

# Art and Wellbeing

**A guide to the connections between Community Cultural Development and Health, Ecologically Sustainable Development, Public Housing and Place, Rural Revitalisation, Community Strengthening, Active Citizenship, Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity.**

**Deborah Mills and Paul Brown**





© Commonwealth of Australia, 2004

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process without prior written permission from the Commonwealth available from the Australia Council for the Arts. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to the Managing Editor, Australia Council, PO Box 788 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 Australia or to <comms@ozco.gov.au>.

Every reasonable effort has been made to contact copyright owners of materials reproduced in this publication. The Australia Council welcomes communication from any copyright owner from whom permission was inadvertently not obtained.



**Australian Government**



The National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication data:

Mills, Deborah, 1950- .

Art and Wellbeing: a guide to the connections between community cultural development and health, ecologically sustainable development, public housing and place, rural revitalisation, community strengthening, active citizenship, social inclusion and cultural diversity.

Bibliography. Includes index. ISBN 1 920784 25 X.

1. Art and society - Australia.
2. Art and state - Australia.
3. Sustainable development - Australia.
4. Community development - Australia. I. Brown, Paul, 1952- . II. Australia Council. III. Title.

303.440994

**Authors:** Deborah Mills and Paul Brown

**Project Manager:** Bernice Gerrand

**Editor:** Rosemary Peers

**Design:** Hoy Design Consultants

**Contributors:** Sincere thanks to those organisations and people who provided material and/or took part in consultations for this publication. All extracts and images are used with permission of their authors, who are acknowledged in the text.

Published by the Australia Council for the Arts  
372 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills  
Sydney NSW 2010 Australia

PO Box 788  
Strawberry Hills NSW 2012

Tel +61 2 9215 9000

Toll free +61 1800 226 912

Fax +61 2 9215 9111

[www.ozco.gov.au](http://www.ozco.gov.au)

This publication is available online at [www.ozco.gov.au](http://www.ozco.gov.au).

Please direct enquiries about this publication to [ccd@ozco.gov.au](mailto:ccd@ozco.gov.au).

# Art and Wellbeing



## Foreword

Sometimes it's all too easy to focus on the difficult aspects of our everyday lives, and yet we are surrounded by so many wonderful stories, so many courageous and creative people. As each case study in *Art and Wellbeing* shows, creativity is inextricably linked to our wellbeing—people's lives are changed, and communities and cultures are strengthened, whenever imagination is encouraged.

The authors have adopted a broad definition of wellbeing and, in particular, community wellbeing: how we relate to others and to our environment, how inclusive our societies are, how we address and respect cultural diversity.

Investing in creative, collaborative activities can help agencies to implement their policies, and contribute to individual and community wellbeing. Such investment needs to be integrated with and respond to social, environmental and economic development—expressed in the partnerships between government and non-government agencies, between communities and multi-disciplinary teams, between artists, health workers, planners, scientists, policy makers and community workers.

We recognise that wellbeing issues are interdependent and cannot easily be dealt with in isolation. I'm sure *Art and Wellbeing* will encourage arts and cultural agencies to work with other organisations involved with community wellbeing, to strengthen social capital and achieve policy objectives.

Jennifer Bott  
CEO  
Australia Council

## Contents

Foreword .....	2
Preface .....	4
Introducing Community Cultural Development .....	6
Art and Wellbeing: securing the connections .....	7
1. Health .....	12
<b>VicHealth and its partners</b> .....	17
<b>Somebody's Daughter Theatre</b> .....	22
<b>Big hART</b> .....	25
<b>The Artful Dodgers Studio</b> .....	29
2. Ecologically Sustainable Development .....	32
<b>SunRISE 21</b> .....	38
<b>CERES</b> .....	41
<b>Murray River Story</b> .....	43
3. Public Housing and Place .....	46
<b>Kensington Public Housing Estate</b> .....	51
<b>Richmond Housing Estate</b> .....	54
<b>Cascade Place</b> .....	59
4. Rural Revitalisation .....	62
<b>Wauchope</b> .....	67
<b>Atherton Tablelands</b> .....	72
5. Community Strengthening .....	74
<b>Re-Igniting Community: The Torch</b> .....	79
<b>Maralinga/Oak Valley</b> .....	82
6. Active Citizenship .....	86
<b>Small Towns Big Picture</b> .....	91
7. Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity .....	94
<b>Merrima</b> .....	99
<b>Deloraine Craft Fair</b> .....	101
<b>The Project with a Thousand Outcomes</b> .....	102
8. Appendices and resources .....	104
Appendix 1: Evaluating the Impact of the Arts—Overseas Evidence .....	106
Appendix 2: Integrating Community Cultural Development .....	108
Appendix 3: Sample Proposals .....	109
Bibliography .....	118
Index .....	122

## Preface

This guide assembles ideas and case study material which demonstrate connections between community cultural development and government ‘wellbeing’ initiatives.

*Art and Wellbeing* uses a concept of wellbeing which builds on a social and environmental view of health, and recognises the inter-relatedness of environmental responsibility, social equity, economic viability and cultural development. These four factors, effectively balanced, have also been considered as the basis of ‘ecologically sustainable development’ (Hawkes, 2001).

The material is relevant for decision-makers concerned with health and wellbeing, integrated approaches to policy, planning and service delivery, ecologically sustainable development, natural resources management, rural revitalisation, community strengthening, active citizenship and diversity and inclusion.

Australian and overseas research (see Appendix 1) shows that direct involvement by communities in arts activity can contribute significantly to individual and community wellbeing and can enhance the efforts of government agencies in realising their policies for community wellbeing and ecologically sustainable communities. The case studies presented here demonstrate that community-based creative processes, when embedded into an agency’s policies and strategies, can be very powerful in strengthening the knowledge, engagement, social capital and leadership required to achieve policy objectives.

In 2002 the Community Cultural Development Board (CCDB) of the Australia Council commissioned research to explore the effect of its funding on the policies and programs of those government agencies concerned with community wellbeing. This research and consultation included round-table meetings with representatives from key community and government agencies, and extensive interviews with government agencies and cultural organisations.

The research identified a number of policy themes associated with community wellbeing—themes that are currently ‘top of mind’ in many spheres of government. The research also assembled case studies which show how participatory arts activities in the community have been applied to these policy themes.

The case studies explore:

- how community cultural development initiatives can be integral parts of far-reaching government strategies
- the potential for community cultural development processes to enrich the policies and actions being taken on some of Australia’s most complex social, environmental and economic challenges
- the way business, government and community organisations can become involved in community cultural development as a means of building trust, knowledge and social capital as preconditions for joint decision-making about complex issues
- the potential for community cultural development to influence the conduct and meaning of cross-sectoral, whole-of-government approaches.

The case study material in *Art and Wellbeing* is certainly not a complete guide to community cultural development and wellbeing activity. For every program or project included, many others could have easily come in alongside. Instead the aim is to explore what could be termed ‘diagnostic’ examples, those case studies best able to demonstrate the viability and potential of community cultural development in achieving and challenging government policy and decision-making.

The scope of this project did not permit engagement with the educational sector. However it is important to recognise the relevance of federal and state government arts in education strategies to the art and wellbeing agenda. Similarly, some of the most successful work in integrating community cultural development with other policies and disciplines is being done in the local government sector and, while not the subject of specific inquiry for this project, this work should also be acknowledged.

The consultation with key community and government agencies revealed a growing awareness of the significance of culture as a factor in wellbeing and an interest in integrating cultural development into those government policies and strategies concerned with wellbeing. On the basis of this interest, the CCDB has resolved to enter into a number of strategic alliances with government agencies working in the area of wellbeing and interested in embedding community cultural development practice into their policies and strategies.

The CCDB is continuing to assemble case study material which explores the connection between art and wellbeing and invites you to provide it with details of additional programs and projects. Individuals and organisations interested in pursuing art and wellbeing partnerships are also welcome to contact the CCDB.

## Introducing Community Cultural Development

Since its establishment 30 years ago, the CCDB of the Australia Council has been instrumental in the development and support of what has become known as community cultural development. Initially the CCDB was responsible for implementing that part of the Australia Council's Charter to do with ensuring that Australians have opportunities to access and participate in the arts.

This focus has evolved into support aimed at strengthening the capacities of communities to develop and express their own cultures. Community cultural development has come to be understood as a collective process, often involving creativity interpreted in the broadest sense. This contributes to changes in people's lives and long-term developmental benefits for a community. Meanwhile the relationship between artist and community has become a partnership rather than the 'expert' sharing with the 'amateur'.

In practice, community cultural development involves a wide range of art forms, from performance to visual arts, from film and video to writing, oral history and storytelling. Its creative outcomes may be everything from public art to festivals, theatre and dance performances, exhibitions, publications and seminars. All of these activities, and there are many others that could be mentioned, have in common the collaborative and empowering processes by which participants engage with creative activity.

Throughout this evolving practice, communities and artists across the country have developed a wide range of collaborative programs and projects. These have involved health centres, multicultural organisations, prisons, public housing agencies, environmentalists, educationalists, trade unions, local governments, urban planners, youth centres and women's groups: communities all eager to use a range of creative processes, to develop skills and express their concerns and aspirations to a wider audience.

The art and wellbeing practice described in this guide arises from such work.

## Art and Wellbeing: securing the connections

In tackling complex social, environmental and economic problems affecting community wellbeing, governments have begun to find that an integrated and whole-of-government approach is necessary, one which links policy, planning and delivery mechanisms between government agencies and between different spheres of government.

As they address these complexities, some agencies question orthodox policy approaches which subsume social and environmental issues beneath economic concerns and which rely primarily on economic measures to deliver results.

From this re-examination, the balanced integration of social, economic and environmental dimensions is gaining recognition as a vital first step towards community wellbeing and ecological sustainability. This new balancing act often requires the reformation and/or extension of ideas and information, the establishment of shared understandings of the meaning of sustainability and the building of shared commitment to solutions. But there are barriers to reaching these shared understandings and solutions.

For example, conflict can arise between centralised decision-making processes and bottom-up processes of community-based decision-making. The institutions charged with the responsibility for policy development and resource allocation can seem remote from and insensitive to the interests of local communities. Often the way knowledge is made and used is important in this:

- There can be an over-reliance on technical knowledge.
- Decision-making may privilege one type of knowledge over another (for example, scientific knowledge over lay or Indigenous knowledge).
- There may be competing knowledge bases, with a lack of connection between expert systems and localised interest groups.
- There can be poor communication of technical knowledge.

Another key problem is that the centralisation of power can act to prevent communities from expressing their values, realising self-determination and achieving their sense of identity. Because of this, some government agencies now acknowledge community engagement, also known as active citizenship or participatory democracy, as a building block for sustainability and wellbeing. They recognise that only by engaging people in active debate on the kind of society they want will people and communities explore and clarify their values, their goals and the means to achieve them.

However, attempts to engage communities in this way have encountered difficulties. Again, the centralised way in which policy is developed and resources are controlled works against these community-based processes and contributes to distrust of government and business and inertia at the community level. These feelings of alienation can be particularly acute for marginalised groups.

### Responding to complexity—culture and values

The search for more integrated methods of providing ecological sustainability and wellbeing has already led to the development of partnerships between government, business and the not-for profit sectors. But effective responses require new ways of thinking and new ways for governments to go about their business. This in turn has implications for:

- our social structures
- our relationship with the natural environment
- the scale, scope and structure of economic activity
- what and how we learn
- our planning and governance structures and processes.

This will mean the reform of our basic institutions and systems. These structural reforms will require profound **cultural** changes in our society, changes which cannot happen without a shift in our **values**. Our institutions—both government and business—need to engage communities in ways that allow them to express their values and sense of identity, to embrace new policy approaches and to achieve self-determination.

A society's values are the basis upon which all else is built. These values and the way 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. (Hawkes, 2001)

### The role of community cultural development

If governments wish to more effectively enhance community wellbeing, they need to recognise or incorporate the community's culture (and thus values) within government policies and strategies. They can do this through participatory creative processes.

Community cultural development uses involvement in artistic and other creative processes as a way of exploring and expressing our cultures and the values underpinning these cultures and our society. Community cultural development processes can therefore play a vital role in helping people to think critically about their experiences.

It is in the act of creativity that empowerment lies, and through sharing creativity that understanding [is] promoted. (Matarasso, 1997)

Active engagement in intellectual and artistic activities is one way in which we can re-evaluate our perceived reality, and our collective habits of thinking and acting. This engagement can expose communities and decision-makers to previously unimaginable ideas which challenge our values, leading to personal growth, lifelong learning and change.

In considering the role of community cultural development, it is useful to distinguish between **instrumental** approaches which involve the arts ('let's implement policy using the arts') and **transformational** approaches ('let's allow creative activity to help determine policy, negotiate shared understandings and map out solutions').

The instrumental approaches are reasonably well known. The arts are already well recognised as an effective 'tool' for educating and raising awareness of particular issues. As examples, they have been used for civic enhancement, as a way of building self-confidence and engagement with the wider community, or as a way of revitalising a local economy. However, this instrumental role is only half the story, and, as the case studies in this volume show, engagement in community cultural development processes can achieve and challenge government policy and decision-making through *both* instrumental and transformational approaches.

The transformational role of community cultural development would see it encourage fundamental shifts in policy processes, agency structures, modes of decision-making and attitudes. Australian government agencies should embrace the opportunities which community cultural development provides, to change habits of thinking and acting by galvanising community involvement and engendering debate ... debate which has implications for agencies' core activities.

By going further than instrumental applications of the arts, transformational creative processes can unlock new solutions to the challenges agencies face in the pursuit of community wellbeing and ecologically sustainable development.

## Transformational approaches—knowledge, trust and social capital

Because they foster trust between individuals and organisations, collective cultural processes can assist in engendering debate, making knowledge, illuminating divergence, and highlighting consensus around shared meaning, purpose and values.

For example, the knowledge-building functions of community arts projects, such as those approaches identified in several of our case studies, would seem to be of great value in decision-making contexts. This is because different knowledge bases (the lay versus the scientific, the local versus the universal/global) need to be synthesised into practical solutions that work at the level of individual communities, but also make sense at the state, national and international levels.

The case studies in this guide also show that arts organisations can be very effective in creating both types of social capital—*bonding* and *bridging*.

‘Bonding social capital’ refers to the strong ties within localised communities and relies on a sense of personal and collective trust and the development of shared values within groups. Such outcomes are not only cornerstones of community cultural development, but also important pre-conditions for policy and action in non-arts sectors. As community knowledge and trust grow, people discover new solutions and establish a shared commitment to those values, goals and means of achieving them. These improved participatory practices can enhance the capacity for change and resolve and/or avoid conflicts likely to arise in the promotion of policy changes.

‘Bridging social capital’ is sometimes regarded as the glue which connects *between* diverse community groups (Flowers and McEwen, 2003). But it can also mean a more specialised form of bridging: between localised groups and *expert systems*, such as those systems utilised by agencies charged with managing wellbeing issues and informed by expert knowledge. Arts projects which originate at the local level can achieve significant advances in wellbeing for individuals and communities. But they can also have important influences in state and/or federal decision-making forums, through deliberate strategies that link communities, and which transport participants, ideas and creative outputs into the decision-making realm of government agencies. This can resolve the tension that exists between centralised decision-making processes and bottom-up processes of community-based decision-making. Several of our case studies show how community cultural development can achieve such transformations.

## Case studies

Our case study material supports and elaborates on the above arguments. The examples are grouped under seven themes, which represent key priorities for governments in Australia in achieving community wellbeing:

1. Health—including social, environmental and clinical policy approaches
2. Ecologically Sustainable Development—meeting the needs of current and future generations through simultaneous environmental, social and economic development, and through natural resource management
3. Public Housing and Place—integrated approaches to public housing development in major cities
4. Rural Revitalisation—particularly within rural and regional Australia
5. Community Strengthening—government initiatives aimed at increasing a community’s capacity to resolve its social, economic or environmental issues
6. Active Citizenship—greater involvement of citizens and communities in government processes
7. Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity—strategies to overcome barriers based on gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, mental health or disability.

## Moving forward

The full potential of community cultural development is achieved when it is effectively integrated into the way in which an agency goes about its business. The case studies demonstrate how this is already happening. A five stage scheme for integrating community cultural development is set out in Appendix 2, while Appendix 3 presents sample proposals suggesting how integration might be achieved in future programs. In practice, much will depend on how aware the agency is of the potential of community cultural development strategies and whether it appreciates the relevance of these strategies to its objectives. Another variable will be whether everyone within the agency supports these collaborative creative processes, or whether support comes only from one or two individuals. Finally, inclusion of community cultural development in the agency’s policies, budgeting and strategies is further evidence of effective integration.



1  
*health*

**Above:** *Emma and Tegan*, from Big hART  
Zeehan, Tasmania. Photo: Christopher  
Saunders.

# 1. Health

**In the health portfolios of all spheres of government the interaction between community cultural development processes and policy development and implementation takes place. The case studies presented in this guide are:**

## **Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)**

A government health agency with a highly regarded long-term community cultural development program

## **Somebody's Daughter Theatre**

A theatre company implementing and provoking government prison policy

## **Big hART**

Youth health and social issues tackled through integrated community cultural development programs; an award winning model

## **The Artful Dodgers Studio**

An artists' studio linked to the Jesuit Social Services, and providing a safe environment for young people at risk.

Policy approaches to health include those which integrate social, environmental and clinical factors. Over at least the last two decades, the application of arts and cultural activities within these approaches has gained acceptance in Australia and overseas, and systematic evaluations demonstrate many benefits. (Our case studies are all well evaluated Australian examples, while overseas research on the influence of the arts appears in Appendix 1.)

One of the most far-reaching integrated approaches is the application of health and wellbeing concepts to the development of cities. For example, the Healthy Cities Program of the World Health Organisation defines a healthy city as one that is:

continually creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential. (Hancock and Duhl, 1988)

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a number of Healthy City projects were initiated in industrialised countries in Europe and North America. The Australian pilot projects were implemented in Noarlunga (South Australia), Canberra and Illawarra (NSW) between 1987 and 1990. Community cultural development projects were a feature of these early pilots. While the Healthy Cities program would appear to have lost official momentum, many of the program's principles

live on in the application of concepts such as liveability (natural and built environments for healthy and easy living) by local councils throughout Australia.

Ongoing work is also taking place to integrate the issues of human health with concern for ecological systems. For example, the National Environmental Health Strategy of the Australian Department of Health and Ageing aims to enhance environmental health management nationally by providing a framework to bring together parties interested in a range of issues which encompass environmental health. The strategy states:

There is a growing understanding that good health and wellbeing are linked with the state of the environment ... There is a growing appreciation of the interaction between human lifestyles, consumption patterns and urban settlements with the state of the environment. Additionally there is increased recognition that environmental degradation and overload may lead to new hazards and diseases. As well as minimising health hazards, good management of the environment can make a strong contribution to increasing health and well being ... This strategy explores the relationship between our health and the environment by focussing on: water, air, food, contaminated land, waste management, vector borne diseases, built environment. (Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, 1999)

In outlining its approach to the strategic management of national environmental health and the development of infrastructure for community involvement the policy states the importance of community empowerment:

Community empowerment is a powerful stimulus for change as well as a powerful ally for health and a buffer against the processes that threaten it. (Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, 1999)

Collective creative processes have been used to empower communities and improve the health of individuals for many years in Australia. These have been aimed at:

- identifying healthcare needs
- improving self-esteem and personal development
- improving sensory awareness, mental capacity and physical dexterity
- helping people to communicate effectively with each other
- improving staff and patient relationships and morale
- visually enhancing healthcare environments

- improving the emotional and spiritual state of mental health service users
- promoting positive health messages
- developing creativity in the workplace.

However, the use of creative processes needs broader recognition in the policies of government health agencies. To a large extent, they remain on the margins of health activities and, when they are introduced, it is more often as a one-off project rather than as part of any sustained policy and program commitment.

The case studies show:

- how the process of community cultural development empowers communities to take action on health issues
- the way community cultural development programs and projects have affected government health policy
- how community cultural development projects have affected government structure and organisation in the health arena
- how participation in community cultural development projects has improved individual and community health and wellbeing
- the way community cultural development processes have been used to assist individuals overcome some of the social determinants of ill health.

## VicHealth and its partners

In 1999 the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) developed its *Mental Health Promotion Plan 1999–2002*, establishing a framework for the development of research and program activity over a three-year period. The framework focuses on three determinants of mental health: social connection and social inclusion; freedom from discrimination and violence; and economic participation. Arts and creative processes are used to assist individuals strengthen these aspects of their lives as part of an integrated program. The Plan aims to increase participation and access for disadvantaged groups while contributing to the building of community.

The Plan features a Community Arts Participation (CAP) scheme. Launched in 1999 this scheme marked a move away from investment in the arts through sponsorships towards more integrated and evolved partnerships with arts and community organisations.

The population of CAP participants is understood to involve groups of people conventionally isolated from participation in mainstream society—people with intellectual, physical or psychiatric disabilities, long-term unemployed people, young people with drug habits, marginalised young people, and people experiencing isolation in rural communities.

Projects and programs range across many artforms—from theatre projects with people with disabilities, to film projects with the homeless, music and traditional dance events linked to festivals, and workshop programs in dance, circus, drama and music. Community writing has been used, so too a broad range of visual arts programs; for example, a long running artists' studio, a sculpture project, photography, and the creation of public art works.

In supporting this work, VicHealth regards its partnerships with other agencies and arts organisations as a key strategy in line with policy approaches across all government sectors. Agency partners have included youth housing services, schools and tertiary education facilities, social services including those provided by religious organisations, the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, local councils and community health services, festivals and philanthropic trusts.

### The Role of VicHealth

In its three-year plan, VicHealth has expressed three key long-term objectives, to:

- promote the benefits and develop clear understandings of creative arts participation to the health sector, general public and governments
- develop the community/arts sectors' knowledge and understanding of health and health promotion
- bring sectors together in project partnerships to explore common interests, such as pathways for projects using creative approaches.

