community living at the edge of the city, at the end of the railway line; in houses plonked in empty paddocks. There is an interesting and complex story told by people who were placed in public housing in the area in the 1950s and 60s but now the community is genuinely cosmopolitan; Broadmeadows, for example, has the highest proportion of residents from Middle East origins in Melbourne. This created specific concerns about the tensions that might erupt in the community following the September 11 events in the US and the Bali bombings the following year, and I was inspired to hear what religious and civic leaders in the area did to calm those tensions.

However, an interesting story I want to share with you now is that the construction of a very large shopping centre in what has become the Broadmeadows CBD has led to the demise of smaller shopping centres in the surrounding areas. However, in both the Olsen Place (Broadmeadows) and Dallas shopping centres, people from the 'ethnic' communities have stepped in to revive sagging businesses and both shopping centres have become 'centres of excellence' for Middle-Eastern food in particular. Not surprisingly, older residents see this as a 'takeover' and they mourn the loss of the old and familiar shops. However, the Council is convinced they will get used to the idea that these have become specialist shopping centres and they have tried to reflect this in a major refurbishment of the Dallas shopping precinct. When I talked to the Turkish mayor of Hume City Council a year ago, he pointed out that Turkish people from all over Melbourne had gathered in Dallas shopping centre to watch the progress of the Turkish national team in the 2002 soccer World Cup on large screens and there had been no problems at all.

We used stories like this for a report to VicHealth called *Creating Resilient Communities* and you can get a copy of that report from VicHealth if you are interested. However, there are, of course, many ways in which such stories can be shared. Some local histories are good – we have a good one for Brunswick, for example – but some are very dry and narrow. Some local museums are interesting but they struggle for funding and resources. Local history enthusiasts often do a very good job in collecting oral histories but they often don't know what to do with it all. Personally, I like the idea of more stories being put into signs at appropriate places because you can get a glimpse of stories in situ.

One of the best examples I have come across for the sharing of place stories is the 'Memories, Margins and Markers' project that was overseen by the artist Julie Shiels in the Port Phillip area. I understand that Julie collected hundreds of diverse stories and then turned some of them into art installations, some temporary and others fairly permanent. Others will speak of this at the conference; I particularly like what Julie did with Maria's story, a local South Melbourne character better known as 'Diamond Lil' and her story is carved into her old chair now located, along with her old shoes, outside the Temperance Hall in Napier Street. And I love the representation of 'Tommy's Story' to mark the fact that dockworkers like Tommy often left their 'street clothes' on



The second photo of Tommy's clothes includes my five-year-old daughter Indu who just may be a Diamond Lil in the making. She was certainly fascinated by the clothes on the sea wall.

Highlighting Tommy's story is, of course, a selective use of history. But in this case it is a way of telling stories that are quickly fading from view. A real problem for social diversity in a place like Port Phillip is the 'gentrification' that is turning the area into the preserve of the wealthy and upwardly mobile, thus marginalizing people who look increasingly out of place in such environments. I know that the Port Phillip Council is fighting a noble fight to sustain social diversity in the area. They need ongoing community support to succeed in this aim and I think that this is better achieved by demonstrating that diversity makes local life more interesting for all, rather than by appealing to a sense of charity for the 'needy'. I recently wrote a paper called 'The Aesthetics of Messiness in Sustaining Social Diversity' because I think that we need to demonstrate that an obsession with tidiness can create boring social environments.

Let me conclude by saying that stories are the way to catch public attention and stimulate thought and debate, because:

There are so many stories that there is much to choose from. A good storyteller has much to work with in crafting powerful narratives that will circulate widely. Stories can range from recent events to local legends that have long escaped the constraints of verisimilitude and have entered the realm of mythology. Stories can move people emotionally and they are often remembered far into the future. It may be difficult to tell when a story that is carried in the heart of an individual will be revived to work its magic once again. Stories can circulate for a long time.

Stories tend to defy single interpretation, although they may be abused in that way. Certainly the interpretation of stories can be challenged by other interpretations. Stories can be shared in many ways, in many settings, and in many modes of communication. They can be fun to work on and share.

However, we should keep in mind that this kind of work faces some strong impediments. For example:

Gentrification and related socio-economic trends can re-segregate communities that have known real diversity and marginalize those who can be the memory of the past. The privatization and commercialization of public spaces makes it harder for people to meet and talk in spontaneous ways. People have become more fearful of strangers and tend to live more completely inside their individual homes. Prevailing fashions in building landscape design can destroy local idiosyncrasies and local icons.

Organisations like VicHealth need support to continue their emphasis on community wellbeing as preventative health care, rather than the more traditional emphasis on addressing downstream health problems. In our busyness, most of us have little time to take an active interest in our local communities and to connect with local lifeworlds. Those of us who can engage with local stories as part of our paid work are probably lucky because it is a fascinating thing to do.

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## NEIGHBOURHOODS TALKING: *Graffiti, Art and The Public Domain*

Dr Christine Dew

This paper is about ways of seeing. It is also about art and aesthetics, communities and public space. For several years now I have been collecting photographs and stories of public spaces in my neighbourhood which I have gotten to know quite well on long walks. Walking is a great way to get to know where you live and to find out what goes on there and who else inhabits public space. It is also a great way to dissipate fear; by getting to know your neighbourhood you make it your own, you replace fear of the unknown with detailed knowledge and joyous encounters of the everyday. I prefer walking around to buying an alarm system and I love living in an area where lots of other people walk around too. Graffiti stories are one of the things I collect on my walks, graffiti is evidence of activity in my neighbourhood that I don't usually get to see happening. I wish to propose some ways of seeing graffiti because ways of seeing, as John Berger notes, are powerful things. Not everyone sees things the same way; some ways of seeing may even have the power to make a 'problem' go away. I want to ask if different ways of seeing graffiti might even make this 'problem' go away.

### **Graffiti is everywhere.**

Graffiti seems to be everywhere. Colour and line sings from walls and doors and pavements, from signal boxes, fences, light poles, and benches. Inside and outside the trains, on the platforms and under them, names and messages are written in paint. Cartoon characters grin, stenciled zebras and elephants charm, penguins fly towards freedom. Political images menace with dire warnings for the future, love is declared and denied; whimsy and resistance cohabit in a jumble of statements and images. There is the blunt political message, the obtuse hieroglyph of the grafter, the repetitive signature of the tagger, the spontaneous outburst of the occasional scribbler, the artistic intentions of the muralist, the clean lines of the stenciler. There is flamboyance, playfulness, anger, artistry and critique. The coincidental magic of their juxtaposition makes my world a gallery as I wander through the public spaces of my neighbourhood.

I am as entranced by the squiggles traced in paint on rusting poles as I am by the squiggles worked by insects into tree bark in the bush. I have a similar fascination; who laboured to make these marks? What accidents of time and weather and traffic and decomposition make this composition of texture and colour and line so compelling? What story of inhabitation is being told in these little scratchings? What code will decipher the hieroglyphs of my neighborhood, human or otherwise?

Humans labour up and down their open spaces in the neighbourhoods in which they live. Like ants on a tree. They travel, recreate and work; they go through life cycles. They commute, play and exercise; interacting with their environment and leaving hieroglyphic traces that also mark the landscape. Footprints wear into walking tracks, bicycle tyres cut ridges through the parks, walking trails get paved and then graffitied, gardens are planted, shelters fashioned, rubbish drifts, disperses and is collected, posters attach to every available surface, trees are planted, pruned and removed — graffiti is painted.

The grey paint on a power pole is flecked with rust, the fine white flourishes of a tagger's name (BerkA) dance with the paint and red eruptions of iron mixed with damp. The detail of paint on rusting pole is as accidental, seasonal, ephemeral, coincidental, as any pattern on a tree. The picture as dependent on weather, seasons, interaction and age as any on a tree. The graffiti tells me about activity in my neighborhood, about the movements of someone and their ecstatic recognition of a canvas — just as the tree bark tells me about the vicissitudes of the seasons and the activity of the ants. Someone came by here and left a mark.

I'm full of questions. Who are these someones who work in the dark? Who are Rollerdan, Scooter-Joe, Jane-X and the Sloco Crew? Why does Naomi declare her love for Rollerdan when he loves someone else? What great love inspired the medieval repetitions of 'Vixen I love thee' on the fences up near Lygon Street? Why does Zorka add his flourish to a jumble of other tags on the soft green paint of a signal box? Who thinks to write their name on every single slat on a bench, and carefully chooses pink to contrast with their heritage green? Who feels moved to comment on the war? To paint mermaids under bridges, cartoon characters on signal boxes? Who stencils elephants and weeping children onto laneway walls?

Someone recognised the potential for thin white lines on rust-flecked grey. Someone added to the cacophony of colour and line on a signal box. Somebody planned and carefully executed that full colour drawing. Some bodies move about in public space, performing a dance of bravery and rebellion, risk and artistry. At night. To communicate... something.

I find it democratic. It incites my curiosity and fills me with joy. There are people in my public spaces and they are

me about private property. Billboards, road signs, street advertisements. But they don't have the chaotic democracy of the people's voices.

These signs tell me about business, about fashion, they generate needs for compliance or consumption. They tell me where I can and cannot park. How to come and go. How I should look, where I should shop, the kind of body I fail to have. They tell me about all the things I do not have but should aspire to. They tell me about my lack: of power, of capital, of legitimacy.

But on the walls, and over some of the billboards the disenfranchised engage in public debate without the power of the media, without the need for capital in order to speak. They make political comments without the backing of political parties, public art without the blessing of the art establishment; they send messages without the contrivances of advertising - outside of the market economy and outside of the law. They make public spaces their own. And their speech is in excess, it's more than what we need to sell goods and direct the traffic, and more than what is allowed by strict adherence to the 'law' and order of things.

We can build a picture of the irrepressible life-force of our city by attending to the ephemeral, incidental and 'low' art of the laneways, waterways and railway lines; poster fragments flapping in the breeze, declarations of love or hate scratched into bus shelter walls. Philosopher Georges Bataille was always keen to look at what others preferred not to see. It was there, he thought, that we could find the most important things about ourselves and our society. I think he might have been entranced by the proliferation of graffiti in contemporary cities, for its randomness, virulence and contingency. I think he would have thought that graffiti has much to tell us - about what we are afraid of, of what we wish to become, of what we must expel in order to create a certain 'order'. What do our walls tell us about the kind of society we have made?

I want now to relate some of these graffiti stories, collected in the City of Yarra where this work is based, in order to suggest some ways of seeing graffiti in public space.

### **Angel - Graffiti, Art and Aesthetics**

A large park in inner suburban Melbourne – North Fitzroy. On the concrete wall of a cricket practice pitch a man and woman labour with paint, a ladder and brushes. A pale, blue-eyed angel with full lips and richly feathered wings looks quizzically out from the wall, now a sky blue and green background to her magnificence. She is beautiful. Away from the angel a woman paints yellow rectangles to frame two round faces; the larger face serene, bald and slightly 'Eastern' in appearance, the smaller looks comically surprised. Its frightened eyes and big ears sit below hair that stands on end. The faces have been there a long time, and the artists were asked to retain them in their mural design by residents in the street where they are painting. I am told the faces were painted by local children. Do the children still live in this street? Or have the faces they painted long ago become part of the landscape of 'the local' that comforts in its familiarity and whose recognition of detail is a sign of belonging? One of the signs we collect in our neighborhood as we map the uniqueness of our 'home'?

Up on the ladder the man fills in the last of the background, layered shades of blue and white giving texture and depth to the 'sky'. I am intrigued. Is this 'graffiti' happening by daylight? Am I in the presence of some graffiti artists, those nocturnal creatures with an assumed name whose anonymity has me so intrigued? It's like seeing Batman at the milk bar in tights and a cape, or Buffy's vigilante vampire-love Angel in broad daylight! Or has some City official commissioned a mural for this unlikely place? The painters look unassuming and not at all furtive. I just have to ask them.

A little softly, for I am putting myself out in public. Oh, dear. I begin: 'Um. Hello? Excuse me?' He turns reluctantly from his paint, she looks round but makes it clear it is him I should speak to. 'Um. What are you doing?' I've started with the bleeding obvious. 'I mean, has someone commissioned you to do this? Did someone give you permission?' I feel ridiculous, like a prudish school-girl who is too scared to wag class and have a smoke herself. But it is the question I want to ask. Did someone give you permission, or are you breaking the law? Are you defacing public property or making art?

This is one axis along which the question of graffiti turns. Graffiti is vandalism because public property is 'defaced'. If someone gives permission for a wall to be painted, we have art, a billboard, signage or advertising. If there is no permission, the wall has been graffitied. The unsolicited nature of graffiti art makes it an act of destruction rather than of creation. And it links the crime of graffiti to the institution of private property, and the state regulation of public space. So graffiti is not vandalism because graffiti is necessarily ugly, graffiti is vandalism because it is not allowed. Do we find graffiti ugly because we know it is not allowed? That is, does its ugliness come from its lawlessness, and even more importantly perhaps, its disrespect for private property? Or do we see things we think are ugly as graffiti and things that we like as art? What





The angel is beautiful. Classically beautiful. She has big eyes. Full lips. Soft hair falls on fine, bare shoulders. Her wings are sumptuous and soft. This must be art - or pornography? And the painter does not think much of my question. He does not care about permission because he is beautifying an ugly wall. It turns out he is painting, unsolicited, on a public wall - but he is not concerned because he is making something beautiful. He is making art. And he expects that others will also see it that way.

I press on with my daggy questions. 'If you don't have permission, then what do the people in the street say? Has anyone objected?' He's a little impatient with me. Fair enough too, I guess. He's got painting to do and I'm annoying him. But he answers, 'No'. He tells me everybody likes it. That they think he is making the wall look much better. That they asked him to preserve the two faces. They like the angel. 'And why would they object?' he continues, 'This is art. It's not like all that ugly tagging. I'm not doing graffiti.' He points at the other un-commissioned artworks in the area, hieroglyphics on signs and fences, a jumble of cascading signatures that wrap around a light pole. I am to be convinced by the vast contrast between the artistic merit of his work and theirs.

But I'm not really, because there is still the question of permission. And a question of aesthetics. Because I find the tags quite beautiful myself, if one looks at them outside of their lawlessness, if one stops worrying about defacement, if one does not see them (as some state governments have) as an evidence of a lack of policing (they are just little squiggles of paint!), if one stopped assuming that graffiti, drugs and gangs all go together, if one does not feel the need to take the defacement personally, if one sees the interesting calligraphy, the skill and tenacity required, if one marvels at the industriousness of these intrepid travelers working at night.

Somebody else is unconvinced too. A municipal officer arrives and tells the painters they must stop. Because they don't have permission. Because this is public property. Because it costs the council a fortune to keep these gardens clean. I ask what the council policy is and it is complex really, and quite benign. The painters can apply for a permit to the City's Arts Officer but in the meantime they have to leave it. It turns out the City is formulating a new policy. They can't afford to repaint everything. I hear later that the cleaning crews make their own aesthetic decisions about what stays and what goes in an environment of limited resources. And that some councils are frustrated by assumptions that all graffiti in the public domain is their responsibility. I find out much later that the painters never made an application for a permit. But the mural was completed and still remains, largely untouched by both cleaning crews and other graffiti writers.

The painters expect a favourable reception for their art, which they do not understand as graffiti because for them graffiti is ugly and what they are doing is beautiful. It is art. They expect, and they are probably right to do so, that people will like their mural. In much the same way that the childishly drawn faces have become part of the map of the local and the loved for the residents of this street, the Angel is likely to begin to be owned by the public in a real and lived way, along with the genteel grandeur of the old grandstand and the green expanses of the park which are so recognisably North Fitzroy.

But tags and even carefully worked pieces are less likely to gain this acceptance. Is this because of whom we assume painted them, and why? Because they were not painted by 'artists' or 'children', but by angry young men? We assume. Or because we do not have a framework for liking their particular aesthetic, for it being so firmly placed in 'youth culture', or 'sub-culture' and not in 'art', even if naive? Or is it because these works are not pictorial in nature but have to do with words? They are writings but are not decipherable. Is it that we do not like not understanding what they say?

Mary Douglas has shown us how arbitrary our ideas about clean and dirty are. Dirt, for Mary Douglas, is not a thing in itself. Dirt is, rather, 'matter out of place'. The same soil that is desirable in abundance in a garden bed, offends, even in small quantities, inside a house. Dirt offends against order. It tells us about the order of things. When we serve just-cooked food we salivate with delight. As soon as we have eaten our fill those same plates and any uneaten food becomes 'unsightly' and 'unsanitary' - 'dirty dishes' needing to be washed and put away. Order is not restored until this act has taken place. For Douglas ideas about dirt are analogous to, and express, a general view of the social order. Our actions in 'restoring' order are creative; we actively shape our world as we tend the borders between clean and dirty, order and chaos.

Graffiti generates considerable anxiety in many communities, as something that is 'out of control', that signifies disorder and urban decay, a poorly funded police force, a run-down transport system, or the presence of gangs or drug-related activity. Graffiti is often seen as a 'community safety' issue by state and local governments. Here graffiti represents an attack on property values and on personal safety; graffiti indicates the breakdown of 'law and order' and the threat of youthful rebellion against the 'order of things'. Whilst many would complain that graffiti makes the urban landscape look awful, much of the same artwork, in a gallery or museum, might well be deemed to exemplify contemporary art practice and aesthetics. Graffiti is art that is 'in the wrong place'. It is this misplacing of paint and posters that offends against order; art should be in a gallery or museum, signatures

When the painter of the angel appeals to aesthetic criteria to distinguish his un-commissioned painting from 'graffiti' he draws another line in the sand. He places himself on the side of order in this case by appeals to the aesthetic criterion that makes his work 'art'. But the jumble of signatures on a nearby light pole that he contrasts with his own painting is highly stylised, multi-layered and electric with energy. In a gallery his 'realist' angel might not attract as much reverence (for better or for worse) as this 'Blue Poles' on a light pole. The order of artistic merit has been reversed on the street, at least for those for whom the angel is infinitely preferable to the tag. In a twist surprisingly amenable to Bataille's ideas about the affinity between the sacred and the profane, 'high' art becomes 'low' when you put it out on the street, and when it is made by the accidental activities of many rather than the creative 'genius' of one individual alone.

### Bright Spark - Neighborhoods Talking

From abstract art we move to the concrete of North Fitzroy. 'Dunit' and 'Ned3h5' are graffiti painted on a footpath beside the Merri Creek in a small park below Rushall Station. The path passes under a railway bridge and walkover whose red brick pylons and steel superstructure are decorated with a profusion of paintings. Ha-Ha's stenciled cats slink across the bridge high above the road. Down below, away from the road and the railway line a tent sits hidden in the vegetation, near to where someone had set up camp here a couple of years ago. A cartoon alien has the words 'Art not crime' written on his round, green belly and there on the footpath is 'Dunit', in yellow, white and blue, with a light bulb for an 'i'.

It's early in the morning and I have my camera. I'm crouched on the footpath, pointing my camera at the tar. I'm taking pictures of the cracked and peeling paint, of the yellow, white and electric blue of filament and globe - and all of a sudden this empty park seems to be full of curious onlookers. In public, your activities are scrutinised by others. And just as I felt enabled to question the painters of the angel, now it is my turn to be interrogated.

Firstly, I am accosted by a bright young woman with boyfriend and dogs. 'I thought you were in pain!' She tells me. 'I thought you were distressed!' She has rushed to help me, mistaking my crouched position and intense concentration for being doubled over in despair. One mustn't act too unpredictably in public space, people will almost always assume the worst. I explain that I'm just taking photographs, point out that we've met before (her sister is a friend of mine) and try to avoid responding to questions about my relationship to the camera. It seems my behaviour is excused if I am 'a photographer', but is a little worrying if I am not. This has happened before; leaning over a footbridge to look at the water in the Merri creek someone stopped to make sure I wasn't jumping! It is reassuring that people will still put themselves out to offer assistance to someone in need, but it says something about our levels of fear that disorderly behaviour in public space is assumed to be a sign of madness or of danger. I feel ashamed for my harassment of the Angel painters, but delighted at this interaction - it is what I love about public space, and about graffiti - neighbourhoods get talking.

Next, a man with a dog. He has definitely seen the camera so my sanity is not under question but he does want to know what I'm doing and why. 'I'm taking photos of the paint', I tell him. 'I really like the colours and lines.' He is really interested now. 'I know who did that', he says and now he has my interest. I love this piece of graffiti! I pay more attention. He is not a young man and I'm photographing classic 'hip-hop' style graffiti. I ask him how he knows the writer and he hastens to correct me. He does not know who did the original painting but he knows the person who filled the coloured words with black crosses. Someone who hates graffiti and so 'crossed out' the piece. Someone who defaces graffiti in order to denounce it.

It had never occurred to me that the black crosses were not part of the original design. They are neatly contained within the confines of the piece and evenly distributed across it. Someone graffitied some graffiti because they hate graffiti. But they have done it so respectfully, and so neatly. Is this because they are an artist too and cannot help themselves? Or because they dislike any form of messiness, even when vandalising public property, or public art? Or because, by staying inside the lines they are merely defacing graffiti but not the concrete path? It's intriguing. Who takes up a paintbrush to denounce painting?



Later I notice another addition to 'Dunit's' art. It may have been there on this first day or perhaps it came later, but it's more of this conversation, in paint, in public space - about graffiti. 'Got a life and grown up' I read in the cross of 'Dunit's' 'i'.

What does it mean? Why does someone need to make this statement inside a piece of graffiti? Some of the letters are different from each other. Most are black but two are yellow. And two of these yellow letters have black letters beneath. Aha! I get it. Someone has changed 'Get a life and grow up' to 'Got a life and grown up'. Someone has answered the condemnation of the man with the black paint with two carefully chosen signs. And

added their own little yellow crosses, neatly distributed between the black. Was this the original writer, Dunit's, response, or has



On Rushall Crescent itself, high above Dunit's light globe, the artist 'Tusk' stenciled two elegant elephants facing each other. They were painted onto a Citipower substation housed inside a green painted structure with a peaked roof. Their old world charm seemed to fit with the quaintness of the surrounds: the pretty buildings, hedges and gardens of the 'Old Colonists' home behind. The building was painted over in green to obscure the elephants, I believe because someone in the street complained to the electricity company. But the elephants were repainted, quite soon after, by someone with much less artistic skill and experience of painting upright (and quickly) on large outdoor walls. These elephants are hand painted in dripping red paint, by someone who is not quite so good at painting elephants. Their outlines are wobbly, their proportions slightly wrong, but they are very happy, smiling elephants and they are talking to each other. 'What do you like to listen to?' asks one elephant of the other in a speech bubble coming out of its trunk. 'Why elephants (sic.) Gerald ... of course!' is the reply.



I hear that Tusk is a little peeved that the badly drawn elephants have lasted much longer than his stylish originals. And on aesthetic grounds alone he is probably right to be cross. But the new elephants tell us something we couldn't know before; that is, how much someone liked Tusk's original. Someone was moved to replace them, with a new twist but paying definite homage to the person who thought to put them there in the first place. A conversation has commenced on the Citipower substation about aesthetics and public

space and the character of the 'local'. About what some locals or regular visitors want. And that some locals like some graffiti. Graffiti gets the neighbourhood talking.

### Playgrounds

Graffiti gets the neighbourhood talking but can make local governments quite nervous. Some municipalities have adopted 'zero tolerance' policies toward graffiti and graffiti writers. Others adopt a range of approaches, including reporting tools, cleaning, information and diversionary programs. Some offer free cleaning kits to residents affected by graffiti, or order residents to clean affected walls. Residents in receipt of these cleaning kits can exercise their own aesthetic criteria in deciding what to remove from their properties. Ironically, property owners ordered to clean their walls are being punished for someone else's crime. A 'zero tolerance' policy aims to be totalitarian; and tends to act in the interests of property owners and businesses ('ratepayers') who complain. But there are other 'stakeholders'; young people, visitors, tenants of public and private housing, ratepayers and businesses who do not complain. Some may like some graffiti, some may be painters of graffiti, some may know that their children see graffiti very differently to themselves — some are no doubt indifferent or resigned to its appearance. And there are all kinds of public spaces that councils do not control. Transport corridors and utilities infrastructure, power substations, railway stations, stormwater drains, the walls and fences of private property.

What tends to be forgotten when nervousness dominates responses to graffiti is that not everybody sees public spaces in the same way. For many young people graffiti is evidence of a vibrant music, arts and youth culture; something that attracts them to Melbourne and tells them something about the areas they visit. And graffiti also tells us something about public voices, voices that rise above those of the government and media to protest against a war, to challenge the nonsenses of advertising or comment on the shape our neighbourhoods are taking. Or voices that simply tell us of children who play, with paint and in public space — perhaps not as sweetly as we might expect children to, and at a slightly older age . . . It's too late for cubby houses by the time they hit the streets. But then we've left them so few wild places, and we watch them so closely, what is left to them but the laneways and railways and the fences and walls that keep them out? Where else are their playgrounds to be?

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## SHIFTING GROUND:

### *Negotiating Values in a Gentrifying Community*

June Moorhouse, Moorhouse Consulting

My presentation is about Fremantle in Western Australia. This is the land of the Nyoongar people of the South West of Australia and I wish to acknowledge their ownership of the area they know as Wal-y-up. If not for their care and stewardship over generations I would not be in a position to raise questions about what it means to live in this place or to call it my 'home'. This paper outlines work I've been doing for the past two and half years funded by a Fellowship from the Community Cultural Development Board of the Australia Council.

There's a research process, which you'd probably describe as action research, which entailed

- lengthy face-to-face interviews with about 50 people from across the community
- a series of articles in the local paper over the last three months outlining the sorts of issues people raised in the interviews and inviting readers' responses,
- an exhibition of work by eight visual artists which I curated exploring their relationship with Fremantle which was exhibited in a heritage gallery space during the Fremantle Festival
- and a series of public discussions or 'Community Conversations' which I facilitated in the exhibition space during the exhibition

From all this there are (or will be!) findings and recommendations. In fact, it may be that what I describe today offers something to other gentrifying or seachange communities to assist with the extraordinary challenge of negotiating values in a rapidly changing community.