*(VicHealth, 2003)*

### Outcomes

VicHealth's evaluation of the CAP scheme identified specific mental health benefits:

- **Developing positive relationships.** The evaluation observed that the group-based nature of all 28 projects surveyed, combined with the supportive facilitation of community artswriters, resulted in participants developing positive relationships with their peers and the wider community.
- **Gaining public recognition.** The public acknowledgment received by participants through the display of their work was an important aspect of connecting individuals to the wider community. Increased self-esteem was also a result of participation in the scheme.
- **Connecting families.** Families gained new insight into their sons, daughters, mothers and grandmothers. In some cases, participants' involvement led to their first contact with their families for years.
- **Connecting diverse communities.** This was an explicit aim of several projects and was successfully realised in five projects.
- **Connecting with health and welfare organisations.** Most projects reported that, through partnerships with health and welfare organisations, or simply through their broader community networks, participants were frequently referred to other services and organisations. Participants felt an increased sense of belonging to the wider community and of having people who care.
- **Enhancing skills.** A number of projects working with marginalised young people reported improved participation at school or return to school. Other participants developed enhanced confidence and skills in engaging with political processes. Project officers reported the highest levels of participant skills development in learning to work with others and in a team, communicating ideas and information, solving problems, planning and organising activities.
- **Working against discrimination and violence.** For many people, their role in a project allowed other participants and 'observers' to see them differently, with tolerance and understanding increasing from an expanded view of each other.
- **Economic participation and meaningful engagement.** Pathways to employment were created for some participants and many participants were able to imagine futures with a vastly expanded range of options.

(VicHealth, 2003)

A large number of participatory arts organisations have programs of activities which run parallel or link to the developments at VicHealth, and which arguably have driven forward the arts health and wellbeing agenda over the last decade.

VicHealth has funded such organisations to develop and conduct projects and programs. Organisations which have been supported by VicHealth include Somebody's Daughter Theatre, The Artful Dodgers Studio for artists, and Big hART's youth and community projects. Further details on these organisations are provided below. The Victorian Cultural Development Network has been a key body working in partnership with VicHealth, and has provided networking and policy development.

As a strategy for health and wellbeing, VicHealth advocates the long-term security of the community cultural development sector and the enhancement of infrastructure and resources for the arts and health sector. At the same time, critical debate within the community cultural development sector aims to enhance the engagement of health authorities with the arts, specifically through the adoption of principles and values of community cultural development approaches. There is a dynamic and constructive debate between VicHealth and its community cultural development partners, which is building knowledge about approaches to health and wellbeing while helping the development of community cultural development practice and theory.

### For further information

#### Website:

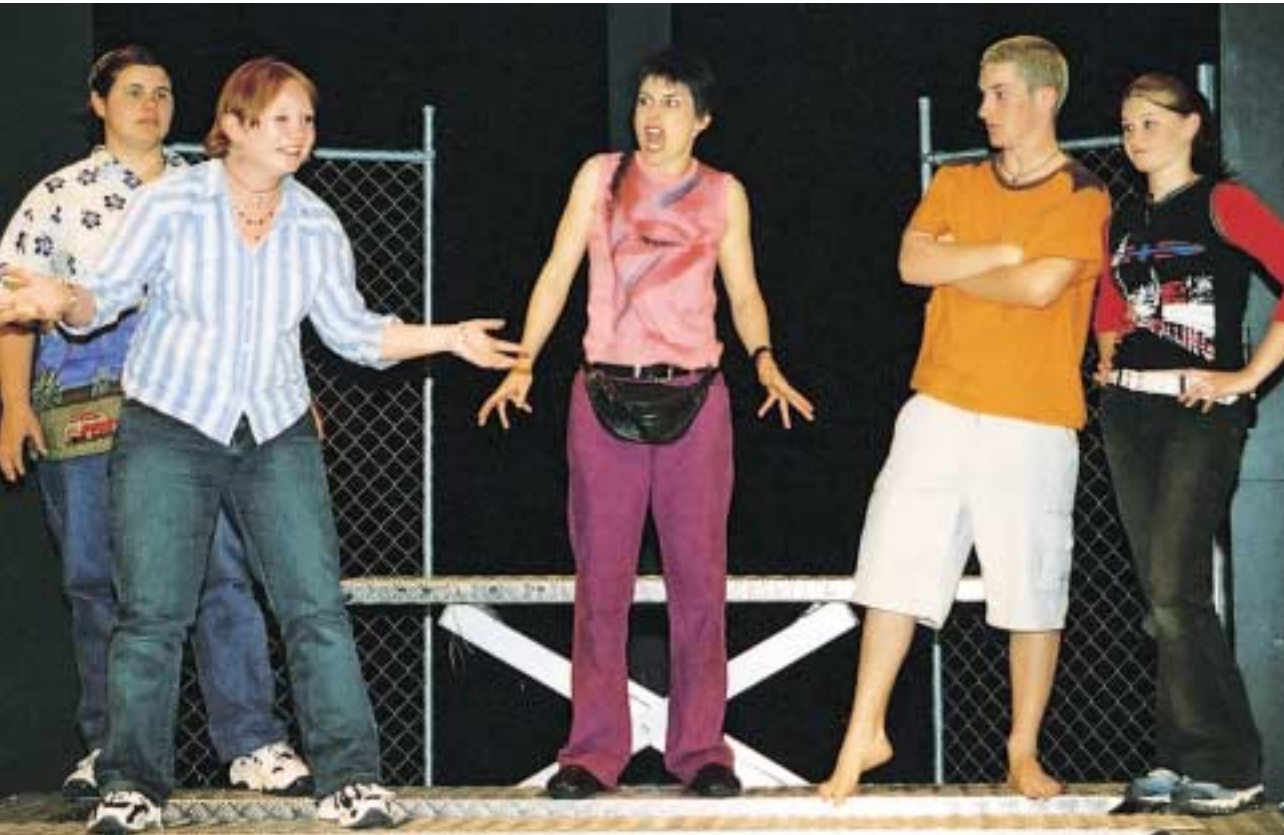
[www.vichealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au)

#### Key publications:

VicHealth (2003), *Creative Connections: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing through Community Arts Participation*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation *Mental Health Promotion Plan 1999–2002*.

This publication includes six case studies, and reports an evaluation based on a study of 28 projects funded by VicHealth.

VicHealth (2004), *Creative Connections: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing through the Arts*, 14-minute video. Available from VicHealth free of charge.



**Above:** *She Wakes, Somebody's Daughter* Theatre. Photo: Jan Osmotherly.

**Right:** *Chris, Big hART, Strahan, Tasmania.* Photo: Christopher Saunders.



## Somebody's Daughter Theatre

**This highly regarded community theatre company originated in Fairlea Women's Prison in 1980, and provides an example of sustained and successful linkage between the arts and health through community cultural development practice. Among many achievements and awards, the company received the prestigious VicHealth Innovation in Health Promotion Award in 2001.**

With public performances dating from 1991, the company has focused strongly on its work with women in prison and those who have been released, and always links its work to the issues of mental health and wellbeing. It is well known for facilitating transformational discussions and workshops on issues such as drugs, addiction and recovery, as a critical follow-up to performances (Osmotherly, 2002).

Favouring long-term interventions, Somebody's Daughter Theatre devises projects which identify healthcare needs, promote positive health messages and provide an environment where creativity develops more effective communication. Productions, which involve workshops, community writing, art, music and performance, create important social support networks, and through shared creative processes provide practical solutions.

'The company aims to assist women in prison, ex-prisoners and youth at risk, to deal with issues that have caught them in a destructive cycle of self-abuse and self-negation. By facilitating a space where their voice and vision of life's experiences can be shared with others, these people are empowered ... The drama process takes an idea from dream to conception to completion, from a dream to reality—providing an excellent model for anyone who wants to make positive changes in their life.' (Osmotherly, 2002)

The company serves a population that is markedly disadvantaged. Women prisoners are often incarcerated for drug-related or gambling offences; the great majority are victims of multiple

### Somebody's Daughter Theatre—methods:

- weekly workshops inside and outside the prison
- intensive long-term arts-based program for youth at risk
- scripts generated from the authentic voice of participants
- scripts selected for school Year 12 text lists
- publication of writing by prisoners
- at least one series of public performances and art exhibitions every year
- shows inside prisons
- ex-prisoners working with rural youth at risk to 'break the cycle'
- radio, press and television coverage
- series of public workshops and discussions
- tours of city schools, rural towns, theatre spaces, etc.
- CD with songs from women in prison
- website with information for people wanting to engage the company.

sexual and physical abuse, and most have low levels of education. One project, *Bring Down the Walls*, was designed to give women inside Victorian prisons and ex-prisoners a public voice, through dance, art and music.

I think everyone does want their story to be told. They want to be heard. You are in an environment where you are powerless and no-one listens to you. Having control over your own story gives you some kind of power, some kind of control. (Project participant quoted in Osmotherly, 2002)

In another initiative, the company has increased its work with youth at risk as a strategy for tackling the social determinants of ill health, and to 'break the cycle' which ties some young people to the criminal justice system. Intergenerational projects with youth at risk in Wodonga and Albury have become a major priority within the company's current three-year plan. The youth involved are mostly contenders for juvenile justice, have been expelled from schools, and as a result find it impossible to work in a group situation.

A major achievement within this program has been the establishment of a youth theatre arm, High Water Theatre, which has produced and toured shows and art exhibitions in conjunction with Somebody's Daughter Theatre. Venues have included rural towns, Melbourne theatre spaces and Parliament House, Canberra. This initiative arose from a partnership between Somebody's Daughter Theatre, the Upper Hume Community Health Service and the Victorian Department of Education. Following an extensive assessment based on participant responses, the company wants to extend links with disadvantaged youth and to document over a three-year period the creative connection and the power of the arts to transform lives.

### Outcomes of *Bring Down the Walls*: a project with women prisoners

- The skills participants learnt in the process (acting, voice work and improvisation, set/costume construction and song and script writing) developed their self-esteem.
- Participants developed trust, the ability to work in a group, strategies to deal with anger and grief, and a sense of empowerment.
- There is an exchange of understanding between prisoners and mainstream media and the general public.
- The involvement of decision-makers in projects also creates new knowledge about the reality of prisons.
- Stereotypical views of prisoners are broken down, so that policy-making can reflect a sophisticated understanding of women in the prison system.

(Based on Osmotherly, 2002)

### Outcomes of youth project

Osmotherly found that the High Water Theatre initiative demonstrated the way empowerment through arts activity can be used to inspire both individual and collective action. For example, although most participants were initially forced to attend workshops, three weeks into the project all wanted to participate, and felt enabled by the experience to take control over their lives. One significant way in which they expressed this after involvement in the program was through renewed desire to find an educational framework that could benefit them.

(Osmotherly, 2002)

**For further information****Website:**

www.somebodysdaughtertheatre.com

**Key publications:**

Osmotherly, Jan (2001), *Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company Evaluation Report*, Osfield Consultants.

Osmotherly, Jan (2002), *Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company Evaluation Report*, Osfield Consultants.

These reviews contain extensive reporting of outcomes against performance indicators, and the results of detailed surveys of participant responses.

## Big hART

**Big hART is a multi-artform organisation established to create art with people or groups experiencing marginalisation in a rural, regional or isolated context. The company was established in 1992 by Scott Rankin and John Bakes, and is best known to government agencies for its crime prevention work.**

The first Big hART projects were in Burnie, Tasmania in 1992. The Youth Bureau of the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA) gave the project funding and the Burnie City Council agreed to support the production of a manual and video and to establish the infrastructure for the future expansion into regional and mainland communities. The company's approach won National Australian Violence Prevention Awards in 1993 and 1995 for both youth crime prevention and domestic violence prevention.

Big hART projects generate new material from the raw edges of society and change structures to give this material access to national forums. (Big hART website)

There have been several projects since 1992 that target Burnie's youth—including offenders and victims of domestic violence. Big hART provides life training and self-affirming experience for project participants who have had dysfunctional experiences in systems and organisations. The collection of ideas for the activities of Big hART comes from young people's expression that surfaces in the production process. Rip and Tear Theatre, Inkwings theatre, the staff of Youth Bureau (DEETYA), Burnie Youth Access centre, the Burnie City Council and many hard working individuals are the main contributors to such projects.

At any one time, Big hART may have upwards of 15 projects under way, in locations around the country. The projects explore violence in public spaces, domestic violence, young women witnessing extreme violence, domestic violence in isolated communities, recidivism among juvenile offenders, self-harm prevention, young women with children and violence, young people and surf

**Big hART: aims and objectives**

The company's stated objectives are to:

- produce profound art from the experiences of disadvantaged people in regional Australia
- use the art to transform Australian culture, and present it to national forums
- provide the disadvantaged with mentorship, encouraging behavioural change and increased options.

Through such activity, Big hART aims to achieve:

- domestic violence prevention
- suicide prevention
- youth crime prevention
- re-integration of young people into regional and isolated communities.

(Big hART website)



### Pin Ups

*I'd say I was twelve when I had my first kiss  
My first real kiss  
At school in the shelter shed.  
Girls weren't allowed to talk to boys.*

*Can't remember my first kiss to be honest.  
The maypole dance,  
Girls plaiting ribbons.  
I was only fourteen.  
And then unplaiting.  
He was of German extraction,  
But it wasn't what you'd call a raging affair.*

*We'd play Spin The Bottle.  
That game's still around today!*

*You drink, talk  
Smoke, dance  
Sing into broomsticks  
Try to get with people  
Make a fool of yourself*

*Painted their legs with Parisian essence  
Drew a line with a pencil down the back of their legs*

*My pin ups were Laurence of Arabia, Chopin, and  
Mathew Flinders.  
And Marie Curie.*

*So you know Spin The Bottle eh?  
Yeah, I know.*

**Above:** *Pin Ups*, from the Heaps of Rocks project, Big hART, west coast Tasmania. Photo: Christopher Saunders.

### Indicators of success: Big hART

- Inter-agency cooperation occurs through an independent project that benefits mutual clients.
- Participating organisations enhance their profiles by being involved, locally and federally, with funding bodies and the media.
- Empowerment of participants: If the project is working with young homeless people, the participants would move from homeless to having a home (working with service providers) then to addressing the issue of youth homelessness in the local community, then in national forums through performance, thus providing the community with a legacy.
- The work of marginalised groups is contributed to national forums. Young people involved are taken to national forums and their work recognised.
- New work is created and access to cultural forums is restructured so that discussion of ideas and our future is inclusive.

safety, racism, juvenile justice, living in harmony, and the reintroduction of Indigenous young people to education through New Media. (Big hART website, accessed 2003)

For example, in northern NSW a number of communities are involved in film and radio programs which address addictive behaviour; meanwhile in Kalgoorlie and Boulder in WA an equivalent program is underway. In Bourke, NSW the company is running a 'Healthy Mothers Healthy Families' project; while a performance-based project is taking place with Belvoir Street Theatre in inner Sydney set in a public housing estate. The company's objective of taking shows and participants to national forums has seen it participate in the Adelaide Festival, and in documentary films made for public broadcast.

In all its projects, through community cultural development processes, the company aims to expand community resources, enabling people to mutually support one another in performing

functions of life and encouraging the rebuilding of social infrastructures.

Arts mentors work with people with destructive impulses—those with limited skills and motivation who are disengaged from the community—to help them produce work for national arts forums. The way the projects are administered encourages active cooperation from many disadvantaged communities and helps to develop a sense of community awareness through the provision of communication networks, where issues can be resolved.

The commonality in our stories means that anybody can potentially influence the way our culture emerges, providing they have the resources to produce good work and have access to forums ... It means offering an alternative structure for creating and viewing. (Big hART website)

### For further information

#### Website:

[www.acmi.net.au/bighart](http://www.acmi.net.au/bighart)

#### Key publications:

Rankin, Scott (1996), *BIG hART, manual*, Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

**Big hART outcomes**

The process allows a diverse range of groups, who were previously structurally prohibited from discussion, to participate and influence decision-making and affect outcomes. The company points to further advantages of its model:

- 1) It allows disadvantaged individuals to be re-engaged in the cultural life of the community which improves the social health of both the individual and the community.
- 2) The holistic approach taken results in social, economic and cultural benefits for the entire community.
- 3) The activities to which young people contribute help to improve their emotional/mental health, family reintegration, and employment options. The work also has outcomes relating to wellbeing, including suicide prevention, crime prevention and vocational training.
- 4) The mentorship and advocacy presented in the activities helps to improve health by promoting behavioural change and providing increased options for the disadvantaged.
- 5) People who are neglected by and disengaged from society can cease anti-social behaviour and be again connected with the community.

*(Rankin, 1996)*

## The Artful Dodgers Studio

**This studio, based at a welfare agency in Collingwood, in inner city Melbourne, is run by Jesuit Social Services as an intervention strategy for young people at high risk, primarily with a dual diagnosis of substance abuse and mental health issues. Significant support has been provided by the William Buckland Foundation and VicHealth. The central element of the program is the engagement of participants as *artists not clients*, and the philosophy that rather than regarding art as therapy, the program uses art to ‘be with’ participants.**

The Studio therefore provides a ‘safe haven’ for participants, acting as the vehicle for exploration of the relationship between isolated individuals, a supportive community and a world of possibilities (Marsden and Thiele, 2000). The playing out of such a relationship over an extended timeframe (participants remain involved over months and even years), seems to create the trust necessary for making change.

The following extract is reproduced from an analysis of The Artful Dodgers Studio by Martin Thiele and Sally Marsden:

In 1996 Jesuit Social Services established The Artful Dodgers Studio as part of its Connexions program, a new and innovative multidisciplinary program established to engage with and provide specialist services to young men and women with complex needs, specifically, young people with a dual diagnosis of substance use and mental health issues.

Sally Marsden, an experienced community cultural development artist practitioner, was employed to coordinate the studio-based program. Following a six-month research and development period, she employed sessional artist practitioners for short-term projects and established the long-term program. The Studio was designed as a sustained-engagement model specifically for young people who are extremely fragile and marginalised ...

From a health professional’s perspective ‘dual diagnosis’ refers to people who are experiencing concurrent mental illness (including depression, psychosis, drug-induced psychosis, bi-polar disorder and schizophrenia) and substance misuse (typically, amphetamines, alcohol, heroin, marijuana and prescription medications).

The Artful Dodgers Studio is a central feature of the Connexions program, providing a safe and secure environment for young people to explore the arts. It provides an alternative strategy for engaging young people and enables them to give expression to their experience of marginalization through artistic projects. A contributing factor to the

program's success is the location of the Studio within a welfare program, enabling participants to develop relationships of trust with youth workers and counsellors and refer to them as the need arises.

Typically the Studio participants experience a high incidence of homelessness and disengagement from family, school and other 'community' institutions. It is not unusual for participants to exhibit high-risk behaviours such as prostitution, offending, intravenous drug use, needle sharing, suicide attempts, and other forms of self-harm, including unsafe sex and binge drinking.

Over time the Studio has developed into a fully functioning visual arts workspace, designed around an open access studio model. At any one time, as many as eleven young people are working on individual art pieces or group projects. Adjacent to the Studio is a working kitchen where meals are prepared on designated days by one of the artist practitioners. The Studio employs one full-time community cultural development artist practitioner with visual arts specialization, one part-time artist practitioner and sessional artists for specific projects ...

Jesuit Social Services has looked at participant progress as part of its ongoing evaluation of programs ... Figures suggest that by engaging with the program participants learn to manage their mental health, substance use and other problems. This enables them to begin to develop significant relationships and engage with the community, in particular through returning to education and/or employment, thereby reducing their social exclusion.

We need to be cautious about analysing and interpreting the data because there are multiple factors at play (especially in relation to dual diagnosis); however, the statistics presented here represent a preliminary overview which shows changes in mental health status, substance use and education/employment. Future research will enable us to identify the multiple factors involved and to better understand the significance of these in relation to the participants' journey through the program.

(Thiele and Marsden, 2003)

### **The Artful Dodgers Studio: achievements**

#### **Extract from *Engaging Art*:**

By examining Studio participation data over a four-year period ending in 2001, the following trends have been identified:

- 1) **Substance use** – on entry to the program, only 6% of participants reported not misusing drugs and/or alcohol. This picture changed drastically, with 36% of participants reporting not using any substances on exit from the program. Further, on entry to the program 76% of participants reported abusing depressants such as alcohol, heroin and prescription drugs, while on exit this figure had dropped to 37%.
- 2) **Mental health** – there was an overall reduction in reported levels of anxiety, depression, and self-harm, as well as a small reduction in the number of psychotic episodes experienced by some participants.
- 3) **Education/employment** – almost all of the participants who came to the program had disconnected from formal education and/or employment; however, on exit 18% of participants entered some form of employment and 21% returned to formal education (such as CAE, VCE, TAFE and university).

(Thiele and Marsden, 2003)

#### **For further information**

##### **Website:**

[www.jss.org.au](http://www.jss.org.au)

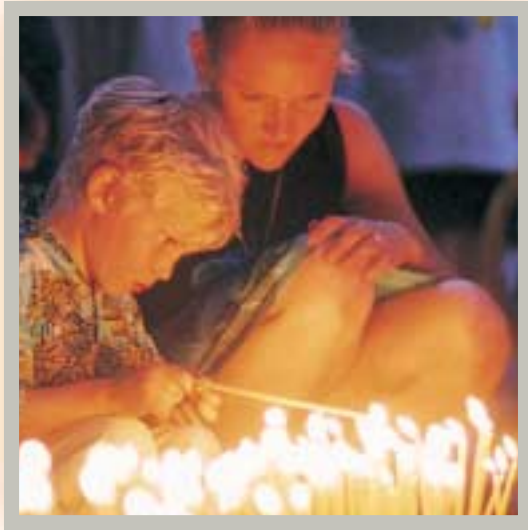
##### **Key publications:**

Marsden, Sally and Thiele, Martin (2000), *Risking Art; Art for Survival: Outlining the role of the arts in services to marginalised young people*, Jesuit Social Services, Melbourne.

This is published by Jesuit Social Services, with 5000 copies already distributed. It provides a theoretical framework with analysis of 12 examples of programs which combine the arts with services for marginalised young people.

Thiele, Martin and Marsden, Sally (2003), *Engaging Art: The Artful Dodgers Studio: A Theoretical Model of Practice*, Jesuit Social Services, Melbourne.

This follow-up book explores the Artful Dodgers Studio in considerable detail, presenting case study material, and offering a model of ethical practice and evaluation.



*ecologically sustainable  
development*

2

## 2. Ecologically Sustainable Development

Since the early 1990s, all spheres of government have been responding to environmental, social and economic challenges within a framework of ecologically sustainable development (ESD). Several related projects and programs have involved community cultural development. The case studies we include are:

### Sunrise 21

A multi-artform program concerned with natural resource management, addressing the viability of Mildura's farming community and irrigation practices on the Murray River.