But most of all this is the story of me searching for a way to live lovingly and in my skin in Fremantle, which has been my chosen home for the most part of 30 years. Because four and half years ago I found myself feeling very disconnected from my community. I had lost the desire to participate in local things after years as an active contributor both professionally and in a voluntary capacity. In particular, I felt silenced in the face of what was passing for public debate.

It seemed to me that the letters' pages of our local papers, the articles in those papers and the approaches people were taking to campaigns for local causes or local elections, reflected fear, anger and division that was expressed through an obsession with single issues, with people holding hard and fast views and a tendency to mark anyone with alternate views as the enemy. Debate looked to me more like repetitious argument, and frequently with a nasty personal bent.

I couldn't see how to contribute in this environment.

How adding one more opinion on various matters was going to do more than raise the noise level in the already-cacophonous letters' pages?

How to offer ideas or venture opinions in the hope of meaningful exchange with others?

How to set single issues in the context of larger questions about Fremantle?

How to put forward musings that were not hard and fast positions but suggestions that required shared creative thinking to become possible solutions?

I didn't want to go to public consultation meetings which result in Council's consultants threatening to sue local campaigners, as happened once. Or go to precinct meetings that end in physical altercations, as one did. I wondered if other people felt like I did. Were others withdrawing from civic involvement because of similar misgivings and questions? And if so, where did that leave Fremantle?

Fortunately, once I became aware of how disengaged I'd become (and how regular my fantasies of moving to Melbourne were), my impulse was to connect with others. I recalled my days as a journalist with the locally-owned paper when I was in my mid-20s, interviewing people for a weekly column that profiled different characters around town.

Sitting listening to people's life stories and them talking about their relationship to Fremantle was the highlight of my week at the paper. I used to develop a real connection to the people I interviewed and through their stories felt my relationship with Fremantle was strengthened because the things they told me might be new to me or because together we shared our pleasure about some aspect of life here.

the job as journo on a fake-it-til-you-make-it basis and was always afraid I'd be discovered for the fraud I was! But also because the process of sharing other people's stories in a respectful and sensitive manner seemed to reinforce more broadly what a special place this community was and how lucky we all were to share it.

I decided to go back and re-interview some of those people, and from that grew a desire to interview people from across the community. This process was a way of checking out my own responses, of listening to what others think, and it provided me with a basis for mulling over local issues it also gave me an excuse to make connections with all sorts of people across the community. I also hoped that hearing other people's stories would generate some ideas about how to contribute in a meaningful way.

Fortunately, the Fellowship allowed me to really indulge this idea and I now have hours of recordings with all kinds of people:

- older people who have lived here since their birth,
- people who (like me) came with the first wave of gentrification in the 70s and 80s following the restructuring of the port (the introduction of container ships) and the departure of many working class families.
- young people who are the children of this group and for whom Fremantle has always been home
- people who've chosen to leave Fremantle (most of them in opposition to the impact of the America's Cup) and some who've subsequently returned
- people who've very recently arrived and taken up residence in the recycled warehouse apartments or the new developments that are the result of active infill policies

From this basis I started to build a picture of some of the challenges we faced in maintaining a functioning community at a time of considerable change.

And just to give you a picture of that change....

Probably the most telling statistics from Census data is the increase in those engaged in professional occupations from 12.4% in 1986, to 27.8% in 2001 and the corresponding decrease in labourers from 20.9% in 1986, to 6.8% in 2001. This is matched by a doubling of the percentage of the population in the top income bracket, the decline of conventional family households with 70% of households in Fremantle now occupied by either one or two people and an ageing population. The ethnic diversity of the community, which was a significant part of Fremantle's pre and post-War make-up, is decreasing (although we remain more ethnically diverse than Perth)

In this regard, I'm sure what we're experiencing is the classic profile of gentrification that Melburnians see in Williamstown or St Kilda and Sydney-siders see in Balmain or Newtown. I think there would also be similarities with many seachange communities along the east and southern coast. I can't offer you a neat round of conclusions from the research. Apart from having just finished yesterday and with lots of filtering of information to happen, if I've interviewed 50 people, I have gained an insight into 50 unique relationships with Fremantle. So it feels disrespectful and potentially dangerous to reduce that diversity and richness to generalities.

Having said that there were commonalities and themes that emerged in response to my questions which could probably be summed up as, 'what matters most about Fremantle?' They were:

- heritage and the built environment – the sense of history, the beauty of the buildings, the scale, the suitability for walking, compactness
- the port – its part in Fremantle's history, the coming and going, the feeling of connection to the world, the industrial landscape
- proximity to the coast and the importance of the ocean
- the street life or cultural life – a sense of vitality, people making connections, buskers, parades, festivals and events, the arts and artists
- and finally, the diversity of Fremantle and the sense that it is a tolerant community – that this is a relaxed place where you see all kinds of people and where people feel welcome

Not everyone cited everything in the list and people varied in thinking that these aspects of Fremantle were healthy, in decline, or somewhere in between. What I did observe (and feel) was that Fremantle is not just any place to the people who live here. Even if people expressed the view that it is changing 'for the worse' they still went on to identify myriad ways that they continue to enjoy Fremantle's offerings. Even if they were resident through circumstance rather than choice, people expressed strong feelings about the place and identified themselves as part of its distinct community.

interviewees with the way the place is changing. In fact for me, people's comments often revealed the intellectual ease with which we value diversity and tolerance - and the incredible difficulty of living it. Some people highlighted the ethnic diversity of Fremantle and the rich contribution of migrant communities across the years - the cappuccino strip, the restaurants, the fishing industry, the arts and cultural celebrations, the religious celebrations and the domestic architecture.

Others talked about the very different lifestyles people live side-by side in Fremantle, identifying the well-to-do, the not-well-off, the academics, the alternative stylers and the downright feral. Others referred to the number of people with obvious mental disorders who make their way around the city, apparently comfortable and 'at home'. These features were consistently offered as positives. However, significantly, in many cases the same people would go on to express concerns about one group or another, who they saw as undesirable or as having a negative impact on Fremantle in some way.

I was taken aback by one interviewee who said that the development of a new university in town was disappointing because it was attracting dark skinned (African) students. The same woman felt that it was a shame all the welfare services were based in Fremantle because it attracted the wrong kind of people in to town. At the same time, this relatively young woman was extraordinarily honest in answering my question about why she and her husband had chosen to move to an apartment in Fremantle, sharing the quite emotional story of their attempts to have a family and the decision finally to abandon the dream home and adopt a completely different urban lifestyle in a community that had been important to them both as children, when their parents were migrant market-gardeners on the outskirts of Fremantle.

Her prejudices were one thing (and reasonably isolated) but far more consistent were the assumptions made by people who chose Fremantle as their home pre-America's Cup (which happened in the mid-1980s), that recently arrived wealthy apartment dwellers didn't appreciate Fremantle for anything other than its property values.

I came to feel that these prejudices were fuelling a particularly dangerous division in the community. The fabulous sense of ownership that we immigrants of the 1970s and early 80s felt towards Fremantle (and that we community cultural development workers prize!) not only drove the conservation of heritage buildings, renovating of old homes, the effort put into building community feeling and making things happen. They also seem to have led to a feeling that the place is 'ours'.

I also felt a real resistance to change of any kind and wondered whether the dominance of heritage as a focus for community feeling contributed to a stuck in time approach. On the other hand people choosing Fremantle as their home should be expected to respect the community they're moving into, the history and spirit of the place that was, in my experience of interviewing them, part of what attracted them here. There were terrible stories of infill developments that took no account whatsoever of the privacy or dignity of neighbours. Of new inner city residents complaining about noise from the port, from late-night venues etc.

A piece I wrote for the paper about the value of back lanes and other 'wonky bits' of Fremantle, elicited an example of one back lane that had been the site of communal activity for years until a new neighbour purchased the land, fenced it off, landscaped and installed electronic gates and surveillance. Obviously acts like this completely destroy community trust and indicate a newcomer who is entirely antagonistic to the pre-existing environment - not much hope there.

If you see gentrification as some sort of evolutionary process, it seemed to me that we had hit stasis on the evolutionary path. I don't think it's coincidental that this has happened during a period of low-level leadership from Council and an increasingly corporatised approach to local government management. This is a subject on which I expanded with some passion at the first Cultural Planning symposium so I'll save you from that rant and refer you to those papers.

Back to my meandering process. From the outset I'd thought that an exhibition might be a productive way of bringing some ideas to the public so a year ago I started working with artists with whom I had some form of previous connection. We talked about the kind of work each of them could make about their connection to place. Again the richness of the relationship each of them felt provided source material for a fantastic exhibition - *Shifting Ground*.

Some examples of the work are Holly Story's *Flora Notes #2*, South Fremantle - which is weeds pressed into lead flashing. Weeds from a walking track near Holly's home that are being mown down and replaced by couch. In the catalogue Holly writes - 'weeds that have come here over the years with the newcomers that have changed this place forever. What if we suspended the rules and let these 'weeds' flourish? Just to honour tenacity, remember a history and be reminded that change need not be feared'..

Theo Koning and Megan Kirwan-Ward's, *Garden of Curiosities* - which plays with the beautiful in the everyday, the tenacity of plants that survive a hostile environment, the juxtaposition of waste and life and the increasing cultivation of a wild environment.

sustained the working class sport for generations.

500 people turned up to celebrate the opening and a steady stream of visitors to the gallery during its run (including lots of repeat visitors) suggest to me that this was a powerful way to present some of the ideas that had emerged from interviews. It's also the joy of approaching those issues tangentially.

At the same time the newspaper articles were concluding, having canvassed many of the issues I've touched on as well as;

- what lies Beyond the Boomers - why young people are absent from civic involvement and what they had said about life in Fremantle through the interviews
- whether we wanted our relationship with Council to be about customer service or citizenship
- the way in which all the wonky bits of Fremantle contribute to people's sense of place and how to protect those wonky bits in the face of a 'beautifying' mentality and a risk-averse public domain (Public art and the dumbing-down of imagination)
- how individual or neighbourhood initiatives such as street parties, plantings or wall art add to the sense of a creative engaged community and how we might seek to encourage rather than 'manage' this creative energy

The articles drew a very positive response. Not so much about the issues, but it was more people thanking me for saying things that they felt really needed to be said. It highlighted for me the importance of not only examining gentrification and demographic changes through gathering statistics but also of engaging with the emotional experience. I had started with the intention of exploring people's felt sense of change and I held onto that in writing about people's comments.

Then, last week, during the Festival I ran a series of Community Conversations in the exhibition space to encourage community members to come along and talk about life in Fremantle. Small numbers but great conversations. The first night was "What is 'very Freo'?" A term used to describe people, an experience or event, the way someone dresses and at one time used by the Council for a marketing push with the slogan Shop 7 days a week – very Freo.

This conversation had 20 people along and the group very quickly got to a discussion about tolerance and the nitty gritty of living it. After considering the question 'What is Intolerable?', the group concluded that the loss of socio-economic diversity would be the single most intolerable experience in Fremantle.

The second night was a smaller group and we were discussing how we communicate in Fremantle. This highlighted the importance of gathering places, places of connection in Fremantle and they were identified typically as cafes, local shops, the beach (particularly the dog beach), local schools. We discussed whether you could aspire to a single connected community or whether what we needed to encourage was a web of connections within the community so that various sub groups maintained their strong connections and that those sub groups were easily linked or cross-referenced to build a community foundation.

How that linking occurs is key. For example with the divide between longer-term residents and newcomers. If they are older couples with no kids attending local schools, how do we make those connections?

The last conversation on the topic of 'Fremantle's in our hands' took place on a Saturday afternoon. Thanks to a young local band playing, we had a small number of young people mixed in with oldies (like me) to talk about what they felt was important. This led to a discussion of the lively contemporary music scene in Freo – John Butler Trio, the Waifs, Little Birdy, Eskimo Joe and others, all identify Fremantle as their roots. But there are pressures all the time on licensed venues, the noise issue and anti-social behaviour after hours. It was really useful to hear young people talk about the challenges of surviving as musicians, what they see on the streets as buskers and the different modes of behaviour they experience in venues where the focus is on selling alcohol and the venues where the focus is on original music.

We also had about 120 primary students through for a couple of conversations in the exhibition space. They were really engaging events and the kids insights were useful and not dissimilar to their older counterparts. They valued the sense of personal relationships, the relaxed environment, the beach, the parks, the ice cream shops...

So, I haven't had a chance to sift through the Conversations yet and weigh up the value of them - quantity and quality - but I think I will continue to look for opportunities to conduct them. Final comments about what's been gained from this process?

## **Content**

I think it's fair to say that the process has started a different kind of conversation in Fremantle. Last week at the Chamber of Commerce's Fremantle 2020 Conference, a number of the matters I'd written about were referred to in some of conference

people to speak honestly. Raising the issue of young people and their place in civic life and engaging a number of them in an active way throughout the process has been useful and enjoyable. I will be pursuing this.

The process has also reinforced the importance of people feeling genuinely listened to and this raises a lot of questions for me about various methods of consultation that are in place in our community, particularly from Council. They appear good enough to win Best Practice Local Government Awards but leave many members of the community feeling disenfranchised and unheard.

The features that I think contributed in this case were:

- one on one listening is a privilege – for both interviewee and interviewer. Maybe not cost-effective but sampling could be a good way to go.
- listening well meant the depth of things people shared were significant
- the articles fed back what people said so they could see what I'd done with what they'd said and how accurately I had interpreted their comments.
- I invited interviewees to become involved in the project in other ways – many of them spent time staffing the gallery over the last two weeks
- there was no 'agenda' to my questions or pre-determined outcomes floating in the background. I was not aligned with any cause or institution. I approached people with genuine curiosity and a willingness to let the conversations go where they needed to go – both interviews and group discussions.

### **Personal**

At the personal level this project has been a constant learning process and at times very confronting. I felt pressure to construct a sound research process so that what I learnt would be taken seriously, and I seemed to have pre-conceived ideas about what a sound research process is – lots of data, which would make great overheads etc.... while all the time my desire was to follow my nose and see where I ended up. So I dealt with lots of questions about who I was doing this for? Was it just a huge personal indulgence?

Much of that didn't really resolve itself until I wrote the articles and got such an overwhelming and warm response. What I discovered (or re-discovered) is that staying true to my own process and being unafraid to show my passion, to write and talk in a loving way about the things people had shared brought others out of the woodwork. So quite contrary to the warnings from people that if you stick your head up in this community, you'll get it lopped off, what I found was that people are hungry for honest enquiry, straight talking, and thinking that takes into account both the head and heart of loved experience.

The process has been an outstanding success in reconnecting me to my community and I now easily share an intense concern with the future direction of Fremantle with a remarkable number of new friends and colleagues.

*June Moorhouse has lived and worked in Fremantle on and off since the mid-1970s. She has over 25 years experience working in the arts, much of that in senior management positions and as a consultant. The values of community cultural development are at the heart of her work and she has recently completed a two-year Fellowship from the Community Cultural Development Board.*

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## RESTRUCTURING COMMUNITIES

### *Policies for a Different Society*

Onko Kingma, Director, Capital Agricultural Consultants Pty Ltd, Canberra

We rely on our culture to give balance to our materialistic society. However, this strategy now lacks credibility as the direction of economic efforts is increasingly turning to our culture itself - cultural events, the arts, and social movements, are all becoming dominated by commercial enterprise. At the same time we see the rise of different communities characterised by new values and life styles, creativity, transience and self actualisation, and demanding a different culture. Culture increasingly means 'access to commodified cultural experiences', and this leads to questions about whether our society can survive with a much reduced government and cultural influence, and dominated by commerce as the main arbiter of our lives. New policy approaches are not likely to be evident within current systems since solutions to many of the issues rely on cooperation, tolerance and sharing, difficult concepts to embrace in a society built upon individualism and competitiveness. We need to set out the conditions whereby citizens can participate in building more sustainable communities, but this means turning current policy on its head. Commitment to a different set of principles directed at questioning our spiritual motivation and our institutional base itself, can achieve this. The agenda will be about re-balancing the secular and the sacred.

#### **The paper**

In this paper I argue that our culture, as we know it, is under threat – but whether this is a good or bad thing depends on your viewpoint. There is a large literature in this area, impossible to cover in this paper. I therefore, discuss selectively some of the forces that are affecting our culture (the fourth pillar of sustainability), concluding that, whatever side of the fence you are on, we will have to shift towards more inclusive policies and solutions, based upon cooperation, tolerance and sharing.

#### **Flaws in our economic system**

It has troubled me for many years that we support a policy framework which is deeply flawed. The thrust of this policy has been to create an economically competitive environment aimed at bringing our activities into line with 'market realities'. The underlying philosophy has been that of 'neoliberalism', an uneasy synthesis of liberalism and neoclassical economic theory, supported by a belief that the pre-eminent place of the individual can best be served by competition and market forces. This basis for the structuring of our society falls short, on the one hand, in the mis-use of liberal thinking and devotion to humanism (Carroll 2004, Eckersley 2004, Hamilton 2004), and, on the other hand, in the interpretation of economic theory and its narrow application (Eckersley 2004, Hamilton 2003, Kingma 2003).

Arguments in this context, relate to: the impact of individualism and materialism on our society; downgrading of politics and democracy to the management of a single ideology business state; globalisation of poverty and disenfranchisement of many as economic growth proceeds; increased participation of governments in business and corporate power at the expense of social and democratic functions; and the impact of conglomerate media power. Also in question is whether the promise of economic growth can, in fact, be fulfilled due to issues such as: the potential, as commodification proceeds, for modification of many goods and services as well as the environment in which they are consumed; and 'adding up' problems where possibilities and effort at the individual level are frustrated in aggregate (Hamilton 2003, Hirsch 1977, Kingma 2003).

While acknowledging that economic growth has brought many benefits, growth now appears to be increasingly at the expense of other equally as important values, while social and cultural problems are reduced to the day-to-day economic, or secular. Reducing all to the economic can be destructive of inclusive values and attempts to synthesise economic, social, environmental and cultural goals – it tends to give rise to a mean-spirited socio-economic environment.

#### **Bias in markets**

The institutions which have emerged from the present market policy philosophy are secular in nature - dominantly economic and supportive of business. These institutions are reinforced by actions within markets, which will reflect the characteristics of their main players - those with economic power and property rights. Underlying values of these players are supportive of profit making and competitive behaviour which work towards inequality and disenfranchisement of many.

Markets if left to themselves, may not evolve in sympathy with community values since the private sector will by default develop its own rules of business. These rules will invariably be oriented towards firms capturing and exploiting the resources that will facilitate their private operation and profits. Outcomes of this process may be narrow and destructive. For example, statistics show escalation in crime, suicide and social dislocation as economic growth has proceeded (Eckersley 2004, Hamilton 2003,

A deregulated market environment may also debase concepts of work and lead to problems of scale and dominance of business and bureaucracies. Once power and control shifts beyond the locality to centralised organisations, then community values, employment activities and production and consumption patterns become determined outside the locality. The organisational structures that come with these changes, generally motivated by individual decisions to reduce risk and 'capture' markets relevant to company interests, have the potential to threaten local cultures and destroy social capital, leading to a loss of identity and motivation within communities.

Hamilton (2003) has argued that the market itself has evolved into an instrument of coercion and control over our culture, leading to

'... the emergence of societies where fraud and deception are endemic ... where pre-teen children without incomes are targeted by corporations in an attempt to build life-long brand loyalty, where teenagers declare that the brands they wear and otherwise consume determine who they are, where both popular and classical culture are systematically mined for icons and images that can be used to sell products, where the intimate details of our personal lives are systematically collected and sold to marketing organizations, where sporting, artistic, literary and educational institutions have become the playing fields of advertisers, and where the essential data of our action are provided overwhelmingly by a handful of media corporations.'

(Hamilton 2004, p.viii).

Similar observations are made by Eckersley (2004).

### **Erosion of social capital**

Any forces that diminish social capital will reduce the effectiveness of markets as a mechanism for ordering transactions and conveying appropriate signals for exchange. A material culture, by undermining trust, cooperation and collective endeavour, can destroy the very basis for markets to operate effectively, that is, the trust that transactions entered into will be honoured (Hirsch 1977). The rise of a litigious society and escalation of crime and alienation (Eckersley 2004, Hamilton 2003) are all signs of the erosion of trust.

Thus, as our culture becomes more 'commodified', there is a very real danger that we may lose the richness, diversity and trust upon which our society is based, characteristics which, ironically, underpin the successful working of a market economy.

The success of more inclusive policy solutions to address these issues is also dependent upon the richness of our culture and the strength of our social capital base. A strong cultural base will balance the harsh effects of market forces. As argued by Hawkes (2001):

'A society's values are the basis upon which all else is built. These values and the ways they are expressed are a society's culture. The way a society governs itself cannot be fully democratic without there being clear avenues for the expression of community values, and unless these expressions directly affect the directions society takes. These processes are culture at work ... cultural vitality is ... essential to a healthy and sustainable society.'

A culturally rich and inclusive community is essential to overcome the issues noted above.

Attempts to change or enhance our culture are difficult because a materialistic environment erodes both culture and social capital. Hamilton (2003, p.x), for example, in reviewing evidence that economic growth crowds out a more meaningful set of values, concluded that '... our societies are no happier than they were. Growth not only fails to make people contented; it destroys many of the things that do. Growth fosters empty consumerism, degrades the natural environment, weakens social cohesion and corrodes character.'

If we are to rely on our culture to balance the negative effects of materialism, then we will have to counter the deterioration of our cultural environment. But new more holistic policies are not likely to be evident within current systems since more cooperative and inclusive policy approaches will have to be taken to today's complex issues. Cooperation and inclusiveness will necessitate quantum shifts in behaviour and attitudes and the relinquishment of present power and rights by some. In a society built upon individualism and competitiveness, many would not easily participate in this.

### **The vulnerability of our culture**

The task of policy reform is made even more difficult because major shifts are taking place in many business companies and networks, that are inexorably driving much of our lives and our culture into the hands of business. This directly impacts on the

agreements now replace market transactions, and resources are managed via 'supply chains' and pooling and sharing arrangements.

Rifkin (2000), for example, has argued that markets and ownership as we have known them are beginning to make way for networks and access to services. In a network economy, physical and intellectual property are likely to be accessed by businesses rather than exchanged. Sellers and buyers are replaced with suppliers and users of services and market transactions give way to alliances, co-sourcing and gain-sharing agreements. In Rifkin's (2000, p.5) words '... many companies no longer sell things to one another but rather pool and share their collective resources, creating vast supplier-user networks that co-manage each other's businesses.'

Companies and business networks and alliances, Rifkin (2000) argues, now have vast capacity to draw local cultural resources into the commercial sphere and to repackaging them as cultural commodities, to be accessed as commercial experiences. Rifkin (2000, p.10) argues that

'the economy has turned its attention to the last remaining independent sphere of human activity: the culture itself. Cultural rituals, community events, social gatherings, the arts, sport and games, social movements, and civic engagement are all being encroached upon by the commercial sphere. The great issue at hand ... is whether civilisation can survive with a greatly reduced government and cultural sphere and where only the commercial sphere is left as the primary mediator of human life.'

An example of this for the arts in Australia is given by Griffiths (2003, p.5) who says

'... the buzz of creative industries and the hype of strategic innovation are used to construct the arts as the newest form of commodity. Thus the new logics of creative industries ... have seen arts companies, forced to face a serious situation, begin to transform art into 'product'.

Griffiths argues that, in the process, these arts companies struggle to retain their artistic integrity.

In all areas of our culture, companies now have the ability to exploit cultural resources and turn them into paid-for experiences. The result is elimination of cultural diversity and homogenisation of our culture. For this paper the significant point is the increasing hold that this gives business in controlling our lives and culture. This time of 'access to commodified cultural experiences' is a threat to our culture.

### **Changes in values and consumer preferences**

There is a different perspective to the above in terms of shifts in lifestyles and consumption preferences among significant groups in the workforce. Key groups are the 'downshifters' and the 'creative class', with both having the potential to temper the effects noted above. If the influence of groups like these is large enough, business corporations can be expected to make the changes necessary to accommodate new values and interests – it is an interactive, dynamic process.

'Downshifters' now form over 20 per cent of the Australian workforce and this group is growing. These people want more balance and control in their lives, more time with their families and friends and more personal fulfilment. They have '... expressed a desire to do something more meaningful with their lives, and to achieve this aim they considered it was necessary to consume less, work less and slow down.' (Hamilton 2004, p. 206). This group has the potential to bring about social change, promote the quality of social and individual life and create new communities.

'Creative class' people, now some 40 per cent of the US workforce, are also a new force in moving our societies into fresh, positive directions. Florida (2002) has surveyed and documented the emergence of this class of people, concluding that they come from all walks of life and generally have good formal education and a high level of human capital. This group is, in large measure, fuelled by the high-tech industries and the technologies of the information economy. However, they hold different values, share a common ethos that stresses creativity, individuality, difference and merit and, as with 'downshifters', see the function of work not primarily as a wage or salary but as a means to add creative value and gain self-expression. They are experience-oriented, use time differently, tend to favour participation, flexibility and stimulation, and are less bound by conventional social and lifestyle institutions. Florida (2002, p.68) says

'... the basis of the 'creative class' is economic ... its economic function both underpins and informs its members' social, cultural and lifestyle choices. The 'creative class' consists of people who add economic value through their creativity. It thus includes a great many knowledge workers, symbolic analysts and professional and technical workers but emphasises their true role in the economy ... the way people organise themselves into social groupings and common identities (is) based principally

These people appear to be strong culture builders, but the interest is more in developing new 'street level cultures' within the present paradigm of economic growth. Nonetheless, their activities are challenging prevailing norms and attitudes.

According to Florida (2002), policy makers and community leaders have, in general, been slow to understand the implications of these changes for their communities and regions. His research shows that in the US, places that are actively integrating the 'creative class' into their local cultures and politics are prospering and that a new social and economic geography is emerging in these regions. Division in communities appears to be less on income and more on the emergence of centres in which creativity can flourish and where labour markets are 'thick' and flexible enough to provide a place for the exchange of ideas and for different lifestyle interests, in addition to a wage. Features have been acceptance and encouragement of people and business, the creation of an environment for innovation, recognition of merit and ideas, and authenticity and uniqueness of the living environment.

### **Policy directions**

The analysis in this paper shows that whatever one's philosophical persuasion and whatever the issue, the way to a more sustainable society is through embracing policies which encourage inclusiveness and the expression of collective interests. Whether redressing excessive commodification, the crowding out of diversity, biases in markets, erosion of social capital or dated institutions, the way forward is inexorably through new approaches to participation, empowerment and cooperation.

What is important at this time is how we deepen the impetus for a shift to a different and tolerant culture. Preconditions will be debate on values and options, analysis to inform debate, a stocktake of our resources and institutions, and clarification of rights/responsibilities of individuals and groups at all levels, including governments. Infusion of new values into our institutions will give the key to a more sustainable future. The following secular 'action agenda' suggests itself, but this is only a start. Our actions must be infused with higher, sacred values if we are to move towards a more sustainable society.

### **Reshaping the secular**

Communities should be vision oriented and strongly committed to principles which enhance ecological sustainability, (positive) social capital, efficient resource use and creativity. This requires that they take charge of their own destiny, develop visions for their future and implement local solutions. Cultural activities, particularly the arts, play an important role in this process by reconnecting with the spiritual, generating social capital, breaking down relationship barriers and transmitting information.

Communities should secure equitable representation, voice and power in business, social and environmental affairs. More inclusive and participative governance arrangements should support empowerment and creativity. This would require a re-assessment of the roles and responsibilities of many participants. Control processes will no longer work. Thus initiatives which are partisan and coercive should be replaced with approaches which are more local and utilize more inclusive and participative processes and these should be accompanied by new approaches to learning, capacity building, training and re-training, lifelong education and skills development.

Governments have an important role in these processes of change. Initiatives should provide leadership, enable, foster dialogue and implement collective solutions. Principles for the expression of culture, in particular through the arts, should be embedded into policy. The aim should be to establish an environment to encourage innovation, experimentation and creativity.

Communities should set in place comprehensive regional and local arrangements to deliver the necessary infrastructure development, services and networks for economic and social activity. New models for and approaches to financing, risk-sharing and implementation of both private and public investment projects will be required, possibly necessitating change in the roles and functions of participants and better coordination between administrative, planning and policy making institutions. Much of the change required is institutional change. Thus, policy initiatives which do not, at minimum, give consideration to the institutional settings within which change takes place, should be questioned.

Communities should work in partnership to encourage strong industries which value-add their produce locally and form strong linkages both into their communities and into the wider business sphere. Consumers of the future will demand quality and sophisticated goods and services, value added in their own communities, and providing local employment opportunities, new prospects for local produce and opportunities for local re-investment of funds.

A purely market or neoliberal view will be too narrow. Thus, potential actions and policies which give expression to narrow approaches to industry development should be re-examined and modified. Where competitiveness, scale, market share and private profit considerations are seen to conflict with broader goals and vision, special directives may be useful for the private sector to

A new focus of responsibility should involve: looking outside the conventional methods of government; re-inventing governance through institutional change; transferring a degree of power to communities of interest; devolving responsibility; and reviewing the 'scale' of economic and social activity. This will require the striking of a new balance between 'competition' and 'cooperation'. Change would be required in the methods, structures and values of public policy, and in many present accountability systems that tend towards uniformity and control when superimposed on regions and local areas. Policy responses should be 'place' and 'people' specific and grounded in local needs and circumstances, re-discovery of the strength of 'community without politics' and motivation through 'public purpose'.

### **Towards sacred community**

The above action agenda is a good start. But undertaken within the confines of current beliefs and values, it may simply lead to a re-configuration of our secular society. Community revival based on narrow economic goals works to strengthen materialism and competition. We just end up with the same concerns and issues but from a new perspective.

As long as the secular dominates, suppressing and destroying the deeper, creative structures on which human society is based, the outcome will be further escalation of social dysfunction. A secular policy action agenda is, therefore, not enough – cooperative, sacred community should underpin the secular. We need a culture which balances the secular and the sacred, where the day-to-day organization of existence and the theatre within which the true creative expression of humanity can occur, are in harmony and work in a complementary way to realise the potential of all. Only by a deep questioning of our spiritual motivation and our institutional base which gives expression to our creativity, will we evolve into a more balanced society.

The basis of existence is 'unity' of all, with cooperation, tolerance, sharing and working together as the building blocks. Thus, a perception of existence as though we are separate, egoic individuals driven by the need to compete against each other, is wrongly based. As noted earlier, an individualised society leads to anxiety, illusion and disunity. If the prevailing philosophy is 'not unity' then the collective order will reflect this and be characterized by fragmentation and dis-unity. In aggregate, such a philosophy leads to the disintegration of society and a loss of (positive) social capital.

Present institutions and organisational structures tend to work towards dis-unity because the prevailing philosophy on which they are based is secular, that is, they are mainly concerned with organization of the business of day-to-day life. They are characterized by dominance and exploitation. The secular State in this system is a dominant, controlling structure, focused on egoic, individualized goals and tending to neglect the collective interests of communities. Most religious institutions can no longer help to re-balance this situation. The separation of the secular from the sacred and the perception that the spiritual domain is somehow a purely private issue only, has led most religious institutions to now focus dominantly on the secular – they have become absorbed in the 'religion business'.

Local participation and a 'change of mind' at the individual level leading to a change of collective mind, is the only way to restore a balanced society in which individuals' voices are heard and where the individual's role and place is restored in sacred community – this re-focus of the individual's role will then, ultimately, determine the nature of the State or collective community. Such change will only happen in a community in which responsible relationships can flourish and where advanced cultural agreements at all levels can be worked out.

The above action agenda, by stressing the development of more inclusive and participative processes and different governance arrangements, works towards this. However, there must also be a vision beyond the secular and this can only come from action at the individual and group level within cooperative community. We should not wait for action from 'outside' – change will not occur in the system per se but this must be initiated by a 'change of mind' at the individual level. A new leadership and a greater more visionary role played by the civil sector and local government, are central in bringing this about and to restoring the collective interests of our society.

Only with a determination to balance the secular and sacred, can we work towards a more unified, creative and collective society motivated by cooperation, tolerance and sharing.

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## THE CULTURAL JOURNEY

**Anne Dunn, consultant arts, communities and organisations**

My presentation is titled the Cultural Journey, subtitled 'Can bureaucracies change their ways?'

I have found this topic really interesting, actually completely fascinating, I too am a Fellowship holder from the Australia Council Community Cultural Development Board. I am only halfway through mine, so I only have to be half as good as June Moorhouse to be OK. But what I have found, as I suppose all Fellowship holders have found, is that the time that you get to think is quite extraordinary. It is the gift that you get with a fellowship - the chance to stand back from what you are doing and think about it and look at it. I've never seen myself as a contemplative person and actually I probably wouldn't have been if I hadn't broken my ankle. But the combination of Fellowship and the ankle has really made me quite reflective and the chance to put some of those things together in this presentation is quite exciting.

So let me start by just making my own statement about culture, which is not actually much different from the things people said, but I reckon if we all talked about what we think culture is, all of the time, then we would change the reality outside of this room.

So, for me, acknowledging and respecting cultures is my goal in life. Culture is at the heart of society. It's the five 'I's for me:

- identity
- inspiration
- independence
- interdependence and the
- ideals of values by which I live.

The respect and acknowledgement of that is indeed what I strive to do, in my work and in my interactions with other people. So having announced it as a goal, now I would like to consider the cultural journey as artists. It is the separation of the culture and arts topic which I find the most difficult. I understand why we adopted culture as an arts topic, but in fact, in the long run, we've done ourselves no favour at all, because culture needs to be understood by all sectors as being core to what they do and they need to see it not as an arts topic, but as something that is their own topic. Therefore, I talk as an artist, although I might have been a scientist, although I might be an environmentalist with culture as the goal. But I wanted to talk about the journey, my journey as an artist.

I am an artist who chose the public sector as her stage, and a wonderful stage it was too. Fortunately I got paid more than those of you who chose the community. So it's my journey. I think that's another thing about Fellowship holders, they talk about their own journey.

My cultural journey starts in 1965 when the arts were for fun. It was what you did after work, even if you were a professional artist, where people were exploring their creativity and talents and still at the same time, even then, bringing people together in communities. And arts practice at its most challenging was poking fun at government decisions that we thought we weren't engaged in. At the time, I was doing 'The Gondoliers', 'Showboat', 'Brigadoon' and various other performances of that ilk. But also doing things called 'Up Monato', 'Parks are for People', and various other community based review things, that were of the poking fun variety. Internationally, 1967 was the International Tourist Year, 1970 was the International Education Year. 1975, World Population Year. It was the beginning of there being a kind of international understanding by Australians. There were major events happening that were shaping our lives. The Vietnam War was happening, direct dial phones were introduced in this period, which connected us instantly to the rest of the world, which we can hardly remember now when you can pick up your mobile and do anything. Significant in this period was the transfer of indigenous responsibility to the Commonwealth and Martin Luther King was assassinated. These were major political influences on me. Also in this period, I was getting married, having babies and doing any job I could get my hands on.

Now, what was happening in organisations from the public policy perspective? The public organisations at all spheres of government were large and they were largely accepted by the community. They were expected to provide a full range of services, they were hierarchical. People who worked in them were compliant, seeing themselves as serving the public under a Westminster system. People described themselves as public servants and they meant just that. As artists, we were accepted as being reasonable people but it was outside the public sector realm, not anything to do with what was going on inside.

awakening rebellion, it became a way for people to listen to messages they didn't want to hear and a way to allow different people to have a voice. I was doing fantastic things like the 'Carolina Chisholm show', 'Chores', 'Frontier Follies', 'Our Schools Do It On Purpose', 'Redheads' Revenge', 'The Margin to Mainstream'. They're fantastic aren't they? 'Out of the Frying Pan' was the beginning of big community arts conferences where people came together and shouted mad speeches at each other- shouted at the converted. Used words I'd never heard before. People used to talk about the pedagogy of something or other, but generated a huge enthusiasm among each other for our capacity to change the world. With Bjelke-Petersen times in Queensland, there were artists in the streets everywhere in Brisbane, where people just took to the protest with a vengeance.

It reflected the international. 1975 was International Women's Year and a most significant event in my life. 78 and 79, International Apartheid Years, 1980 was International Year for Disabled Persons, so there was a growing sense that there were voices and people that needed to be heard.

There were major events. Entebbe happened in this period, my first brush with thinking about terrorism. The women's movement emerged and overtook my life and my understanding of reality. The first Aboriginal Land Rights act was passed in the Commonwealth Government and I marched at Pine Gap and saw myself in a really different way, as the beginning I suppose, for dealing seriously with environmental issues.

In the public sector, these changes were also being reflected. This was the time of huge public sector reform. Equal employment opportunity was wild. It was big and we made a meal of it. Heads of government departments in South Australia where I was, went from being permanent public servants to people on contracts and in performance agreements with their ministers. Indeed as I would describe it, the beginning of the breakdown of the Westminster system and the emergence of political relationships in the public service. We demanded attention and we as artists found that the public service was listening. So many of the shows, for example, emerged out of the organisations I was working in. So we found response, we did learn that arts were a way to make people listen to messages they didn't want to hear. For those of you who were old enough to remember, the Australia Council ran chairing workshops for women that changed the face of women's participation in arts organisations across Australia.

1985-1995: lots of variations. A decade is almost too long to describe, but a really interesting period. Arts now as a practice has moved on to being a really relationship building practice. In my experience, this is the period when arts became the vehicle for indigenous and non-indigenous people to listen to and really respect each other, to hear what they are saying. It was the emergence of non-Anglo theatre and arts becoming the way for people of non-English speaking backgrounds to explain their differences and our differences. We were beyond food and national folkdancing. This went into really artists' communication so that we could really understand each other. And there was a new-found audience for people with disabilities and an understanding that people with disabilities also had voices and needed to be heard.

So I was doing shows like 'Faded Genes', 'When I Die, You'll All Stop Laughing', 'Is This Seat Taken?' 'They Shoot Ferals Don't They' was not a show but a project that I was involved in, so much more serious and intense. But mind you, there was one called 'Onward to Glory' that seems overly optimistic when I look back. But we were much more serious and intense and using art to really explore new boundaries.

Internationally, 1986 was the Year of Peace, 1987, the Year of Shelter for the Homeless, 1993 Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples, so again reflecting where the international trends were. Major events, 1992 was Mabo, 86 was Chernobyl, 1991 somewhere there was the first Gulf War, Rajiv Ghandi was assassinated in this time, Mandela and the freedom in South Africa all emerged during this period. So very exciting international times, and very intense and passionate times certainly for me as a performing artist. So what was going on in the public service? Not the same level of passion, I don't think!

So now to Hawke and Keating. We're into Hawke trying to rationalise the spheres of government. We're into the beginning of the reduction of government as being central and core to all that happened in Australia. We've got new roles for CEOs. In most places, the central heavy hands of public service boards and central treasuries are being loosened. Departments are being given a new level of independence, able to hire and fire staff on their own. The State over local governments are backing off, being loosened and giving councils new freedom to develop in their own communities without referring back to the state government. So an emerging independence of units of government, independent local government, independent government departments at the state and commonwealth level, and a huge rationalisation and reduction. This is the beginning of the reduction of the public service.

So what are they thinking about artists? Well, we're in, actually, we're in. We're driving them mad, in there and marginalised but we are beginning to see arts officers in councils. We're seeing an emergence at the state and commonwealth level of the

And now to the last ten years. The activity level has not let up. And in fact, when you look at it, huge change has occurred when you look at the arts as part of what's going on. It has become a vehicle for local governments to build stronger communities. That's depending, more or less, on where you are. I was in a council the other day, where they've got huge problems between the indigenous and non-indigenous people in the town. I was proposing that there might be some discussion about it and we might look at some arts project that would assist that, and the CEO of that council told me that managing those relationships was not the Council's problem.

So there's that kind of view at one end, and at the other, councils who use the arts beyond their arts program. In the middle, there are a whole range of local governments who've got into festivals and who've got proper arts programs and use them arts programs as a way of achieving the Council's goals. There's been a big surge in creative activity and a way for the building of new economies, particularly in tourism and local history and local museums, and you can see that all over the country.

I loved it when arts become a way for people to be healthy. And you can see that around Australia. In Victoria, VicHealth have been absolutely fantastic supporting arts projects to do that, and in enlightened councils you can see in municipal health plans, how arts and arts activities have become part of what they do.

And, I'm being optimistic here now, when I am talking about the arts becoming a way for governments to solve problems. A project that Judy Spokes and I are currently working on, called 'Animating Democracy', is actually a project to demonstrate to local government that the arts as a practice is a way to help them solve really difficult problems. We (Cultural Development Network) are in a partnership with the Local Government Community Services Association of Australia and the Globalism Institute of RMIT. We're in association with the Australia Council and VicHealth, who have kicked us off with funding and we've got promises and interest from a host of other funding bodies. We'll be working with six councils across Australia to actually place an artist or artists for three years in a council to work on a problem other than an arts problem. So to work on bringing indigenous and non-indigenous people together. So to work on some issue of community identity, or to work on how to rebuild the CBD, or whatever is the biggest problem in the council. Artswriters will be located in the area of the council where the resolution of the problem lies, not in the arts and culture branch of the council.

And that's hugely exciting. So I've been really optimistic. During this period, there's been a really big shift for me in the things I've done as an artist. I've been associated with community gardens and artists, with workplace choirs, with the Small Towns Big Picture project, with negotiations with Feral Arts, with traditional owners, the Gugu-Badhun people, the pastoralists in and around Greenvale in Queensland.

I worked on the Regional Cultural Alliance, which is an alliance between national cultural peak bodies Regional Arts Australia, the National Libraries Association, Museums and the National History Association. They have worked together to turn themselves into a Regional Cultural Alliance and absolutely amazingly did such a wonderful job of lobbying and being part of the mainstream that they feature in the current government's regional election commitments. Who would have thought that what might have been described in the past as a small cultural project, would turn into a major commitment by the current government? And congratulations to those partners for achieving that.

In the world, 1995, the Year of Tolerance; 1996, the Year of Eradication of Poverty; 1999, the Year of Older Persons; 2000, the Year of Volunteers; 2001, the Year of Dialogue Amongst Civilizations. The same year, mobilization against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related tolerance issues. So internationally, we are moving and are into a period of understanding that people need to be included and part of what's happening, so I am hugely affirmed that our own arts directions are consistent with that. Of major events that have shaped our lives over the last ten years, the Millennium and the hype that was around that would be hard to ignore. The tragic republic debate and issues of identity and how that got sidetracked into being a debate about something else rather than who we are. The increasing anxiety about terrorism that started long before September 11th, but of course came to the fore. The growing awareness of our nearest neighbour East Timor, and our responsibilities and desire to engage with that country and last but not least, Australia going to war and a war that now, most Australians are afraid of.

So, that's what's going on in the world. There's one other thing that's happened in the world, but mind you it started before the last decade, but it happened significantly over this last decade. That's the rising of the topic of caring for the environment and the planet. So as well as those international years, we've looked at for example, 2002, the Year of Mountains, 2003, the Year of Fresh Water, and a million other things that have gone on in all of our lives that have brought to our attention, the question of resources and our responsibility to it. In 1999, I went to an International Water Conference in Sweden and I was vastly amused, and sent back to my council, humorous reports of seeing waterless toilets and vacuum toilets that separated faeces and urine at the source, so that one lot could be sent to one place and one to be sent to another.

And now when I look back to 1999, I don't think I was alone in not understanding that there was a water problem. Now such a short time later, it has been brought to our attention and we have had to address that as part of our core, our culture, we must be caring for the planet. Ian McPhail, Commissioner for the Environment, thinks that the environment is Pillars One, Two and Three. But I think that I've just reversed it on you. I think that I am saying we must embrace culture, the Fourth Pillar, as significantly as part of our culture as caring for the planet. And that is new for us, for most of us. It is not true for those people who have been conscientiously fighting this topic for twenty years and have had a parallel journey with mine. I feel that there has been fighting for communities and respect, but there's also been fighting for the planet. Now is the time when the two are able to converge.

Well, what's going on in the public sector? The public sector is bigger than just the public sector. Now we're in the public domain. Now we're into corporatization. Now we're into the rise and rise and rise and rise of CEOs, both in government and business. The terrifying rise of CEOs and the power of CEOs. We're into a loss of confidence in politicians and therefore people turning to look for leadership in other places. We're into bigger is better, local government amalgamations. Sue Nattrass commented to me that the prediction is that within a very short space of time there will only be six multinationals in the world. They will have all coalesced, or merged or taken over each other and then we will have six very important CEOs running the universe.

The World Trade Organisation has emerged as more significant in international politics than the UN, able to control what happens in governments in particular countries. So I learned the other day, that currently the Canadian government had the World Trade Organisation say that governments will not place impediments in the way of free and proper trade with each other. The Canadian government introduced a series of environmental regulations designed to control water, and is now being sued for megabillions of dollars by a multinational using the World Trade agreement as the basis for that. So there is a direct interference now by large business in the role of governments in protecting both their people and their place.

We're in the hands of managers. Eve Stafford commented to me that, even the music industry is controlled by bar managers, which I thought was lovely! So government itself has less and less control. What's left of governments have more and more control over what's happening, and so we've got this terrifying prospect of the country looking for leaders, being unable to find them in our politicians, and the emergence therefore of CEOs who are people who have in the main, a responsibility to someone other than people in the community. Public servants no longer describe themselves as servants of the public. They describe themselves as servants of the government of the day.

So where are we as artists? We're in there and we're in the program. It's just that we are still not in charge. We manage to still be in the hands of people who largely do not share our values. Large corporations are serving their shareholders, public sector organisations are serving the government of the day, as is true in local government, serving the council, and in a way, this seems to me to be a kind of normal transition. I don't know where that will take us, but we need to understand that and see it as being a significant dynamic.

So, where are we going? Alright, I'm a dreamer. I've thought about what are the shows I'll be involved with over the next ten years: 'We of the Never Never'? No, 'Graceful Grannies'. What about 'The World is My Oyster'? I did a little workshop at a drinks table last night and I got some of these- what about 'Australian Idyll'? That was good!! We are so much into reality programs, what about 'Changing Lives'? We could get into that. So then I finally decided that it's 'When I Grow Up Im Going to Be a CEO'. Now mind you, I've had my turn as a CEO. This is the message I am giving to you. June Moorhouse and I again had a conversation about this and she said that the only way to change culture was to be in charge of it. And I suppose I was thinking that really, it's easier to change things, when you're the person in charge. Particularly at a time, when it's the person in charge who defines things. So organisational cultures are defined by the CEO of the organisation. Mind you, these people also are now, the chairs of arts boards and you have a look at where these CEOs are now. They're not just sitting in their corporations. They're running a whole range of things across the community.

I dream that in the next ten years, arts will become a normal part of organisational life, where cultures are acknowledged and respected. I dream that small again will become beautiful, where people can belong. And it doesn't mean that local government will be smaller necessarily, but that we learn that small is, in the main, how people relate. And we learn how to make small within the big. And where creativity is valued above all. And for us, that we have a common purpose and we say it's all of us, and it's about all of us. And that it's about the planet.

So when I look back over all these years that I choose not to add up, even though the public domain and public policy has changed and even though my own arts practice and that of people around me has changed in response to changing environment,

through all of that is, that the arts has found a way to celebrate that which is good and that which we strive for. That it's always, even when doing 'Brigadoon', about bringing people together, getting people to work cooperatively and giving people a sense of belonging. That's always been about releasing creativity, developing respect and understanding and that's always been exhilarating and daring. And I wish for all of us that this would be our future.

So here is our future: your future. It's got a tune, a tune you all know- my favourite tune because pretty much everybody knows it. So I am halfway through a Fellowship and I don't know what I'll think for the next year but what I think now is, on the cultural journey, which is the journey of building communities and caring and identity and inspiration and interdependence and independence, on that journey, we've done pretty well. And we've worked out how gradually to wheedle ourselves into the system. Not everybody, right? Not every CEO- don't tell me you've got a wonderful CEO, in your council. You might have one of the only five good ones. No, you might have a good CEO! I am making wild generalisations, but I am saying that there are people who now work outside the system whom I'm enormously respectful of, and there always were. But for those who are working inside the system, we're in a time, over the next ten years, where we need more people in authority making a difference, not just being passionate at the bottom. So I am trying to inspire you with grand thoughts of the future, because organisations will be changed by the people who lead them. Communities will be led by people with values if they're in those significant positions. So I am speaking to you, all those people under 50, budding leaders.

**SONG:**

Culture, culture, gives the world meaning and to our lives a core  
Culture, culture, to you we'll be true ever more

We're working to build up Australia  
As the land where we're all in the fold  
We know that there's only one answer  
We all must be strong brave and bold

Culture, culture, gives the world meaning and to our lives a core  
Culture, culture, to you we'll be true ever more

We're artists and thinkers and dreamers  
We work with our talent and heart  
We're looking towards a great future  
It's just not quite clear where to start

Culture, culture, gives the world meaning and to our lives a core  
Culture, culture, to you we'll be true ever more

So gather your skills and your cunning  
Be inclusive of both friend and foe  
Set your sights on the future you're dreaming  
And make sure that you're the next CEO

Culture, culture, gives the world meaning and to our lives a core  
Culture, culture, to you we'll be true ever more

Thanks very much

*Anne Dunn was a public servant in South Australia and the Northern Territory for 23 years, holding the positions of Commissioner - Public Service Board, Director - Department of Local Government and Chief Executive Officer of the Departments of Arts & Cultural Heritage and Family & Community Services. Following a period as the CEO of the City of Port Phillip, Dunn has returned to her consulting practice, working in the areas of facilitation, mediation, community consultation and organisational development.*

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## PAPERS

### THE SPACES BETWEEN THE PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Marla Guppy, Cultural Planner, Guppy and Associates

(This paper is not yet available.)

*Marla Guppy is the principal of Guppy and Associates, a cultural planning consultancy with a twenty year track record in planning and rejuvenating cultural environments. Marla is a qualified urban planner with a particular interest in creative community involvement in the planning process.*

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## THE FOUR PILLARS IN PRACTICE AT THE CITY OF PORT PHILLIP

Sally Calder, Director, Community and Cultural Vitality

I want to talk about a focus over the last three years in Port Phillip. Port Phillip Council, the southern neighbour of the City of Melbourne, takes in the area from Port Melbourne to St Kilda and Elwood. In our a very small municipality, the most densely populated area in Melbourne, we've introduced the Four Pillars. Sometimes we talk about a 'fourth pillar', sometimes we talk about the 'fourth pillow', sometimes we talk about the 'fourth bottom line' and sometimes we just talk about cultural vitality. But what we have tried to do is to imbed into our systems, our practices and our policies, a way of working. It's a way that's not so different from how we have always worked. But I guess that we are trying to sustain it into the future. So from a practical, management perspective, I want to tell you what we did, what worked, what didn't work and maybe there will be some lessons that those of you who are interested in trying to introduce a fourth pillar into your setting can take away and learn from.

Port Phillip is a very articulate community, diverse, with a strong cultural heritage and a strong history of activism, particularly around planning and development issues. It's got a history of being a producer of cultural events, both large and small, and it's a municipality that has a focus of being bigger than itself. It really has been a playground for Melbourne and Victoria, a place that has been meaningful for many Victorians and many Australians. And we have always been really lucky that our councillors have been reflective of our community. They've been just as passionate about cultural heritage and have been sympathetic to the notion of the fourth pillar. But we are also a community that is changing rapidly. Gentrification has had a huge impact on the city and continues to have a huge impact.