### CERES

A community-based festival and educational program addressing the challenges of ecologically sustainable development in urban regions.

### Murray River Story

An example of participatory community theatre involving scientists and decision-makers; exploring the knowledge-building and decision-making functions of community cultural development.

In an ESD framework, 'development' is concerned with maintaining equity within and between generations, preserving biodiversity and adopting a precautionary approach. The challenge is to resolve the tensions between economic, social and cultural development and environmental protection.

Until recently much of the emphasis on sustainability has been on resolving the tensions between economic development and environmental protection. Much less progress has been made on resolving the social aspects of development. *The Western Australian State Sustainability Strategy* provides one example of how state governments are attempting to tackle this:

To incorporate the social dimension into sustainability by demonstrating that it is possible to create a stronger economy and a healthier environment by more fully integrating the social dimension. It suggests that by thinking differently and more inclusively the 'deep clues' as to how to resolve fundamental environmental and economic conflicts can be discovered. The solutions are not to be found only in environmental science and engineering, but in social sciences, humanities and business. (Western Australian Government, 2002)

The *Western Australian State Sustainability Strategy* also recognises the critical importance of a 'sense of place', heritage and symbolism for the success of this strategy, with 'civil society' being seen as the repository of the long-term values and visions necessary for a sustainable future. The strategy acknowledges the role of the arts in raising community awareness and interest in sustainability. However, it goes further than this in recognising the role that the arts and intellectual life can play in resolving conflict between social, environmental and economic development by providing:

the creative edge needed to face the new and potentially difficult problems of sustainability, to find the *ethics* [our emphasis] which underlies every element and every issue in sustainability. (Western Australian Government, 2002)

At local government level, the internationally recognised strategy, *Local Agenda 21*, focuses on the development of local solutions and the mobilisation of community involvement and commitment to sustainable development. Community cultural development projects have been used by a number of local councils to illuminate particular local environmental issues, to galvanise local action and to educate communities on issues to do with natural resource management.

To understand the existing scope and potential for community cultural development related to ESD, we began with an examination of a number of national and state government initiatives which are directed towards the preservation of natural water resources. These include the Murray-Darling Basin Commission, the work of state-based environmental authorities and the Natural Heritage Trust with its four main programs in Landcare, Bushcare, Rivercare and Coastcare.

Such programs are confronting environmental problems that have profound consequences for community wellbeing. These include salinity and water quality, two of the most significant issues confronting Australian communities. Salinity currently affects 2.5 million hectares (5 per cent of cultivated land). This figure could increase to 12 million hectares over the next 20 years and to 17 million hectares by 2050. Salinity threatens more than farming land. Currently over one-third of rural river systems are adversely affected (Kenyon and Black, 2001).

As one federal government response to such issues, the Natural Heritage Trust was set up in 1997 to help restore and conserve Australia's environment and natural resources. To 2003, \$1.4 billion was invested in the Trust and related programs for more than 11,900 projects around Australia involving 400,000 people. Through its programs funds are delivered to three levels: national, regional and local. Regional investments are the principal delivery mechanism for the Trust and include the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality.

The Murray-Darling Basin Commission is a statutory body established as part of the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality to coordinate the activities of the 17 agencies involved in the management of the Basin and to tackle the salinity problems of the Basin through research and education. The Commission has adopted an integrated catchment management process and has argued that, in natural resource management, changes need to be addressed at the social and cultural level, as well as the technical and economic:

Human behaviours, needs and priorities are the central elements of resource management ... any large scale or comprehensive changes to the condition or management of the resource are only possible through changes to human behaviour ... it is important to know about the contexts in which (people) operate ... economic, social, cultural and institutional.  
(Murray-Darling Basin Commission, 2001)

Community cultural development processes are an ideal way of raising awareness of natural resource management issues, and are applied in this way by a number of local and state government agencies. However, governments are yet to fully recognise the potential of these processes for effecting a *transformation* in communities' understanding of sustainability issues.

Particular outcomes which can be achieved using collaborative creative processes include the enhancement of leadership and commitment, the introduction of new conflict management techniques, the awareness of new kinds of social relationships, and the building of trust between the parties involved. Competing knowledge bases can be reformed and extended, and bridges built between communities and decision-makers, between localised groups and expert systems such as those bureaucracies charged with environmental management and informed by scientific, ecological knowledge.

The case studies show:

- how the concepts of 'ecological sustainability', 'sense of place', 'heritage' and 'natural resources' are negotiated in community cultural development projects and programs
- how community cultural development raises community awareness of the issues and challenges of ecologically sustainable development and natural resource management
- how community cultural development projects and programs give participants 'deep clues' about how to resolve conflict between social, environmental and economic dimensions
- how community cultural development programs can provide the knowledge needed to establish new policy directions and solutions

- the potential for community cultural development activities to help determine appropriate government structures and organisation of ESD programs
- how community cultural development may assist public bodies to be more responsive to the views of the parties involved as they develop natural resource policies.

### Notes

In addition to the case studies presented in this section, there are others in this guide with a strong environmental focus. The Small Towns Big Picture case study (see page 91) concentrates on communities attempting to resolve environmental problems; for example, the issues associated with energy use. In Appendix 3 we have included three examples of the potential for further integration of community cultural development within ESD processes.

## SunRISE 21 Artists in Industry

**SunRISE 21 is an excellent example of an integrated arts, environment and business program which had the objective of fostering sustainable development. Conducted in the latter part of the 1990s, it has been proclaimed as one of the most ambitious arts activities undertaken in regional Australia.**

The program, centred in Mildura, arose through the efforts of industry, the Mildura Arts Centre, the Murray-Darling Basin Commission and the then Department of Primary Industries and Energy, through that department's Rural Partnership Program. It picked up on local debates about sustainable development in a region where degradation of land and water systems threatens the viability of industry and the social fabric of a community.

The program explored ecological and resource use issues alongside planning objectives linked to rural town rejuvenation and development.

### SunRISE 21 Artists in Industry: Collaborations

- Sculptor Chris Booth hosted by CSIRO/Riverlink Consortium produced a large scale rock sculpture with the themes of knowledge about land and water.
- Craig Christie, theatre director and playwright, developed a musical play with community members that explored the role of women in Sunraysia. The host was the Horticultural Consortium.
- Digital media artist Megan Jones worked via the Salinity Management Consortium to create a photographic exhibition and a CD-ROM of virtual reality landscapes; the work raises important questions about what is natural in a highly engineered and now degraded environment.

- Michael Doneman and Motoyuki Niwa are the multimedia artists who worked with the Murray-Darling Freshwater Laboratory, responding to the linkages between science and the arts to create an interactive exhibition.
- The First Mildura Irrigation Trust hosted Rodney Spooner to develop a giant sculpture, a video and an exhibition exploring the history and preoccupations of irrigators and engineers on the Murray River.

SunRISE 21 as an organisation with objectives beyond the Artists in Industry program, assessed the program as follows:

The name 'SunRISE 21' stands for Sunraysia's Regional Initiative for a Sustainable Economy in the 21st Century.

#### SunRISE 21 Partners

- Murray-Darling Basin Freshwater Research Centre, Lower Basin Laboratory
- Mildura Arts Centre
- CSIRO
- First Mildura Irrigation Trust
- Salinity Management Consortium
- Horticultural Consortium

The SunRISE 21 vision and achievements have arisen from the concerted efforts and inspiration of many stakeholders, from individual horticulturists and community groups, to industry agencies and all levels of government. This coordinated approach, combined with a regional perspective and community direction, has shaped and supported the development of SunRISE 21 as a successful model for sustainable regional development in the Murray-Darling Basin of Australia. (Ian Ballantyne in Vivian, 2000)

Significantly, the SunRISE 21 Artists in Industry program seems to have promoted rigorous debate both locally and in national forums about the meaning of sustainability. In most, if not all of the arts projects, the history of engineering and economic approaches to the Murray-Darling Basin were both celebrated and brought into question. Through such an exploration, the ecological dimension of sustainability has been brought into focus for further debate within the community and among interested parties.

The SunRISE Board and also key funding bodies such as the MDBC believe that in addition to the benefits noted above, the Artists in Industry program will have positive effects on local industry. It is helping to lay the groundwork for a learning community by helping to strengthen networks and providing different approaches to the establishment of indicators for growth and sustainability, while facilitating commercial development and linkages.

#### For further information

##### Key publications:

Sunrise 21 (1999), *Sunrise 21 Artists in Industry Information Package*, Mildura Arts Centre, Mildura.

Vivian, Helen (2000), *Interceptions: Art, Science and Land in Sunraysia*, Mildura Arts Centre and Artmoves Inc., Mildura.

### SunRISE 21 Artists in Industry

#### Some key objectives

- A process of community and industry consultation that complements the SunRISE 21 integrated plan for sustainable regional development.
- A creative process that will engage the interests and challenge the thinking of community and industry networks.
- A synergy generated by the convergence of industry and the arts.
- Promoting local issues as relevant subjects for interpretation by artists.

### Commentary on the achievements of SunRISE 21

- Assessors of SunRISE 21 have suggested that, at a minimum, the diverse arts projects functioned as an innovative and effective communication tool, facilitating increased critical engagement and positive attitudinal change amongst individual and stakeholder participants.
- According to its Chief Executive, the First Mildura Irrigation Trust, a cooperative society of growers, through its involvement with the program has arguably re-evaluated its approach to sustainability questions. The organisation also came to better understand the diverse perspectives of other involved parties in debates about irrigation.
- Scientists saw engagement with the arts as a means of raising community awareness of the scientific undertakings of the Murray-Darling Basin Freshwater Research Laboratory, a step regarded as crucial in building cross-sectoral knowledge about the river and its problems.

(Vivian, 2000)



**Above:** *Mosaic Gateway*, CERES Community Environmental Park.  
Photo: Daller James.

## CERES (Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies)

**CERES is a longstanding East Brunswick (Melbourne) community-based program with the Festival of the Sacred Kingfisher as the centrepiece. It is located on a 5 hectare site, boasting interactive environmental and cultural displays, alternative energy projects, public artworks, community permaculture gardens, creative play equipment, farm animals, an Indigenous plant nursery, a café and a stage. Supported by government agencies as an arts, environment and education program, CERES arises from an exploration of sustainability in the urban context. Education and celebratory functions are driven by artists, academics and scientists.**

The Tenth Festival of the Sacred Kingfisher took place in November 2003. The festival's name originated from the observation that after the community had conducted extensive rehabilitation of an inner city urban waste dump, the migratory kingfisher began to re-visit its habitat. The festivals have included large scale theatre events (involving shadow puppetry, giant puppets, music and storytelling) exploring the perceptions of both nature and of people, who represent the unknown in both the modern parable of the kingfisher's return and the current stories of migrants in search of sanctuary. Themes include displacement, journey, hardship, place and community, and the celebrations aim at encouraging people to share their experiences and build relationships with other cultures and nature.

Support for CERES comes from a wide range of related organisations and agencies: Cultivating Community, Field Naturalists Club, Friends of the Earth, Friends of the Merri, Future Rescue and Otway Ranges Environment Network, Merri Creek Management Committee, Permaculture Melbourne, Australian Conservation Foundation, Gould League of Australia, The Wilderness Society, and Birds Australia.

Funding for the annual festival has come from: Australia Council for the Arts, Festivals Australia, Arts Victoria, Parks Victoria, VicHealth, Moreland City Council, The Victorian Community Foundation Trust and the Albert Edward McKay Trust.

### **Typical events might involve participation by:**

the original owners of the land the Wurrundjeri, local councils, AMES students, five local schools, two local choirs, CERES Stompers, Darebin Walking Group, Dominique's dancers, Earth Parents and kids, NMIT Theatre students, Leisure Action, Soulmates dance company, Wild Moves Centre for Drum and Dance, International Volunteers for Peace, Little Big Tops (youth performers), Merri Creek Management Committee, Asylum Seekers Resource Centre, Te Aka Matua Maori Performers, The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture and support services (social justice groups) including The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, Ecumenical Migration Centre, and Urban Seed, Consumer and Tenants Advisory Service, Victoria Peace Centre, the Fitzroy Learning Network.

The processes used constitute community cultural development. For example, in the last festival, storytellers worked with the different ethnic communities to develop theatre work on the issues surrounding migration. Many other community groups were involved in the incorporation of puppetry, music and storytelling. Themes were expressed and explored successfully by the members of the asylum seeker and refugee community with the help of the Kingfisher artistic team.

#### CERES achievements

- The festival brings together disability services, the local council, schools and community groups, and has contributed to strengthening community ties.
- It is a meeting place for different 'communities of interest' – environmental, educational, multicultural.
- CERES can be interpreted as a spontaneous renewal not only of a degraded urban environment and habitat for a migratory bird, but also of a sustainable human relationship to nature.
- CERES is regarded as a 'ritual' that approaches ecological sustainability in a positive (rather than reactive) way, relying on a shared sense of 'place' where multidisciplinary exchanges and interactions take place between diverse cultural groups.
- Through this a central achievement is the reflection and re-negotiation of human relationships with the environment.

CERES is not the only permanent festival celebrating the relationship between the arts and the environment. For example, one has been established on the Sunshine Coast, also inspired by a combination of community environment groups and scientific researchers exploring the cultural context of water.

#### For further information

##### Website:

[www.ceres.org.au](http://www.ceres.org.au)

##### Key publications:

Filor, Lucy (2000), 'Sacred Kingfisher', *Artwork Magazine*, Issue 47, Community Arts Network SA Inc., Adelaide.

## Murray River Story

***Murray River Story was a large scale community play about the ecology of Australia's largest river, put together by the Albury-based Murray River Performing Group (now Hothouse Theatre), and performed at an Aboriginal meeting place on the Murray in March 1988.***

The purpose of this case study is to present in some detail the methodology of this particular community arts project, as a means of exploring how the arts assists in the making of new knowledge about human-nature relationships. It also explains a particular 'tool' of community cultural development—Community Theatre, which can be defined as participatory theatre of local relevance that will develop local culture and help achieve local aspirations by building empowerment and trust.

The company initiating the project, the Murray River Performing Group, had more than ten years of experience within its community, and through informal networks had judged that the time was right to tackle the threats to the ecology of the river through theatre. The company invited in professional theatre workers and also established a steering committee of local residents to provide initial guidance for the project. The idea of presenting the play event-style, on the river itself, arose from the earliest meeting of the steering committee, as did the writer's brief, which was to develop a play based on the personal anecdotes and impressions of people living and working along the river.

Dozens of local organisations contributed to the project. Apart from professional theatre workers, there were involved scientists, anglers, farmers, conservation group members, tourism operators, journalists, bird observers, industrialists, students, drug rehabilitation inmates, bureaucrats and local politicians. These people were not only participants in the research phase, but contributors to the performance, playing the parts of explorers, irrigators, flood refugees, 'recreationists', gamblers, farmers, politicians, and 'ratbag de-snaggers', or providing river craft, construction materials, props, PA equipment, farm animals and labour.

#### Murray River Story Synopsis

The play was performed on, in and over the river itself, with the audience seated on the bank. Subtitled 'an epic love affair between woman, man, and the environment', the play tells the story of a new settler on the Murray who, with her husband a homecoming WWII soldier, tries to establish a modest farm in the era of rapid engineering development along the river. They become embroiled in the contest between two modernising forces—the engineers/irrigators wanting to dam, weir and drain the river to within an inch of its life, and the tourism developers whose dream is a series of permanent picturesque lakes. As damage to the ecology intensifies, in particular as wetland salinity takes hold, all these human uses of the river prove unsustainable. The play gives no final easy answer (not surprisingly given the problems of the Murray-Darling Basin), but as a precondition it does look to increased cooperation between stakeholders.

*(Brown, in prep)*

**Murray River Story: How did it work?**

To develop the play, researchers interviewed about 100 people living and working along the Murray. By the time rehearsals began, a great deal of oral history material had been collected, within which emphasis was given to recording what people had *seen* and *heard* along the river. Another 100 people became involved as writers, performers and backstage staff. The engine room of the project was a series of writing, acting and music workshops in which ideas about the play were processed using participatory activities that were both theatrical and social. Actors workshoped potential scenes for the play under guidance from the director and a group of facilitators, with only raw research material as a starting point. Scripted scenes both reflected what the actors had devised and fed in new ideas from the research. Many people lived and breathed the project for more than three months, and this is how participants in the project developed their collective wisdom about the river and its problems.

(Brown, in prep)

There are complications with getting information to the community and secondly the problem of getting the needs and desires out of the community into management arenas. These are problems which community theatre, such as the Murray River Story, can attempt to address.

Dr Terry Hillman, director Albury Laboratory, Cooperative Research Centre for Freshwater Ecology, and participant in Murray River Story.

When people from all walks of life participate in shows such as *Murray River Story*, the projects become meeting places for the various attitudes and arguments that shape individual perceptions. The effect is that they negotiate (though it's called 'rehearse') a common understanding (though it's called a 'performance') in a situation where they have considerable power to shape ideas, to compose the words that are spoken and ultimately to directly address their fellow citizens from the stage, effectively inviting them to consider and follow particular plans of action.

It was the processed *lay* knowledge about the river which gave participants the authority to 'stand up for the river'. The knowledge built in *Murray River Story* is better described as 'hybrid'—since 'lay', 'Indigenous' and 'scientific' inputs were all important. Community theatre provides the social processes by which otherwise competing or incommensurable knowledge bases can be reformed and extended. (It shares this with other forms of participatory decision-making.)

*Murray River Story* was about economics and ecology. At the time of the play, important changes in administration of the river were being made, most notably the formation of the new Murray-Darling Basin Commission. There was a strong sense that the play provided a conduit for community opinion about this new body and its responsibilities, and articles in local newspapers helped give context to the play in this way. It also lent strength to organisations such as the local Anglers Association, the local

Environment Centre, and the Murray Valley League (which represented farmers) and to scientists working at the Albury Freshwater Laboratory who were project participants and also involved in submission writing and research about the river's ecosystem.

Although community theatre draws heavily on past community experience, neither audiences nor participants become involved to have what is already their common understanding simply played back to them. They instead want to take a

journey away from what's already been socially negotiated, in order to educate themselves about new possibilities for taking action in their lives. This is the key to *extending our collective stock of knowledge*. In plays like *Murray River Story*, the experience of intensive involvement in community theatre shapes the attitudes and develops the knowledge that individuals and communities need if their aim is to re-think the position of humans in nature and to take action on environmental matters.

This case study has focused on community theatre. But equally we could be looking across the broader field of community arts to understand how environmental issues have been interpreted through cultural development activity. For example, there is a considerable body of visual art and urban design projects that, through participatory processes, have creatively explored the human-nature relationship.

Environmental education is built around the concept of environmental citizenship—that state of being in which awareness of environmental crisis and of human responsibility for nature are married to capacity and skills for taking action, individually and collectively. At the very least community arts has a role as an educational process which can help achieve environmental citizenship for its participants. Moreover, its power is as a form of public participation by which communities negotiate their way through critical questions in search of change, building the necessary knowledge and meaning from their collective experience of environmental matters as they are refracted through the intense (trust-building) processes involved in creating plays and other artworks.

**For further information****Website:**

[www.hothousetheatre.com.au](http://www.hothousetheatre.com.au)

**Key publications:**

Brown, Paul (in preparation), 'Nature Moves Centre Stage: Knowledge Making and Australian Ecotheatre', in McAuly, Gay (ed.), *Contested Ground*, University of Sydney.

McDonnell, G (1997) 'Scientific and everyday knowledge: trust and the politics of environmental initiatives', *Social Studies of Science*, Vol. 27, pp 834–835.

Just because scientists have some particular knowledge it doesn't give them any particular right to make the decisions more than anyone else. There needs to be an opportunity in the process of knowledge-building to allow individuals to question the safety of the reliance on scientific knowledge. Theatre can allow the public to raise these questions and challenge these systems.

Dr Terry Hillman, director Albury Laboratory, Cooperative Research Centre for Freshwater Ecology and participant in Murray River Story.

**Community theatre – what it can achieve:**

- Participatory processes provide a working environment that is trust-building.
- This allows hybrid knowledge to be produced.
- It also builds consensus about what actions should be taken on environmental matters.
- Performances convey such agreements in a public arena.
- This can build bridges between communities and decision-makers.



# 3

*public housing  
and place*

**Above:** Man with trolley, Kensington Public Housing Estate. Photo: Angela Bailey.

## 3. Public Housing and Place

**Across Australia, place-based whole-of-government approaches are a strong feature of many agency initiatives. In this context, approaches to public housing and facilities emphasise programs of community renewal and place management in precincts and estates. Creative activities have been vital to these programs. The case studies presented here are:**

### Kensington Housing Estate

The arts became a critical element in the relocation strategy for a community living in a Melbourne housing estate.

### North Richmond Housing Estate

In one of Australia's longest running integrated programs, the arts plays a key role in community development, housing policy and health services.

### Cascade Place

In Brisbane's northern suburbs, creative activities and innovative disability services grow together from a community garden project celebrating place.

Agencies responsible for housing policy aim to improve services, security, infrastructure and community involvement, while addressing a range of social problems. Such work typically overlaps with the priorities of other agencies, such as those concerned with health, disability, justice, finance, environment, planning and urban infrastructure.

There are 'technical' and 'physical' challenges associated with the design of buildings and public space, and the provision of services in precincts and estates:

- the need for physical maintenance and renewal
- failures of 'experiments' with planning and design
- moves to integrate private and public housing.

There are also 'social' issues associated with the characteristics of public housing communities and the stigma sometimes associated with living on housing estates. Agencies and communities face:

- high levels of social disadvantage as the criteria for acceptance into public housing become more stringent
- demographic characteristics which often see a mix of young people and older residents, and/or people with special needs
- drug and alcohol abuse
- crime

- poor parenting and life skills
- vulnerability to mental illness
- poor school performance
- impacts of relocation—caused by changes in government priorities for urban land use, or made necessary by maintenance or renewal programs.

Responses to these challenges require holistic approaches which link economic, environmental and social elements, recognising their interdependence. Solutions must take account of distinctive local circumstances and grow from a shared understanding and vision about how people want to relate to each other and to their natural and built environment; and how a community wants to experience its place and its culture. Programs which address these issues may be variously referred to as place management or community renewal programs and often involve a coordinated whole-of-government approach aimed at:

- improving community safety and amenity
- enhancing facilities and services
- creating employment and enterprise opportunities
- addressing problems such as family violence and breakdown
- reducing social isolation.