So for us, part of what we were on about was making 'how we do things around here' not just dependent on a strong CEO. Anne Dunn has been one of our CEOs, so you can tell the influence she has had. We currently have, in David Spokes another strong CEO, but the desire to embrace cultural vitality has to be bigger than one individual. It's got to be a whole of organisational and whole of community intent. So we tried to formalise and make really tangible, the intangible values that have informed how we have worked for many years. I think that probably the reason why all of us work in local government is that at some level, we want to make a difference to the way people experiences their lives. I came to local government from a primary care background. And I was interested in Anne's comment that the notions of community cultural development had started to impact New South Wales Health significantly in the late 90s, but I felt that the traditional community capacity building literature and social capital literature really missed something inherent around values and beliefs and aspirations. You couldn't really address those issues from a health perspective. So it was my sense that local government was probably the best placed level of government to try and co-ordinate aspirations to impact on those sort of issues.

Port Phillip, obviously through Anne's tutelage and our current councillors and CEO, has been heavily influenced in particular by Jon Hawkes' work, the *Fourth Pillar of Sustainability*. It just made really good sense to us. Part of our thinking was that it picked up the essential challenges for local government and the things that we really wanted to impact on. So we commenced a struggle to try and make the intangible tangible, introducing a framework that would articulate very clearly what it was that we were aspiring to, what we wanted to influence, and provided some mechanism for us to check our progress.

So I am going to tell you about what we actually did. It's going to sound very linear and very neat but it wasn't at all, it was very messy and very iterative. Probably everybody's recollection of the process is different, but this is my recollection of the process. My role was really portfolio manager, but there were a whole range of people who had really pivotal parts to play in all of this. The first thing that we did was to introduce a new framework for our corporate plan, which is now called the Council Plan, built very clearly about four pillars. It identified Council's key role as being around service and sustainability and identified the pillars of economic viability, environmental responsibility, cultural vitality and social equity. So there you go, we just did it. Get a new framework and you'll be right!

Within each of those pillars we had to define a clear goal, what it was that we wanted to achieve with that pillar. At Port Phillip we love to have a chat and the process of defining our goal for cultural vitality was the source of very many really long and passionate debates with councillors and with ourselves about what it was, ultimately, that we wanted to achieve. And you may like this or you may hate it, and we could debate it endlessly, but at the moment, what we've defined as our goal around cultural vitality is to "support the conditions that allow all communities within Port Phillip to experience and enjoy diversity of values, beliefs and aspirations".

That goal has a number of key objectives. The first of those objectives is to do with local culture, so we want a place that is

are very strong themes around wanting to protect our physical and our cultural heritage. So I guess for us, cultural vitality is around tolerance, diversity, creativity in the arts, active citizenship and heritage. Having identified these objectives we then went through the process of grouping all the actions we would be undertaking in the next twelve months under each of those objectives. And surprise, surprise, the thing that we discovered was that those actions, and there were about 60 of them, came from every single division of the organisation. That was a really powerful message.

That sounds easy, but that probably took us six months to achieve. The second thing that we did was embed cultural vitality considerations into all of our key planning and reporting systems. We had to make the framework real and we had to make people live it every day. Looking back, I think this was really pivotal. A couple of examples of the sorts of systems we impacted on were, first of all, council reports.

Every single option that council now considers for every single decision that it makes regardless of the type of decision it is, will be considered not only in terms of the economic, environment and social impacts, but also in terms of the cultural impacts of that decision. Our tendering and evaluation processes, (we run a large commercial portfolio of real estate), that previously would have been made on straight economic grounds, are now assessed in terms of their cultural impacts. David's paper will describe a recent and quite controversial example of that.

And also, our planning processes, our capital works business cases, our services and budget planning are all built around cultural impacts, cultural implications. The other thing that is quite important was Organisational Development processes; the sorts of people that we recruit, the way that we induct people into the city, the way we train them, the way that we manage their performance, is absolutely informed by their understanding of the contribution that they make to cultural vitality in the city, regardless of what their role is.

The third thing that we did, and looking back we didn't do this knowingly at the time, was that we created a number of rituals and symbols that supported the cultural vitality pillar. An example of a ritual is the personal sustainability diamond that was introduced at the Corporate Plan launch, always a big bash at the city of Port Phillip. This started off as a good idea of our Coordinator of Corporate Planning & Strategy, Anita Lange, but it became a really important personal symbol in the organisation. Every single member of staff created their own personal diamond that reflected the contribution that their role made to each of the four pillars. It was a powerful device for increasing the understanding of people as to what cultural vitality was and how they could contribute to it, whereas previously they might have defined culture quite narrowly and would not have seen that there was a role for them.

The fourth thing that we did was that, with the Cultural Development Network, we hosted a cultural vitality symposium in July of 2003. Specifically what we wanted to find out from that forum was, what were the factors that promote and develop cultural vitality in local communities and what was local government's role in promoting and developing those factors? Now I have to say that we didn't actually answer any of those questions. In fact, what we discovered was that we were being called quite innovative, which was really scary, because we had wanted to influence lots of levels of government to take on the fourth bottom line approach, but at that time, we discovered only one other LGA, Marion in SA, who were using the fourth bottom line.

I'd be interested to know if that's changed significantly. We were quite frightened about the fact that we were doing it ourselves. But there were lots of other really, really fantastic things that came out of that symposium, and the best thing that came out of it, which we didn't plan for at all, was the impact that it had on our organisation. I think that up until the time of the symposium, cultural vitality had been seen, across the organisation, especially for those people who weren't in the traditional social and cultural developments fields, as the new groovy buzzword, the thing that was possibly going to take over the organisation. The band that you needed to be on, if you wanted to go up the ladder.

What actually happened was this. Because I got anxious about numbers about a week before the symposium, I badgered and badgered my general management colleagues, and I made sure that they had all of their third level managers, 25 managers from across the organisation, in attendance. The Voices of Atherton Gardens, community choir from the Fitzroy Housing Estate, performed and made a big impact. I have this recollection of seeing four or five big burly grey-suited managers from finance and the fleet and purchasing and areas like that, watching the performance, this really beautiful performance. Our South African finance manager had a tear running down his face. And he said to me afterwards, 'Sally, thank you, thank you so much. That was the best thing I've ever seen'.

I had realised in that moment that what we had actually done was organise our own little community cultural development event for our organisation, and the impact of that was that everyone felt included in the topic. They didn't feel excluded from it any

disappeared. In retrospect it was probably one of the most powerful things we did, even though we didn't really achieve what we set out to achieve.

The other thing that we did was appoint a three day a week project officer, Richard Holt. That was really significant because you have to have resources and the opportunity to think and explore. We don't have time to do that in our working lives, but you do need people who can actually challenge you and push you and can think of broader ways of influencing other people to respond to the topic.

We continued to host a number of specific events that were designed to explore some of the big questions that came out of the forum, like for example, the impact of gentrification on the city.

And we communicated those internally, and overseas. We sent Richard away to LA to find out more and bring it home.

So in a way, in a nutshell, that's the neat story of what we actually did. David Brand's presentation will demonstrate some of the key examples that suggest to us that we are actually making a difference. What I want to address is what some of the initial reactions were that people had to this whole debate. It was quite interesting thinking what the key lessons were that I learned out of it.

I want to mention three groups of people—councillors, staff and the traditional arts fraternity. Our councillors obviously have a strong passionate interest in this topic and they were an easy audience, but even they were scared or sensitive to accusations that this was a very inner-city yuppie indulgent thing in which to put your time and your energy. So, there were still sensitivities that had to be overcome and the sense of 'why do we have to talk about this, we do it anyway?' So for us, it was very much a conversation around wanting to sustain this into the organisation of the future, wanting to sustain it to make it bigger than one powerful CEO, wanting to make it bigger than five or six passionate arts officers.

For staff cultural vitality was, until the symposium, not an issue that staff across the board really engaged with. It was seen as confined to the groovy young hipsters in the arts and festivals unit and it didn't really mean anything for anyone else. So, as much as anything, a lot of this has been an organisational development strategy, making it meaningful for everybody. And I think for the traditional arts fraternity, there was certainly some sense of loss, when we first started this conversation. Port Phillip has had a really strong traditional approach to arts and community cultural development, and I think there were concerns that that would be lost in some way, that if arts were part of something bigger, cultural vitality, that there would be a loss and they would be at risk.

And there are two things that I can point to, that suggest that this is not what happened. The first is our contemporary art collection which every year is under threat; will we buy more? should we get more money? You know that you've had an impact when the Director of Corporate Services, who describes himself as a fifty-something Scottish Presbyterian accountant, becomes the advocate for the acquisition budget. That's the first thing that suggests to me that the arts have not been lost. The second thing that suggests that to me is the fact that we are currently undergoing a multi-million dollar accommodation strategy and one of the key issues on which we are pinning our decision is the opportunity for the building to provide gallery space. So I think we have had significant impact on the thinking of the organisation more broadly.

Having said that, it's an ongoing conversation, certainly with our Arts Advisory Board. So these are the key things that I have learned and would be keen to share with you:-

first of all, it was very helpful for us, obviously, as Anne said, to have a powerful CEO, and a council who were on board and in sync. Certainly both Anne and David Spokes, our current CEO have been incredibly valuable. It's also really helpful to have an executive team that are collegiate and collaborative. That means that the culture of the organisation isn't dominated by territorialism and competition. You've got to have an ability to get other people on board who want to support you. The other thing we learned was that, though we didn't always achieve what we wanted, we always achieved something, often something that we hadn't planned for. I think the message is, don't have too much of a plan, just get on and do it.

The fifth thing is, it's really, really important to make 'how we do things around here' absolutely embedded into what you do. And some examples of that are, first of all your systems have to reflect your intent. You have to embed the fourth pillar into all of your systems, practice and policy. Anita Lange, our corporate planner, was invaluable in getting all of that level of detail. You have to make people feel included in the topic. You've got to celebrate it, and you've got to understand that everybody has a contribution. They've got to understand that, too. Don't exclude people from it. Include people into it. Don't get too tricky and too clever. Don't try to intellectualise cultural vitality too much. Just get on and do it, and work it out as you go along. Never underestimate the power of art to move (I think that the Atherton Gardens performance was certainly the turning point for our organisation).

Espy Hotel and the Vineyard, processes that enabled the retention of iconic cultural venues as vital performance and gathering spaces. Finally, the thing that I would say, if you want to truly embed the fourth pillar into your organisation, is that it can't be seen as just the province of social and cultural development or, particularly, the province of the arts unit, the community cultural development unit, or the community development unit. It's got to be seen as everybody's business and you will know that you have truly embedded cultural thinking into your organisation when you and your colleagues can point to a range of finance decisions, resource allocation decisions, planning and development debates that have been informed by explicitly articulated cultural considerations. And I put it to you that I think that is the challenge. Explicitly articulating the cultural considerations that have led you to behave in the way that you have.

I also think that it is important that the traditional arts areas really grab that challenge of being able to articulate clearly the impact that they have on the culture and identity of a place. The two stories I told you earlier of the contemporary art collection and the gallery space, I think, are just some little examples, of how we've been able to do that at Port Phillip.

Finally, the thing that we are struggling with every day is not to get too complacent. We don't, for a moment, think that we've got it all stitched up. Just last week, I put a report to council about a skate park and I dreamt last night about being castigated by some prominent St Kilda residents about how a skate park in their city would attract graffiti-vandalising, drug-taking young people and their lives would end. Street prostitution is another example where we didn't get the outcome we wanted, so it's an ongoing challenge. Something we have to chip away at all the time. David Brand's paper will describe some examples that we think speak of successes.

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*This paper is an edited transcript of Sally's presentation to the Fourth Pillar Conference.*

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## THE FOUR PILLARS IN PRACTICE AT THE CITY OF PORT PHILLIP

**David Brand, architect and former Councillor of Port Phillip**

Sally Calder's presentation was about life under the Fourth Pillar in the council organisation in Port Phillip. I'm going to describe the political perspective. I'm going to share some observations of my practical/political experience of cultural issues in Port Phillip with one or two case studies, to see if the particular can shed as much light as the general.

But a few general observations first. There's a kind of Maslow's hierarchy of needs that seems to apply to local government.

1: A city must first become economically sound, and that's based on

- a) a healthy local economy (the practical aspect), and
- b) financial propriety (the ethical imperative)

Then, layered on top of that, there are two more needs:

2. a city must be dealing with its social basics:

- a) delivery of services (the practical) and
- b) sense of justice (the ethical)

3: and the same with environmental responsibilities:

- a) build and maintain infrastructure
- b) environmental responsibility

Once these are under control, questions of a city's cultural vitality come to the fore. Really these needs are not quite so separate or sequential – their relationship is a bit more graduated and overlapping. But I'm sure I'm still committing some sort of fourth pillar heresy by talking about a hierarchy like this. When a city is healthy, wealthy and well-run, attention does seem to then focus on the cultural issues. I think this is true. Certainly, as a councillor, my experience as a complaint magnet bears it out. The political concerns; the political pressures one comes under, will get stuck on roads rates and rubbish when there's a problem, but will gravitate to the more cultural end of the hierarchy once they're fixed.

People, I've discovered, are desperate to worry and blame. (And I'm talking about my friends and allies, who really love the place, as much as anyone else!). When a city is doing well on the basics, people then fear problems on the intangibles. But in my experience, people really do care intensely about the cultural realm, and in fact I think they care about the cultural realm more than the others.

Cultural issues is how I got into local politics in the first place. In particular, the issue of the Esplanade Hotel.

The problem, you may recall, was that a developer was planning to build a 38 storey tower on the Espy - 2.5 times the height of Arrandale, the building you see next door there. The campaign was to save the Espy as a local music venue – the legendary incubator of Melbourne rock'n'roll, etc. And it was also about preserving the urban character of whole St Kilda foreshore. Whether you thought the main fight was for urban design, or saving rock'n'roll, the issues here were cultural.

It was a six year battle, with way too many twists and turns to recount here. People were so incensed about it, we got 10,000 objections sent to Council's planning department, all full of passion for St Kilda. I got elected on the back of it – it was such an emblematic fight, that just by my association with it, I was obviously a good thing for St Kilda too! One of the pivotal points the whole thing swung on was the powers available to council, under the planning scheme, for the protection of cultural heritage, when the cultural heritage was described as a use of a building, and not just the building itself. This was about protecting the





Espy as a place where certain cultures could continue to happen, rather than just as an iconic piece of architecture itself.

I was very proud of the journey our planners and officers took on this: from a flat 'we can't protect that - no way!', to sticking their necks right out in the end, in a truly audacious deal to save the cultural viability of the Espy as a live music venue. That a council - as planning authority - would stand up for this broader reading of cultural heritage, I believe, was a real landmark.

Anyway, another local controversy, quite a lot smaller than the Espy, but one that shows up quite a range of political challenges thrown up by cultural issues, is the Vineyard Restaurant, in Acland St, next to the O'Donnell Gardens..



The Vineyard was a small teahouse, built in the early 20th century.

It eventually became a Hungarian Steakhouse, whose lease with council ran out in the late '90s. The building was slated for possible removal, and it was let out on a temporary, short term low rent lease. The three brothers Iodice, and a cousin, who took up the lease, made a raging success of it as a café / restaurant / bar. It was very alternative and makeshift, and suited the local vibe perfectly. And Johnny Iodice and the boys were a pretty alternative set of operators too!

The 'Vineyard issue' that followed needs to be seated within a far greater, overarching, urban design project - the St Kilda Foreshore Urban Design Framework, that is now branded the 'St Kilda's Edge' project. The UDF/ StKE project is the biggest single issue by far that I had to work with as a councillor. It's a 10 to 20 year plan for the rejuvenation of the entire St Kilda Foreshore: Luna Park, the Palais, the Beach, the Pier, the Catani Gardens, etc, etc.



The basic idea is to keep all the aspects of the foreshore we love; fix or redo the crappy bits; and to retain all of its innate 'St Kilda-ness'. St Kilda-ness is clearly a cultural term, and it's what this massive infrastructure project is really aimed at preserving and reinventing. The UDF was built on about two years of public consultation, which was a massive task in itself. In the course of that, the question arose on demolition versus retention of the Vineyard.

The presumed wisdom was to knock it down, for more open space and open vistas and access to the adjacent gardens. But a very deep (though by no means universal) public affection was detected for this, the 'last of the beach shacks', as I took to calling it. It's worth noting that preserving the Vineyard really was a cultural decision, with barely a hook to hang on — the building had virtually no formal heritage value, virtually no obvious urban design value, and virtually no conventional aesthetic value.



But it just seemed the right sort of historical accident to retain on the foreshore — one of the 'wonky bits', as June Moorhouse might call it. Protecting a place like this was really striking a blow for culture over common sense. That's not quite true: 'culture' many times is what common sense sees. Which is then often overridden by 'the hard realities', which realists then call common sense. Because it was not justifiable on any of the other solidly 'realistic' grounds, the cultural grounds had to be very explicitly identified, and fought for.

Now, the Vineyard, over the last few years, has gone through three long, drawn-out controversies on the way to where we are



battle over the simple idea of the cafe trading with some tables and chairs out on the footpath in the park, next to the Vineyard.



Council had happily granted the Vineyard operators a standard footpath licence to trade on the pavement. A local citizen pointed out some time later that it was crown land, and despite council being the land's committee of management, it was not council's to issue licences over. We quickly discovered that this citizen was absolutely right. And that there was a small body of local residents, and perhaps some officers, who wanted to use this legal fact to clear out of the park something they didn't think should be there anyway.

And I also very quickly discovered a much larger body of local sentiment that demanded the outdoor trading be reinstated immediately! And which saw the whole, tedious process to correctly re-establish the right to trade there on crown

land as an attempt by council just to strangle and sink the anti-establishment Vineyard in bureaucratic red tape.

We ended up, on one day, with a ludicrous situation, at the State Government's launch of its huge Docklands film and TV studios, which was staged in the park beside the Vineyard. At that moment Victorian tourism, and cultural pride, was riding the crest of the Secret Life of Us, and the Government wanted the opening to be set before an iconic SLoU scene. The outdoor cafe at the Vineyard was the choice – the setting for countless SLoU tete-a-tetes. So the tables and chairs and potted palms were brought out from their banishment, repositioned on the footpath, and repopulated with St Kilda denizens, for this demonstration of Victoria's cultural vitality and hip savvy. And then whisked away again once the cameras departed.

And it took forever, to go via the state legislature, to get them back again. Probably about 18 months!

It's one of the most difficult political phenomena to deal with – and it absolutely plagues the cultural realm: the cumbersome process just to reach the simple end. And it was an 18-month-long incubation of every conspiracy theory, every strain of political paranoia, and every seed of cultural alarmism. By the time we got the tables and chairs back on the path, the depth and breadth of mistrust was quite palpable. And this is from people you essentially agree with! I found it very frustrating: just having to say 'Trust me' to everyone for that long. Some of them even started calling me a politician!

When the legals are complex, the long bureaucratic wait is a formula for political disaster. And it's sometimes hard for officers to appreciate just how corrosive, what is to them an obviously necessary and justifiable process, can in fact be. It's the role of the politician to convey this warning message to the organisation. And this usually happens when the politician himself starts to feel seriously corroded!

Then there was the issue of late closing – the guys applied for extended trading outside on the footpath till 3:00am each night. The political stress factor here is trying to choose between competing cultural 'pictures' of what's going on, or at least trying to find a fair way to balance them.

There was one picture:

The Vineyard as the perfectly located, quintessential late night chill-out scene —drinks and a little late night live local music — for St Kilda's bohemian & alternative subcultures, for the waiters and bartenders and musos after their own work ..... This is a full-on St Kilda cultural reality. A cultural strength. And every city worth its salt, and certainly St Kilda, just has to have places like this. That's why we live there!

Then there's the other:

The Vineyard as an unnecessary, unruly, inconsiderate, noisy, hard to police, constant nuisance; destroying nearby residents' reasonable amenity, dominating the park, escalating public drunkenness, printing money at residents' expense, and to add insult to injury, all underwritten by their local council!!! All true.

It comes down to the interpretation you choose - the slant – the cultural reading you decide to run with.

But as a councillor,

- do you take on one particular (popular) reading, and go for it,
- or do you try to allow for all multiple readings, and somehow let a process filter them through to some sort of weighted answer?

It was Richard Holt who first pointed out to me the blindingly obvious difference between social-pillar-desired outcomes and cultural-pillar objectives: pursuing cultural vitality is often not commensurate with pursuing social harmony. Real cultural vitality



At the time of the third and most difficult Vineyard controversy, Acland Street itself was the subject of a great deal of local angst. And I think this is a very typical cultural vitality issue.

High rent was changing the face of Acland St, from the famous, quirky, Middle European-Jewish street, of delicatessens, kosher butchers and Bohemian (and that's capital B Bohemian!) cafes and cake shops it once was, into a blandly gentrifying strip of generic, tourist-orientated retail outlets. But Acland St was filling up with ice-cream parlours (in the '90s) and juice bars (in the '00s), tourist gift shops; tourist bars and restaurants; and — the most hated of all — high rent franchises, like 7/11s and Gloria Jeans. There was constant criticism and political

pressure on council to stop the rot. But especially since the famous 'McDonalds Amendment' under the Kennett Government, council, as the planning authority, can't pick and choose businesses in this way, and certainly can't culturally plan the place at that fine a grain.

Nonetheless, it is assumed, or believed, by a large portion of the population, that council can and does control all this, and that council actually wants all the higher dollar development, for its own nefarious purposes! Shopping centre mix is, indeed, one of the really pressing cultural questions facing all municipalities. And one for which local governments have very few tools at their disposal. For the cultural pillar, forget arts policy for a moment, and have a look at this planning legislation!

But here, at the Vineyard, council was the landlord too, not just the planning authority. And, clearly, we had to do better, culturally, than the other landlords in the street. The permanency conferred upon the Vineyard by the UDF meant the building had to be repaired — to stop it falling down or rotting away — and the business had to be put onto a secure footing of a longer term lease.

For this, the operators had to vacate the building, and, also, at the same time, compete in an open tender for the new commercial lease. Now this was always going to be the case - the Act is quite clear that new commercial arrangements like this, on crown land, have to be publicly tendered. But by this stage, the Vineyard operators, and their staff, and their patrons, and the increasingly engaged public, were all pretty much convinced that council was basically just preoccupied with victimising them.

It was very tough on the Vineyard boys, who could barely comprehend what was going on, and it was a very inconvenient and cumbersome process indeed. And it created, again, this runaway culture of cynicism and disbelief: a pervasive culture of misinformation, and holus-bolus rumour swallowing.

Council ran a major public information campaign. But public statements guaranteeing that the 'look and feel' of the Vineyard would be preserved were apparently just not believable.

I'll read you some extracts from the very large 'Save the Vineyard' e-mail campaign - I want you to notice how absolutely spot-on the cultural analysis of the Vineyard's place in St Kilda often is, and on the other hand, how far off the perceived facts are.

*I write to you in the hope that you will help preserve the St Kilda we know and love: the essence of which lies within its peculiar characters, its diverse and accessible cultural events and its unique, quaint and irreplaceable establishments. As rates rise and new money moves in, many of St Kilda's iconic bars, cafes and shops are being run out of town by 24 hour fast food chains and an endless stream of cafe/restaurant/ bars that are as lacking in personality as they are in individuality. In doing so we are losing everything that makes St Kilda what it is.*

\* \* \*

*I am a St Kilda resident. I love where I live, and love the diverse cultures in the area. St Kilda is unique. Sadly, it feels like we are going to have to start saying St Kilda WAS unique. How many trendy juice bars and international chain stores are going to be allowed into Acland St before the council realises the soul of St Kilda is being destroyed?*

*I can appreciate that some renovations are essential as the building is old. I cannot appreciate the offering of the licence to the highest bidder. Please think of your constituents before you allow greed to turn St Kilda into something colourless.*

\* \* \*

*I am writing to you to express my absolute disappointment and opposition to the proposed closure of the Vineyard. I am a local, and I love Acland St. I moved to St Kilda from Adelaide because it has a vibe, feeling and culture unlike any other area in Melbourne.*

*Where is your community spirit? Are you really working for the people of Port Phillip or are you only worried about your budgets? If you destroy the Vineyard, you are destroying our culture.*

\* \* \*

*Are we to welcome further boredom to St.Kilda? The Vineyard is the final vessel of what made St.Kilda St.Kilda. The Vineyard site doesn't have to make money to be a shining asset in the Port Phillip Portfolio. No franchise 'coffee' business, fast food joint or poncy wine bar could offer St Kilda what the Vineyard has, and will continue to provide to the community.*

\* \* \*

*God Save the Vineyard. Places like the Vineyard are at the very essence of St. Kilda. To destroy the Vineyard is to destroy the culture of St. Kilda.*

Really, you can hardly find more beautifully expressed 'Fourth Pillar' sentiments than some of those. Nor more variety in what people will believe when it comes to scuttlebutt about Council's intentions.

What really took the cake for misinformation though, was this: the window war!



Council erected a public notice on the building, setting out the processes and works about to be embarked upon, and explaining, in part, that

*The works will not change the character of the premises. Council supports the Vineyard remaining a local icon, and these works will enshrine the Vineyard as a permanent fixture of the area.*

*The council will welcome proposals which are sensitive to the cultural environs and ensure the Vineyard's continuation as a restaurant where locals gather to eat, talk and listen to music. It will be essential that the historic features and presentation of the building be retained.*

A fairly straightforward undertaking.

In the window immediately above the sign, though, soon appeared this graphic, of a slick, two storey glass and concrete box, labelled 'Vineyard', but otherwise sharing nothing in common with the existing building. Under the banner

SAVE THE VINEYARD – DON'T LET THEM TURN IT INTO THIS!

the accompanying text said this, if you can't read it. I hope you can spot the differences in world view here:

*To the people of St Kilda:*

*History is a rare species that must be protected. Once we destroy the icons and buildings that link us to our past, our soul will quickly follow.*

*Port Phillip Council must understand that St Kilda's great treasures – Luna Park, the Palais and the Vineyard (to name a few) can't be abandoned in pursuit of a larger plan. And in much the same way, they have to respect people like us who are dedicated to keeping alive the spirit of St Kilda.*

*We won't let this place, or our part in building the Vineyard into a St Kilda landmark, be compromised by a flawed strategy. We won't abandon you, and we won't give up without a fight.*

I won't even try to unravel which planet of paranoia or cynicism this arrived from. But it's instructive of what a local politician sometimes has to deal with. With rumours flying around that the tender had already been secretly awarded to various other parties, or even to the current operators, Council had only one way through - to run a fourth-pillar-enlightened, and absolutely straight, transparent tender process. Which is what it did.

Councillors had their input on the assessment criteria, but were thereafter rigorously excluded from the process.

The tender principles we pre-set were, (more or less)

- the tender should not be designed to exclude the current operators,
- whatever the outcome, the operators eventually selected needed to be culturally credible with the current fans and patrons,
- and, although a credible market rental was required, Council, as landlord, must be responsible for the cultural product it brought to the street, not just the dollar return it collected.

A tender 'ideal' we discussed early on was that the process should, in effect,

- pick out the culturally credible bidders, and
- then let just those tenderers compete against each other on all the other criteria, including dollar return.

The tender process worked — and this is the practical lesson I think we can offer in cultural pillar management — because:

- the weighted assessment criteria included a set of strong, clearly thought-out and articulated cultural objectives, and
- the tender assessment committee included real subculture-savvy cultural advocates on the team.

The result, you may have guessed, was a highly gratifying surprise, to me at least, with our culturally appropriate 'rogue cowboy' operators actually coming out on top of the rigorously quantified scorecard. And I need to emphasise that the scorecard was weighted towards a cultural outcome — favouring any culturally credible operator — and not toward any one particular operator.

I reckon one of the proudest moments I've had with our council, was in the chamber, hearing the initial tender advice from our Executive Director, Corporate Services, David Graham — a self-described "55 year old Scottish Presbyterian accountant" — an inveterate single bottom line man if ever there was one — giving his fastidiously argued analysis of the cultural factors underpinning his committee's recommendation for the tender award.

So what was so special about this decision? Non-dollar criteria aren't radically new, just because we've now got a fourth pillar to go by. Nor is ending up with a culturally preferred outcome something new — though to obtain this sort of decision, I have a feeling it is often leapt to, intuitively, rather than arrived at by process. I think it's in the way cultural principles were actually embedded in the formal process that makes this decision noteworthy, and, I think, working through the formal processes, and sticking to principle, in all the heat, was an approach we can perhaps take heart from in the new world of quadruple bottom lines.

And the public reaction? Happiness. Puzzlement. And a sudden shift in world views among many of them - I think amazement that local government could actually do what they thought it never would.

And for me, a huge sigh of relief, and a great feeling of reconnection with community and local culture. And a real sense of pride in a council organisation actually grappling with the cultural dimension, in practice.

### **A real Fourth Pillar decision!**

It's really interesting to note what sorts of issues drove the local election campaigns in Port Phillip last weekend. In St Kilda Ward there were seven candidates all standing for pretty much the same things:

- ensuring residents' say on the future character of the foreshore, and
- making sure live music venues are retained in St Kilda

Both obviously cultural issues. Roads rates and rubbish were not to be seen.

These cultural issues were where the heat was - the ones on which every candidate was desperate to establish his or her credentials. Beneath these, of course, were countless issues - financial, social and environmental - that are absolutely vital, but were not, at this time, controversial. But maybe also this is saying, that if politicians look after the cultural issues properly, all else may possibly be forgiven. Culture is, after all, **who we are** and **what we live for**.

*David Brand is an architect and former Deputy Mayor of the City of Port Phillip*





## WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

*A range of materials from conference workshops follow; some summaries submitted by workshop speakers, and reports from facilitators summarizing the workshops...*

### NUKUNU - OUR HERITAGE AND IDENTITY:

#### *An Exercise in Collaborative Story Telling*

#### Malcolm McKinnon & Jared Thomas

Artist Malcolm McKinnon and Nukunu man Jared Thomas described a collaborative initiative involving an Aboriginal community organisation, a local historical society (strongly supported by a local council) and an artist, working together to address the lack of recorded Aboriginal history in a part of the Flinders Ranges in South Australia. Directed towards the development of a permanent museum exhibition, this project explores the historic and contemporary connection of Nukunu people to the Mount Remarkable area. Combining first-hand narratives with historical artefacts and multi-media presentation formats, the exhibition presents a range of stories promoting an understanding of local Aboriginal heritage and identity.

The exhibition includes stories concerning:

- the continuing survival of Nukunu people, culture and language and a surviving sense of connection to the Mount Remarkable region (despite the physical absence of Aboriginal people from the immediate area);
- the impacts of European settlement on Nukunu people;
- relationships and interactions between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, in all their diversity and complexity.

In particular, Malcolm and Jared talked about the collaborative nature of the project and the unusual leadership role fulfilled in this instance by a local historical society, brokering a working relationship with an Aboriginal community. They also outlined the project's focus upon a story telling approach that places contemporary Aboriginal voices within the context of a eurocentric museum environment. Most significantly, they talked about the way in which this project is promoting dialogue and mutual understanding between blackfellas and whitefellas in a small rural community. Central to this presentation was the screening of a short film called *Still Connected*, one of the works produced through the project.



Margaret Smith, Nukunu elder, from film *Still Connected*



Nukunu country at Mount Remarkable, South Australia, from film *Still Connected*

*Malcolm McKinnon is an artist and planner with bases in Melbourne and in the southern Flinders Ranges region of South Australia. His work encompasses research and planning assignments, community development initiatives and public and community art projects. He has particular interest working in a regional and rural context, including numerous projects with farmers and aboriginal communities.*

*Jared Thomas is a Nukunu person from the southern Flinders Ranges in South Australia. Currently employed as an indigenous Arts Development Officer for Arts SA, Jared is also a writer. His first major work, a play called 'Flash Red Ford' toured Uganda and Kenya in 1999 and his first novel, 'Sweet Guy' was short listed for the 2002 Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature. Jared is also involved in film writing and editing and was Assistant Director on the film 'One Night the Moon,' directed by Rachel Perkins.*

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## WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

### ANIMATING THE HERITAGE OF GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY

**Dr Elaine Lally and Tiffany Lee-Shoy**

Two years ago, WSROC began managing the Regional Cultural Planning coordination project that spanned the 14 LGA's in Greater Western Sydney.

#### **Common barriers faced by cultural staff**

During the consultation and research to develop a Regional Cultural Strategy, a number of common issues kept emerging, and they were:

- That cultural and heritage officers are isolated within the local government structure
- That information that was useful to cultural planners was often inaccessible
- That rich cultural information gathered through cultural projects such as CCD, festivals or cultural mapping, or recorded in heritage collections – were not valued by planners or decision makers, and even if they were, the mechanisms to include it in the planning processes were poor
- That culture and heritage is seen as too messy, too difficult, or sufficiently addressed through demographic data.

#### **Digital Cultural Atlas for GWS**

The DCA is a response to the needs of cultural planners – but is essentially about animating any cultural story and presenting it within a spatial context that activates the physical environment.

- It is a conduit between the hard data and tools (GIS) currently used for landuse planning in local government, and the intangible, value-based stories about how the community lives.
- Through the research, it has become clear that DCAGWS can address the unique bundle of challenges faced by heritage planners in GWS Councils.

#### **The digital cultural atlas concept**

The traditional atlas concept suggests:

- Lots of maps
- Additional information about economics, politics, lifestyles
- Indexing which makes it easy to find places

Electronic/digital cultural atlases extend on this through the use of new information and communications technologies :

- Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- Networked information and the World Wide Web
- Powerful linking and indexing techniques

#### **Beyond the bird's eye view**

Cultural mapping/planning requires both

- the 'bird's eye' (planner's) point of view and
- the 'on the ground' (community) point of view

Adding perspective by 'zooming in':

- Images
- Video, audio
- Documents, stories
- Links to related information wherever it is
- Online Exhibitions and access to digital collections
- Linking information together to provide 'trails'

#### **A bundle of GWS heritage challenges**

Heritage issues in GWS:

1. Heritage awareness is low in the community, and heritage fears are perpetuated by the real estate, finance and insurance industries (eg: depreciation of property, property modification straitjacketing).





2. Within local government, heritage planners report that heritage is often met with ignorance or outright hostility by elected representatives, and there is generally a high turn over of planners assessing DA's. The value of heritage places to the community takes a back seat when it is believed that individual rights (to alter the property etc) are being compromised. People cannot contextualise the value of heritage places, within the regional history, let alone the state or national stories.

GWS is facing significant development pressures to accommodate the rapidly expanding metropolitan population, with an additional 260,000 dwellings planned in the period 2001-2019. It is expected that most of this will be accommodated in existing areas, with 60,000 on the fringe. Development applications in town centres for new 20+ story residential developments are being approved, in part because local government planning instruments have not kept pace with these new ventures. Some councils have been unable to conceptualise the impact of these major developments on heritage properties, aesthetics (including shadowed areas) and the overall functioning of the city.

3. The range of heritage is poorly understood— recent studies reveal that our colonial heritage is well documented, but records fail to reflect the full range of the regions cultural heritage. There are notable gaps in our understanding of Aboriginal heritage, migrant (esp post WWII), industrial and moveable heritage and the importance of cultural landscapes (including productive agricultural heritage). There is a cultural cringe towards late 20th century heritage, which diminishes the social and cultural heritage value of places. This includes significant migration heritage places, as the greatest influx of migrants to Western Sydney occurred after WWII as Australia sought labour to rebuild the nation after years of depression and war.

#### **Benefits of DCA to heritage and local government**

1. Promotes heritage awareness
  - In the community
  - In local government
2. Bridges the communication divide – an unthreatening passage between culture-talk and planning-talk
3. Tells a story which situates heritage items in community context
  - Activates the meaning and value of 'problem points on a map' (NSW Heritage Office plotting SHR & LEPs to DIPNRs GIS)
  - How heritage items contribute to historical themes
  - How local heritage finds its place in regional development
  - The relationship between places and moveable heritage and collections
  - A spatial context for peoples stories/ oral histories
  - The relationship between sense of place and cultural identity
4. A framework that connects diverse information sources
  - It networks heritage and cultural places, organisations, communities and people
  - Enhances knowledge about communities for museum planning or CBHS

#### **How could it be used?**

- Western Sydney heritage review, and implementation of recommendations
- Thematic history online, weaving the regional story that connects local items
- LEPs - reviews
- GWS Agricultural heritage project – looking at agricultural landscapes, and resonant objects

#### **Grantham Poultry Research Station, Seven Hills, State Heritage Register**

DCAGWS has the potential to connect and visually represent the Grantham story with:

- the Estonian Poultry farms in Thirlmere, (a story that is being researched by Wollondilly Shire Council, Wollondilly Heritage centre and the Powerhouse Museum), as well as contextualising it with
- the history of farming sub divisions that saw poultry farming boom across western Sydney from 1900-1960s, and
- farmers market days, through to
- modern day Ingham Brothers factory production methods.

It can also explore the reuse and adaption of Grantham as a Heritage Park,

- with council currently exploring a childrens science museum,
- including activities that make use of the historical chemistry labs,



*Dr Elaine Lally is Assistant Director of the Centre for Cultural Research at the University of Western Sydney. Dr Lally conducts research into contemporary cultural change in western Sydney. She is chief investigator for the 'Greater Western Sydney Electronic Cultural Atlas' project, developing information support tools for cultural planning in the western Sydney region. Dr Lally is author of *At Home with Computers* (Berg, 2002).*

*Tiffany Lee-Shoy is Regional Cultural Planning Coordinator at the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, an association of eleven local government bodies in Western Sydney. Her project seeks to expand resources and collaboration between councils to promote the cultural life, arts and creativity of the region.*

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## WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

### LIVING STREETS PROJECT

**Monir Rowshan, Living Streets Coordinator, Liverpool City Council**

Liverpool Region is situated in the south-west of Sydney. It stretches over 30 kilometres between Georges and Nepean Rivers with a total population of approximately 74,000. The area has a rich indigenous and multicultural history, with a large number of Liverpool residents coming from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Liverpool has the highest refugee intake in the western Sydney region and the council recently announced Liverpool as a Refugee Welcome Zone.

Living Streets is a Place-Making Project that has been using community and cultural development processes within certain areas of Liverpool CBD. As a cultural planning practice, the project looked at the southern CBD area of the City, at Speed Street, Nagle Street, Mill Road and River Park Drive. This neighbourhood at the time of the project had a population of 3,960. From this figure, 2,343 residents were born overseas, with 2,209 or 55% born in non-English speaking backgrounds. The area was well known for crime, drug use, drug dealing and rubbish disposal. In the mid nineties it was used by newly arrived migrants and refugees as a launching pad in terms of settling into a new community. Regardless of all its problems it has always been friendly, with a great energy created by residents who stand on their doorsteps and talk to each other. However, the area at the time was so unsafe that it made the new migrants and refugees even more isolated from the wider community and was labelled with stereotypes.

Safety and amenity issues were major concerns for families who lived in the area. In 1997, the Living Streets Project received funding from Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme to create a project with the residents in the neighbourhood. The project worked with schools, community and government agencies to develop an understanding of the cultural and social needs of the residents. Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre and Liverpool City Council's Community Planning team worked in collaboration on surveys, art projects with local schools and some door knocking at resident's homes as a local consultation strategy.

An unused piece of council land next door to a Community Centre and Disability Centre was identified and transferred to the project. In consultation with the residents it was decided that they wanted a park and a community garden. A team of urban designers and planners worked with the Project Coordinator. The plan informed different council departments about the social and cultural needs of the residents.

The aim of Living Streets Project is to use community and cultural development strategies within specific streets of Liverpool to create a sense of place that promotes liveability, safety and amenity. Placemaking, or sense of place, is about making opportunities for the community's imagination and ideas to inform a public space. It examines the spaces we live in and the way we utilize space. It looks at lifestyle and the way people connect, reject or identify with the environment they live in. Place making is about improving an urban environment so people feel safer and happier. It looks at what can be done to make neighbourhoods liveable for communities. In this regard it's about residents understanding their community and being able to direct change. Living Streets a place making program that seeks to improve the liveability of the southern CBD residential area by consulting and working with the people who live there.

#### Objectives of the Living Streets Project

- to develop opportunities for members of the community to participate in community cultural development projects
- to work with residents to highlight and take action about the issues that affect their everyday activities
- to direct the project to NESB and at risk communities
- to challenge the negative image of the area
- to improve access to cultural or recreational facilities that the local community can use.
- to develop communication networks within the community and between the community and outside agencies (including Council)
- to develop a project framework that could be sustained beyond the project period and that is transferable to other communities



By 2001, a beautiful and colourful park full of mosaic seating and pathways that reflected the multicultural nature of the neighbourhood was developed in the area. A community garden was built for residents who live in apartments. A performance was created with young people for the launch of the project.

the community garden. A qualified horticulturist who was a graduate of the University of Kabul became involved in the project and helped the community members with building the garden plots. Design, Parks and Recreation, Community Planning and Community Facilities departments of Liverpool Council were involved in this process.

Residents started coming out of their homes a lot more and the park became a focal point for the residents and visitors. A video and booklet was developed to promote the project, and the study of neighbourhood brought out a lot more information about the aboriginal, European and multicultural heritage of the area. A document called the Living Streets Heritage Walk was developed and approved by council during this time suggesting a walk from Liverpool Railway Station, to Casula Powerhouse, looking at heritage sites within the area.

Through this project:

- crime in the area was halved
- residents who are mostly newly arrived migrants and refugees felt a stronger sense of self worth
- residents took pride and ownership of their neighbourhood
- a youth centre started functioning in an unused building in Speed Street
- residents started coming out of their apartments more often
- residents took charge of the 16 garden plots created for their use
- there was strong trust and friendship built between the cultural workers and the residents



Based on this project model, Living Streets has been able to obtain numerous grants from different funding sources to continue to work with residents on other projects. Since 2001

- a master plan of the Georges River area which has involved massive community consultations in informing the plan has been developed.
- more community gardens are being built in the neighbourhood (Lighthorse Park) funded through NSW Planning (DUAP)
- a basketball half-court funded through the Department of Sports and Recreation is being built for young people at the Gasworks site Young people of the area have worked with local artist to create designs for a seating area of the basketball court.
- a public art program has engaged artists to create Heritage Sculptures placed at significant sites within the Living Streets precinct, funded through Federation Community Grants (Department Communications, Information, Technology and the Arts)

In its current development, the project has extended its partnerships with the Liverpool Uniting Church and obtained funding from the CCDB of the Australia Council to create a flower garden to welcome refugees to Liverpool. The project is called the 'Living Garden' and engages artists to work with residents and refugee communities to create a community space for public use.

The Project has extended partnerships with Liverpool Public School on a Place Making Project called the 'Childhood Memories of Migration'. This project will tell the stories of migration by children focussing on arrivals and departures. Poetry, painting and ceramics will be used to enhance the landscape of that area owned by Department of Education and Training opposite the Railway Station, funded through NSW Ministry for the Arts/Western Sydney Local Government Arts Incentive Funds (\$20,000). Council has supported the project by allocating funds towards landscaping of the project area.

The project has also obtained two-year funding to work in Warwick Farm area, a suburb of Liverpool with a high population of refugee and migrants divided by the Hume Highway, age gaps, cultural gaps, drugs, safety and amenity issues. It is working in partnership with a range of local and regional organisations and have already gained the support of two major schools in the area, the Neighbourhood Centre, health organisations, University of Western Sydney (UWS), Liverpool, CCD NSW, Department of Housing, and Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre.

The project is funded through Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme for \$63,750 in its first year and \$73,750 in its second. It is at the first stage of development and is working in partnership with Liverpool Health Service, local schools and the Neighbourhood Centre on numerous community cultural development projects. The final outcome of these practices will be to create community spaces. Case studies of all recent projects will be available in the near future.

#### **Conclusion:**

The essential ingredients for the success of Living Streets model of community cultural development practice has not only been based on policies but also through some unusual principles perceived by the community not as the norm in a local government environment. These include:

- building trust with communities by listening to them rather than imposing council's ideas
- incorporating the community's ideas into planning processes
- putting in place sustainable processes that have helped communities to be independent
- having dedication and passion and a belief that we are here not for ourselves but for serving the community



*Monir Rowshan is a visual artist with extensive experience in ceramics and mosaics. She has worked in the field of community cultural development, multicultural art and public art in the last 14 years. Based at Liverpool City Council, she is currently coordinating the 'Living Streets Project', which deals with complex issues of community partnerships, community building and creativity within the context of place making.*

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## WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

### THE ART OF RENEWAL

Deborah Miles and Glenda Masson

The presentation provided an overview of *The Art of Renewal – A Guide to Thinking Culturally about Strengthening Communities*. The guide, to be launched in early 2005, has been developed by Arts Queensland and the Queensland Department of Housing's Community Renewal program in partnership. It is supported by a steering committee which includes representatives from peak organisations and local government.

The guide identifies the role and value of culture, creative practice and the arts in communities and highlights how the inclusion of cultural identity and creativity in community engagement processes can benefit communities. The guide includes the *Art of Renewal* planning pathway, which is a series of group exercises designed to achieve a community creativity plan.

In the context of Health and Wellbeing, the presentation noted the policy contexts for the *Art of Renewal* guide in Arts Queensland and Community Renewal. In addition, Glenda and Deborah noted that the *Art of Renewal* planning pathway integrates cultural issues in planning and decision-making in local areas as well as promoting the implementation of creative cultural practices.

A trial of the *Art of Renewal* planning pathway was conducted in late 2003 in the renewal area of Vincent, a suburb of Townsville. Community Renewal staff guided a community group through the following three steps and 10 exercises and in 2004 an action plan to meet the identified goals was implemented.

	Step	Exercises	Outcomes
Dreaming Phase	1. Building a cultural picture of your community	1. Mapping the locality 2. Reflecting and reminiscing 3. Developing themes 4. Identifying community values 5. Visioning	<b>Our Community Culture</b>
	2. Identifying your community cultural resources & aspirations	6. Auditing cultural resources 7. Identifying aspirations	<b>Our Community Cultural Resources</b>
Translating Dreams to Reality	3. Translating community cultural development aspirations into action	8. Re-visioning and goal setting 9. Determining strategies 10. Action planning	<b>Community Creativity Plan</b>

The *Art of Renewal* guide has shaped the development of the Community Renewal community creativity program strategy and is in line with the Community Renewal program goal 'to develop communities where people feel valued, safe and proud'.

*Deborah Miles is a Principal Policy Officer with Arts Queensland. Deborah has a background in social policy and community development in local government.*

*Glenda Masson is a Senior Planning Officer with Community Renewal, Queensland Department of Housing. Glenda has a background in social planning both in government and non-government sectors.*





### A COMMUNITY-CENTRED MODEL FOR TOURISM

**Frank Panucci and Nat Trimarchi, Rainwater Productions**

'We need to think about cultural tourism because really there is no other kind of tourism. It's what tourism is... People don't come to America for our airports, people don't come to America for our hotels, or the recreation facilities.... They come for our culture: high culture, low culture, middle culture, right, left, real or imagined – they come here to see America.'  
Garrison Keillor, 1995 Partners In Tourism Conference, Washington.

...'Basically the model shows a method of reconciling 'community-centred' needs with 'tourism-centred' needs. It shows how taking a community cultural development approach can produce best practice in cultural tourism and resolve the often competing community, artistic and commercial interests. The arguments that often surface ... indicate the need for setting out a framework for the proper development of cultural tourism products. Products that benefit communities culturally and economically. From a community perspective, it is essential to have management and control of cultural material that can be used commercially and for longer-term cultural sustainability. From a tourism perspective, products need to be high quality, authentic and marketable preferably en masse, as well as meet a whole range of industry related requirements. Cultural tourism that doesn't work has negatives for both communities and tourism, and represents a missed opportunity. This community-centred model puts forward a perspective that competes with purely commercial approaches and interests, approaches that account for what I think is, currently, a severely limited scope of products.'...

Nat Trimarchi, fuel4arts September 2003 Forum: Cultural Renewal and Tourism

In 2000 Nat Trimarchi travelled to the USA (under a Fulbright Foundation Scholarship) and undertook research on best practice cultural tourism. What he found was that Australia was about 10 years behind in world's best practice and this was partly because the arts sector here, unlike the US, has not effectively engaged with the topic. However, the Americans were (in 2000) probably five years behind us in community cultural development best practice. The Americans developed a national strategy in 1995 led by the tourism sector and key government agencies like the NEA and Americans for the Arts. The Partners in Tourism initiative has achieved great results – both economic and cultural - and this approach should be of interest to Australian governments, and the tourism, arts and heritage sectors in particular.

In 2001, Nat presented his findings at Museums Australia's national conference and has since published several papers on the topic. With the assistance of the Australia Council, Rainwater Productions has now developed and is currently promoting a model that should be of interest to policy makers and to people working in all three key sectors: arts, heritage and tourism, all of whom have much to gain.

The model shows:

- a) how to blueprint the relevant aspects of the US approach in the Australian context, and
- b) how to utilise Australia's leading edge experience in community cultural development to achieve best practice cultural tourism and resolve the often competing community, artistic and commercial interests.

The model has the potential to expand work and business opportunities for people employed in all sectors that engage with tourism. It is applicable to, and has potential to produce economic benefits for all communities and has particular relevance in regional areas.

Seminar presentations are being targeted at:

1. Communities and community organisations wishing to engage in cultural tourism product development for the first time (or who need advice and direction);
2. Local (particularly regional) tourism business enterprises who wish to expand in order to build mutually beneficial local community links and partnerships; and Selected Tourism, Heritage and Arts sector organisations and networks;
3. Selected Tourism, Heritage and Arts sector organisations and networks.

*Rainwater Productions on (07) 48658033 / email [rainwater@austarnet.com.au](mailto:rainwater@austarnet.com.au)*

*Frank Panucci is a cultural and arts consultant with a wide range of experience covering community cultural development, multi arts and writers' festivals, and strategic planning for theatre and community cultural development organisations. Frank has held senior roles within the Australia Council including Manager of the Community Development Board, Manager of the Torres Strait Islander Board, Director of Policy, Communications and Planning. He has also been General Manager of Carnivale, Director of the Race Discrimination Unity at HREOC and worked as a principal policy*

*Nat Trimarchi (Principal Consultant, Rainwater Productions, Mackay, QLD) is a community cultural development specialist who has worked for over 20 years in the areas of community development, ethnic affairs, education and arts. Prior to establishing Rainwater Productions, he was a Senior Policy and Research Officer at the Australia Council where his responsibilities covered several program funding areas including Arts for a Multicultural Australia and Community Cultural Development. In 2000, Nat travelled to the USA on a Fulbright Foundation scholarship to conduct research on current best practice approaches to cultural tourism. He has recently completed a major cultural tourism venture with the Australian South Sea Islander community of Mackay, and is currently promoting Rainwater's unique community- centred model for cultural tourism.*



## WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

### FESTIVALS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

#### Richard Bladel

This session is intended as an opportunity to develop a dialogue around the role of festivals in reflecting and strengthening community cultural engagement. How do we design festivals so that they represent the communities they celebrate?

Arts festivals are great, aren't they? An opportunity to go large and unusual and to see and do some stuff we wouldn't get the chance to usually, a coming together, a celebration and a sharing of spirit... I love them. But on the other hand, at their worst, major arts festivals are economically driven, top end of town affairs, exhibiting mostly a collection of art already happening anyway, curated to suit some individual or committee's idea of what art should be. They are so often detrimental to local arts practitioners, hoovering up scant resources and using local productions to pad out programs headlined by glossy imports. Their prime connection is with a market rather than a community.

I'm here to talk to you about The Works, a ccd arts festival that Kickstart Arts and Glenorchy City Council co-produced in Tasmania in 2000 and 2003. Over the two festivals, we employed 121 artists who made all sorts of art with 4,700 community participants seen by an audience of over 16,500 people. We raised a total budget of \$402,853.00. All this in a city of 45,000 people. But much more important than the numbers, when we are talking about cultural sustainability, it represents a seven year partnership that has left the cultural life of the place richer and more vital. The Works was cheeky, chaotic and imaginative, it managed to terrify the right people in the bureaucracy just enough, and to excite enough people outside the bureaucracy too much. After seven years it is now entering a new phase where its own community is taking it on and running it, The Works has been voted on by Aldermen, and is now officially on the books.