Local government often sees itself as ideally positioned to take a leadership role in implementing integrated policy and planning, though characteristically there is extensive involvement of other tiers of government, non-government organisations, the private sector and the community itself.

For example, several state housing authorities have used community renewal programs to respond to the marked disadvantage experienced by people living in highly concentrated housing. These community renewal programs use a multi-pronged approach to address the complex range of factors which contribute to this disadvantage. The principles of these programs emphasise local strategic partnerships and cooperative solutions involving government, non-government agencies and the private sector. Opportunities are created for residents, community and voluntary groups to take leadership roles in their communities.

Outcomes of these programs include the creation of employment opportunities and tenant involvement in estate management and decision-making about work on the estates. In addition to these outcomes, strategies are aimed at reducing the risk and enhancing the protective factors which have an impact on the lives of residents. These outcomes are all predicated on cross-agency cooperation and the integration of their various strategies and approaches.

For a long time the arts have played a role in ‘place-making’. Programs have included public art projects (e.g. murals, sculptures), theatre and music workshops, activities relating to local festivals, and participatory art and design projects. More evolved approaches have been based on integrated cultural planning and long-term relationships between arts organisations, agencies responsible for wellbeing and public housing communities.

Community cultural development processes can provide a neutral, and therefore safe, context in which to test different ideas, question the effectiveness of existing policies and programs and make new links between agencies. Cultural activity can weave together the different components of a multi-agency strategy, and contribute to planning and implementation. Projects can become a meeting ground for various attitudes and perceptions, creating a situation where participants (who may otherwise be categorised as ‘patients’ or ‘clients’) find they have considerable power to shape ideas. Indeed, in many community cultural development projects it is the treatment of participants as *artists* that is the catalyst for individual and collective change, and a way of influencing agency decision-making.

For example, participants might be empowered to compose words or images that are spoken or presented directly, not only to their fellow citizens, but to agency personnel, effectively inviting them to consider and follow particular plans of action. Having the capacity to do this represents an increase in bridging social capital (see discussion on page 10).

The case studies reveal:

- the effectiveness of community cultural development in allowing a strong relationship to place to grow within communities
- how the arts became the means for building trust and solving problems in precincts and housing estates
- how, through participatory creative processes, social cohesion and empowerment develops among inhabitants of particular places
- the potential for community cultural development to influence the conduct and meaning of cross-sectoral approaches
- how cultural approaches enable agencies to use available resources more efficiently and effectively and eliminate duplication and gaps.

#### Note

In addition to the case studies presented in this section, we have included, in Appendix 3, an example of the potential for further integration of community cultural development within housing planning processes.

## Kensington Public Housing Estate

**Kensington is a small inner city Melbourne suburb, with 5000 residents and a multicultural make-up. One half of the suburb is a public housing estate that is 40 years old. When the decision was taken in 1998 to demolish most of the estate and rebuild with a mix of public and private housing, it affected hundreds of families, some of whom had lived on the estate for more than 30 years.**

The housing stock may have been too old and maintenance issues never ending, however many of these tenants were prepared to stay and many would like to return. Kensington was their home, their village, their link to a network of communal infrastructure all well within walking distance, if not arm’s reach. (Costi and Bailey, 2003)

The City of Melbourne, along with the Tenants Union of Victoria and the local Tenants Association, initiated a cultural project that involved the commissioning of two community artists to work collaboratively with residents across an 18-month period on a project titled *Relocated*. An open-ended approach was negotiated, and the direction of the project was determined by a reference group of residents and representatives of government agencies.

Stories, photographs, opinions and feelings were gathered through varied processes of interviews, Polaroids, drama and writing workshops, informal discussions, on-site displays and outreach connections. Many local groups, centres and institutions were involved, including Kensington Primary School, English language students at the Kensington Neighbourhood House, Horn of Africa women at Kensington Community Centre and the Elderly Vietnamese Group. The creative output included exhibitions in high-rise flats, oral histories, photographs, songs and published stories.

In April 2002, part way through the process of relocation and demolition, tenants staged an exhibition with a celebratory performance. Together with professional actors, they performed their own script while images of the estate were projected through windows or blown up and projected onto entire buildings; meanwhile the sounds of demolition and pigeons in flight were amplified throughout the space.

The Victorian Office of Housing was a partner in the project, with a view to exploring the potential of the project not only for Kensington but also for other housing estates where a range of challenges had been identified. The Kensington

The open ended approach, with outcomes left up to collaborative processes, was hard to negotiate, since identifiable outcomes are normally what attracts funding. But this project was in essence about the process of engagement between artists and residents, with residents able to determine how things evolved.

*Jane Crawley  
City of Melbourne*



**Above:** Kensington Estate.  
Photo: Angela Bailey.

Estate project models an innovative approach to problems of social isolation in public housing estates, problems which are often experienced with or without the complication of relocation. Estate residents often experience stereotyping and objectification in their relationships with other community members and government agencies.

In *Relocated*, the participatory arts process built trust and connections between people in the community, as well as the artists, so that the creative output was also an expression of pride and dignity (Costi and Bailey, 2003).

[It] documented this process of redevelopment in physical, social and emotional terms and celebrated the enormous contribution made by the tenants to Kensington and to Melbourne generally.

[It] ensured that the individual and collective memories associated with the Estate were not erased with its physical demolition.

(City of Melbourne Mayor John So, in Costi and Bailey, 2003)

**For further information**

**Website:**

[www.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

**Key publications:**

Costi, Angela and Bailey, Angela (2003), *Relocated: a tribute to tenants: Kensington Public Housing Estate*, City of Melbourne.

We wanted to creatively present our work in a way that reflected the structural demise and reinvention, and the complexity of feeling evoked through prescribed living and sudden change ... we wanted to acknowledge the estate as a pivotal piece of contemporary Australian history.

*Artists Angela Costi and Angela Bailey*

## Richmond Housing Estate

**The Richmond housing estate in Melbourne's inner eastern suburbs provides one of the longest standing examples of an arts program integrated within a community health centre, and addressing the concerns of housing estate communities.**

A need becomes apparent. Agencies respond. Long term work at Richmond means that community cultural development is in the loop from the start.

*Rosalie Hastwell, Manager Arts and Culture Program, North Richmond Community*

The Arts and Culture Program at North Richmond Community Health Centre is embedded within an organisation which is essentially a cluster of primary and community health services and programs targeting the local community and several geographically dispersed ethnic communities around Melbourne. The

Centre is situated on the Richmond Housing Estate, which is the largest high rise public housing estate in Victoria, and which has many Vietnamese and Timorese tenants. The Centre plays an active role in many ways on the Estate and also has strong relationships with and specialized services for Timorese and Vietnamese communities, Asylum Seekers and Refugees living across Melbourne. (Hastwell, 2003)

We're always learning each other's language, negotiating a relationship between ways of doing things in health promotion and community cultural development... the longevity of the program, the trust that has developed, and the respect... we aim to work 'alongside', to all learn and grow.

*Rosalie Hastwell*

1988 saw the beginning of arts projects at North Richmond which evolved into a long term program, relying on strong leadership and ever-present and passionate community support for the inclusion of arts and cultural activity in the Health Centre activities. Now the work is transformational, with cultural planning an integral part of the development of services between the partner agencies which include the Victorian Office of Housing (which has a

local office on the estate). Other key players are the Jesuit Social Services 'Communities Together' Program, the North Richmond Tenants Association, Belgium Avenue neighbourhood house and the City of Yarra.

The Arts and Culture Program aims to increase opportunities for communities to control, develop and promote their own cultural practice and identity. 'This happens through mentoring, skills development and cultural development projects with key communities, through long term strategies, through smaller projects and as a part of political campaigns, for example around refugee and asylum seeker issues.' (Hastwell, 2003)

## Vietnamese and Timorese communities

One of the important program components is the arts and cultural activity with members of the Vietnamese and Timorese communities within the North Richmond estate. This emphasises the value of culture in binding and strengthening community. Many people from these immigrant communities regard the estate as their 'village' or 'home' because it's the place they first came. The annual Moon Lantern Festival and Lunar New Year or Tet celebration, work with this sense of place, to celebrate and honour the village and the home, drawing on cultural traditions which include, for example, the Vietnamese tradition of decorating the village. The 2004 Tet celebration transformed the estate's community gardens, with installations combining new form with traditional lanterns as a way of honouring the 'village'.

The work with Timorese people has included mentoring, and traineeships which allowed Timorese returning to Timor after Independence to take up leadership positions there. The North Richmond program is now building a second generation of young leaders, through strategic planning and community development in conjunction with the Melbourne East Timorese Activity Centre (METAC) and Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House. METAC aims to support, celebrate and revitalise the East Timorese communities as they establish themselves in Melbourne. The North Richmond Arts and Culture Program provides support and training for METAC and collaborates with it on a number of coordinated arts projects which track and celebrate this new development in the community. (Hastwell, 2003)

### The Moon Lantern Festival

One of the major 'planks' of the Program which has evolved over the past ten years and which involves most of the communities and many of the organisations we work with is Moon Lantern Festival. Taking place each September, at Vietnamese/Chinese Autumn Harvest time, this has become a highly significant and valued annual tradition for the communities involved ... [It] began with a small group of children and families from the local, mostly Vietnamese Primary School, joining arts, health and community workers in a simple lantern procession around the Health Centre ... but has now grown to become a major community celebration. A strong collaborative arts component highlights current community issues and is combined with significant cultural traditions.

The past two years have seen the Festival Finale developed as a highly moving event especially inclusive of the East Timorese community, featuring stories and images related to the moon in Timorese indigenous culture ... and personal accounts from refugees and asylum seekers of their experiences of leaving Timor to come to Australia, and the new life which people have encountered in Melbourne.

*(Hastwell, 2003)*

Our role changes frequently between supporter, advocate, collaborator, initiator, partner, adviser, mentor, trainer, fundraiser and project manager in response to the currents within these communities.

*Rosalie Hastwell*

### A model project with culturally diverse young people

In 2004 the North Richmond Community Health Centre will launch Cross Cultural Collaborations, a five-year statewide project with the Centre for Culture Ethnicity and Health to respond initially to a number of problems of young people who live on the Richmond Housing Estate. The two agencies want to consult with young people of diverse backgrounds, who are disadvantaged through poor access to skills development, and who typically feel isolated and without a voice in decisions which affect their lives. The project will develop and pilot a model for consulting with culturally and linguistically diverse young people about their health and wellbeing needs. The model will be evaluated, documented and promoted through the youth and health promotion sectors in Victoria with the overall aim of a statewide adoption of what the two agencies hope will be a successful approach.

### 'Public Art Public Housing'

Another key project builds a three way relationship between the North Richmond Community Health Centre, the Office of Housing's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and the Victorian Cultural Development Network, to promote models of renewal and public housing across Victoria. The Office of Housing sees this as a policy development process, and it confirms the role of arts programs as a key element in agency planning, not only for the North Richmond Estate, but for statewide development. Activities include:

- a Building Communities forum held at Melbourne Town Hall in May 2003, in which artists, agency representatives and housing tenants took part as presenters, performers and debaters
- a book to be launched in 2004, which documents models and provides critical debate for tenants and artists, government agencies and students (the provisional title is *Common Purpose* and the author is Graham Pitts)
- an exhibition to coincide with the book launch at Queens Hall (Parliament House), which will include installations modelled on the distinctive and creative interiors of the flats of culturally diverse tenants.

In 'Public Art Public Housing' the direct communication with agencies (the forum) and to an even broader audience (the book, the exhibition) demonstrates the capability of community cultural development for knowledge-making, and bridging between the local concerns at a housing estate and the imperatives faced statewide by decision-makers and planners.

Rosalie Hastwell, the current manager of the North Richmond Arts and Culture Program, sums up the experience of more than 15 years of development:

Through its highly successful Arts and Culture Program, North Richmond Community Health Centre has learnt that using a

range of appropriate arts media, from film making and visual arts through to storytelling and cultural festivals, is a highly effective way of engaging with culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Through the processes of community cultural development, project participants are supported by and work collaboratively with highly experienced professional community artists to explore, articulate and express aspects of identity, and personal and social issues of concern to that particular community. These issues and aspects of identity often remain untapped through other approaches to engagement and consultation with communities.

The processes for creative and collaborative work with communities not only uncover new ways of relating to and listening to the needs, issues and aspirations of communities, they can also be used to develop solutions to community needs, and to build the capacity of communities. A key principle in this approach to building community capacity is the recognition that solutions, if they are to deliver maximum benefit to the community in the long-term, must be developed collaboratively with the community and cannot be pre-empted by workers, government, or agencies. (Hastwell, 2003)

### For further information

#### Key publications:

Hastwell, Rosalie (2003), 'Working Together for Wellbeing—a View from Community Health', *Artwork*, Issue 27, Community Arts Network SA, Adelaide.

Pitts, Graham (2004) *Common Purpose*, North Richmond Community Health Centre, Melbourne.



**Above:** *A Garden on the Moon*, Cascade Place. Photo: Cascade Place.

*A Garden on the Moon* was a live performance using light and shadow, sound and music, to celebrate the achievements of the Cascade Place community.

Cascade Place is a respite centre for people with disabilities, a community centre and a place where dreams can come true.

## Cascade Place

**'We try to enable what seems impossible.'**

**Cascade Place is a facility of the Cerebral Palsy League of Queensland. Located within a precinct that includes parkland and a community museum, it is a good example of how the experience of 'place' can be developed through creative processes, thus achieving the objectives of service providers concerned with wellbeing.**

The facility provides a service for people over 16 years of age who have a disability, living in Redcliffe, Caboolture, and the northern suburbs of Brisbane through to the Sunshine Coast. The service offers individually tailored programs, which include a centre-based program and community access or recreational support, seven days a week. It is a place that enables participants to have control over their environment and the arts has played a key role:

It started as a way of accessing the garden. More and more ideas grew. Now the fences are down between the centre and adjacent council land.

*Kriket Broadhurst, Artsworker*

Cascade Place aims to provide opportunities for individuals to pursue their personal and professional goals through the provision of visual and performing arts workshops, the establishment and maintenance of a community garden and related workshops and events. By doing this, Cascade Place creates opportunities to continually improve and broaden skills, friendship networks and quality of life for people with a disability. (Cascade Place website)

Visually and in terms of community development, the heart of Cascade Place is its garden. Fifteen years ago those attending the facility experienced only a wire fence, a brick building and a lawn, with no wheelchair access to the exterior spaces. As the prospect of community cultural development arose, a garden was the first thing people said they wanted. In a step-by-step development, people attending the centre, with artsworkers and community volunteers, have planted and developed a garden that is the focus of many of the Cascade Place programs. The fences between the centre and the adjacent land have been removed, with agreement from Redcliffe City Council, and other parts of the precinct have been developed to complement the Cascade Place garden, including a recently opened museum in an old church at the other end of the park.

Over the last seven years the centre has evolved physically as well as philosophically to become a space that provides arts and cultural developmental opportunities for both clients and the broader community.

*Cascade Place website*

**Cascade Place arts activities include:**

- public art projects
- community garden
- theatrical productions
- music writing and composing original works
- yearly art exhibition at the Redcliffe Gallery
- World Environment Day festival
- workshops across many artforms.

The garden itself provides opportunities for people in wheelchairs to garden, with raised beds and wheelchair accessible paths facilitating this; and one of Cascade Place's first projects was the design and fabrication of wheelchair friendly garden furniture. As a program of native plantings and regeneration unfolds, public art is integrated with the gardens; for example, mosaics have been designed and constructed around the Cascade Place building. Meanwhile, other arts activities have developed, many of which relate to the garden and its significance as a resource and an inspiration for

both the centre and its neighbourhood. The relationship between Cascade Place and its neighbours is extended through community projects which are organised regularly and involve a large range of people within the community.

**A Garden on the Moon**

The Cascade Place experience has transformed the approach to disability services, with many different organisations now aware of the work, and interested in taking up the model. The program has boosted the number of referrals, so that Cascade Place itself is 'bursting at the seams with people and activity'.

Recently participants who recall the origins of the garden initiated a theatre project, which celebrates the Cascade Place experience. To them, the idea of having a garden seemed 'as remote as having a garden on the moon':

*A Garden on the Moon* is a piece of theatre produced by Cascade Place, written and performed by people with cerebral palsy, their support workers and a team of professional artists. It tells the story of one man's life and dreams ... Its settings are here, in the schools, sheltered workshops, respite centres and nursing homes of Queensland over the past 50 years, through changes in attitudes, policies, the treatment and the status of people with disabilities. But it is also set in the imagination, in outer space. It is a story of courage and transformation. (Cascade Place website)

The creative process for *A Garden on the Moon* began in February 2002 with weekly workshops at Cascade Place, leading to its first performance on the evening of 12 July 2002, to an audience of around 150 people who after the show made their way through the gardens of Cascade Place and into the centre where a meal had been prepared by young people from the neighbouring Redcliffe Youth Centre.

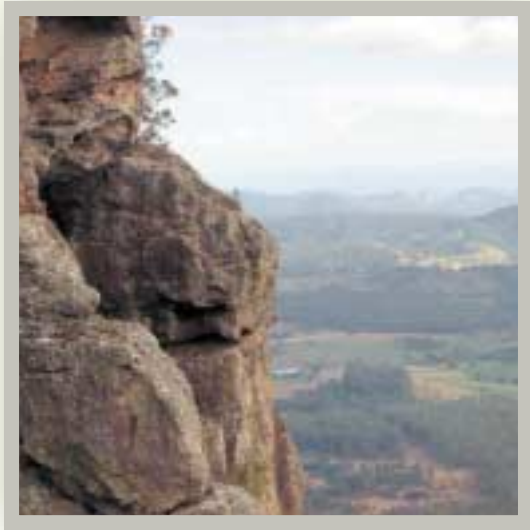
*A Garden on the Moon* is also significant because it has become a means of communication with the general public and with decision-makers and agencies, through a successful tour of the performance throughout Queensland. Such a 'bridging' exercise, and the history of Cascade Place, confirms the role of community cultural development in developing bonding social capital within communities, and also facilitating transformation in policy approaches and management across wider horizons.

**For further information****Website:**

[www.cascadeplace.org.au](http://www.cascadeplace.org.au)

There's a sense of place ... the environment of the garden, if it hadn't been created none of the rest would have occurred. It's a matter of trust. The development of the garden has changed their mood, created a vibrant environment.

*Kriket Broadhurst*



# 4

*rural revitalisation*

## 4. Rural Revitalisation

**In every Australian state, there is evidence of arts activity being used in programs which encourage economic revitalisation in rural and regional communities. The case studies we present are:**

### Wauchope, NSW

The demise of traditional local industry provoking a response through integrated cultural and economic initiatives shared with local government.

### Atherton Tableland, North Queensland

A remote region experiencing dramatic change has a cleverly managed network of cultural activity linked to social and economic development objectives; one of eight regions included in the national Sustainable Regions Program.

#### Communities in decline

- the economic, social and environmental changes which have affected Australian agriculture since the mid-1970s have given rise to increasing concern not only for the sustainability of family farming, but also the continuing viability of country towns (Tonts, 1996)
- virtually every measure of the standard of living—income, health, education, aged care, access to services, infrastructure, housing—is stable or declining in rural Australia (Sidoti, 1998; Sarantakos, 1998).

Rural communities are experiencing declining populations and changing demographics as economic circumstances change, and people leave to find employment and education.

Communities are affected by a decline in services and the stress and uncertainty of volatile world commodity markets, particularly where the local economy is traditionally based on mining, fishing and agriculture (Black and Kenyon, 2001).

Nationwide understanding of these changes has grown over the last two decades, allowing some communities to respond with positive programs of revitalisation and development. In their well-known analysis, Peter Kenyon and Alan Black

have characterised the desirable outcomes of such programs. They should aim to:

- stabilise, and in many cases increase, the size of the population
- retain and attract young men and women
- diversify the economic and employment opportunities
- maintain an adequate range of services and quality of life for residents
- increase the levels of civic participation and community pride by residents
- preserve what is special about the community.

(Kenyon and Black, 2001)

The Australian Government is implementing strategies to revitalise the economies of rural communities. It does this through its Stronger Regions Program linked with the Department of Transport and Regional Services and organisations such as the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation. Similarly, state government agencies such as the Queensland Department of Primary Industries, Regional Development Victoria and the Western Australian Department of Commerce and Trade are working closely with rural and regional communities to enhance their economic development; as is the South Australian Government through its regional development strategies.

Meanwhile, the need for institutional reform, especially of financial institutions, is argued by the National Farmers Federation (NFF) on the grounds that investment in rural and regional communities is insufficient to sustain existing incomes and prevent declining employment:

With rapid growth in investment funds through superannuation, NFF believes there should be increasing opportunities for equity finance for regional business, however, there is significant anecdotal evidence that there is a disproportionate flow of funds away from regional and rural areas. (National Farmers' Federation, 2002)

Considerable international and Australian research documents the skills and capacities required for economically and socially vibrant communities, including:

- well developed problem solving skills among local groups
- commitment to wide community participation in civic affairs
- leaders with vision and residents with a strong sense of community
- collaboration and consensus on goals and priorities
- government that provides enabling support
- the ability to manage community conflict.

(Kenyon and Black, 2001)

Community cultural development would seem to add an important dimension to the complex range of processes and strategies needed to revitalise communities. Collective creative processes can help develop bonding social capital (see discussion on page 10) by encouraging leadership, strengthening communication, re-establishing and enhancing feelings of mutuality and reciprocity and bringing fresh techniques to community consultation processes.

In addition to these instrumental applications of community cultural development, creative processes can also be used to search out the 'deep clues' to the new ways of thinking and acting that are needed to revitalise communities. For example, community cultural development has a role to play in reforming

institutions, which arguably need changing at the fundamental level of their organisational values:

The solution is seen to lie in policies for rural Australia that support an infusion of new values into our institutions—values associated with the development of bridging ties and relationships through cooperation, goodwill, common-wealth and tolerance. Design and re-design of institutions with such qualities will require engagement of the community in new ways.

In the first instance, informed debate is required on values and options, involving analysis of scenarios for, and the implications of, change. Concepts of ‘community’ must be revived in the context of a lifelong learning culture supported by social capital. Revised approaches to work and learning, improved processes for community and stakeholder involvement, policies to more actively involve women, a central role for the arts, and re-assessment of property rights arrangements, are seen to be important tools for change. (Falk and Kingma, 2000)

The case studies show:

- how community cultural development has been effective in finding solutions to the problems of declining or changing populations
- how community cultural development has enhanced social capital in rural and regional communities
- how community cultural development has been linked to rural leadership programs and used in community consultation programs
- why community cultural development is an effective tool for exploring and instilling new values in our institutions and policies for rural Australia.