The Works was one of the few near fully commissioned arts festivals in the country. A core team of artistic director of the first two Festivals, Ian Pidd, myself, the Glenorchy City Council's Community Development officers, artists and community members worked together to produce 90% of the art from scratch specifically for the two events. And every event was free for everyone. I want to explain how we went about producing The Works because when we are thinking about how a festival might strengthen community engagement, the model and process we used as much as the mistakes we made might make a contribution.

Glenorchy is a working class city a little north of Hobart with an economic focus in traditional manufacturing industries. It is full of large factories and warehouses. And, like everywhere else, these industries are struggling to cope with global market forces. This has real impact on real people. Glenorchy continues to have more social problems than its richer neighbouring city, Hobart. It is a city of 45,000 people, with one small community arts centre, a library, a private museum, no live theatre venues at all and relatively little in the way of regular live music, even in pubs. Apart from Symphony under the Stars there's very little in the way of major arts events. It's a place where you don't even get big crowds at the footy anymore. So judging by its lack of infrastructure, it is a city seemingly uninterested in art, so how do you fascinate people in a community level arts festival that asks them to not just come and look at art, but actually participate in new, unfamiliar and slightly strange activities?

The development of the first Works festival began with the idea of using art making to connect with people's experiences of work. We started with an easily identifiable theme rooted in the daily life of community members as a starting point, as an idea that could create some energy. This sounds like it might make for a very dry and boring arts festival, a reaching back to the old Art and Working Life Days of the 70s.

But it wasn't. We used the theme of work often very loosely as a starting point to produce some startling arts projects on the main road, in shops, in people's homes, community centres, churches, schools, factories, parks, on buses and all sorts of workplaces. In the beginning, in order to gather support for the idea of the festival, Kickstart and the Council Community Development Officers focused on a community partnership building. We directly targeted Glenorchy Council's strategic plan as a means to get them as a whole organisation involved in the idea of the festival. If we could create a process that fulfilled some of Council's strategic community, social, youth, tourism, and even, dare I say it, economic development needs as well as cultural ones then they would be much more likely to jump in with both feet. And they did. Council invested \$20,000 initially – and this is a large sum for a small council. This was used as seeding investment to pull in more funding. The festival enjoyed direct involvement from many departments other than just community development – for example, the Environmental Health Department (responsible for waste, etc) with the Rescene exhibition, which involved partner waste management and resource recovery organisations paying for artists and community members to make sculptures from recycled & reused materials.

of the communities in a place. You can make too many promises to too many sectors, try to achieve too many things in your desire to get things moving. The festival can be seen as merely a marketing opportunity for a council, and the thing can get lost in bureaucracy. It can dissipate your focus and energy. The key question became could we address these strategic needs by designing a series of inspiring and inclusive arts projects and still connect with what the community really wanted? Connecting with where they were really at?

The festival began also as a response to community consultation processes run by Council as part of their cultural and social planning process. During these meetings, community members stated that they wanted a major festival or community event for Glenorchy. But only people who are interested in being corralled into butcher's paper-led checklists attend these meetings, and local government consultation processes can be notoriously pragmatic affairs, surely. We've all been there. What made the festival connect with the many sectors of the community that it did, was that this progressive Council are really serious about trying to involve the community in things. Glenorchy Council has a system of community representation based around local precinct committees that they put a lot of energy into. While not perfect, this was one mechanism that we used to encourage participation from all over the city.

We also ran our own consultation processes for The Works. This entailed countless weeks spent meeting with groups of people in workplaces, schools, community halls, parks, churches, etc. This is where the project based model of funding really sucks. The lack of initial funding to support detailed community consultation at the beginning of the process made it challenging to work slowly from the ground up, building from what was already going on culturally in the place.

The Works was not perfect, it failed to involve the middle section of the Glenorchy community, the decidedly no thanks to art mob, and the key street parade and art installation events held on Sundays were not as well attended as they might have been. We spent too little on promotion, too much on the art. But we seemed to succeed in convincing the ones with the performance indicators that this is a process, that it takes time to challenge behaviour and attitudes built up over decades.

The major public event of the festival in 2000 was held over one Sunday with a parade and the entire CBD of Glenorchy transformed into a huge art gallery, movie theatre and concert venue – after months of lead-up work making the art together. But we were murdered by a below zero snap westerly that drenched everything and then blew it away.

The festival in 2003 was larger than the first, and was held over nine days, with an ultimate event again on a Sunday, unfortunately also Mothers Day. But it was a beginning. A really inspirational beginning. In the typically clinical language used in such reports, independent evaluator Julie Roach, in her evaluation report on the 2003 Festival stated:

*'The evaluation materials depict a picture of positive participation experiences at most activities. Respondent feedback was generally positive and overwhelmingly respondents would like to see the festival continued. The opportunity to see and experience art in the local community was positively received. There have been seven major flow-on projects that are running independently after the festival that were initially conceived or inspired by The Works. As this was an important aim for the Festival, this must be seen as a success.'*

The key partnership between Kickstart Arts and Glenorchy City Council began in early 1998 and is now, almost seven years on, entering a phase where the Council have taken over prime responsibility for its production. In other words, both as a partnership and piece of community cultural development it has come full circle.

Planning meetings, consultation and a revisioning process are now under way for the 2006 Festival, with Glenorchy Council firmly in the driver's seat. Kickstart is still involved, but in a very different capacity. Despite the best of intentions, and with all due respect to my good Council partners, local government as a political animal is usually about managing risk rather than taking risks, and it is this sense of risk taking that must continue. We need to preserve the energy, chaos and excitement of ideas that made the first festivals a success creatively. Now that's going to be an interesting challenge.

*Richard Bladel is Artistic Director of Kickstart Arts, a dynamic community arts organisation based in Hobart. Kickstart is a multi artform arts company with a total focus on community cultural development. It produces bold and challenging community focused arts projects that link art/cultural issues with other sectors such as industry, welfare, health, education and tourism.*



## WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

### RE-IGNITING COMMUNITY

Steve Payne, Director, The Torch Project

#### Summary

Re-Igniting Community is the main activity of The Torch Project. Over the past six years it has evolved as a community cultural development model that uses the arts to mobilise communities around issues that fall into the 'too hard basket'; including racism, substance abuse, family violence and disability. These issues are addressed in an on-going inclusive process using community consultation, workshops, activity in schools, theatrical and artistic expression, and ongoing community development activities driven by the local communities and involving hundreds of volunteers. In the course of this 'whole of community' process, Indigenous people and organisations, migrants and youth, disability, health, religious and arts groups, businesses, schools and Local, State and Federal government agencies come together. They work through the steering committees and working groups, increasing coordination of service delivery and identifying gaps, developing leadership skills and strategies to tackle disadvantage in their area.

#### Aim

To increase local capacity to lead and manage diverse communities.

#### Objectives

##### Community Building

- bring together a diverse range of community members into an inclusive forum that encourages discussions relating to issues of history, culture, identity and belonging
- identify relevant community based social issues and needs
- enhance community leadership and management
- establish and develop community networks
- increase coordination of service delivery and identify gaps
- grow the voluntary capacity in communities by generating new opportunities for enjoyable participation
- foster and develop pre-employment skills and facilitate access the training with the community develop strategies to seek out solutions to the issues and needs that have been identified
- assist in the long-term development of sustainable local infrastructure to maintain and expand upon the issues raised and strategies developed
- increase awareness of diversity issues

#### Artistic

- develop a theatrical event with the community that incorporates local issues, stories and participants that will be ultimately performed for schools and the general public
- develop, celebrate and share with the community traditional Indigenous ceremony
- cultivate the participation of and respect for people of all cultural backgrounds
- harness and nurture local energy and talent by involving community members directly in the development of a performing arts event
- provide a skills development forum for local participants to work with professional actors, choreographers, musicians, writers and other artists
- promote local thought and talent encouraging a culture of self-efficacy
- create high quality, provocative and entertaining theatre that acts on the intellect and the emotions of its audience
- assist with resource and referral systems to facilitate the further development of local arts infrastructure

#### Stages in the Re-Igniting Community process

All of the stages listed below are covered by project activities but not necessarily in a linear fashion.

**Initial Discussions:** Community members and organisations talk with The Torch Project team about hosting the project. Contact is made with a range of community organisations and groups including indigenous people and organisations, migrants and youth, disability, religious and arts groups, businesses, schools and local, state and federal government agencies. A series of community meetings is held to determine feasibility.

**Steering Group formation:** Individuals and representatives from interested organisations across a broad range of areas and backgrounds are invited to form a steering group that will guide the project at a local level. Skills and issues workshops are run.

**Identifying local needs, issues and stories:** Through this steering group, an informal community consultation process begins in which community members are invited to share their thoughts about issues of concern in the community. Stories of the history and culture of the land and people of the community are sourced. Ideas for strategies to deal with the issues raised are explored. Lead organisations and significant schools are identified.

**Script and event development:** A framework script is written to reflect the ideas and concerns of the community, in consultation with the steering group. Other art forms engaged include visual arts, dance, music, poetry and story telling.

**Rehearsal incorporating local artists and community participants:** Workshops, discussions and rehearsals are held with all interested community members to expand on the script, and to further adapt it to the local area. Additional workshops are conducted with organisations focusing on developing long-term strategies to deal with critical local issues. Event dates are advertised

**Performance and Event:** The show is performed in schools and for the general public. The cast and crew perform the show in schools or with specific community members in the morning, rehearse up to 50 kids and adults into the play in the afternoon and perform with them for the school community that night. Larger public multi-arts events are built over a week or two, incorporating local artists and many of those involved in the schools.

**Evaluation:** The Torch Project team will undertake evaluation with participants post event to examine community and individual impact of project. Final facilitation with steering group and statewide project partners will assist in developing a local cultural development strategy and implementation process and examine ways of assisting in the region's development. It is planned that some of the projects listed will involve long-term evaluation with Effective Change, RMIT's Globalism Institute and Victoria University around community arts participation and its impact on community wellbeing.

**Long-term strategy development:** Community organisations work together on implementing strategies identified throughout the process. These may be cultural, business, education, policy or other strategies as developed by local organisations working together to address issues explored through the Re-Igniting Community process.

### Community Issues

Re-Igniting Community provides a platform for marginalised communities and individuals who have little opportunity to express their needs and desires in a non-threatening public forum. Local social issues and related community needs are identified and addressed in an on-going consultation process.

While each community has its own unique issues and conditions, the following are some common themes that occur in all communities and continue to be addressed in the current work;

- a historical 'whiteout' relating to local Indigenous history.
- lack of a coordinated approach by community and government agencies
- a culture of defeatism and inertia
- lack of appropriate cultural opportunities and supporting infrastructure
- family violence
- substance abuse
- teenage pregnancy
- lack of employment opportunities
- poor public transport
- youth homelessness, health and cultural and family dislocation
- racism in schools and the broader community
- alienation of young people and the lack of structured activities

Projects have been conducted in metro Melbourne (1999, 2000), Shepparton area of northern Victoria (2001), south-west Victoria and East Gippsland (2002), north-west Victoria (2003), Bayside, Bendigo/Castlemaine, Doveton/Eumemmering and Frankston (2004), highlighting the above local issues.

These findings were incorporated into powerful and accessible productions that brought together members of Indigenous



### **Residual Outcomes (2001-2004)**

The list below is included to illustrate some of the longer-term benefits to The Torch Project partner communities. It is not exhaustive and one of The Torch Project's main aims is to increase its ability to track the longer term benefits and support communities we have worked with in a more cohesive manner.

**Re-Igniting Community East Gippsland Inc** is to be officially launched on June 4th 2005. As a direct result of The Torch Project's work, the steering committee gathered by TTP in 2002 continues to meet on a regular basis, has become a fully constituted and incorporated body and secured funding for future projects.

### **Health**

**Policy:** Community Connections in Warrnambool has initiated policy change in two health regions placing priority on the practice and reclaiming of Indigenous culture as central to improvement in Indigenous health.

**Promotion:** The Torch Project is one of four Community Cultural Development projects featured on VicHealth's video 'Creative Connections: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing'

**Presentation:** Northern District Health (Kerang), the Allinjara Co op and The Torch Project are presenting at National Health conference in Alice Springs

### **Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation(ANTaR)- Fanning the Flames:**

As a result of ANTAR volunteers and staff engaging in the Re-Igniting Community process, a partnership has developed and ANTAR's regional projects are based in communities where The Torch Project has been. TTP provides ANTAR with links to networks – particularly host employment agencies such as Community Connections in Warrnambool, Murray Mallee Training Company in Swan Hill and The Smith Family in Bairnsdale. This is seen as an ongoing relationship that provides employment and follow up work.

### **Department of Human Services**

**Cultural Awareness Training:** 12 DHS staff attended the performances of The Bridge as a result of the involvement of Wade Mahoney, the DHS Indigenous Family Violence coordinator in Mildura. In conversation post performance these DHS staff identified a lack of understanding of contemporary Indigenous life and history and their desire to rectify this. Cultural awareness training was organised for 18 people for the first time in recent memory. This outcome provided employment for Indigenous advisors and will have a significant long term impact on the way in which DHS staff deliver services to the Indigenous community.

**Police** in Kerang, Swan Hill, Robinvale and Mildura used the project for internal cultural awareness training, as did the Swan Hill and Mildura Councils.

**Presentation to senior staff:** Wade Mahoney and Uncle Bruce Baxter gave a presentation on Re-igniting Community North West to a statewide gathering of senior departmental officers designed to showcase projects that had been successful in engaging indigenous people.

**La Mama mentorships:** Through the relationship between TTP and La Mama Theatre, two young people involved in Re-Igniting Community Nth West have accessed mentorships with La Mama. This relationship is seen as a potential for future community participants and represents a support framework following the touring phase that allows participants to build experience, network and careers. Kristy Mitchell, a young Indigenous woman from Dareton, gained experience in performance and direction and Pez, a young Cook Islander man from Mildura, was mentored in photography.

**Loddon Mallee Community Leadership Program:** A steering committee member in Swan Hill, participating in this well respected Leadership program, volunteered to act as co-chair. She used the experience of the project to fulfill the requirements of her program and was so enthused by the experience that, when sharing it with other members of the program across the Loddon Mallee region, she encouraged a formal link with the future work of TTP. This resulted in TTP delivering some training for project participants in 2004 and securing highly skilled volunteers undertaking the Community Leadership Program to sit on a Bendigo project steering committee.

### **Study pathways:**

several units towards a Diploma in Community Services (Community Education). Kristy Mitchell is now at Swinburne preparing to study the arts

Angie Lee Solomon (Re-Igniting Community 2002) is at VCA in preparation for the acting course in 2005

**Networking across the region:** As a result of the project launch for RIC Nth West in Mildura, participants across the region got together – many meeting from like organisations, community groups etc for the first time. This networking opportunity resulted in some strong outcomes for indigenous dance groups – the Latje Latje dance group based in Mildura have been asked to support emerging dancers in other towns throughout the Nth West. Indigenous elders from across the region are also seeking opportunities to meet on a regular basis to support initiatives across the region.

### **Youth Performing Arts**

Shepparton: Following the tour, the steering committee in Shepparton applied for \$20,000 from the Australia Council for the Arts' CCD Board. They were successful, and the money was used to co-ordinate a performing arts group for young people, focusing on encouraging diversity. Two cast members from The Torch ran workshops in drama and hip-hop along with many other local artists, and the workshops ran in several phases over 9 months.

Warrnambool: young Indigenous people have developed and performed plays around domestic violence.

Mildura: We are supporting a teacher at Chaffey College who is developing a Youth Theatre

*Steve Payne is Director of The Torch Project. For over 25 years, Steve has worked as a project manager, educator/trainer, performing artist and producer - in the community sector, private industry, tertiary institutions, the trade union movement and labour market program. He has worked with indigenous and non-indigenous Australians and people from other countries in many different contexts including: committees of management, paid and unpaid staff in community organisations, union trainers and shop stewards, owners, managers and workers in factories, local government workers and councillors and parents, teachers and students from kindergarten through to tertiary level.*



### CREATIVE COMMUNITIES SYNERGIES

#### Jeanine Gribbin

Greetings – I would like to start by thanking the members of the 4th Pillar Conference for giving me the opportunity to present to you today about arts in the community in New Zealand – and give you some examples of our creative communities synergies.

I want to look at local government's response in New Zealand – Manukau City specifically. Our Creative Diversity, 1996 (the report designed to develop a new policy paradigm for culture) suggests that of all the layers of government, local is best placed to foster grass roots cultural needs.

When it comes to culture and arts, Aristophanes said it thousands of years ago:

Let each man exercise the art he knows  
Aristophanes (450 BC - 388 BC)

Using systems theory, it can be seen that in the Anthroposphere: i.e. the sphere that is affected by and affects human society, local government is the linking point in sustainable development.

Those of you who heard Penny talk yesterday will know that the Local Government Act 2002, charges local councils in NZ to be responsible for social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing.

#### Manukau

- Third biggest city in NZ
- Named by the Tainui settlers who heard the cries of the many birds as they paddled their waka down the harbour.
- Manukau continues to attract migrants today.
- Manukau is NZ's most ethnically diverse city.
- A city of contrast, geographically, economically, socially and culturally.
- Part of the region of Auckland it is often referred to in a less than gracious way as 'South Auckland'.

In Manukau we have a saying for cultural development 'te pua waitanga o te tangata' – the blossoming of the people

Three examples – three different approaches visual arts, musical and literary

To see people's participation in arts as a continuum of mode, time and place - the blossoming of the people

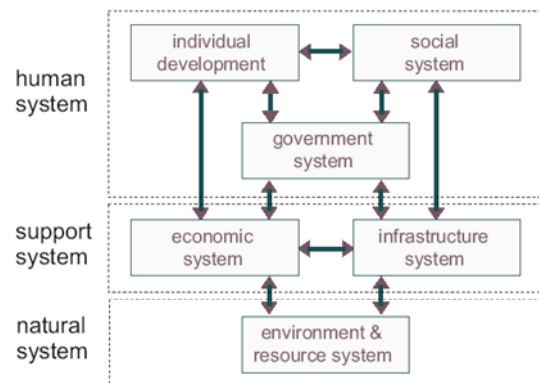
Manukau has a long history of supporting cultural needs in the community. Rather than a council run facility, *Te Tuhi* is a working model of a partnership between a well organised community organisation and council. The gallery which is rated in the top three in the region, provides magnificent facilities developed at less cost to the rate payers than if it were funded totally from the public purse.

Te Tuhi's mission is to

- create avenues for access and participation in arts, cultural and community activities.
- develop dynamic, innovative and challenging programmes to engage and delight participants.
- foster partnerships with our communities by encouraging dialogue and collaborative projects.
- celebrate the diversity of Manukau City and enrich the cultural life of its residents and visitors.
- contribute to the arts and cultural scene on a regional and national basis.
- cultivate life-long learning.

CCS is a partnership between Arts Council (CNZ) and Local Government. CNZ provide the funds, local government administer the scheme in a way that is appropriate to their area. The purpose of CCS is to support arts participation, increase the range of arts activities available and strengthen local arts organisations.

The CCS framework is in some ways deeply democratic (Matarasso 1997) in that it is funding that is distributed at a local level



by an assessment committee of local people, representative of the community. However, I guess the one of the major difficulties with the fund is that at 10% of the budget of CNZ – many people miss out or do not get funding that is required for projects. The principles of cultural democracy require the exercising of rights, not just an available opportunity. (Hawkes)

The 2 projects that I am delighted to be involved with that I will look at today show that a little funding goes a long way ... less than \$10,000 each.

To mark the opening of a new venue for the city of Manukau – Telstra Pacific Events Centre, a choral and orchestral piece called *The Journey* was written especially for the building. A partnership has been developed between the venue, the sponsors and the orchestra. The opening performance will feature *The Journey* – written by Manukau-born composer and with words by a local poet – and a massed choir featuring the South Auckland choral society, a Tongan youth choir, the Auckland Maori Choir and the



MAA Chinese Choir. They share the stage with world-renowned pianist Michael Houston and local up-and-coming violinist Loata Mahi, (who has played with the orchestra since she was ten), under the baton of international recording star Uwe Grodd – the MCSO musical director.

‘Writers in Manukau Libraries’ or WIML is a New Zealand first. Unlike other residency-type programmes, it is the budding and emerging writers of Manukau and Counties who benefit directly from the pilot programme.

The money received from Creative Communities goes towards mentoring of locals by top New Zealand author Graeme Lay in four of the libraries in Manukau. The community group who received the grant forming a close working relationship with the libraries and the New Zealand Society of Authors has been key. The launch of the programme will be part of the AK05 Arts Festival and plans are being made to have an anthology of writing published.

What these groups represent are Hope Based Networks

HBN are essential to local government, to meet the aims of wellbeing, and to foster strong community ties. Local government needs to develop skills especially in transformative leadership to assist the community to develop their own responses to culture and provide funding to support people.

I would like to leave you with one final thought about the role of local government and cultural policy politics – participation policy is well recognised, but perhaps the concept that these changes means seems to be slower to be realised – that participation by people means non-ownership by governments, empowerment means disempowerment for the governments.

- Multiple organizational partnerships
  - HBN bound by passion and advancement of common goals
  - Alertness to entrepreneurial opportunities
  - Have the “will and way power” to go for a goal
  - Fusion of striving and attaining
- (Wallace and Dollery, 2001)

So what is the important thing for local governments to remember?

*He tangata, he tangata, he tangata*

It is the people, the people, the people

*Jeanine Gribbin is the Director of Creative Compass, New Zealand. She previously worked with the Manukau City Creative Communities Committee. She has a long history of involvement in innovative arts and cultural development projects.*



## WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

### THE GREENING PROGRAM: City of Hume

#### Natalia Valenzuela

The aim of the Greening program is to encourage community participation in the decision-making process regarding open space development—with a focus on maintaining areas of conservation and amenity values. My specific role is in engaging with members of culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD) and working in partnership with them in the organisation of greening activities.

#### Goals of the Greening program

- to support community participation in open space planning and the development of natural areas within Hume City.
- to provide passive recreation opportunities in natural environment setting.
- for CALD communities to enhance their understanding of the natural environment.
- for CALD communities to become involved in the decision-making process.
- community involvement in greening activities and other environmental initiatives such as waste reduction, energy-saving and water conservation.
- increased knowledge of the environment and environmental issues.
- tailoring programs to be responsive to the diverse cultural needs of the community.

#### Benefits

The program provides opportunities for greater understanding of the local environment and general environmental issues. Many communities enjoy taking part in environmental activities. In fact, some CALD members are keen to share their experiences of environmental issues—obtained from their countries of birth.

#### Methods to engaging the community

- educational activities—encouraging people to think and talk about issues like waterways, greenhouse effect, waste, litter, energy
- audio visual presentations
- face-to-face contacts
- planting
- festivals
- involving community centres, Migrant Resource Centre, Ethnic schools, ESL schools, TAFE

#### Promoting environmental issues to CALD communities

- making educational presentations visual/interactive.
- adding a social element to environmental activities.
- utilising ethnic media to promote environmental issues/events.
- using interpreters
- formal and informal meetings

#### Multicultural Planting Festival – a case study

The Multicultural Planting Festival is a great example of how one event can bring together people from different backgrounds and helped promote the message of environmental sustainability. The Festival is crucial in educating Hume's diverse communities on the importance of looking after the environment and on such issues as using water wisely, conserving energy, properly disposing of waste etc.

The Festival has numerous benefits.

- as the CALD communities help in the organisation of the event, a sense of ownership is created—the festival becomes 'their' event.
- environmental education can be resource and time intensive. Gathering participants together on the same day and promoting waste wise practices can be more effective. Nothing beats face-to-face communication.
- the Festival promotes the message of personal responsibility. If every person can do 'their bit' for the environment—with simple everyday things—then that person is contributing to creating a better environment today and into the future.
- with so many cultures represented, the festival is a showcase of Hume's diverse community groups. The message is: no matter your colour or creed, together we can make a difference.
- while the festival's focus is environmental, it is also social. It is an opportunity to meet new people, learn new things and try



### **Previous Festivals**

Every year the Festival has seen increased participation especially among refugees, new arrivals and the general community.

- 1996 Grebes & Growling Grass Frog Festival
- 1997 Reeds and River Redgums Festival
- 1998 Black Shoulder Kite Festival
- 1999 Yabbies, Wrens and Ripples Festival
- 2000 Willie Wagtail Festival
- 2001 Dragonflies & Damselflies
- 2002 The Golden Head Weaving Warbler & Wetland Festival
- 2003 The Blue Tongue Lizard & Chocolate Lilies
- 2004 Blue Wrens, Bells & Devils

### **What Works in the Festival?**

- we have the support of CALD communities all of whom volunteer.
- we ensure that the festival does not clash with any religious activities, national days and large sporting events in the area
- people come together and make new friends and connections
- people continually come and support the festival each year
- people have the opportunity to talk about their environmental experience of their own countries
- face to face approach and all staff are introduced on the day of the festival
- the Manager of City Environment is very supportive of the festival
- the community networks are very important
- allows the community to voice their views about the impact of the festival

### **What is not working in the Festival?**

- communication by letter is not working, phone follow up and personal approach are required
- language barriers
- the staff need to be more sensitive when dealing with CALD communities from a cultural point of view
- the food tables have to be strategically set up to allow for cultural sensitivities.
- difficulties in engaging emerging and new communities.
- the environmental staff use technical jargon which is not easily understood by the communities
- barriers to participation due to lack of time
- the communities need to feel supported.
- more emphasis needs to be placed on general environmental awareness rather than specific restrictions such as littering and water restrictions
- don't understand the role of the Council

### **How will the festival grow/develop in the future?**

- the festival is a good opportunity to work closely with CALD communities
- to raise awareness of the importance of the environment
- the opportunity to access a range of community groups
- great opportunity for the people to come together
- opportunities for sharing each others culture and develop a sense of ownership of the Festival
- allows communities to put down roots in the new country.
- the Festival will increase understanding of the environment within CALD communities as more people recognize the importance of the environment for future generations.