## Wauchope

**In many respects the 5000-strong community of Wauchope, 20 kilometres inland from Port Macquarie on the mid-north coast of NSW, is representative of a large and growing number of small Australian towns grappling with dramatic changes in population size and make-up as well as changed economic conditions and industry base.**

When the Wauchope community produced its Bago Community Celebration from July to October 2003, it embarked upon a revitalisation of this annual event by adopting a community cultural development approach. One aim was to engage a wider range of community members in the event. But the underlying motivation was to tackle broader issues.

At the height of its timber-based economy, Wauchope was the commercial and administrative heart of the Hastings region. It now feels the negative impact of the restructure of the timber and dairying industries and the subsequent loss of the community’s traditional economic base. As a result:

Community regeneration initiatives are seen as important in Wauchope and there are currently a range of community initiatives to diversify Wauchope’s economic base with a strong focus on supporting and marketing locally grown produce and promoting the area’s attributes as a rural community with a unique cultural heritage. There is a growing awareness that the arts also have a role to play in community renewal. (Flowers, 2003)

Initiatives for revitalising Wauchope have grown from a partnership between the Wauchope Community Arts Council, the Centre for Popular Education at the University of Technology Sydney and Hastings Council (centred on Port Macquarie which holds the title of City of the Arts for 2001–03). As a key strategy aimed at community strengthening, the partners are using the Bago Community Celebration to ‘re-vision the town and build community cohesion, identity and spirit’ (Flowers, 2003). The celebration is also seen as an opportunity to foster partnerships with a broad range of public and private sector organisations to try to influence the broader economic and social development of the community.

I have glided through vines, twigs and branches,  
Rustled around in the leaves of the past.  
I have seen fires and loggers, hunters and watchers,  
Distant travellers from the other side of the world,  
I warn the wildlife of all approaches,  
Time and again I have been burnt, but I cannot be destroyed,  
I am the spirit of the mountain.

*Jamie Leigh Johnson, St Joseph’s Primary School  
(Bago Stories Creative Writing Workshop)*

In this way, other key agencies and organisations have become involved with the celebration and with long range planning for town revitalisation: the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Wauchope Chamber of Commerce, the *Hastings Gazette*, local schools, and a range of Wauchope businesses and community organisations.

Building on a base of local arts activity, and previous arts festivals, processes of community cultural development have increased the engagement of community members with the celebration. Small businesses, local artists, landholders, ex-state foresters, bushwalkers, the local photographic society, scouts and many local families became involved.

For the 2003 celebration, the key activity was the creation of Bago Stories, a project building on traditions of storytelling about the relationship between people and the local Broken Bago mountain range. Managed by a steering group, Bago Stories used discovery tours and excursions, along with photographic and storytelling workshops, poetry and song writing, the production of a mural, and celebratory events. These creative activities allowed community engagement with the newly declared Bago Bluff National Park—an area that was previously state forest. The program provided a way to explore traditional and new connections to place, seen as a precondition to community redevelopment.

#### **Bago Stories: Steering Group**

The four main involved parties formed a representative management group which drove this project forward:

- Wauchope Chamber of Commerce
- Hastings Council
- National Parks and Wildlife Service
- Wauchope Community Arts Council.

The ongoing involvement of the Centre for Popular Education allows systematic evaluation strategies, themselves important as developmental tools, to be integrated with celebration activities and long range planning.

As the centrepiece of the 2003 Community Celebration, Bago Stories is regarded as a very successful project, with outcomes relevant to ongoing planning by organisations responsible for community revitalisation. For example, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) considers that the project:

- engaged the community and brought together planners from various agencies and community organisations
- reached a variety of community groups and individuals
- provided a previously lacking profile for the Park and for NPWS within the Wauchope community

- allowed consultation with a range of

community groups on the land use issues and educational opportunities associated with the Bago Bluff National Park

- assembled valuable resource material relating to cultural and natural heritage: images, historical information, contacts

- gave impetus to and provided perspectives for the development of a Plan of Management for Bago Bluff National Park.

The community, assisted by the Centre for Popular Education, is embarking on long range evaluation of the Bago Stories project, and more generally the Bago Community Celebration, as a strategy for community revitalisation. The example underscores the relevance of celebrations as a means of strengthening local communities as they embark on systematic renewal programs. It also shows how the relationship between agencies (for example, NPWS) and a small rural community can foster an exchange of values which influence the response of agencies to community priorities.

#### **For further information**

##### **Website:**

[www.cpe.uts.edu.au/pdfs/bago\\_web.pdf](http://www.cpe.uts.edu.au/pdfs/bago_web.pdf)

##### **Key publications:**

Flowers, Rick (2003), *Community Festivals and Community Building: Hastings NSW 4th City for the Arts; a community celebration of who we are, where we live and what we can become*, Centre for Popular Education, UTS Sydney.



### The Bluff of Broken Bago

*'Neath the Bluff of Broken Bago  
Where the lyre-birds build their nest,  
The wattles bloom in the spring-time,  
And the sunset gilds the West.  
The currawongs call from the ranges,  
And the song of the creek sings low,  
While a lullaby of the forest,  
Drifts on the sunset glow.  
Under the cool dim hollows,  
Where sweet wild violets bloom,  
The tiny ferns and mosses  
Shine in some shady gloom.  
Where Tecoma brightens the morning,  
Gold faces ope to the sun.  
Clematis, pale in the moonlight,  
Over the tree-tops run.  
Oh! give me the song of the gullies,  
And my heart can be at rest.  
Oh! give me the song of the bell-birds,  
And my life with joy is blessed.*

By Win Godfrey

Written at Dr Tony Simpson's place  
under the Bluff of Broken Bago.  
January 1988.



**Left:** Win Godfrey, from the Bago Stories project. Photo: Roman Schatz.

**Above:** Yungaburra Tapestry, from the Atherton Tablelands project. Photo: Eve Stafford.

## Atherton Tablelands

**The Australian Government's Sustainable Regions Program uses a new approach to the delivery of regional programs in Australia, and is designed to encourage communities to make informed decisions and implement projects that will create a sustainable future for their region.**

### Regional challenges

As one of eight regions included in the Sustainable Regions Program, the Atherton Tablelands has received \$18 million over three years to enable it to become more economically viable and socially cohesive, and to achieve responsible management of its natural resources. Heavily reliant on agriculture, the Tablelands qualified for inclusion in the program following the collapse of most of the region's key industries: the timber and tobacco industries have disappeared, the sugar industry is significantly impacted by low prices, and deregulation of the dairy industry has had a negative effect.

The Tablelands includes four local government areas that were previously economic competitors. However the new initiative has seen the development of a regional Strategic Framework and Prospectus for Regional Development.

### Regional response: the role of cultural development

The Prospectus includes and partially integrates cultural and arts activity within planning initiatives for the region. (Planning covers agriculture, industry and resources, tourism, culture and arts, environment, social infrastructure and youth.) Specifically, culture is seen to 'add value' to tourism strategies, as well as generating employment and regional income from a diverse range of arts activities.

The opportunity for closer integration of culture with all other dimensions of planning and development has not gone unnoticed by the region's network of practitioners in community cultural development. The established regional body Arts Nexus, which operates across Far North Queensland, is charged with developing a regional cultural strategy with associated action research. This chimes with several new and existing community cultural development programs which have emerged across the Tablelands.

For example, there have been several recent public art projects that link tourism development with the identity of rural towns. These include a main street project in Kuranda, a recreation foreshore project at Tinaroo for Atherton Shire Council, a youth murals project in Mareeba, and an Indigenous public art project linked to housing development.

Meanwhile a regional Youth Entrepreneurial Program has been developed to respond to the needs and unique strengths of each town. In a 'creative industry' approach, young people at risk, living in former tobacco town Mareeba, have been trained in computing and multimedia, producing work for an exhibition in

Cairns. All these young people had been expelled from schools, but are now back in the education system as a result of the project. In another initiative, a Tablelands craft and design project is opening up new pathways for export from the region, with two trade 'expos' already mounted in Singapore. Other elements of the Youth Program include mentorships, place making projects, and oral history. In essence, all these projects are designed to develop entrepreneurial and leadership skills, not through formal training courses, but in the context of local arts and cultural practice linked to social and economic objectives of towns and the region.

These new initiatives relate to and extend a late-1990s regional program targeting rural women and providing leadership experiences and training through arts activity. (This program, initiated by the Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women, is described on page 102). In the Atherton Tablelands, more than 100 women took part in this program, with many then taking pathways to key leadership positions in the tourism, arts and sugar industries, and local government. (One woman became mayor of her town.) The program established fertile ground for the current appreciation of the role of arts and community cultural development, as well as long-term changes in institutions and policy.

As new planning gets under way within the framework of the Sustainable Regions Program, Arts Nexus is well placed to foster greater integration of the arts into the local economy. The organisation is working closely with the Queensland State Development Department, and has taken on the role of secretariat for the Creative Industries program.

Challenges include the need to realign arts and cultural policies of both state and local governments to take further account of regional opportunities, including prospects for trade and cultural exchange with the Asia-Pacific region; and the need for further brokerage to take full advantage of potential linkages between the arts and sectors previously regarded as 'hard core' economic domains.

### For further information

#### Website:

[www.artsnexus.com.au](http://www.artsnexus.com.au)

#### Key publications:

Atherton Tablelands Sustainable Region Advisory Committee (2003), *Atherton Tablelands Strategic Framework and Prospectus for Regional Development 2002–2005*, Department of Transport and Regional Services.

### Atherton Tablelands: Summary of outcomes of integrated cultural activity

- The arts is becoming established as one of several key and viable industries.
- Long-term cultural development is gaining momentum across the region.
- Community cultural development processes foster leadership initiatives, particularly among youth.
- Linkages between cultural and other sectors are valued and extended as a key strategy of regional development.
- Tourism and environment sectors impacted by learning through cultural activity.



# 5

*community strengthening*

**Above:** *Desert Oaks Exhibition, 2002*  
*Adelaide Festival from Maralinga/Oak*  
*Valley. Artist: Heather Edwards.*  
Photo: Mark Rogers.

## 5. Community Strengthening

**All of the case studies already encountered in this guide are in some way about strengthening the communities in which the projects or programs have evolved. Community strengthening is an ever-present objective of community cultural development which also underpins government approaches to empowerment at the local level. The case studies we present in this section are:**

### Re-Igniting Community: The Torch

A long-term theatre project in East Gippsland and South-west Victoria, with demonstrable community strengthening as the outcome.

### Maralinga/Oak Valley

How a remote Aboriginal community and a major arts festival came together to build local capacity.

Many government initiatives aim to achieve and maintain long-term change by enhancing a community's strengths and its capacity to respond to, influence and resolve its social, economic and environmental issues. They may do this using programs designed to encourage the development of community capacity for self-help. Some programs may focus on the development of social capital; that is, the networks, norms and social trust which facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit within communities and between communities and government, commerce and other institutions.

Community strengthening processes may often form part of a strategy for a 'whole-of-government' approach to an issue or in an area. These programs are often a response to one or all of the following phenomena:

- population change, particularly significant population decline in rural and industrial areas
- social isolation in remote communities
- economic decline, for example, decline in the agricultural or manufacturing sectors, and/or decline related to environmental degradation
- social change: a loss of social cohesion and community participation often accompany depopulation, reduced economic status and changing demographics (loss of young people from an area as they follow educational or employment opportunities).

Government response programs are often characterised by:

- a strong economic focus: this can involve business/retail district development or the economic restructuring necessary as one industry (for example, dairying) declines and another (for example, eco-tourism) is encouraged
- the encouragement of a strong local identity through the use of arts as a tool to enhance the use of public spaces to overcome divisions within a community through festivals, exhibitions, street parades and celebrations
- the development of local leadership as one method of tackling problems of high levels of social disadvantage experienced, for example, by many people living in high concentrations of social housing, or as a step to improving community resilience during economic, social or environmental change
- attempts to identify and address causes and perceptions of crime and involve interested parties in crime prevention.

As an example, the Strengthening Communities Unit of the NSW Premier's Department highlights the importance of social capital in rural renewal, but the lessons can be applied to any community suffering from economic and social decline:

In rural communities struggling to remain viable in the face of major social and economic change, the presence or absence of social capital is a major factor in how well these communities can cope. Social capital is becoming more crucial and more threatened in declining communities. Rural communities are particularly being challenged to develop and use local social linkages to develop community-led responses. High levels of social capital indicate a high quality of life. This does not necessarily equate with a high level of income. If people feel safe, happy and secure, they will work together to organise and interact to build a stronger community. (NSW Government, 1999)

Community cultural development is a well established process for strengthening social capital within communities. Creative processes can help bridge divisions within a community, inject new life into strategies for community engagement, encourage partnership and cooperation, promote cross-cultural and inter-generational understanding, reduce fear of crime, promote neighbourhood security, enhance leadership and organisational skills and provide new vision and hope and a shared sense of purpose, as well as practical solutions for economic revitalisation.

Our case studies show:

- how community cultural development allows the articulation of shared goals, and the creation of shared physical and symbolic definitions of a location/place
- how creative processes aid the development of social capital and networks which provide new strength for a community
- ways that community cultural development has helped bridge divisions within a community, reduce fears, and inject new life into strategies for cooperation
- how community cultural development projects have introduced and maintained long-term changes in a community by providing mechanisms for self-help
- how community cultural development can enhance a community's capacity to respond to, influence and resolve complex issues
- how community cultural development processes have guided policy development related to community strengthening.

## Re-Igniting Community: The Torch

### From The Torch Project website

Since its inception in 1997, The Torch Project has evolved and developed an extensive program of community cultural development work in regional and metropolitan Victoria. Embracing the key themes of history, culture, identity and belonging, it blends powerful art with community mobilisation ... [It] empowers communities to act on difficult issues that often end up in the 'too hard basket'. It has been supported by 200 plus Indigenous, government, church, educational, business and community organisations, demonstrating the widespread support for such work.

Auspiced by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, The Torch Project contributes directly to the Brotherhood's vision of *an Australia free of poverty*. Through The Torch Project, the Brotherhood has an ability to empower communities to act on Indigenous issues, multicultural themes and to work towards sustainable change ... The statewide steering committee includes representatives from the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Equal Opportunity Commission and the Indigenous Family Violence Unit.

The Torch Project facilitates Re-Igniting Community in regions by providing a platform ... for marginalised communities and individuals who have little opportunity to express their needs and desires. In the concept and practice of Re-Igniting Community, local social issues and related community needs are identified and given voice, in the context of the history of the place. These are addressed in an ongoing process, via community consultation, workshops, activity in schools, theatrical and artistic expression, and ongoing community development activities driven by the local communities.

The previous projects conducted have involved community groups and individuals from Bairnsdale in East Gippsland and Warrnambool in South-west Victoria to Melbourne, to Shepparton in the North. 2003 saw the team bring Re-Igniting Community to towns throughout Victoria's North-West including Swan Hill, Mildura, Robinvale and Kerang. Themes covered in the various projects have included public education; the use and abuse of power at domestic, organisational and political levels; Indigenous issues (a strong theme) and Reconciliation; domestic violence; multiculturalism; substance abuse; and [many] other issues important in the local setting.

The Centre for Popular Education, at University of Technology Sydney, has assessed the impact of The Torch Project and its community strengthening activities (Flowers and McEwen, 2003). The evaluation, based on observations, research workshops and interviews with key informants, explored the value of *The Torch* as community cultural development, as theatre, and as a means of strengthening communities.

The assessment featured interviews with experienced community development workers who were able to contextualise *The Torch* among other strategies for community strengthening. Findings take account of this comparative evaluation.

The evaluation study examined *The Torch* and Re-Igniting Community in terms of:

- community engagement—measured by the degree to which people and groups are investing time and energy in the particular program of activity. The

Evidence indicates that the project has strengthened the capacities of those who are most disadvantaged. The project has effectively engaged with people and groups who otherwise have experienced exclusion and marginalisation. There is also evidence that the Re-Igniting Community project and *The Torch* has inspired a variety of practitioners—from social workers to school teachers to environmental activists—to devise more creative and structured ways of working. (Flowers and McEwen, 2003)

effect of Re-Igniting Community on this indicator was high—most people are energetic, enthusiastic, active and volunteering to do more.

- engagement with community groups who experience social exclusion—research found that projects engendered a strong sense of community, identity and pride in these groups. In addition, diverse cultures were explicitly valued in both the content and process of activities.
- bonding social capital—the ability and willingness of community members to pitch in together and support bottom-up initiatives. The effect of both projects was high. There is never a shortage of volunteers, with many people committed and determined to initiate local solutions to local problems.
- cultural identity and pride—Re-Igniting Community has had a high and significant impact on the fostering of cultural identity and pride. People feel strong and secure about their identity and culture. They are proud of their histories.
- bridging social capital—Re-Igniting Community had a medium to high impact on the indicator of levels of exchange, sharing and cooperation between various groups. Not only is there tolerance and respect for different groups, there is also considerable empathy.
- leadership and community initiative—people’s willingness and capacity to exercise leadership, to research and offer their own analyses of local challenges and issues and then to plan and pursue actions. The impact of Re-Igniting Community is high on this indicator. Recognised leaders actively nurture emerging leaders. Significant amounts of time are invested in planning and pursuing community action initiatives.

(Flowers and McEwen, 2003)

#### For further information

##### Website:

[www.thetorch.asn.au/current\\_project.html](http://www.thetorch.asn.au/current_project.html)

##### Key publications:

Flowers, Rick and McEwen, Celina (2003), *The Impact of ‘Re-Igniting Community’ and ‘The Torch’ on community capacity building*, Centre for Popular Education, University of Technology, Sydney.



**Above and right:** Re-Igniting Community 2002, The Torch Project, Warrnambool. Photos: Peter Mumford and Rusty Stewart.

## Maralinga/Oak Valley

**Designer Alison Page and Adelaide Festival associate director Lynette**

**Wallworth describe the project this way:**

In 2002 Australia's oldest arts festival decided to engage with the essential relationship between the arts and place. 'Desert Oaks' the Oak Valley Project on Maralinga Lands was one of the resulting projects. It needed long-term care and negotiation to build real relationships, to learn proper protocols and to develop authentic responses that could continue to exist and to grow long after the festival was over.

The Oak Valley community is one of the most remote in Australia. It is a community begun by Maralinga elders who decided to return to their lands in the 1980s. The people from Maralinga Lands had been forcibly removed in the 1950s to make way for British Nuclear Testing. In the minds of many Australians still, the most prevalent image of Maralinga is of a mushroom cloud, while the community lives in the Great Victoria Desert, a land of immense beauty and incredible bio-diversity.

Consulting with this community for the festival, Alison Page created a new art-room where a series of paintings that detailed the history of testing on the community were created. The art-room is an affirmation of the resilience of this community and their paintings, now represented in the Gallery of South Australia. It is a message sent to the wider Australian community that speaks to other histories and stories we have yet to hear. On the last day of the festival a radio program of over a million listeners heard the story of the art-room and the paintings and the community from the red dust under the tank shed. (Page and Wallworth, 2003)

To establish the Desert Oaks project, consultations took place between festival staff and representatives of the Maralinga Tjarutja community. Under the guidance of elder Archie Barton, the project originated as a contribution to community development, bringing together ideas and energy that fed into a long range plan devised by the community targeting employment, housing, communications facilities and opportunities for youth. Cultural activity was regarded as instrumental in weaving these components together, and a contributing force for planning and implementation.

For the new paintings project in conjunction with the 2002 Adelaide Festival, the people of Oak Valley, the community closest to the Maralinga test sites, wanted to record their stories in art.

Artsworkers Lance Atkins and Maggie Urban taught painting skills in the community. The team of cultural workers included community members, who worked for up to six months on the project. This led to longer term opportunities for employment in various aspects of the community's development.

Maralinga Tjarutja are trying to decide whether to reoccupy those parts of their land affected by nuclear testing, and if they do, how they will go back. What the Adelaide festival sought to do was to help provide the resources for community strengthening through engagement with the arts, one way the community could process its own understanding of critical life decisions and the knowledge needed to make them.

### For further information

#### Key Publications:

Allerton, Louise, et al. (2001), *Pila Nguru: Art and Song from the Spinifex People*, Spinifex Arts Project.

Page, Alison and Wallworth, Lynette, (2003), *Placemaking/Wellbeing and the Adelaide Festival of Arts*, Conference paper.

The Desert Oaks paintings project also continued work undertaken two years earlier at Tjintjintjara, another Maralinga Tjarutja community, just across the border in Western Australia. Here, as part of a campaign to establish Native Title, women and men painted a remarkable collection of acrylics on canvas and board, known as the Spinifex collection, that was critical to the winning of the land rights case.

These paintings depict birth places, stories, maps of the land and other traditional elements. But significantly, by using the 'profane' and 'secular' medium of acrylic and canvas, they were able to be made public, unconstrained by sacred tradition. Two of the paintings became formal attachments to the Native Title agreement that was won and ratified in 1999 (Allerton et al., 2001). It can be said that these paintings recorded and produced knowledge, then made it public in a self-determined and empowering way, and that this knowledge fed directly into a critical decision-making process.



**Above left:** *Desert Oaks Exhibition*, 2002 Adelaide Festival, from Maralinga/Oak Valley. Artist: Elizabeth Moodoc. Photo: Mark Rogers.

**Above middle:** Oak Valley landscape, Maralinga/Oak Valley. Photo: Lynette Wallworth.

**Above right:** Oak Valley from the Artroom, Maralinga/Oak Valley. Photo: Lynette Wallworth.



# 6

*active citizenship*

## 6. Active Citizenship

**In complex community development work, all the objectives depend on the capacity of individual citizens to take action which will effect change. Agencies recognise and value this, and are using community cultural development processes to foster the greater involvement of citizens in government processes. The case study to demonstrate this is:**

### Small Towns Big Picture

Rural development objectives have been approached through an integrated and wide-ranging community cultural development program which emphasises leadership and active citizenship.

American political scientist Robert Putnam describes the need for a strong, active civil society to make democracy work (Putnam, 1993). Trust in government has been proposed as one indicator of strong social capital (Cox, 1995). An active civil society therefore requires trust in governance structures and processes.

An active citizen ... is someone who not only believes in the concept of democratic society but who is willing and able to translate that belief into action. Active citizenship is a compound of knowledge, skills and attitudes: knowledge about how society works; the skills needed to participate effectively; and a conviction that active participation is the right of citizens. (Education for Active Citizenship, Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training, 1989)

In broadest terms, active citizenship can involve citizens in the development and implementation of policies, programs and services. However, active citizenship policy initiatives are more often characterised by a continuum of engagement ranging from information-sharing to consultation to involvement in policy development and decision-making processes. Community engagement approaches therefore can include:

- open and localised meetings of councils, parliaments and cabinets
- Internet broadcasting of parliamentary and council proceedings
- community forums or reference panels—physical meetings and online
- online engagement through e-petitions, online consultation and a community engagement website
- strategies for improving internal procedures, for example, public access to information, better sharing of resources and information between government

agencies to help overcome ‘consultation fatigue’ arising from single agency/department consultation sessions.

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) endorsed active citizen participation in its 1997 Declaration of the Role of Australian Local Government which commits local governments to the encouragement of ‘non-discriminatory participation of all citizens in building democratic communities which share power and ensure more equitable allocation of community resources’. The Community Indicators and Local Democracy Project, a partnership between Swinburne University of Technology, the University of NSW, Oslo University, the ALGA and some Australian local councils is helping to identify and audit local democratic participatory processes. The Australian Citizenship Council has recommended a number of basic principles be recognised as defining Australia’s civic culture (LGCSAA, 2001).

Collective creative processes, in conjunction with other initiatives, can be a means of tackling serious social problems and the disempowerment that results from them. Whatever peoples’ social or economic situation, people do, and always will develop their own creative resources, but they need support and access to wider cultural and civic discourse. However, these processes will founder unless there is community confidence that they can influence policy and resource allocation outcomes, and this requires commitment from policy institutions.

The achievement of ecologically sustainable development and community wellbeing will require structural change, changes to our economic, social and environmental management systems, which will, in turn, require the relinquishment of power and potential disadvantage for some.

Finding a way forward in these circumstances is even more urgent given that issues surrounding consultation and communication with, and between, stakeholders are presently among the most urgent and unresolved areas of policy, particularly in regional Australia. In many areas the stresses of coping in a fast, changing environment have been such as to cause people to ‘shut down’. Communication on policies and community strategies has become difficult in many areas and in many cases, old ways of communicating are no longer effective. (Kingma, 2003b)

Community cultural development processes can nurture local democracy by encouraging people to become more active citizens. It does this not just by giving people the personal and practical skills, but by opening up routes to wider democratic processes and encouraging in people the desire to participate.

The case study demonstrates:

- how the engagement of citizens in community cultural development activities has transformed them from passive consumers to engaged participants and ultimately leaders, thereby building confidence among individuals and in the community
- how community cultural development can transform citizens' perceptions of public agencies and local councils
- the way active citizenship (through community cultural development) has been a means of tackling serious social and environmental problems
- why community cultural development allows people to achieve real democratic activity.



**Right:** *Energy Footprints*, from Small Towns Big Pictures project. Photo: Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities.

## Small Towns Big Picture

**Some of the issues confronting small rural communities have been described elsewhere in this guide (for example, see *Rural Revitalisation* starting on page 62), and strategies to strengthen communities have been presented in several previous case studies. This example, which considers an integrated arts and community development project in five rural Victorian towns, concentrates on the implications of community cultural development for the role of individuals as 'active citizens'.**

Small Towns Big Picture was a community development process focusing on the development of social, environmental and economic sustainability indicators. The program was initiated by the Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities at the Bendigo campus of La Trobe University, and run in partnership with the Victorian Cultural Development Network.

Progress indicators for social cohesion, energy use and economic activity were seen as essential for 'Triple Bottom Line' evaluation—in this case a community audit bringing together social, environmental and economic dimensions of analysis and policy-making. The indicators were seen as a vital first step towards developing action plans which would revitalise communities (Rogers and Ryan, 2001).

The Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities had previously worked with small communities in a project aimed at achieving economic and employment outcomes. Although this initial project established links between the Centre and rural communities, assessments indicated only partial success in engaging community members in the process (Rogers, 2003).

What happened next owes something to the recent flourishing of ideas about the importance of culture as a 'fourth pillar' underpinning sustainable development, alongside social, economic and environmental dimensions. Initiatives by Victoria's Cultural

### Small Towns Big Picture

The project originated from three research and strategic planning needs:

- a community cohesion index
- an energy footprint measure
- an economic activity measure.

The community cultural development approach involved, for example:

- development of a theatrical performance reflecting the issues identified through the development of a community cohesion indicator
- creation of prints, photographs and ceramic tiles reflecting the energy footprint and impact of towns on the environment
- development of an interactive website depicting organisational networks within each community
- participation by people of all ages, and a wide range of community groups from five towns in rural Victoria.
- creative workshops across a range of visual and performing arts, e.g. 30 workshops engaging hundreds of schoolchildren, teachers and parents.

(Rogers, 2003)

Development Network, including a pivotal publication by commentator Jon Hawkes and a number of strategic forums, lent encouragement to a new approach in Central Victoria.

For Small Towns Big Picture, the Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities commissioned eight community artists to work alongside researchers and the community. What began as a project about analysis and strategic planning for

social, economic and environmental success, would now use culture as the means to promote wide engagement of community members. Ultimately some 1500 people became actively involved in the program, from the towns of Dunolly, Wedderburn, Carisbrook, Talbot and Maldon (Rogers, 2003).

Small Towns Big Picture is an ongoing initiative that has already generated ideas and

expectations that are being acted upon at the local level. McKinnon provides a useful summary of achievements:

In Dunolly for example, a local energy committee is using data collected and interpreted through the project to inform discussions with the Bendigo Bank and CSIRO directed at the establishment of a Community Power Company and the trialling of hydrogen cell technologies at the local hospital. In Carisbrook, the project created impetus for a successful campaign to restore the local Town Hall. In Wedderburn, the local council is incorporating artworks produced through the project within a community garden, and the principal of the high school is planning new projects involving local artists. At the more macro level, La Trobe University is developing a new series of local workshops to audit economic performance and identify opportunities for replacing imported goods and services with local produce. In all of the towns involved, new ideas and a creative energy is evident. (McKinnon, 2003)

But it is also apparent that the capacity of individual citizens to take action has been greatly enhanced by Small Towns Big Picture.

Community cultural development was the vehicle that enabled people to come to the party. Previously they were not buying in, but arts raised their energy and excitement.

*Maureen Rogers from the Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities*

#### For further information

##### Website:

[www.latrobe.edu.au/csdc](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/csdc)

##### Key publications:

Hawkes, Jon (2001), *The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's essential role in public planning*, Common Ground Publishing and Community Cultural Development Network, Victoria.

McKinnon, Malcolm (2003), 'Small Towns, Big Picture: art, social research and community development', *Artwork*, Issue 55, May.

Rogers, Maureen (2003), 'Does Cultural Activity Make a Difference to Community Capacity? A key question addressed by the Small Towns: Big Picture project', Presented to the *Just and Vibrant Communities Conference*, National Congress of Local Government Managers, Townsville.

Rogers, Maureen and Ryan, Roberta (2001) 'The Triple Bottom Line for Sustainable Community Development', *Local Environment Journal*, Vol. 6(3).

#### Small Towns Big Picture: Active citizenship outcomes

- high levels of engagement by community members in a social research and planning exercise
- community members with new levels of confidence to take on leadership positions within their towns (based on a survey of project participants)
- a large number of individuals motivated to conduct a second stage project: the development of action plans aimed at improving on the initial benchmark performance measures.
- a number of activities already initiated since Stage 1 which have been driven by newly committed community members; for example, the first meeting to discuss the Dunolly energy initiative attracted a record 70 people
- such activity suggests people are better connected, more inspired and more confident.

*(Rogers, 2003)*



*social inclusion  
and cultural diversity*

## 7. Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity

**Barriers to social inclusion can be based on gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, mental health or disability. Many governments' policies address these issues of diversity and exclusion/inclusion. The case studies are:**

### Merrima

A State Government's Department of Commerce has established a specialist Aboriginal design group working on public buildings in rural communities, which aims to include Indigenous perspectives in decisions about new infrastructure.

### Deloraine Craft Fair

A Tasmanian community successfully tackled divisions based on differences of ideology and cultural background by establishing a Craft Fair that now rates as the biggest of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

### The Project with a Thousand Outcomes

This initiative of the Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women seeks to include diverse communities from across Australia.

Healthy communities are characterised by a high level of discussion between members of the community, strong relationships and strong communication patterns. Other characteristics are acceptance and valuing of different points of view within the community, or acceptance of controversy. Acceptance of controversy means that people can disagree but still respect each other. In communities that accept controversy:

There is a depersonalisation of politics. Ordinary citizens are more likely to run for public office, and feel able to implement countermeasures to resolve community issues without being crucified. (Flora, 2000)

In the review of case studies of effective efforts to revitalise rural communities (Kenyon and Black, 2001) the loss of social cohesion and community participation was identified as a consequence of reduced economic status and changing demographics. The studies also identified that:

For many Indigenous Australian residents of small towns, income levels, health standards, employment rates, and civic participation continue to remain unacceptably low, and a source of continual frustration and challenge. Cross-cultural tensions remain a strong and unresolved reality in many small towns. (Kenyon and Black, 2001)

Other case studies referred to the tensions brought about by the influx of new residents into rural villages and the 'clash of cultures' when 'alternative lifestyles', often with a commitment to the natural environment, came up against the 'establishment' in the town. Other dichotomies between 'artists' and 'labourers', 'workers' and 'recipients' also emerged. These divisions are not exclusive to rural villages and can be seen in cities as the 'gentrification' of inner city suburbs leads to a similar influx of new residents with different skills and, often, different values.

Community cultural development processes can help engender new skills, new confidence, new friendships and social opportunities, cooperation towards achievement, involvement in consultation and local democracy, affirmation of identity, a stronger commitment to place and cross-cultural links—all means of fighting social exclusion. Community cultural development achieves this partly by building individual and community competence, but more importantly by building belief in the possibility of positive change.

The case studies explore:

- how barriers to inclusion are addressed by community cultural development projects
- the way community cultural development affirms identity and values diversity through the use of participatory arts processes
- how cross-cultural links and cohesion around particular social and environmental goals are achieved in diverse communities using community cultural development
- the impact of community cultural development projects and programs on government policy regarding social cohesion.



**Above and right:** Wilcannia Multi-purpose Health Centre. Photos: Brett Boardman.



## Merrima

**The Merrima Aboriginal Design Unit is a multi-award winning architectural practice providing culturally appropriate design services to Aboriginal communities. As part of the Government Architects group in the NSW Department of Commerce, Merrima has designed hospitals, educational facilities, housing, cultural centres, exhibitions and public art.**

Three of Merrima's projects are now briefly outlined in a precis of information provided by Merrima and by Alison Joy Page, a Tharawal woman from La Perouse, who is a designer working for the organisation.

### Girrawaa

The Girrawaa Creative Work Centre was the first project that Merrima undertook. The idea to create an Art Centre outside the grounds of Bathurst Jail for Aboriginal men to sell paintings and artefacts was developed as a positive response to Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. To generate ideas for the design of the building, a design competition among the inmates was held. The winner, Don, interpreted the local totem of the Wiradjuri people (Bathurst) in a plan where the displays would be in the head, the workshop in the body and the amenities in the tail. There were also strong landscaping ideas, which are derivative of the men's Bora Rings, the larger at the front of the building and the smaller, more private ring at the rear.

### Wilcannia Health Service

The Wilcannia Health Service is a project which showcases Merrima's philosophical approach to process. The Wilcannia Community Working Party managed the capital development of the project and guided the design team through seven options for the new hospital. The option chosen required the refurbishment of existing heritage buildings and the construction of the new residential accommodation with related services adjacent. Indigenous training and employment has been maximised on the project, most notably in the locally manufactured stabilised earth bricks used in the new building works. The Darling River has spiritual and

#### Merrima

Just as the discovery of culture is a journey, not a destination, Aboriginal architecture should be a 'process' and not just a 'product'. When designing for communities, Merrima believes in a holistic approach whereby there is maximum community involvement in the design, construction and management of the project. As each community has a unique cultural identity, it is essential that an inclusive process of consultation, design workshops and community meetings are undertaken to ensure community ownership.

*Merrima Aboriginal Design Unit (2003)*

The representation of cultural totems in a building can strengthen the sense of cultural pride as you are not only generating a unique adaptation of a western technology, but it can be a powerful communication tool for a community to not only express their presence but to also reveal the stories that tell of this land and its creation.

*Alison Joy Page, Merrima Designer*

cultural significance for the local Aboriginal (Barkinji) people, therefore the building developed from the conceptual idea that it will belong to both land and water. Walls and roofs become skins and fins of a water creature.

With considered planning, we can affect cultural pride and self esteem through an appropriate process of consultation, exploring cultural identity, addressing social justice issues and maximising employment and training opportunities. It is about creating an authentic response where the process becomes more important than the product.

*Alison Joy Page, Merrima Designer*

### Outcomes

In summary, Merrima uses participatory and inclusive processes to achieve the following outcomes:

- functional buildings and spaces that relate to the priorities and cultures of their communities
- the engagement of community members in design processes, thereby ensuring inclusion of Indigenous perspectives
- a sense of cultural pride expressed through public buildings which 'contain' the stories and other heritage of the community
- linkages to other sectors of the community which create bridges between diverse groups
- a successful process which educates government agencies to the benefits of culturally specific and participatory design.

### Oak Valley

*Note: We have already described aspects of this project in Community Strengthening, beginning on page 74. Here the focus is on the process of designing an art room.*

The Oak Valley community in South Australia is the most remote Aboriginal community in Australia. Situated near Maralinga where the British Nuclear Tests were carried out, the community, who had been previously nomadic, built houses and a shop at the place now called Oak Valley. There are between 50 and 150 people who live in Oak Valley and there are around 20 houses. Alison Page was asked to consult with the community to create an art centre in a disused shed adjoining the women's centre. With \$50,000 and 12–15 people of all ages from the community, a centre was created with a narrative of animals and waterholes around the perimeter of the room and a large painting by Mandy Queamer of Oak Valley covering the floor. The room is used for the creation of paintings, not previously done, which are now selling in art galleries in Adelaide.

### For further information

#### Key publications:

Merrima Aboriginal Design Unit (2003), *Portfolio of project descriptions*, NSW Department of Public Works and Services.

Page, Alison Joy (2000), 'Gurung Gunya' [New Dwelling], *Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

## Deloraine Craft Fair

**Deloraine is a small township in north-west Tasmania, which has achieved well recognised outcomes in a range of community and economic developments. Such successes are consistent with outcomes we have considered in the Rural Revitalisation section, beginning on page 62.**

Here, the resolution of conflict through community cultural development is the focus of our example. In the 1970s in Deloraine the influx of 'alternative lifestyles' created conflict with 'loggers and woodchippers', and further divisions arose between 'alternatives' and 'establishment' and between 'the labourers' and 'the artists', and 'the workers' and 'the recipients' (Kenyon and Black, 2001).

The response to such divisions, within a package of measures designed to revitalise the town, was to introduce the annual Tasmanian Craft Fair in 1981. It began with 30 stallholders, and has grown to involve over 200 craftspeople at 15 venues attracting over 30,000 patrons. It is the recipient of many tourism awards and stimulates over \$1 million into the local economy (Kenyon and Black, 2001). From the Craft Fair initiative a number of highly regarded community cultural development projects have evolved, for example the Yarns project in the mid-1990s. Behind this project was the desire to resolve community differences through participatory art.

In their review of small town renewal strategies, Kenyon and Black present a wide range of successful outcomes of the Deloraine Craft Fair. These include the presence of a strong sense of belief, expectation and optimism, a tolerance of difference, the ability to network, a strong focus and high value placed on young men and women, enhanced leadership role of local government and a new sense of celebration and fun (Kenyon and Black, 2001). The Deloraine Craft Fair is a further reminder of the value of long-term initiatives in building trust and social cohesion through traditions of celebration within diverse communities.

### For further information

#### Website:

[www.deloraine.tco.asn.au](http://www.deloraine.tco.asn.au)

#### Key publications:

Kenyon, Peter and Black, Alan (eds) (2001), *Small Town Renewal Overview and Case Studies*, Deloraine Case Study, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation.

### Deloraine Craft Fair: what does it achieve?

In terms of social inclusion, Kenyon and Black point to a tolerance of difference, arguing that Deloraine is very tolerant of newcomers (Kenyon and Black, 2001).

There is now a camaraderie and admiration of individual skills and a celebration of differences and a willingness to co-exist. All of these people have retained their distinctive culture, they have adopted a broad self-educational attitude and there is an air of tolerance in the community that is not common in the world. (McBain, in Kenyon and Black, 2001)

## The Project with a Thousand Outcomes

*Note: This case study should be read in conjunction with the Atherton Tablelands example (see page 72). Described there are some of the long range outcomes emanating from the Far North Queensland elements of this project.*

In 1997 the Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women initiated a far-reaching project involving two regions—Gippsland in Victoria and Atherton Tablelands in Far North Queensland—under the banner of ‘Uniting our Rural Communities’. The Foundation is an independent philanthropic network that aims to improve the participation of rural and agricultural women in many arenas of decision-making. Having in mind the needs for economic wellbeing of rural towns and leadership skills among rural women, the program set out to be inclusive of the great range of diversity that characterises rural communities.

Such were the multiple implications of the program, that it has become known as ‘The Project with a Thousand Outcomes’. It emphasises the importance of community cultural development in promoting networking and finding common ground between communities which are geographically diverse, as well as having their own internal divisions.

Onko Kingma has described the project as follows:

The individual projects began as explorations of ‘things of meaning’ for each community. From this the type of artwork and the process emerged.

*Val Lang, founding director of FAAW*

The project was organised by the Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women (FAAW) based in Victoria, to help provide Australian rural women with transferable skills which would enhance their lives and confidence, and in turn benefit their communities. By focusing on arts projects, women were able to develop life, management and networking skills, working together in a non-

threatening way to produce an artwork. The project involved: workshops on business, leadership and communication skills; development of the artistic activities and processes; a final workshop and celebration day which validated the women’s accomplishments. The importance of accessibility and encouragement was recognised and child minding, location and refreshments were all part of the planning.

Each project ended on a high, giving participants energy, making all things possible, through connections, inspiration and transferable skills.

*Val Lang, founding director of FAAW*

New skills were put into practice as the women decided on a project, an artist(s) and the practical issues to be considered in implementing their ideas. In Queensland the Milla Milla group made a life size fibreglass sculpture of a cow family while at Herberton the women produced a community

seat. Also in Queensland, the Mt Garnet group decided on a bus shelter, in Malanda a mosaic while the Yungaburra women worked on a tapestry. In Victoria, the Maffra group made a table and seats for the town and seats for the outlying areas while the Orbust group created mosaic paths and carved wooden animals in civic settings. Also in Victoria, Omeo women produced a documentary exploring the past, present and future while women at Bairnsdale developed and staged the ‘Snakes and Ladders’ Roadshow.

An exhibition of the artwork developed through and following this project was part of the ‘Salute from Australia’ at the Second International Women in Agriculture Conference in the United States in 1998. The title ‘Moving the Posts’, illustrated the diversity and achievement of contemporary Australians involved in all aspects of agriculture.

While all participants learned new practical and artistic skills, possibly the most important has been networking and developing new relationships. As a direct result of the project some women have commenced higher education and many found the confidence to return to the workforce. Others have started their own small businesses, sent off literary works to publishers and formed cooperatives. Women in the project areas have demonstrated a new confidence in tackling community issues. (Kingma, 2002)

### For further information

#### Website:

[www.faaaw.org.au](http://www.faaaw.org.au)

#### Key publications:

Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women, *Directions Newsletter*.

This quarterly newsletter has been posted on the FAAW website since 1998. See also earlier editions (Autumn and Summer 1997) which give descriptions of the project.

Kingma, Onko (2002) *Enabling Communities Through the Arts: Case studies from the Community Cultural Development Fund of the Australia Council*, Australia Council.

### Summary of outcomes

- Objectives of the host organisation’s leadership program for rural women are well served by this networking project.
- This includes enhancement of management and economic skills alongside experience with community cultural activity.
- The type of leadership developed is collaborative and inclusive, well suited to ‘flat’ networking and management structures.
- In individual communities, projects provide a rallying point for people of diverse backgrounds.
- Across regional and state boundaries, project participants reach new understandings of strategies applied elsewhere for community strengthening.
- Individual women have made new careers and taken on leadership positions.



# 8

*appendices and resources*

**Above:** Members of Access Arts (Qld) and Sunera Foundation of Sri Lanka at the Wataboshi Festival, Australia 2003. Photo: Sonja de Sterke, QUT.

## Appendix 1

### Evaluating the Impact of the Arts— Overseas Evidence

In this appendix we summarise a number of key overseas studies on the role and impact of the arts in wellbeing programs. Examples of Australian research are included in the main case study sections.

#### **Comedia Research on Impacts of the Arts**

Between September 1995 and March 1997, Comedia, a leading independent research centre in Great Britain, undertook a study into the social impact of participation in arts programs (Matarasso, F, 1997). The research found:

- Participation in the arts is an effective route to personal growth, leading to enhanced confidence, skill-building and educational developments which can improve people's social contacts and employability.
- It can contribute to social cohesion by developing networks and understanding, and building local capacity for organisation and self-determination.
- It brings benefits in other areas such as environmental renewal and health promotion, and injects elements of creativity into organisational planning.
- It produces social change which can be seen, evaluated and broadly planned.
- It represents a flexible, responsive and cost-effective element of a community development strategy.
- It strengthens rather than dilutes cultural life, and forms a vital factor of success rather than a soft option in social policy.

The researchers concluded that participation in the arts brings benefits to individuals and

communities. On a personal level these benefits include improvement in people's confidence, skills and human growth, as well as in their social lives through friendships, involvement in the community and enjoyment. Individual benefits translate into wider social impacts by building the confidence of minority and marginalised groups, promoting contact and contributing to social cohesion. New skills and confidence can be empowering as community groups become more involved in local affairs. Community cultural development can strengthen people's commitment to places and their engagement in tackling problems, especially in the context of urban regeneration. Mechanisms are encouraged and provided for creative approaches to development and problem-solving, and opportunities are offered for communities and institutions to take risks in a positive way. Contributions are made to the health and social support of vulnerable people and to education.