*Natalia Valenzuela is Hume City Council's Environmental Community Development Officer. Since arriving in Australia as a refugee from El Salvador in 1987, she has attained a B.A in Community Development and a Diploma in Social Science and Women's Studies. She is also a health and financial counsellor and has a passion for creative community engagement.*



## WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

### COMMUNITY SINGING EVENT

#### *Practising What We Preach*

Fay White, with the assistance of Jon Hawkes, led a session of group sound-making to demonstrate the compelling attraction of voices in concert.

#### Notes to accompany the session:

##### **Believing in and exercising our own creativity**

The rhetoric of community cultural development highlights and is founded on the belief - no, the fact - that ALL of us have the ability, the right, the need and the desire to exercise our innate creative capacities. It's all very well to talk this talk but, ultimately, the best, perhaps the only, way to demonstrate our commitment to this idea is to show that we do it ourselves. Unless we believe in, and exercise our own creative capacities, how can we expect anyone (senior bureaucrat or 'ordinary' person in the street) to take our rhetoric seriously?

WE CAN MAKE OUR OWN CULTURE, AND NURTURE OTHERS TO MAKE THEIRS.

Enough passive consumption – we can all become producers.

##### **Making music together makes connections and develops relationships.**

When people make music together, connections develop. These connections can transcend profound difference, illuminate unexpected unity, bring cathartic joy and extend into everyday life. We discover and develop connections through creative practises that tap our collective beings in mysterious ways beyond the scope of rational analysis (despite 400 years of 'enlightenment').

We use 'harmony' as a metaphor for the ambience of the society in which we aspire to live. This is no accident. Our bodies respond physically, sensually, emotionally to harmony – the connections between sounds moves us. Making harmony in the moment is a joyful and uplifting experience; a tangible manifestation of our dreams of oneness built on diversity.

##### **Music is both special and ordinary.**

Healthy societies and healthy people exercise all their faculties, use all their talents. Everyone has a voice, everyone has a song. Each voice is special, each song is unique. This specialness is endemic, so widespread as to be everyday, 'normal', ordinary. In our relentless pursuit of the best, we have forgotten our birthrights and denied our own abilities. Yes there are geniuses among us to be cherished and respected, but never at the expense of our own activity.

##### **Music should be everywhere.**

Imagine a society in which:

- the populace happily walk the streets singing;
- public places are regularly filled with people making spontaneous music together;
- communities and families naturally express their connectedness through a commonly held repertoire of songs that they regularly sing together;
- everyone confidently expresses themselves in song;
- public events always begin and end in group singing;
- adults and children enjoy and feel confident singing together;
- making music is universally recognised for its educational, therapeutic and connecting value;
- a song is respected as being as legitimate a way of expressing truth, hope, fear, critique, protest, love as any of the more rationally based modes;
- making music is as prevalent as listening to music;
- improvising and making new songs is an everyday activity amongst groups of ordinary people.

This is a society that would be good to live in. And it is attainable.

Making music together creates a crucible in which people can experience and productively channel the synergy that comes from collaborative effort. It provides an immediate and tangible manifestation of the power and joy of co-operation. It is the creative manifestation of community. It transforms the metaphor of harmony into a real life experience. It is always a creative act, in the moment, a practice of the 'everyday arts' as an integral part of ordinary people's daily lives.

into confidence, fear into energy, individualisation into collective expression.  
It may be that singing together is the most effective first step in developing community.

*Fay White and Jon Hawkes are both active in Community Music Victoria, which has been co-ordinating a three year program of community singing throughout Victoria. Funded by VicHealth, the program has helped in the establishment and development of over sixty community-based independent and ongoing singing groups throughout rural and regional Victoria.*

*Fay White is a singer and facilitator who identifies with the words of poet Adrienne Rich in trying to be 'part of an underground stream . . . of voices that resist the voices that tell us we are nothing'. Fay knows that music, especially song, can make connections, inspire, encourage, build community and play a role in social change. Her sessions and workshops do this. Fay has pioneered 'Vocal Nosh' - a re-vitalised form of community singing that is taking root across Victoria. She's led specifically geared singing sessions for community groups, women's groups, teachers, arts workers, health workers, chaplains and students and has facilitated exploration of environment, arts, spirituality, wisdom and justice themes at conferences and gatherings all over Australia. She is currently working through Community Music Victoria to encourage, train and resource singing leaders across the state.*



### WORKSHOP 1: ANIMATING HERITAGE

**Panellists:** Christine Burton, Malcolm McKinnon, Jared Thomas, Dr Elaine Lally, Tiffany Lee-Shoy

#### Summary by facilitator Sarah Edwards

This workshop featured three very different projects that addressed ways in which heritage can be brought to life.

1. A research project being conducted by the Arts Management Faculty of Business, University of Technology, Sydney, focused on measuring culture and the relevance of museums in community. It identified that core networks, trust and reciprocity were important aspects of the success of the work. The presenter concluded that museums contribute to and are not the cause of social capital.

Presenter: Christine Burton

2. A film project focusing on the community of Melrose, South Australia. This project worked with the local museum and the living community and was not just about the story, but the way the story is told. The benefits extended beyond the production of the film and assisted in bonding the community in a positive way. The film highlighted the existence and connection of the Melrose community to the land, the importance of language to express ideas and the Nukunu indigenous interpretation of community stories.

Presenters: Malcom McKinnon and Jared Thomas

3. An on-line database pilot project that was born out of a collaboration between the University of Western Sydney, 13 local councils (WESROC- Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils), and community based organizations, initiated by the needs of urban and land use planners, to capture the tangible stories about how communities live.

Presenters; Elaine Lally, Tiffany Lee-Shoy

**Conclusion:** Animating Heritage presented the pivotal role museums play in facilitating research and delivery of community stories in three very different ways.

Local government plays an important role in valuing museum services to deliver outputs that relate to their communities' sense of place and cultural identity.

As Malcolm McKinnon summarized, there are three key themes in animating heritage:

- connection of community to their environment
- use of language to express ideas
- opportunity for indigenous interpretation of community stories

*Christine Burton has worked in cultural planning for the past 15 years both in Australia and Great Britain. From 1994 to 1998 Christine worked in the UK as lead consultant with 'Positive Solutions' and 'Art & Society' as well as undertaking research into social impact and cultural strategic planning with Comedia. She is currently the Director of the Postgraduate program in Arts Management in the Faculty of Business, School of Leisure Sport and Tourism, University of Technology, Sydney.*

*Malcolm McKinnon is an artist and planner with bases in Melbourne and in the southern Flinders Ranges region of South Australia. His work encompasses research and planning assignments, community development initiatives and public and community art projects. He has particular interest working in a regional and rural context, including numerous projects with farmers and aboriginal communities.*

*Jared Thomas is a Nukunu person from the southern Flinders Ranges in South Australia. Currently employed as an indigenous Arts Development Officer for Arts SA, Jared is also a writer. His first major work, a play called 'Flash Red Ford' toured Uganda and Kenya in 1999 and his first novel, 'Sweet Guy' was short listed for the 2002 Adelaide Festival Awards for Literature. Jared is also involved in film writing and editing and was Assistant Director on the film 'One Night the Moon,' directed by Rachel Perkins.*

*Dr Elaine Lally is Assistant Director of the Centre for Cultural Research at the University of Western Sydney. Dr Lally conducts research into contemporary cultural change in western Sydney. She is chief investigator for the 'Greater Western Sydney Electronic Cultural Atlas' project, developing information support tools for cultural planning in the western Sydney region. Dr Lally is author of *At Home with Computers* (Berg, 2002).*

*Tiffany Lee-Shoy is Regional Cultural Planning Coordinator at the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, an association of eleven local government bodies in Western Sydney. Her project seeks to expand resources and collaboration between councils to promote the cultural life, arts and creativity of the region.*

*Facilitator: Sarah Edwards is Coordinator of the Outreach Program at Museum Victoria. Sarah has worked for Museum Victoria for five years, although her career spans twenty years in the museum and education sectors. She holds a Bachelor of Education and a Grad Dip in Museum*



### WORKSHOP 2: THE CULTURE OF PLACES

**Panellists:** Monir Rowshan, Susan Conroy, Craig Christie, Gay Bilson

#### **Summary by facilitator Martin Mulligan**

Projects discussed included musical theatre works with rural Victorian communities, the Eating the City project in Melbourne, a creative approach to community consultation on the use of public space in Cabramatta and the Living Streets Project in Liverpool.

#### **Interesting points:**

- cultural projects can give voice and create a common language of place
- outside arts practitioners can collect and feed back stories that may have been hidden (eg. women in farming),
- a strong artistic vision is needed to create momentum and make a project sustainable and memorable for a long time
- cultural projects can help people reclaim the commons, eg CBD in Melbourne
- different communities can contribute to a joint project in their own ways and then see what other communities have achieved, building mutual respect
- social needs can be determined by bringing local communities into a creative gathering in public space
- new places are established in a shared, creative space (eg. the tables used for Eating the City)
- working together on creative projects can establish new relationships between the people involved

#### **Is local government the best place?**

Considerations: Gulf between local government staff and the community

Importance of: Partnerships and flexibility (in all things really!)

The flexibility within local government to balance the need for arts and cultural planning with making things happen and being responsive. The flexibility for local government to enable cultural development by working in partnerships with others  
The flexibility to understand that not all cultural development happens through local government and that it is not always or necessarily the best place for it to happen.

#### **Key ideas:**

- a strong artistic vision for collective celebrations of a sense of place is needed to create interest
- sustainment of the project to completion
- making the project memorable and ensuring that it is widely discussed and analysed, even replicated
- creative spaces in local places can create a language that also builds respect for diversity

*Monir Rowshan is a visual artist with extensive experience in ceramics and mosaics. She has worked in the field of community cultural development, multicultural art and public art in the last 14 years. Based at Liverpool City Council, she is currently coordinating the 'Living Streets Project', which deals with complex issues of community partnerships, community building and creativity within the context of place making.*

*Susan Conroy has been working professionally in community cultural development and cultural planning since the late 1980s. Susan has extensive experience in designing and managing integrated planning projects linking environmental, social, cultural and economic factors in urban design and developing projects. She has also successfully integrated cultural development initiatives into strategic planning and policy development in local government.*

*Craig Christie is a creative and prolific producer of works in the fields of education, music theatre and community theatre, Craig has an international profile providing energetic, exciting and diverse productions for a variety of audiences. For the past twelve years he has worked as an independent producer in the area of theatre for schools. Craig has developed, written and produced a number of exciting community performance projects both in Australia and overseas including the acclaimed musical Right Where We Are for Cultural Development Network's Small Town Big Picture project 2002*

*Gay Bilson was a cook and restaurateur in Sydney for 25 years and ran Berowra Waters Inn until 1995, a restaurant cited as one of the most significant in Australia. She is a widely published essayist and author, and has just published her book Plenty: digressions on food. She sees food as being central to social cohesion. Gay has created theatrical food-based events around Australia and was an Associate Director of the 2002 Adelaide Festival. She returned from an Asialink residency in Sri Lanka in 2003 where she worked on a project about traditional food practices. Gay was one of the lead artists on the City of Melbourne commissioned project Eating the City in 2003 and is currently working with Kate Reeves and the City of Melbourne on Stage Two of this project.*

*Facilitator: Dr Martin Mulligan is a senior research fellow at the Globalism Institute at RMIT University where he is working on community sustainability in Australia and Papua New Guinea. He recently completed a report for VicHealth on sense of place and community wellbeing in Daylesford and Broadmeadows. He was joint author (with Stuart Hill) of Ecological Pioneers: A Social History of Australian Ecological Thought (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2003) and co-author of The Ecology of the City (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 2003).*



## WORKSHOP REPORTS

### WORKSHOP 3: HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**Panellists:** Clare Meyers, Dr Susan Thompson, Linda Corkery, Deborah Miles, Glenda Masson

**Summary by facilitator Deborah Mills**

**Presentation by Clare Meyers - Social Policy Officer, City of Wanneroo**

Clare described how the City of Wanneroo was coming to terms with a rapidly growing area and attempting to balance the demands for housing and infrastructure with environmental management.

She gave several examples of how arts and culture has been integrated into the City's SMART GROWTH strategy:

- Community involvement in the renovation and revitalisation of a community centre
- Cultural mapping of an old beachside area which is the site of new housing development
- The development of a bush care group manual – to encourage the growth of independent bush care groups
- The redevelopment of a reserve to make it more people friendly
- Training programs for young people
- The establishment of a community information data base – again with the view of encouraging self sufficiency and streamlining peoples' access to information on resources and community development/organisational strategies.

*Clare Meyers is the Social Policy Officer at the City of Wanneroo, W.A.*

**Presentation by Dr Susan Thompson – Associate Professor, Faculty of the Built Environment, UNSW**

Susan spoke about her work with community gardens and in particular the evaluation studies she has conducted which demonstrate the health and wellness outcomes of these initiatives.

Her studies have found that community gardens have a number of positive impacts on individual and community health and wellbeing, environmental awareness and education, social and cultural expression, community identity, cross cultural awareness, a sense of belonging, improved feelings of personal safety and community strengthening. In addition, the community gardens have a restorative effect on people, helping them to regain and maintain their physical health, providing food for survival and thereby reduce the costs of food and contributing towards social and environmental sustainability.

Susan spoke of two projects:

- Her publication: A Bountiful Harvest, documents the work done by a team of UNSW academics from the disciplines of social work, landscape architecture, architecture and urban planning and is based on a series of stakeholder interviews and focus groups with people from the three Community Gardens on Sydney's Waterloo Public Housing Estate. This Garden Program was established in 1996 as an initiative of the NSW Department of Housing, South Sydney Councils and the UNSW.
- Maitland City Council: Susan described a carefully managed consultative and development process geared towards the establishment of a community garden in a key cultural precinct of Maitland – a provincial town of NSW north of Sydney.

More information can be obtained from:

- Australian Community Gardens Network [www.magna.com.au/~pacedge/garden](http://www.magna.com.au/~pacedge/garden)
- City Farmer's Urban Agriculture Organisation [www.cityfarmer.org](http://www.cityfarmer.org)
- National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners [www.nsalg.demon.co.uk](http://www.nsalg.demon.co.uk)
- Faculty of the Built Environment, UNSW [www.fbe.unsw.edu.au](http://www.fbe.unsw.edu.au)

*Dr Susan Thompson is an urban planner whose work bridges academia and practice. She is Associate Professor in the Planning and Urban Development Program, Faculty of the Built Environment at the University of NSW. Her teaching and research encompass social and cultural planning, local and neighbourhood planning, and the application of qualitative methods in urban planning.*

*Linda Corkery is a landscape architect and Head of the School of the Built Environment at the University of NSW. She teaches design studies, environmental planning, environmental sociology and professional practice subjects. Her research work is focused on ecological design/landscape design for sustainability and people-place relationships.*

*Deborah Miles is a Principal Policy Officer with Arts Queensland. Deborah has a background in social policy and community development in local government.*

*Glenda Masson is a Senior Planning Officer with Community Renewal, Queensland Department of Housing. Glenda has a background in social planning both in government and non-government sectors.*

*Facilitator: Deborah Mills has thirty years experience in community and cultural development. She has worked for local, state and federal governments and in the not-for-profit sector. She has extensive experience in social and cultural policy and is the co-author (with Paul Brown) of a recent book **Art and Well-Being**. This book explores the policy*





## WORKSHOP REPORTS

### WORKSHOP 4: ARTS /CULTURE: NEXUS AND SEPARATION

**Panellists:** Marla Guppy, Matthew Ives, Suzy Stiles, Pat Zuber,

**Facilitator:** June Moorhouse

(This paper is not yet available.)

*Marla Guppy is the principal of Guppy and Associates, a cultural planning consultancy with a twenty year track record in planning and rejuvenating cultural environments. Marla is a qualified urban planner with a particular interest in creative community involvement in the planning process.*

*Matthew Ives is the Team Leader and Community Arts Officer of the Park Arts and Functions Office at Port Adelaide Enfield Council. He has extensive experience working with diverse urban and regional communities both in England and in South Australia. He is also convenor of the Creative Communities Network of South Australia which produced a guide for councils' work in Arts and Cultural Development.*

*Suzy Stiles is Team Leader, Arts and Cultural Development, City of Marion, SA*

*Pat Zuber is Senior Advisor Cultural Services at Redland Shire Council in South East Queensland. Pat is responsible for strategic planning and policy development in relation to the provision of Council's cultural services and facilities. Recently this has included the planning and development of a new regional gallery and performing arts centre. She previously held the position of Council's Cultural Development Officer. Prior to her work in Redland Shire Council, Pat worked in the field of community cultural development for many years for a number of organisations including Queensland Community Arts Network.*

*Facilitator: June Moorhouse has lived and worked in Fremantle on and off since the mid-1970s. She has over 25 years experience working in the arts, much of that in senior management positions and as a consultant. The values of community cultural development are at the heart of her work and she has recently completed a two-year Fellowship from the Community Cultural Development Board.*



## WORKSHOP REPORTS

### WORKSHOP 5: ARTPLAY VISIT

**Simon Spain and Morris Bellamy**

*Simon Spain is a visual artist who trained as a printmaker in England. Simon has been involved in creating socially engaged projects and artworks in the UK, Sweden, USA and Ireland. In 1996 he became artist in residence at The Ark in Dublin, the world's first Arts and Cultural Centre for children. In 2002, Simon came to Melbourne as founding Creative Producer of ArtPlay for the City of Melbourne. ArtPlay is Australia's first Creative Arts Centre for children and has been open since February 2004.*

*Morris Bellamy is Manager, Arts and Culture at the City of Melbourne*



## PANEL SESSION SUMMARIES

### PARALLEL PANELS AND WORKSHOPS SESSIONS

#### PANEL 1: FESTIVALS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**Panellists:** Richard Bladel, Jason Cross, Jerril Rechter, Tricia Cooney

##### Summary by Facilitator Richard Holt

Discussion points:

- Traditional carnivals had a community and professional mix
- The historical form is widespread and across history
- The meaning and purpose of traditional festivals is linked to place
- Partnership with artists, community and local authorities
- Different models in Italy, France, UK focus on different aspects – community (Italy), artist (France), community cultural development practices (UK)
- Festivals can be a tool in community regeneration
- Carnival parade – street opera
- Best examples integrate festival into the place
- Increased linkage to particular local themes

Jerril Rechter

- picked up the risk-taking issue
- Connection to the whole community is a problem for large festivals
- Food is part of the community
- NOT ‘if you build it they will come’, festivals don’t work like that
- Open cultural dialogue facilitates good community events

Key message: the meaning, purpose and relevance of a festival is intrinsically linked to the place and community hosting it.

*Jason Cross is a performing artist and the Artistic Director of the Big West Festival. Through the facilitation of arts projects, Big West links and creates relationships between community service organisations, community groups, schools, individuals and professional artists.*

*Jerril Rechter is the Director of Footscray Community Arts Centre, a world class community arts precinct based around historic Henderson House on the banks of the Maribyrnong River, Melbourne. The Centre has established a national and international reputation for its innovative work in community cultural development, and its pioneering support and development of multicultural arts in Australia.*

*Tricia Cooney has been working as an artist on community festivals for 20 years. In 1998 she formed a professional street theatre group, Circus Solarus, which perform at festivals throughout Australia and overseas. In addition she has worked since 1983 at an organisational level on committees such as the Central Coast Community Arts Network, ArtsWest and the Board of CCD NSW.*



## PANEL SESSION SUMMARIES

### PANEL 2: MODELS OF INCLUSION (1)

Panellists: Steve Payne, Rosemary Joy, Phil Heuzenroeder

#### Summary by Facilitator Fiona Smith

Successful inclusion is dependent upon

- partnerships between arts and non-arts based organizations
- sustained resourcing with dedicated workers
- support for a network of local governments and community organizations 'doing it' and wishing to adopt best practice

Rosemary Joy about Rawcus

Partnerships between arts organization, local government and disability organizations are essential for success. We always work with performers with and without disabilities, and are based in an arts organization. We value the talent of performances from marginalized groups- which includes people who are aspiring artists and some who are not. It is important for artists with disabilities to have control of content and direction of the work, to make group devised theatre.

Phil Heuzenroeder about Club Wild

300-400 people with disabilities meeting on their own terms at dance parties. Participants build confidence, skills and identity through activity, then move into mainstream cultural activity. This must never replicate institutional models in strategy pursued.

*Rosemary Joy is the Access Arts Development Officer at the City of Port Phillip. She coordinates a range of arts initiatives for people with mental illness and disabilities including the award winning RAG Theatre Troupe which performed at the 2003 Toronto Madness and Arts World Festival and the BiPolar Bears whose debut CD **Only Breathing** was released last year. Rosemary has worked in partnership with Scope (Vic) Leisure Action and Theatreworks since 2000 to support Rawcus, a theatre company of performers with and without disabilities directed by Kate Sulan. Rosemary is also the General Manager of arts organisation Aphids and is a visual artist, touring collaborations to France, Belgium, Japan and China. In 2003, Rosemary received an Ethel Temby Study Award to research disability arts projects in Canada and Europe.*

*Phil Heuzenroeder is a community artist who is passionate about the capacity for participation in the arts to create well being, community and powerful cultural expressions, in particular for people with disabilities. Phil is the Director of Club Wild, a community cultural development organization run by and for people with disabilities working in modern music and video media and creating the dance party as the social gathering place for this emerging community. Phil is music director for the 80 voice Melbourne Singers of Gospel choir and the Bipolar Bears band for people living with mental illness as well as being a film maker.*

*Facilitator: Fiona Smith is chairperson of the Equal Opportunity Commission, Victoria. A barrister and solicitor since 1982, she was previously the chair of the Victorian Business Licensing Authority.*



## PANEL SESSION SUMMARIES

### PANEL 3: LOCAL GOVERNMENT: NEW THINKING

**Participants:** Jeanine Gribbin, Jenny Merkus, Jacquie Maginnis

**Facilitator:** Judy Spokes

*Jenny Merkus is the Director, Social Development at the Moreland City Council. She is also President of the Local Government Community Services Association of Australia.*

*Jacquie Maginnis is an alderman on the Glenorchy City Council and a health promotion coordinator with the state Health Department. She has been involved in the planning of the last works festival in Glenorchy and is currently involved in planning for the Glenorchy 2006 festival. Jacquie has also been involved in the development of a Tasmanian Arts+ Health network. The network is looking at how to get arts valued and supported as an integral part of the business of health. She has a similar philosophy about the role of CCD in the business of local government.*

*Jeanine Gribbin is the Director of Creative Compass, New Zealand. She previously worked with the Manukau City Creative Communities Committee. She has a long history of involvement in innovative arts and cultural development projects.*

*Facilitator: Judy Spokes is Director of the Cultural Development Network, an independent non-profit group that links communities, artists and local councils across Victoria. The Network has played a key role in expanding the understanding of cultural vitality in the local government sector.*



## PANEL SESSION SUMMARIES

### PANEL 4: MODELS OF INCLUSION (2)

**Panellists:** Natalia Valenzuela, Kiersten Coulter, Sharon Jacobson,

**Facilitator:** Jane Crawley

*Kiersten Coulter is a PhD candidate in the Department of Criminology, Melbourne University. Kiersten originally trained as a performer and theatre technician. She has worked extensively as a community artist/performer with young people at risk and young offenders as well as with prisoners in the adult prison system.*

*Sharon Jacobson worked as a dramaturg on a number of productions for Sydney's Darlinghurst Theatre between 1995 and 2001. Since 1998 she has been using theatre to work with socially excluded communities, beginning with facilitating drama workshops and directing community theatre at a long term drug and alcohol therapeutic community just outside Melbourne. Between 2000 and 2002 Sharon facilitated two performance projects inside Barwon Prison, Victoria's male maximum security prison, as well as a number of other drama programs in Victorian men's prisons. In 2003 Sharon co-facilitated the 'Making Waves' performance project for people with mental illness to be used as an educational tool in secondary schools*

*Facilitator: Jane Crawley has worked in community cultural development since 1985. She has specialised in developing arts projects across the range of artforms and practices with people whose visibility and power has been compromised because of circumstances such as age, income and cultural identity. Jane's work in the arts and community development spans the community sector, local government, arts companies and festivals and community media. Jane is currently employed by the City of Melbourne as Team Leader of Cultural Development. She manages a wide range of programs including Community Cultural Development, Indigenous Arts, Arts Grants, mentorship and traineeship Programs.*