#### **British Cabinet Office Research**

The Arts Council of England has collated and reviewed existing research on the economic and social impact of the arts. In addition to the research by Comedia it cites a Cabinet Office study undertaken into the use of arts, sports and leisure to engage people in poor neighbourhoods. This research followed the issue of the publication of *Bringing Britain Together: a national strategy for neighbourhood renewal* (Cabinet Office, 1998). The review concluded that arts, sports and cultural and recreational activity can contribute to neighbourhood renewal and make a real difference to health, crime, employment and education in deprived communities.

#### **Champions of Change—the Impact of the Arts on Learning**

This study was initiated by the Arts Education Partnership, an American, private, non-profit coalition of more than 100 national education, arts, business, philanthropic and government organisations and the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. This coalition commissioned research, over many years and using diverse methodologies, to examine the impact of arts experience on young people (Fisk, 2000). The work built on previous research and examined well-established models of arts education, as well as larger issues of the arts in American education. It included out-of-school settings in order to understand the impact of the arts on learning, not just on formal education.

The research found much evidence that learning in the arts has significant effects on learning in other domains. Some specific findings included:

- The arts reach students who are not otherwise being reached, that is, who have disengaged from schools.
- The arts reach students in ways that they are not otherwise being reached. Young people who are not engaged in classroom activities—so called 'problem' children often become high achievers in arts learning settings.
- The arts connect young people to themselves and to each other.

- The arts transform the environment for learning.
- The arts provide learning opportunities for the adults in the lives of young people.
- The arts provide new challenges for those students already considered successful.
- The arts connect learning experiences to the world of real work.

#### **Other research on the impact of involvement in arts activity on health and wellbeing**

Several other studies of the impact of the arts could be mentioned, for example:

- An Arts Council of England study on the impact of the arts in tackling social exclusion shows that through involvement in arts activity participants have developed supportive social networks and reported increased feelings of wellbeing. Participants have discovered and developed new skills, increased their self-esteem, built social networks and improved their sense of control over their lives. (Jermyn, 2001).
- Other studies of the role of the arts in education support findings summarised above. Involvement in creative activity can result in improved academic achievements, school retention rates and reduced drug and alcohol consumption and juvenile offending (Heath and Soep, 1998).

## Appendix 2

### Integrating Community Cultural Development

This appendix suggests how community cultural development can be more effectively integrated with the work of government agencies. In general, the effective realisation of the transformational possibilities of community cultural development will depend upon successful attainment of the following stages. These stages are adapted from the publication *Better Places, Richer Communities: Cultural planning and local development, a practical guide* (revised edition, 1997, Australia Council, Sydney) by Marla Guppy (ed.) and Graham Samsom.

Stages of Integration	Agency Characteristics
Stage 1: Activity, but Low Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● agency unaware of full potential of community cultural development strategies and the relevance to their objectives</li> <li>● short-term, ad hoc community arts projects.</li> </ul>
Stage 2: Raising Awareness and Extending Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● greater awareness and recognition of the impact of community cultural development practice on social, environmental and economic wellbeing</li> <li>● initiation of some longer term community cultural development projects which engage different sections of the agency</li> <li>● continuing strong dependence on energies/leadership of one or two key individuals.</li> </ul>
Stage 3: Emerging Vision and Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● widespread awareness/acceptance of community cultural development approach within agency</li> <li>● beginnings of a long-term vision</li> <li>● wider engagement by agency staff in community cultural development programs</li> <li>● solid basis of support within agency among senior managers and the various professional groups.</li> </ul>
Stage 4: Vision, Commitment and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● commitment to routine consideration/incorporation of community cultural development factors and opportunities in agency activities/decision-making processes</li> <li>● well articulated long-term vision of the role of community cultural development within the agency</li> <li>● multidisciplinary teams involved in community cultural development program development and implementation</li> <li>● community cultural development skills identified, acknowledged and developed in agency staff</li> <li>● responsibility for community cultural development shared across a range of disciplines and at senior, middle management and operational levels throughout the agency.</li> </ul>
Stage 5: Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● formal integration of community cultural development into the agency's strategic planning, corporate planning and budgetary processes</li> <li>● powerful 'quality of life' ethos pervades all agency activities.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3

### Sample Proposals

This appendix brings together four proposals for future art and wellbeing activity. These have arisen from the CCDB's research and consultation process undertaken in 2003–04. At the time of publication all of these proposals are under discussion.

#### Example 1: Botany Bay

This example explores the *potential* for linkages between community cultural development and wellbeing in a complex region of Sydney.

Urban redevelopment in areas long regarded as the 'sink' for Sydney's dirty industry has put pressure on the natural environment of Botany Bay and its catchment. The legacies of heavy industry to the north, the airport in the north-west and controversial residential and tourist developments in the south all challenge the sustainability of the Bay region. Now, plans to further expand Port Botany and Kingsford Smith Airport add to the social and political tensions, while, as the so-called 'birthplace of the nation', there are Indigenous and European heritage issues to consider.

#### Existing arts activities

Arts activity has been fostered by local government and by activist organisations concerned with social, environmental and heritage issues of the Bay. For example, Sutherland Shire Council (one of several local government areas intersecting the catchment) has recently sponsored a public art project at Kurnell. In this project, the array of 'groynes' (rocky breakwater walls) along the shoreline become the sites for community-devised installations and sculptures which explore themes of ownership of place, invasion, European and Aboriginal heritage, the fishing industry and environmental protection. Sutherland Shire Council is also developing a cultural plan which is responsive to different ways of understanding

environment. In another initiative, the Ecoliving Centre of the University of New South Wales is working in partnership with Aboriginal groups, community artists, and a school at La Perouse to devise a permaculture garden. There are a number of local festivals that have environmental content, for example the Festival of the Sails; and at Mascot on the Bay's northern foreshores, the local museum has initiated a community-driven project on the Italian community around Botany Bay, in particular the 'lost fishing village' of Bourlee which once existed at the mouth of Cooks River, a site now dramatically transformed by airport expansion and freeway construction.

#### Government interests and developing trust

We can identify a pulse of activity (e.g. by South Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils and by the NSW Government) as the problems of finding an integrated management strategy for the Bay seem to worsen. The NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources established a specialist Botany Bay unit with a broad ranging agenda, and this unit initiated a cultural planning exercise alongside scientific and policy research as part of a 'triple bottom line approach'. This preliminary exercise put forward five social focuses: environment, heritage, culture, lifestyle and employment. The output of the exercise includes an audit of cultural events, and an exploration of the policy and planning context of culture in local government. (Note: The scheme employed by the NSW Government would seem to deny 'culture' as a 'fourth pillar' alongside social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development; instead it treats culture as part of the 'social' dimension.)

Government interest in a social agenda is in part driven by a history of lost trust between

### Botany Bay: What knowledge could community cultural development help produce?

#### Historical and sociological knowledge

- European and Aboriginal cultural heritage
- history of urban development, land use, transport, etc.
- industrial history
- recreational use of Botany Bay
- analysis of social movements and resident action.

#### Knowledge about the future

- community attitudes
- environmental ethics—what SHOULD we do with Botany Bay?
- imagining the future—what are the community aspirations?

#### Knowledge for decision-making

- analysis of participatory processes and governance structures
- Assessment of EIA processes
- Modeling of appropriate management structures
- Catchment-based State of the Environment Reporting, with...
- Indicators for tracking progress—integrated social and physical assessment.

#### Environmental Education

- Curriculum analysis—school, tertiary level
- Industry and workforce awareness

#### Citizen awareness and involvement.

citizens and government. For example, the dispute over airport impacts, the apparent 'loss of control' over development proposals (e.g. on the south side of the Bay) and the threat of chemical pollution; and with this failures in implementation of government environmental policy. Government and industry now have strong vested interest in understanding and 'managing' the social elements of planning for the Bay and its catchment.

### Interdisciplinary research and the potential of community cultural development

Alongside government interests, tertiary institutions, now with declared concern for their relationships with their communities, are extending scientific research programs to include social and political studies linked to environmental management processes. For

example, the University of New South Wales, through its Botany Bay Studies Unit, is redoubling its efforts to understand the problems of the Bay via a new interdisciplinary research initiative, which will bring scientists together with social scientists.

The above picture provides a context in which community cultural development activities could grow both as 'instruments' for implementing government policy, and as a means of developing and negotiating shared understandings of the problems of the Bay and mapping out solutions.

The overarching question that needs to be addressed is 'can there be a sustainable future for Botany Bay and its catchment?' But because the Bay constitutes an integral economic unit for the wider Sydney region, such a question becomes very broad—nothing less than the prospects for ecologically sustainable development of Australia's largest city. Adding a global dimension—essential when the implications of transport links are considered—further complicates these issues.

This suggests the possibility that Botany Bay, the place, could be the focus of practical programs which involve community cultural development and the arts, and that such work would contribute to a much wider understanding of the urban environment and ecologically sustainable development generally. As with other arts and environment initiatives, the broad aim would be essentially knowledge-building: to explore and enlarge our theoretical and historical understanding of how the 'environment' of the Bay as we experience it is constructed and shaped by social and cultural processes of knowledge formation and social action.

It would set out to develop, through art and community cultural development processes, an interwoven, focused understanding of the themes and representations which shape our images of nature and their relationships to our actions within it.

There is substantial policy-making and research infrastructure in place which puts such an

initiative within reach. Integrated with current planning and research initiatives, appropriate community cultural development programs should be considered such as the models in this guide. As with the SunRISE 21 program, for example, partnerships between industry, government and community organisations would be essential.

The link with tertiary education institutions would also be vital to the integration of community-based knowledge-building and scientific research. Interestingly, methods used in programs related to rural revitalisation and the development of active citizenship (see the case studies on those topics in this guide) would also have relevance. This is especially so since government-sponsored decision-making processes are so distrusted, to the point where government is now regarded as simply another stakeholder in most conflicts over management of the Bay, raising serious and challenging questions about responsibility for policy and management.

In summary, the current situation regarding Botany Bay may warrant specific initiatives on the part of government (arts and planning) authorities as a way of scoping out the role of community cultural development in planning and management of the Bay and its environmental and social dimensions.

#### For further information

##### Website:

[www.dipnr.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dipnr.nsw.gov.au)

##### Key publications:

Colman, Jim (2001), *The Tide is Turning*, Report to South Sydney Region of Councils on Management Issues in Botany Bay.

##### Linked agencies and organisations:

Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources

Sutherland Shire Council, Botany Bay City Council

Other councils: Rockdale, Hurstville, Canterbury, South Sydney

Botany Environment Watch

Sutherland Shire Environment Centre

University of New South Wales

University of Sydney

University of Technology, Sydney

### Example 2: Landcare

The purpose of this example is to introduce a proposition: that the extensive network of Landcare groups and the coordinating infrastructure of Landcare provides a major opportunity for the integration of the arts and community cultural development with grassroots approaches to natural resource management. The example underscores the importance of building social capital through local knowledge-building, in this case as a potential strategy for more effectively linking grassroots groups with centralised expert systems. Landcare is perhaps the most well known of the 'grassroots' community environment groups. Bushcare, Rivercare and Coastcare are others; and Greening Australia and Clean up Australia can also be included. The ideas proposed here may well be appropriate for a wider range of such organisations and movements.

Social theorists have recently studied the phenomenon of Landcare as a multi-stakeholder, networked organisation which is currently undergoing major shifts in relations of power:

Landcare commenced with the stated aim of raising local awareness and fostering cooperation between land managers and farmers in order to develop more sustainable natural resource management practices. Its origins lie in a partnership formed between the National Farmers Federation and the peak conservationist group, the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF). Since then, the National Landcare Program has been largely funded through the sale of the national telecommunications facility. The Natural Heritage Trust allocates public funding through grants, tax deductions and property management programs. The funding also covers

the employment of coordinators, whose responsibilities include networking and developing community understanding of technical and other issues. However, the Landcare movement is largely volunteer-driven and the various groups have, till 2002, remained autonomous organisations. There are now more than 4500 local autonomous groups across Australia. In the year 2000–2001 approximately \$82.6m was dispersed to these community-based groups, funds being administered at the state, territory or catchment level (Cary and Webb, 2001) ... Individual groups have recently tended to come together in networks. For instance, there are 70 shire networks in the State of NSW, with shire networks also coming together as regional and catchment networks (Marriott et al, 2000) ... The Australian Landcare Council (ALC) is the Government's key advisory body on Landcare matters. The Council is a multi-stakeholder body, comprising community members, various levels of government, community organisations such as Greening Australia and representatives from the ACF and the National Farmers Federation. Partnerships have been formed between the Landcare groups and networks, environmental groups, Greening Australia, industry sector organisations such as the

various state farmers organisations, the Commonwealth Government, local government and universities. [The overarching body], Landcare Australia Limited (LAL), is a Commonwealth Government corporation whose function is to raise funds and awareness for Landcare. (Benn and Onyx, 2003)

#### **Landcare and community cultural development: finding common ground**

Benn and Onyx describe some of the characteristics of Landcare that make it of interest as a movement running parallel to the community cultural development sector:

The official rhetoric of Landcare is that the movement brings together diverse and sometimes opposing factions of society into networked relationships. Recent research has shown that Landcare networks build new social capital through shared experiences in learning and communication and that this form of social capital contributes to the success of networks in developing ecological sustainability (Cary and Webb, 2000; Sobels, Curtis and Lockie, 2001). (Benn and Onyx, 2003)

As Benn and Onyx suggest, complex social systems faced with difficult problems have given focus to informal arrangements between corporations, state agencies, NGOs and communities. Such arrangements are 'shaping society from below'. The development of both trust and social capital is crucial to these processes, as is the active and willing involvement of citizens.

An important source of tension within the Landcare movement is the emerging challenge to centralised decision-making from bottom-up processes of community-based decision-making. One way of restating this is to say that what seems to work from a scientific and bureaucratic perspective (e.g. whole catchment management) can be at odds with the approaches advocated by local groups (which may be servicing just one small part of a catchment). The answer to this lies in the development of bridging social capital, and we have noted elsewhere in this guide, particularly

in the examples of Big hART and Somebody's Daughter Theatre (see the Health case studies beginning on page 12), that arts organisations can be very effective in creating such capital.

Landcare groups are already using the arts in some places. For example, local groups in the Hunter region link with festivals and community markets through (small scale) performances and creative visual material designed primarily to be educational. In the north-east corner of NSW a number of Landcare groups have taken this further, with arts activities that use participatory and celebratory approaches.

But there would seem to be enormous scope for community cultural development projects that bridge between the centralised Landcare infrastructure, which is driven by state and federal government agencies, and local groups. Perhaps the model used in the Atherton Tablelands (see page 72) could be appropriate. This sees, for example, a youth development strategy that relies on essentially local activities and outcomes, yet has guidance from and connections to a regional network.

Further, the knowledge-building functions of community arts projects, for example those approaches identified in *Murray River Story*, would seem to be of great value in the Landcare context. This is because knowledge from different sources needs to be synthesised into practical solutions relevant for individual waterways and tracts of land, but which also work at the level of catchments and regions.

The regional networks of Landcare, and structures such as state conferences provide a natural entry point for a strategic initiative coming from the community cultural development sector, to explore the possibility of more systematic integration of the arts into Landcare. But it is also important, given that Landcare is essentially reliant on centralised funding processes through the Natural Heritage Trust, that the possibilities for pro-active co-funding arrangements are fully explored.

#### **For further information**

##### **Website:**

[www.landcare.nsw.gov.au](http://www.landcare.nsw.gov.au)

##### **Key publications:**

Benn, Suzanne and Onyx, Jenny, (2003), 'The Colonisation of the Local: The power relations of Landcare', Conference paper for AOM, Seattle.

### **Example 3: Housing Planning in the Central Sydney Region**

*Note: Material in this section from the NSW Department of Housing presents the opinion of individual staff and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Department.*

We can take some guidance from projects such as those described in the Public Housing and Place section (see page 46), about how community cultural development processes might more systematically enter into the work of public housing authorities. For example, in the Central Sydney Region, groundwork has been laid for such a systematic integration through the adoption of an action planning approach, devised in partnership between the NSW Department of Housing and a number of tertiary education institutions. The approach is seen as a way of empowering residents of housing estates to take action on their own behalf, in a situation where 'top-down' decision-making has long been characteristic of the relationship between government and tenants.

Estates at South Coogee, Glebe and Menai are among those where the action planning model is being used. In these areas, the issues are essentially 'social' rather than 'technical' and these are complicated by a history of mistrust in the role of government due to poor client service over long periods. Unlike 'technical' challenges, large sums of money are not required to address many of these current issues; required instead is subtle trust-building leading to local ownership of solutions (Mataraarachchi, 2003).

#### **Summary of the potential for integrating community cultural development with Landcare**

- Arts activities can complement existing local programs by extending the celebratory functions of Landcare.
- The knowledge-building function of community cultural development can be effective within and between the many Landcare groups across Australia.
- The arts is well suited to the development of bonding social capital at the local level, through plays, festivals, visual arts, etc.
- Community cultural development is also a proven approach to developing bridging social capital, and it therefore can facilitate communication between the grassroots and centralised levels of Landcare.

We are trying to address issues in so-called ‘problematic areas’, where there is high turnover of residents, problems with substance abuse, lack of responsibility for shared space, and the need to provide cohesion when the community has a mix of young people and older residents. Solutions may start as top-down, but the community must be empowered.

*Sarath Mataraarachchi, senior planning and program coordinator, Department of Housing, Central Sydney Region*

There are opportunities to integrate community cultural development with the action planning approach. Steps of this approach are provided in the following table, with suggestions about how community cultural development could be relevant.

**Community cultural development linked to action planning would:**

- integrate artswokers among technical experts for the purpose of knowledge-building that includes ‘local’ and ‘lay’ components
- provide means of creative expression for residents to set out their aspirations and feelings towards problems and solutions
- develop bonding social capital (internal connections and trust) within the estate through arts activities which open up a non-threatening environment for debate and consultation
- allow the community and the agency to move together towards public presentations of plans, in forms which will attract a wide audience amongst estate residents (e.g. performances and exhibitions)
- provide a way for a ‘message’ to be delivered from the estate community to the wider public and government agencies (e.g. video documentation, and/or performances and exhibitions at conferences and other forums)
- enhance ‘bridging social capital’ (among other things more trust between residents and government agencies) through processes which are inclusive and open.

The table opposite contains practical proposals on how ‘tools’ of community cultural development could be relevant at each stage of the process. Other case studies in this guide provide details of how proposed activities work and what their outcomes can be.

**For further information**

**Website:**

www.housing.nsw.gov.au

**Key publications:**

Mataraarachchi, Sarath (2003), *Community Action Planning in Public Housing Areas: a model*, NSW Department of Housing.

**Linked agencies:**

Department of Housing, NSW, Central Sydney Region

Faculty of the Built Environment, University of New South Wales

**A proposal for integration of community cultural development with an action planning model for public housing estates**

Action Planning Stage (from Mataraarachchi, 2003)	Community Cultural Development: Possible roles and suggested activities
Step 1: Setting up of participatory structures in the estate	A program of arts activities is announced and residents invited to participate. The stated aim is to address issues through arts.
Step 2: Establishment of a reference group	Residents and agency representatives meet to determine how the arts project(s) will evolve with reference to broader objectives.
Step 3: Establishment of a planning team	Professional community artists, including a community video maker, join the team of experts.
Step 4: Collection of relevant background information	Demographic and other statistical data is augmented by oral histories of residents.
Step 5: Workshop 1: Identification of key issues, objectives and strategies	A series of workshops is used to build rapport and trust among residents, e.g. forum theatre is used to identify issues.
Step 6: Workshop 2: Preliminary strategies	Through artworks (e.g. photography, video, painting, music, drama) people express possible strategies for action.
Step 7: Workshop 3: Draft Community Action Plan Report	On the estate, exhibitions and performances are devised and used as ways to ‘report’ on where and how action should be taken.
Step 8: Presentation of a final plan	Presentations of artworks are taken outside the estate to wider public forums. Video and other documentation are critical to this.
Step 9: Development of precinct plans	The community develops plans for new projects including arts activities. The model is fed back into agencies.

**Example 4: Murray Darling Basin**

In this example, we explore the possibility of an enhanced role for community cultural development in attempts to grapple with one of Australia’s most important challenges—how to protect and rehabilitate the food bowl which provides almost half of the country’s agricultural output and which provides water supply across four states.

The environmental and social problems associated with the Basin are so extensive that estimates of funding required run to many billions of dollars. Yet allocations of resources have typically been a fraction of this, even though major agreements have been forged between all state governments and the Commonwealth, and despite extensive and multi-faceted interventions by towns and communities across the region.

The Murray-Darling Basin is under threat. Rising salinity and a high demand for limited water and land resources are two of the major problems it faces. We cannot protect the Basin under current levels of resource use. All partners must decide what they want for the future, what is possible given the constraints, and how to achieve these aims by working together.

*Integrated Catchment Management for the Murray-Darling Basin 2001–2010, statement of purpose*

Over the last 15 years, with the establishment of the Murray-Darling Basin Commission, the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council, and the Council's Community Advisory Committee, there has at least been recognition that all jurisdictions, agencies and communities must commit to cohesive efforts based on principles of Integrated Total Catchment Management. The approach outlined for the period 2001–10 underscores the importance of community engagement in setting policies and managing resources.

**The role of the arts**

To achieve community engagement will require different and more holistic strategies for community development, the expression of culture and the negotiation of community values. An integral part of such a different approach should be to embed and integrate the arts into every aspect of economic, social and government activity.

The case for integrating the arts in decision-making and management is argued throughout this guide. Here, the objective will be to comment on specific strategies for taking forward this integration in conjunction with all other efforts to save the Murray-Darling Basin from collapse.

We can map out ways to deeply embed community cultural development in complex regional strategies for (re)development. These include:

- more systematic funding of one-off arts projects associated with shaping

**Previous arts activities: some examples**

There has already been a range of arts activity in some quarters of the Murray-Darling Basin. Here are just a few examples:

- The SunRISE 21 Artists in Industry program (see page 38), which integrated arts activity with planning for sustainable development in Sunraysia.
- A specific theatre project *Murray River Story* (see page 43) has been put forward as an example of the knowledge-building function of the arts with respect to ecological issues of the Murray-Darling Basin.
- Significantly, the Murray-Darling Basin Commission itself has for a long time made use of arts activities as communication tools within its education programs, especially those targeting schools. (See *Special Forever: An environmental communications project*, Murray-Darling Basin Commission, 2003.)

perceptions towards the environment and the value of arts-based modes of communication in improving sustainability of resource use

- long range arts program funding, aiming for substantial new relationship building at all levels of the Basin community
- integrating the arts within planning processes. (A good example of how this can occur is the role of the arts in developing environmental and social indicators in rural Victoria—see Small Towns Big Picture earlier in this guide.)