## LIST OF DELEGATES

HEATHER ABBOTT	Briefing Officer, Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs
KINGSLEY AKANIHU	Member, Grassroot Mobilization
MICHELLE ALCHIN	Coordinator, Community Development Policy & Programs, City of Port Phillip
STACEY ANDERSON	Cultural Development Co-ordinator, Newcastle City Council
SALLIE ANDERSON	Program Officer, Indigenous Language & Culture, Department Communications, IT & the Arts
JANE ANDREW	PhD student, Centre for Labour Research University of Adelaide
GREG ANDREWS	Deputy Director, Policy & Programs, Arts Victoria
DEBRA ANNEAR	Cultural Development, Coordinator, City of Monash
PHILLIPPA ARMSTRONG	Team Leader - Community Facilities, City of Port Phillip
STEVE ASHLEY	Arts Officer, Country Arts, SA
DESPINA BABBAGE	Senior Policy and Research Adviser, Department of Victorian Communities
ANGELA BAILEY	Photographic Artist
SUSAN MARY BALDERSTONE	Assistant Director, Strategic Support, Heritage Victoria
SUSAN BARNETT	Cultural Development Officer, Shellharbour City Council
LINDY BARTHOLOMEW	Director, Regional Arts Victoria
DEE BASINSKI	Senior Project Officer, Mental Health and Wellbeing Unit
SUE BEAL	Team Leader, Culture Venues, City of Melbourne
MORRIS BELLAMY	Manager, Arts & Culture, City of Melbourne
GAY BILSON	Chef, author
RICHARD BLADEL	Kickstart Arts Inc
JAMI BLADEL	Independent Theatre Director & Actor, Community Arts Facilitator
SUE BOADEN	Director, Australia Street Company
PENNY BONNELL	Cultural Officer, Regional Arts NSW
JENNIFER BOTT	CEO, Australia Council
ADRIENNE BOUZAIID	Volunteer, Tasmanian Regional Arts
ELIZABETH BRADSHAW	Principal Advisor, Cultural Heritage, Community Relations, Rio Tinto
WENDY BRANAGAN	
DAVID BRAND	Former Councillor, City of Port Phillip
CHRIS BROPHY	Project Officer, Arts Victoria
JOANNE BROWN	Program Manager, Community Cultural Development, NSW
SALLY BRUEN	Community Building Facilitator, City of Darebin
JOSEPHINE BURDEN	Convenor of Major in Community Cultural Development, Griffith University
CHRISTINE BURTON	Senior Lecturer in Arts Management, University of Technology, Sydney
SALLY CALDER	Director, Community and Cultural Vitality, City of Port Phillip
LISA CAREY	Electorate Officer, Parliament of Victoria
KAYA CELIK	Public Tenant Support Worker, Brotherhood of St Laurence
NATASHA CHO	Writing Coordinator, Footscray Community Arts Centre
CRAIG CHRISTIE	Musician and producer
SUE CLARK	CCD Course Coordinator Vic. College of the Arts, Centre for Ideas
MAGGIE CLARRE	Manager P.R.A.C.E
GREG CLEAVE	Cultural Programs Co-ordinator, Manningham Gallery Manningham City Council
DANNY COLGAN	Manager, Community Planning City of Boroondara
LISA COLLEY	Executive Director, Policy Communication Research Australia Council for the Arts
COURTNEY COLLINS	Writer, student and CDN Board member
SUSAN CONROY	Cultural Planner
TRICIA COONEY	Director/Performer Circus Solarus, Festival Entertainment
BRUCE COPLAND	Program Manager Regional Development Victoria
LINDA CORKERY	Landscape Architect and Head of School, Faculty of the Built Environment University of New South Wales
URSULA CORVAN	Coordinator - Local Info Network & Community Spaces, City of Port Phillip
ELOISA COSTOSO	Cultural Diversity Development Officer, City of Great Dandenong
KIERSTEN COULTER	Researcher, Department of Criminology, University of Melbourne
JANE CRAWLEY	Team Leader of Cultural Development, City of Melbourne

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JASON CROSS	Artistic Director, Big West Festival
GREGOR CULLEN	Lecturer, School of Art & Design, University of Wollongong
MARTY CUNNINGHAM	Senior Policy Officer, Department of Culture and the Arts
EMMA DAWSON	Cultural Development Officer, City of Boroondara
SHARON DAWSON	Art Networking, Community and Cultural Vitality, City of Port Phillip
CHRISTINE DEW	La Trobe University
JENNIE DICKSON	Community Development Worker, Eastern Tenancy and Housing Ltd
XUELIN VICKY DAVISON	Community Action Team, Knox City Council
MATT DIXON	Health Promotion Coordinator, Centre For Adolescent Health
ELEANOR DOWNES	Community Cultural Development Officer, Glenorchy City Council
BRUCE DRUMMOND	Youth Leisure Worker, Knox City Council
FIONA DUNBAR	Policy & Research Adviser to the CEO, City of Greater Geelong
ANNE DUNN	Consultant, Arts, Communities and Organisations
CHRIS DUPE	Manager - Economic, Cultural and Community Development, Shire of Yarra Ranges
PENNY EAMES	Executive Director, Arts Access Aotearoa
SARAH EDWARDS	Coordinator Outreach Program, Museum Victoria, Visitor Programs
DAVID EVERIST	Program Coordinator, Footscray Community Arts Centre
NICOLE FINDLAY	Producer, Arts Alive
SARAH FINLAY	Co-ordinator, Cultural Development, Manningham City Council
BRENDAN JOHN FITZGERALD	Artistic Director, Theatre of Love and Fear,
BERNADETTE FITZGERALD	Workshop Coordinator, Footscray Community Arts Centre
LUCY FOLEY	Health Development Worker, Health Promotion, Women's Health East
MARTIN FOOT	Cultural Development Officer, City of Boroondara
KAREN GARDNER	Events & Cultural Services Officer, Warringah Council
CONNIE GIBBONS	Director, Community Development, City of Boroondara
MAIA GIORDANO	Circus Solarus
ARANALDO GIORDANO	Circus Solarus
JEANETTE GOEDEMOED	Venue Manager, Northcote Town Hall, Darebin City Council
PAUL GRAHAM	Cultural Planner, City Outcomes Department, Fairfield City Council
JEANETTE GRANT	
SHERIDAN GREEN	Community cultural development worker, City of Melbourne
JEANETTE GREENAWAY	
JEANINE GRIBBINS	Director, Creative Compass
VICKY GUGLIELMO	Arts and Culture Coordinator, Gateway, Jesuit Social Services
JOE NEPARRNGA GUMBULA	Garma Festival, Northern Territory
MARLA GUPPY	Cultural Planner, Guppy and Associates
MEGAN GUSTER	Community Development Officer, City of Onkaparinga
SUSAN HAMILTON	The Minister's Local Government appointee to Country Arts S.A, Central Board, Mt Barker Council
MARIE HAPKE	Participation & Inclusion Officer, Community Cultural Vitality, City of Port Phillip
JANINA HARDING	Indigenous Arts Program Manager, Arts & Culture, City of Melbourne
JON HAWKES	Community Music Victoria
MELISSA HAYES	Co-ordinator, Community & Cultural Vitality, City of Port Phillip
LUCY HEALY	
PIA HERBERT	Partner IUM
JEFF HERD	Manager, Neighbourhood Renewal, Department of Human Services
PHIL HEUZENROEDER	Director, Club Wild
IAN HICKS	Manager - Culture & Recreation, Community & Cultural Vitality, City of Port Phillip
JANE HOLLAND	Councillor, Shire of Busselton
RICHARD HOLT	Cultural Vitality Project Officer, City of Port Phillip
JUDI HOONG	Community Development Officer, Community Services, Perry Shire Council
DONALD HORNE	Academic Writer
JENNIFER HUNT	Executive Officer, South East Arts Region

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ALIX HUNTER	Manager, Neami Splash Art Studio, Neami Limited
RICHARD HUNTER	Regional Development Facilitator, Office of Regional Development, University of Western Sydney
AUDREY HUTCHISON	Cultural Development Officer, Queensland Community Arts Network
JOE IBBITSON	Community Programs Coordinator, Community Development, Penrith City Council
MATTHEW IVES	Community Arts Officer, Port Adelaide Enfield Council
ISABEL JACKSON	Arts & Culture Officer, Hobsons Bay City Council
SHARON JACOBSON	Community Theatre Worker,
TRACEY JOHNSON	Cultural Programs Coordinator, Cultural Programs, Hume City Council
SUE JONES	Manager, Community Services Division
TORY JONES	Principal Project Officer, Capital Asset Management Unit, Arts Queensland
LINDY JOUBERT	Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Architecture, Building Planning, University of Melbourne
ROSEMARY JOY	Access Arts Development Officer, City of Port Phillip
CHRISTINE JUDD	Cultural Development & Events Officer, Sustainable Planning, Port Stephens Council
NICHOLA KAPITZA	Manager, Culture & Youth Planning, City of Salisbury
PATRICIA KEENAN	Coordinator, Arts and Cultural Development, City of Moonee Valley
VICTORIA CATHERINE KEIGHERY	Chief Executive Officer, Regional Arts NSW
JOSEPHINE KENT	Creative Gippsland
ANNE KERSHAW	Arts & Cultural Officer, Social Development, Hume City Council
HELEN KILLMIER	Manager Community Development, Human Services, Whitehorse City Council
ONKO KINGMA	Director, Capital Agricultural Consultants Pty Ltd (CapitalAg)
JENNIFER KINGMA	
NICKY KLEMPFNER	Manager, Audience Development & Events, Arts Victoria
STUART KOOP	Arts Officer, Arts Victoria
MICHELLE KOTEVSKI	Senior Program Officer, CCDB, Australia Council for the Arts
ELAINE LALLY	Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney
ANITA LANGE	Service Coordinator Corporate Planning and Strategy, City of Port Phillip
JAMES LARMOUR-REID	Manager Urban Strategy and Culture, Bayside City Council
RICHARD LAWTON	
TIFFANY LEE-SHOY	Regional Cultural Planning Coordinator, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils
JENNI LILLINGSTON	Senior Manager, Business Analysis, Arts Victoria
ANNA LOUGHREY	
JENNY MACAFFER	Social Planner, Mornington Peninsula Shire
JACQUIE MAGINNIS	Health Promotion Coordinator South District, Tasmania
MAGGIE MAGUIRE	Head Honcho, Maggie Maguire & Associates
MICHELLE MANSFIELD	Research Assistant, Cultural Industries and Practices Research Centre, University of Newcastle
DONNA MANTELLO	Coordinator, Homestead Community Arts & Cultural Centre, Hume City Council
SANDRA MARGULIUS	Cultural Services Officer, City of Boroondara
SALLY MARSDEN	Community Cultural Development Officer, Gateway, Jesuit Social Services
RAELENE MARSHALL	Arts Administrator, Cultural Development Unit, City of Whittlesea
GLENDA MASSON	Senior Planning Officer, Community Renewal, Queensland Department of Housing
ROBYN MAY	Coordinator, JSCA Inc.
CAROL MAYELL	Manager - Social & Cultural Planning & Policy, City of Port Phillip
BRIAN MC KINNON	Director, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co Operative Ltd
MAZ MCGANN	Cultural Development Officer, Cultural Services, Rural City of Wangaratta
IAN MCPHAIL	Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability
JEMIMA MEAD	Y-GLAM Project Officer, CoCare, Moreland Community Health Service
JENNY MERKUS	Director, Director Social Development, Moreland City Council
CLARE MEYERS	Social Policy Officer, City of Wanneroo
DEAN MICH	AEL Arts and Culture Co-ordinator, Brimbank City Council

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DEBORAH MILES	Acting Program Manager, Regional Arts Queensland
ANDY MILLER	Senior Arts Officer, Arts Victoria
DEBORAH MILLS	
MARIA MITAR	CALD Communities New Estates Worker, Blacktown Migrant Resource Centre
DEBBIE MOAR	Arts and Cultural Development Officer, City of Moonee Valley
JUNE MOORHOUSE	Moorhouse Consulting
ELIZABETH MULDOON	
MARTIN MULLIGAN	Researcher, Globalism Institute RMIT University
CLARE MURRELL	Policy Development Officer, Social Justice and Community Engagement, Victorian Local Governance Association
SUE NATTRASS	A.O. Cultural Consultant
NOELLE NELSON	Library & Cultural Development Manager, Newcastle City Council
ROZ NEWTON	Cultural Centre, Bondi Pavilion
CAM NGUYEN	CEO, Australian Vietnamese Women's Welfare Association
HELEN NOSWORTHY	Manager, Indigenous Language and Culture, Department Communications, IT & the Arts
MARDI NOWAK	Curator, City of Boroondara
ANGELA O'BRIEN	Head of School, Creative Arts, University of Melbourne
VINCENT O'DONNELL	Executive Producer, Arts Alive
RACHEL OLIPHANT	Executive Officer, Key Division, Outback Arts
NAOMI PAINE	
BRIDGET PALMER	Manager, Skills and Business Development, Australia Business Arts Foundation
FRANK PANUCCI	Chief Executive Officer, Community Cultural Development, New South Wales
DI PAPAS	Manager, Leisure & Culture, City of Boroondara
NICK PAPPAS	Performing Artist
MARTIN PATEN	Team Leader, City Culture & Collections, City of Melbourne
STEVE PAYNE	Director, The Torch Project
JENNY PEMBERTON-WEBB	Acting Manager, Community & Social Planning, City of Greater Dandenong
KATARINA PERSIC	Team Leader, Arts and Culture, Hobsons Bay City Council
RICHARD PETKOVIC	Project Officer, Outcomes & Development, Parramatta City Council
ANNE-MAREE PFABE	Unit Manager Arts and Culture, Moreland City Council
LISA PHILLIP-HARTOTT	Community Arts Network SA
SARAH POOLE	Team Manager, Arts & Cultural Development, City of Whittlesea
BRIAN POUND	District Liaison Officer, Place Management Customer Relations, City of Melbourne
MANDY PRESS	Manager, Neighbourhood Development, City of Port Phillip
PERLA PROTACIO	Social Planner, Social Development Unit, Wyndham City Council
KATRINA MAY RANK	Arts Officer, Arts and Cultural Development, Nillumbik Shire Council
JERRIL RECHTER	Director, Footscray Community Arts Centre
PETER REDDEN	Cultural Development Coordinator, City of Stonnington
SUSAN REID	Teacher, Mainstream Visual Arts, FNQIT
MIKE REID	Manager, Governance, New Zealand
SARAH-JANE RENNIE	Team leader, Research and Training, Museums and Galleries Foundation of NSW
ALISON RICHARDS	Research Fellow, School of Creative Arts, University of Melbourne
ANNE RIGGS	Artist
JIM RIMMER	Community Development Officer, Victorian College of the Arts Student Union
CATHERINE RINAUDO	Cultural Development Officer, Maribyrnong City Council
IMELDA RIVERS	Arts Development Manager, Arts Development, Country Arts SA
MELISSA ROBERTSON	Executive Officer, Arts Nexus
JACQUE ROBINSON	
SHAUN ROBSON	Briefing Officer, Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs
ALAN ROGERS	Director, Community Services, Noosa Shire Council
ANNEKE ROSE	Promotions & Events Officer, Aice Springs Library, Alice SpringsTown Council
MONIR ROWSHAN	Living Streets Coordinator, Liverpool City Council
JENNY RUFFY	Cultural Development Coordinator, City of Monash

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VOULA SARHANIS	Project & Research Officer, Community Cultural Vitality, City of Port Phillip
GILL SAVAGE	Cultural Planner, Culture, Maribyrnong City Council
CHRISTINE SCHLOITHE	Programming Executive, Creative Programs, Adelaide Festival Centre Trust
LORNA SECRETT	Cultural Development Officer, Shire of Busselton
LU SEXTON	Cultural Development Officer, Manningham City Council
CYNTHIA SHANNON	Community Development Worker, Southside Community Services
STEPHEN SINGLINE	Community Development Officer, City of Great Geelong
DALAL SMILEY	Coordinator, Multicultural Affairs, City of Darebin
MIKAEL SMITH	Indigenous Policy and Programs Coordinator, The City of Port Phillip
FIONA SMITH	Chairperson, Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria
TONY SMITH	Arts and Cultural Development Officer, Banyule City Council
SIMON SPAIN	Manager, Artplay
LESLIE SPARKES	Manager, Community Development
JUDY SPOKES	Director, Cultural Development Network
EVE STAFFORD	Executive Officer, Arts Nexus
KATELYN STANYER	Exhibitions & Programs Officer, Manningham Gallery, Manningham City Council
ANDREE STARK	Department of Housing, Queensland Government
SUZY STILES	Team Leader, Arts and Cultural Development, City of Marion SA
ELIZABETH SYKORA	Cultural Development Officer, The City of Marion
ILKA TAMPKE	Project Officer, Neighbourhood Development, City of Port Phillip
TEIRA TE KENEHI	National Maori Heritage Manager-Kaihautu, New Zealand Historic Places Trust
ANNE THODAY	Coordinator, Cultural Services, City of Boroondara
SHARON THOMAS	Development Co-ordinator, Cultural & Community Affairs, City of Sydney Council
JARED THOMAS	Nukunu Peoples' Council
SUSAN THOMPSON	Associate Professor, Faculty of the Built Environment, University of NSW
JOHN TONSO	Performing Artist
ANDREW TRUMP	Cultural Development Coordinator, Cultural Development Unit
EUGENIA TSOULIS	Executive Director, Migrant Resource Centre of SA
DAVID TURNBULL	Honorary Research Associate, Deakin University
NATALIA VALENZUELA	Community Development Officer, Environment Team, City of Hume
CATHERINE VAN WILGENBURG	Director, Living Colour Studio
ANA VRANTSIS	Arts and Cultural Development Officer, Arts and Culture, Brimbank City Council
GRISSEL WALMAGGIA	Cultural Planning Officer, City of Greater Dandenong Council
INGRID ANNE WARD	Senior Policy Adviser, Policy Group, Ministry for Culture and Heritage
SUE WESTWOOD	Finance Manager, Chunky Move
JENNY WHITELAW	Township Facilitation Officer, Shire of Yarra Ranges
RUTH WHITTINGHAM	Artistic Program Manager, Arts Access
LEANNE WILKINSON	Cultural Services Officer, Arts, Cultural Services, Maroondah City Council
DAPHNE YARRAN	Chairperson, Binjirru Regional Council – ATSIC
ATHOL YOUNG	Team Leader, Creative Communities, Community Development Services
PAT ZUBER	Senior Advisor, Cultural Services, Redland Shire Council



## EVALUATION REPORT SUMMARY

### Evaluation Report Summary

Overall the response from participant's evaluations indicated that the conference was stimulating and useful. 260 people attended, with representation from local government (the majority), state government, community sector, arts, academia and health; from all levels, officers, managers, CEOs and elected representatives. Evaluation response rate was 38% of the 260 attendees, the highest ever for a CDN event!

77% of respondents rated the conference between excellent and good, and 81% of respondents rated the speakers between excellent and good. Aspects of the conference most valued were networking opportunities, quality of discussion, workshops and engaged atmosphere.

Positive comments included;

- overall a very valuable conference
- CDN conference are becoming important milestones documenting changes in public debate about ccd so please keep arranging them
- well balanced program of speakers, interesting group of delegates- as interesting to meet as was the speakers to listen to

There were also suggestions for areas of improvements. Most frequently mentioned issues were;

- time-management
- balance of talk/activity
- crowdedness of the program
- lack of local indigenous content

There were many ideas about how future conferences should be organised and what should be discussed including;

- expansion to a three day event
- site visits
- more how-to
- ccd beyond local government
- what hasn't worked
- other thinkers on 4th Pillar.

And topics for future events such as were suggested such as;

- skill development for artists
- evaluating arts/culture programs and
- best practice models

47% of respondents felt that the conference would encourage them to take new steps, with ideas that the conference contributed including;

- stimulating cross-council agency activation
- building links between business, local government and artists
- using culture as a tool and indicator of success of plans in council
- action from the bottom- just do it!
- become CEO!

Overall, our sense was the conference was well-received and valuable for participants. We will note suggested possible areas of improvement, ideas and positive and critical feedback in planning of future activities.

Kim Dunphy  
Manager





## ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE EVENTS

Monday 29th November

### WELCOME SONGS

Kutch Edwards and Dave Arden

Kutch is well known throughout Australia both for his music and commitment to community, through his work in education, health, art, culture and politics. Music became his voice to express community stories and his own songline. For many years he was the lead singer in Blackfire and has since formed Kutch Edwards and Band. His motivation is simple...to heal the spirit, strengthen community and family. What Kutch shares with his people is a connection, a belonging. It is his gift that in his own journey of healing he is able to help heal others.



Kutch was accompanied by accomplished indigenous guitarist and singer Dave Arden, who has worked with musicians all over Australia.

PHOTO: 278

### COMMUNITY SINGING EVENT

*Practising What We Preach*

Fay White and Jon Hawkes are both active in Community Music Victoria, which has been co-ordinating a three year program of community singing throughout Victoria. Funded by VicHealth, the program has helped in the establishment and development of over sixty community-based independent and ongoing singing groups throughout rural and regional Victoria.



Fay White is a singer and facilitator who identifies with the words of poet Adrienne Rich in trying to be 'part of an underground stream . . . of voices that resist the voices that tell us we are nothing'. Fay knows that music, especially song, can make connections, inspire, encourage, build community and play a role in social change. Her sessions and workshops do this. Fay has pioneered 'Vocal Nosh' - a re-vitalised form of community singing that is taking root across Victoria. She's led specifically geared singing sessions for community groups, women's groups, teachers, arts workers, health workers, chaplains and students and has facilitated exploration of environment, arts, spirituality, wisdom and justice themes at conferences and gatherings all over Australia. She is currently working through Community Music Victoria to encourage, train and resource singing leaders across the state.

### EXHIBITION PREVIEW AND INFORMAL DISCUSSION

*Here Spray: Children / Art / Graffiti / Public Space*

HereSpray was a project of the City of Melbourne's Community Cultural Development Program to celebrate Children's Week 2004. Six young leading stencil artists conducted series of workshops in six City of Melbourne primary schools. With the artists, the children created individual and group stencils that they subsequently sprayed onto their schools' walls to create large-scale murals that become HereSpray. Children were taken on laneway tours in the city's centre, to 'galleries without walls' where they viewed the dynamic of ever-changing exhibitions by local and international artists.



The Community Cultural Development Program is committed to developing projects that make children visible in the city and that acknowledge the immeasurable creative and cultural contribution children make to Melbourne.

Tuesday 30th November 2004

## REPORT LAUNCH

### Health in Public Spaces

Dee Basinski, Senior Project Officer, Mental Health and Wellbeing Unit, VicHealth and John McLeod, author and evaluator, launched *Health in Public Spaces: the evaluation report of VicHealth's Arts and Environment Scheme*. Copies of this report are available on-line from VicHealth at [www.vichealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au)

## BOOK REVIEW

### Public Art Public Housing

*Public Art Public Housing* was a joint project between the North Richmond Community Health Centre and Neighbourhood Renewal, Department of Community Services and the Cultural Development Network. The book, authored by Graham Pitts and designed by Lin Tobias, examines a number of diverse cultural projects and programs that have taken place on metropolitan and regional public housing estates during the past five years. It was written for a general public who may know little about what has been occurring behind the invisible walls of stigma often dividing housing estate residents from the outside world. It was also written for students, community development workers, public housing estate planners, estate service providers, artworkers and most of all, for housing estate residents. This includes the residents who dreamed it into being and participated in the creation of artworks described in this book. It also includes those residents who may consider further possibilities once they have read about what thousands of their co-tenants and collaborative artists have achieved.

Free copies of this book are available from the Cultural Development Network [kimdun@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:kimdun@melbourne.vic.gov.au)



## PERFORMANCE

by The Voices of Atherton Gardens, a high rise community choir and Melbourne community choirs *The Cleaners* and *Loose Arrangement*

*The Voices* formed in 2002, drawn originally from residents of the Atherton Gardens high rise housing estate in Fitzroy who were attending English as a second language classes. Predominantly Mandarin speaking Chinese, the group also comprises Cambodians, Malaysians, Egyptians, an Afghani, a Pakistani and a Filipina. The Voices have spoken and sung in English at many festivals and conferences since 2002, and appeared on TV during the Melbourne Fringe 2003. Graham Pitts is Artistic Director and Jennie Swain, Musical Director.

## ABORIGINAL HERITAGE WALK

The Aboriginal Heritage Walk is a rich and vibrant cultural experience. Participants were led by an experienced indigenous guide through Melbourne's magnificent Royal Botanic Gardens, which rest on a traditional camping and meeting place for the local custodians of the area - the Boonwurrung and Woiworrung people



## ABOUT THE CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

The Cultural Development Network Inc. is a small independent association in Victoria generating new ideas and new connections for councils, communities and cultural vitality. We work towards a society in which local communities in all their diversity have the support they need to make and express their own culture. We advocate a stronger role in cultural vitality for government; and regard the arts (at the heart of culture) as central to this vision. We are best known for our work promoting culture as the 'fourth pillar of sustainability'.

Through our forums program we nurture connections between professionals, artists, and communities engaged in community cultural development locally. The aim is to support more collaborative practice and stimulate robust debate about the links between culture, arts and healthy sustainable communities.

We advocate the centrality of cultural development (and the value of arts-in-community initiatives) in government policies and programs that extend beyond the arts sector through research and representation. Underpinning this work are our efforts (with partner agencies) to demonstrate the benefits of community cultural development in: community planning; civic engagement; building democracy; environment protection, and social health & wellbeing development programs.

***Community Sustainability and Cultural Vitality: a national local government pilot program***

***Engaging Councils, Communities and Artists in Extending Lead Practice Towards Health and Wellbeing: a pilot program to be undertaken in six communities from 2005 through 2007/8***

Our major project for 2005 is being led by Anne Dunn (senior project consultant and facilitator) and Judy Spokes (project manager) during the initial feasibility phase between October 2004 and July 2005. Supported by the Australia Council and VicHealth and working in partnership with the Local Government Community Services Association ([link](#)) and RMIT's Globalism Institute ([link](#)), the Cultural Development Network is the initiator, broker and administrator of the program.

From 2005 to 2008 six local councils will invest in arts-based community development strategies to tackle complex local problems. The goal is to build healthy, active communities through projects designed to generate community discussion and action in response to entrenched or difficult local problems. Though not new, this 'community cultural development' approach is all too rarely applied in medium or long term contexts, or with sufficient senior leadership and support, or indeed with effective inter-government partnerships. This program is being developed to avoid these common conceptual and project management traps.

It will be applied over three years (at least). It will integrate (not marginalise) participatory arts as part of Council's overall local development efforts and will involve programs across the full range of Council functions. It will rely on investment of state, commonwealth and local government resources (both human and financial). It will be evaluated by RMIT's Globalism Institute (subject to success of an Industry Linkage Grant application to the Australian Research Council).

The first planning day of all stakeholders in the project was held on 11 February 2005, and included a creative workshop in which a number of artists with community cultural development experience helped to scope creative solutions to community issues presented by councils. Stimulated by this injection of creative thinking, specific project proposals will be then be developed and funding sought from various sources.

CEOs and Key Executive level managers in the following councils are committed to the program and are scoping local projects during the early months of 2005:

- Maribyrnong City Council
- Latrobe City
- City of Greater Geelong
- Rural City of Wangaratta
- Dalrymple Shire (QLD)
- Western Sydney Council in partnership with WESROC(TBC)(NSW)

Further information, please contact Judy Spokes on 03 9658 8850 or: [judspo@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:judspo@melbourne.vic.gov.au)

For details of our work in the last couple of years (we're a relatively new organisation) see our website: [www.culturaldevelopment.net](http://www.culturaldevelopment.net) You can join us or download a membership form