- expansion of arts programs that set out to achieve certain pre-conditions for community engagement in catchment management—especially leadership development, inclusion of diverse communities, fostering of active citizenship and community strengthening. (See other sections of this guide for examples.)
- inclusion of the arts as a fundamental dimension of government planning processes, in particular national programs for natural resource management
- integration of the arts in developmental strategies initiated by business. (The SunRISE 21 program is an example.)
- the re-creation of institutions responsible for management of the Basin, so that the arts are valued and embedded in organisational structures.

(Adapted from Kingma, 2002)

The last-mentioned strategy, institutional change, is both the most difficult to achieve, and the most important to explore in the next stage of partnership building by the community cultural development sector. In the following table, we conclude this example with some specific suggestions for liaison and exploration by the arts sector and key institutions responsible for planning and management in the Murray-Darling Basin.

**For further information**

**Website:**

[www.mdbc.gov.au](http://www.mdbc.gov.au)

**Key publications:**

Murray-Darling Basin Commission (2001), *Integrated Catchment Management in the Murray Darling Basin 2001–2010: Delivering a sustainable future*, MDBC, Canberra.

Murray-Darling Basin Commission (2002), *Program documentation* at <[www.mdbc.gov.au](http://www.mdbc.gov.au)>.

Institution/ agency	Possible arts sector liaison/exploration
Commonwealth Government	Interactions by agency bureaucrats with MDBC and its various programs
Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council	High level intervention by arts ministers
Community advisory committee	Seek active involvement through membership and agenda setting
State and territory governments	Tap into regional development strategies to ensure the arts is included
Local governments	Advocate and fund ongoing arts programs of relevance to natural management
Catchment management organisations	Seek active involvement through membership and agenda setting
Community groups	In conjunction with existing networks, develop strategic one-off arts projects
Industry groups	Promote business and the arts strategies involving agribusiness peak groups
Landholders and land managers	Ensure participatory strategies with knowledge-building functions.

Note: In the above table, the listing of responsible institutions/agencies is identical to those listed in the 2001–2010 Integrated Catchment Management Plan.

## Bibliography

- Allerton, Louise, et al. (2001), *Pila Nguru: Art and Song from the Spinifex People*, Spinifex Arts Project.
- Arts Victoria (undated), *Creative Capacity—Arts for All Victorians: A Policy Framework for the Next Decade*, Victorian State Government.
- Atherton Tablelands Sustainable Region Advisory Committee (2003), *Atherton Tablelands Strategic Framework and Prospectus for Regional Development 2002–2005*, Department of Transport and Regional Services.
- Australian Local Government Association (2000), *State of the Regions 2000*, Report for the Australian Local Government Association, prepared by National Economics, Canberra.
- Bakes, John and Rankin, Scott (1996), *Big hART Manual*, Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra.
- Benn, Suzanne and Onyx, Jenny (2003), 'The Colonisation of the Local: The power relations of Landcare', Conference paper, AOM, Seattle.
- Bolitho, Annie (2003), *New Dimensions in Water Conversations: an inter-animation of writing and water*, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Technology, Sydney.
- Brown, Paul (in prep), 'Nature Moves Centre Stage: Knowledge Making and Australian Ecotheatre', in McAuly, Gay (ed.) *Contested Ground*, University of Sydney.
- Byrne, Jacki and Davis, Glyn (1998), *Participation and the NSW Policy Process: A discussion paper for the Cabinet Office New South Wales*, New South Wales Government.
- Cary J and Webb, T (2000), *Community Landcare, the National Landcare Program and the Landcare Movement: The social dimensions of Landcare*, Bureau of Rural Sciences, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Canberra.
- Cary J and Webb, T (2001), 'Landcare in Australia: Community Participation and Land Management', *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*, Vol. 56, pp 274–278.
- Colman, Jim (2001), *The Tide is Turning*, Report to South Sydney Region of Councils on Management Issues in Botany Bay.
- Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage (2003) *Protecting Natural Heritage: using the national heritage charter*, Commonwealth of Australia.
- Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing (1999), *National Environment Health Strategy*, Commonwealth of Australia.
- Costi, Angela and Bailey, Angela (2003) *Relocated: a tribute to tenants: Kensington Public Housing Estate*, City of Melbourne.
- Cox, Eva (1995) *A Truly Civil Society: 1995 Boyer Lectures*, ABC, Sydney.
- Curtis, D (2003), 'Initial impressions on the role of the performing and visual arts in influencing environmental behaviour', Conference paper TASA University of New England, funded by Land and Water Australia, Institute for Rural Futures, University of New England, Armidale.
- Curtis, David, Curtis, Frances and Dunsford, Camille (1999), 'The case of the memorable moment: The Streuth family investigates the role of art in changing behaviour and attitudes towards the environment', *Pointers for Change International Conference on Environmental Education*, Australian Association for Environmental Education, Sydney.
- Falk, Ian and Kingma, Onko (2000), 'Co-operation and Tolerance: Restoring Our Economic System', Paper for a symposium: *Australian Values—Rural Policies*, Canberra 28–29 August, Centre for Research and Learning in Regional Australia, University of Tasmania.
- Filor, Lucy (2000), 'Sacred Kingfisher', *Artwork*, Issue 47, Community Arts Network SA Inc.
- Fisk, Edward B (ed.) (2000), *The Impact of the Arts on Learning, (Champions of Change)*, the Arts Education Partnership, the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.
- Flora, C (2000), *Building Social Capital—The Importance of Entrepreneurial Social Infrastructure*, North Central Regional Centre for Rural Development, Ames, Iowa.
- Flowers, Rick (2003), *Community Festivals and Community Building: Hastings NSW 4th City for the Arts; a community celebration of who we are, where we live and what we can become*, Centre for Popular Education, University of Technology, Sydney.
- Flowers, Rick and McEwen, Celina (2003), *The Impact of 'Re-igniting Community' and 'The Torch' on community capacity building*, Centre for Popular Education, University of Technology, Sydney
- Hancock, T and Duhl, L (1988), 'Promoting Health in the Urban Context', *WHO Healthy Cities Papers, No. 1*, United Nations.
- Hancock, T and Labonte, R with Edwards, R (1999), *Indicators that Count!—Measuring Population Health at the Community Level*, Canada.
- Hastwell, Rosalie (2003), 'Working Together for Wellbeing—a View from Community Health', *Artwork*, Issue 27, Community Arts Network SA, Adelaide.
- Hawkes, Jon (2001), *The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's essential role in public planning*, Common Ground Publishing and Community Cultural Development Network, Victoria.
- Hawkes, Jon (2002), *Wellbeing*, A discussion paper for the Community Cultural Development Board, Australia Council, Sydney.
- Heath, S and Soep, E (1998), 'Youth Development and the Arts in Non-school Hours', *Grantmakers in the Arts*, Vol. 9, No. 1.
- Housing NSW (undated), *Community Renewal: Transforming Communities—Partnership and Participation*, www.housing.nsw.gov.au/publications.
- Jermyn, H (2001), *The Arts and Social Exclusion*, A review prepared for the Arts Council of England, London.
- Kenyon, Peter and Black, Alan (eds) (2001), *Small Town Renewal Overview and Case Studies*, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation.
- Kingma, Onko (2002), *Enabling Communities Through the Arts: Case studies from the Community Cultural Development Fund of the Australia Council*, Australia Council, Sydney.
- Kingma, Onko (2003a), *Cooperation, Competition and Contemporary Society*, paper for the NSW Local Government Community Services Association Conference, Port Macquarie.
- Kingma, Onko (2003b), *Social Traps, Barriers to Change and the Arts*, Paper for the NSW Local Government Community Services Association Conference, Port Macquarie.
- Landry, C (1994), *Measuring Viability and Vitality of City Centres in Urban and Regional Quality of Life Indicators*, in Mercer, C (ed.), A Special Publication of the Institute for Cultural Policy Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Griffith University, Queensland.
- London Arts (undated), *The Art of Well-being: Partnership strategy for the arts and health sectors*.
- McDonell, Gavan (1997), 'Scientific and everyday knowledge: trust and the politics of environmental initiatives', *Social Studies of Science*, Vol. 27.
- McKinnon, Malcolm (2003), 'Small Towns, Big Picture: art, social research and community development', *Artwork*, Issue 55, Community Arts Network SA, Adelaide.
- Marriott, S, Nabben, T, Polkinghorne, L, and Youl, R (2000) *Landcare in Australia: Founded on local action*, Landcare Australia.
- Marsden, Sally and Thiele, Martin (2000), *Risking Art: Art for Survival: Outlining the role of the arts in services to marginalised young people*, Jesuit Social Services, Melbourne.
- Matararachchi, Sarath (2003), *Community Action Planning in Public Housing Areas: a model*, NSW Department of Housing, Sydney.
- Matarrasso, François (1996), 'Defining Values: Evaluating Arts Programs', *The Social Impact of the Arts: Working Paper 1*, Comedia, Stroud.
- Matarasso, François (1997), *Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts*, Comedia, Stroud.
- Maxwell, Ian and Winning, Fiona (2001), 'Towards a Critical Practice', *Artwork*, Issue 49, Community Arts Network SA, Adelaide.
- Merrima Aboriginal Design Unit (2003), *Portfolio of project descriptions*, NSW Department of Public Works and Services, Sydney.
- Mills, Deborah (2003), 'Cultural Planning—Policy Task, not Tool', *Artwork*, Issue 55, Community Arts Network SA, Adelaide.
- Mills, Deborah (2003), 'Art and wellbeing: securing the connections—integrated policy and practice', *Artwork*, Issue 57, Community Arts Network SA, Adelaide.
- Murphy, Catherine (1999), *Waterworks: Documentation of the South Australian Country Arts Trust's waterworks project*, South Australian Country Arts Trust, Adelaide.

- Murray-Darling Basin Commission (2001), *Integrated Catchment Management in the Murray-Darling Basin 2001–2010: Delivering a sustainable future*, MDBC, Canberra.
- Murray-Darling Basin Commission (2002), Program documentation at <www.mdbc.gov.au>.
- National Farmers' Federation (2002), *Regional Business Development Analysis*, Submission to the government review on Regional Business Development, Canberra.
- Natural Heritage Trust (2001), *Guide to New Applications*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.
- NSW Government (1999), *Working Together for Stronger Rural Communities: A Statement of Commitment to Rural Social Justice by the NSW Government*.
- NSW Premier's Department (2002), *Local Government Place Management and Community Renewal. An Inventory of Initiatives*, NSW Government, Sydney.
- Office of Housing, Department of Human Services (2003), *Neighbourhood Renewal: Growing Victoria Together*, Government of Victoria, Melbourne.
- Osmotherly, Jan (2001), *Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company Evaluation Report*, Osfield Consultants.
- Osmotherly, Jan (2002), *Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company Evaluation Report*, Osfield Consultants.
- Page, Alison Joy (2000), 'Gurung Gunya' [New Dwelling], *Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.
- Page, Alison Joy and Wallworth, Lynette (2003), *Placemaking/Wellbeing and the Adelaide Festival of Arts*, Conference paper, School of HPS, University of New South Wales.
- Pitts, Graham (2004), *Common Purpose*, North Richmond Community Health Centre, Melbourne.
- Putnam, R (1993), *Making Democracy Work: Civil Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey.
- Queensland Government (2002), *Creative Government: Arts and Cultural Activity Across the Queensland Government*.
- Queensland Government (2002), *Creative Queensland: The Queensland Government Cultural Policy*.
- Queensland Government (2003), *The Art of Renewal: A guide for strengthening communities through creative practice*.
- Queensland Government (2003), *Engaging Queenslanders: Get involved—Improving community engagement across the Queensland Public Sector*.
- Rankin, Scott (1996), *BIG hART, manual*, Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs.
- Rankin, Scott (1996a), *Big hART Project Development Video*, Wobbly Wire Productions.
- Reeves, Michelle (2002), *Measuring the economic and social impact of the arts: a review*, Arts Council of England, London.
- Rhodes, Alix (2002), *The heart of sustainability: An encore for the arts and culture*, A Background Discussion Paper Prepared as a Submission to the State Sustainability Strategy, Institute of Sustainability and Technology Policy, Murdoch University.
- Rogers, Maureen (2002), 'The Energy Footprint for North Central Victoria: An Initial Step Toward Addressing Climate Change', *Sustaining Regions*, Vol. 2(1).
- Rogers, Maureen (2003), 'Does Cultural Activity Make a Difference to Community Capacity? A key question addressed by the Small Towns: Big Picture project', Presented to the *Just and Vibrant Communities Conference*, National Congress of Local Government Managers, Townsville.
- Rogers, Maureen (2003a), 'Small Towns: Big Picture—Social Sustainability Indicators and the Arts', *The Social Dimension of the Triple Bottom Line in Rural Australia*, Bureau of Rural Science, Melbourne.
- Rogers, Maureen and Ryan, Roberta (2001), 'The Triple Bottom Line for Sustainable Community Development', *Local Environment Journal*, Vol. 6(3).
- Rose, R (2000), 'Risk of Salinity Biggest in WA', *The West Australian*, 15 November 2000.
- Sansom, Graham (1993), *A Guide to Integrated Local Area Planning*, Australian Local Government Services Association, Canberra.
- Sarantakos S (ed.) (1998), *Quality of Life in Rural Australia*, Centre for Rural Social Research, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga.
- Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training (1989), *Education for Active Citizenship*.
- Sidoti, C (1998), *Human Rights Commission Report on Rural Australia*, Human Rights Commission, Canberra.
- Sobels, J, Curtis, A and Lockie, S (2001), 'The role of Landcare group networks in rural Australia: Exploring the contribution of social capital', *Journal of Rural Studies*, Vol. 17, pp 265–278.
- Sunrise 21 (1999), *Sunrise 21 Artists in Industry Information Package*, Mildura Arts Centre, Mildura.
- Thiele, Martin and Marsden, Sally (2003), *Engaging Art: The Artful Dodgers Studio: A Theoretical Model of Practice*, Jesuit Social Services, Melbourne.
- Tonts, M (1996), 'Economic Restructuring and Small Town Adjustment: Evidence from the Western Australian Central Wheatbelt', *Rural Society*, Vol. 6(2).
- UNESCO (1999), *Towards New Strategies for Culture in Sustainable Development*, conference paper from 'Culture Counts', Italy.
- VicHealth (2003), *Creative Connections: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing through Community Arts Participation*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation Mental Health Promotion Plan 1999–2002, VicHealth, 2003.
- VicHealth (2004), *Creative Connections: Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing through the Arts*, 14-minute video, VicHealth.
- Vivian, Helen (2000), *Interceptions: Art, Science and Land in Sunraysia*, Mildura Arts Centre and Artmoves Inc., Mildura.
- Watt, David (1992), 'Community Theatre; a progress report', *Australasian Drama Studies*, Vol. 20.
- Western Australian Government (2002), *Focus on the Future: the Western Australian State Sustainability Strategy*, <www.sustainability.dpc.wa.gov.au>.
- Whelan, A, Mohr, R and Short, S (1992), *Waving or Drowning? Evaluation of the National Secretariat, Healthy Cities Australia—Final Report*.
- Wilkinson, R and Marmot, M (eds) (1998), *Social Determinants of Health: The Solid Facts*, World Health Organisation, Regional Office for Europe, United Nations.
- Wills, Jenny (2001), *Just, Vibrant, Sustainable Communities: A Framework for Progressing and Measuring Community Wellbeing*, Local Government Community Services Association of Australia.

# Index

## A

*A Garden on the Moon* (theatre project) 58–59  
 Aboriginal communities  
   architectural design services 99–100  
   major arts festival 76  
 Aboriginal design group, Merrima 96  
 Aborigines, low social inclusion 96  
 active citizenship  
   initiatives 88–93  
   key to sustainability 7  
 Adelaide Festival, Desert Oaks project 82–85  
 Artful Dodgers Studio 14, 18, 29–30, 31  
 arts  
   impact on health and wellbeing 107  
   impact on learning 107  
   overseas impact evidence 106–7  
 Arts and Culture Program, North Richmond Community Health Centre 54–57  
 arts festivals  
   Adelaide 82  
   Maralinga/Oak Valley 76  
   Arts Nexus 72, 73  
   Atherton Tablelands  
   bridging projects 113  
   cultural activity outcome summary 73  
   regional challenges and response 72–73  
   role of cultural development 72  
   in Sustainable Regions Program 64  
   youth development strategy 72–73, 113  
 Australian Landcare Council (ALC) 112

## B

Bago Community Celebration 67–69  
*Bago stories*  
   steering group 68  
   successful project 68–69  
 Big hART  
   aims and objectives 25  
   first projects 25  
   indicators of success 27  
   outcomes 28  
   projects coverages 25–26  
   youth and community projects 14, 18  
*Bluff of Broken Bago, The* (poem) 70  
 Botany Bay  
   community cultural development  
   knowledge 110  
   future activity proposals 109–11

Bourlee, 'lost fishing village' 109  
*Bring Down the Walls*, project with women prisoners 23  
 British Cabinet Office Research 106

## C

CAP (Community Arts Participation) scheme *see* Community Arts Participation (CAP) scheme  
 Community Arts Participation (CAP) scheme  
 Carisbrook, Town Hall restoration 92  
 Cascade Place  
   arts activities 60  
   community garden project 48  
   facility for disabled 59–61  
 CCDB (Community Cultural Development Board) 4–6  
 Centre for Culture Ethnicity and Health 56  
 Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities 91–92  
 Cerebral Palsy League of Queensland 59  
 CERES (Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies)  
   achievements 42  
   annual festival funding 41  
   festival and educational program 34  
   supporting bodies 41  
 Champions of Change—the Impact of the Arts on Learning 107  
 civic culture, defining 89  
 collective creative processes  
   bonding social capital 65–66  
   health of individuals 15–16  
   tackling serious social problems 89  
 Comedia Research on Impacts of the Arts 106  
 communities  
   in decline 64  
   healthy 96  
 'Communities Together' program 54  
 Community Arts Participation (CAP) scheme  
   mental health benefits 18  
   scope 17  
 community arts projects, rural women 102–3  
 community cultural development  
   Botany Bay potential 110–11  
   case studies 11  
   focus 6  
   institutional reform 65–66  
   instrumental approaches 9–10  
   integration 108  
   Landcare 112

linked to action planning 114  
 Murray-Darling Basin 116–18  
 potential 4–6  
 public housing action planning 115  
 role of 9  
 strengthening social capital 77  
*The Torch Project* 79–80  
 transformational approaches 9–10  
 Community Cultural Development Board (CCDB) 4–6  
 community cultural development processes  
   arts projects 102–3  
   health and policy development 14–15  
   natural resource management issues 36–37  
   nurturing local democracy 89–90  
   public housing 50  
   public housing authorities 113  
   Small Towns Big Picture 91–93  
   social inclusion and cultural diversity 96  
 community engagement, approaches 88–90  
 Community Indicators and Local Democracy Project 89  
 Community Power Company, Dunolly 92  
 community renewal programs  
   aims 49  
   public housing 48–49  
   community strengthening programs 76–83  
   community theatre  
   *Murray River Story* 43–45  
   what it can achieve 45

community wellbeing, ecological sustainability 7–8  
 Connexions program 29–30  
 Cross Cultural Collaborations project 56  
 CSIRO/Riverlink Consortium 38  
 cultural changes 8  
 Cultural Development Network 91–92  
 cultural diversity  
   barriers to inclusion 96–97  
   Cross Cultural Collaborations program 56  
 cultural totems, representation of 99

## D

decision-making processes 7–8  
 Declaration of the Role of Australian Local Government, 1997 89  
 Deloraine Craft Fair 96, 101  
 Desert Oaks project  
   establishing 82–83

Spinifex collection 83  
 disabled facility, Cascade Place 59–61  
 domestic violence prevention, Burnie, Tasmania, project 25  
 dual diagnosis youth projects, Artful Dodgers Studio 29–30  
 Dunolly, local energy project 92

## E

Ecoliving Centre, Botany Bay 109  
 ecological sustainability  
   Artists in Industry program 38  
   balance with community wellbeing 7–8  
   development projects 34–45  
   requiring socioeconomic changes 89  
   search for integrated methods 8  
 ecological systems, concern for 15  
 education, Artful Dodgers Studio  
 achievements 31  
 employment, Artful Dodgers Studio  
 achievements 31  
 environmental citizenship, concept of 45  
 environmental health, strategic management 15

## F

Fairlea Women's Prison 22  
 Festival of the Sacred Kingfisher 41  
 Festival of the Sails, Mascot 109  
 First Mildura Irrigation Trust 38  
 Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women (FAAW) projects 73, 96, 102

## G

Girrawaa Creative Work Centre 99  
 government response programs 77

## H

Healthy Cities Program (WHO) 14–15  
 healthy communities 96  
 High Water Theatre 23  
 Horticultural Consortium 38  
 Hothouse Theatre 43  
 housing planning, central Sydney region 113–14

## I

Indigenous Australians, low social inclusion 96

## J

Jesuit Social Services 29–30, 54

## K

Kensington Public Housing Estate  
   rebuilding project 51–53  
   relocation strategy 48  
 Kurnell, public art project 109

## L

Landcare Australia Limited (LAL) 112  
 Landcare network  
   finding common ground 112–13  
   linking 'grassroots' groups 111–13  
*Local Agenda* 21 35  
 'lost fishing village,' Bourlee 109

## M

Maffra group, town furniture 103  
 Malanda, community mosaic 103  
 Maralinga Tjarutja community 82–83  
 Maralinga/Oak Valley  
   Aboriginal community arts festival 76  
   Desert Oaks project 82–83  
 marginalised groups, Big hART projects 25–28  
 Melbourne East Timorese Activity Centre (METAC) 55  
 mental health, Artful Dodgers Studio  
 achievements 31  
 Merrima  
   Aboriginal architecture 99  
   Aboriginal design group 96, 99  
   project outcomes 100  
 Milla Milla, cow family sculpture 102  
 Moon Lantern Festival 55  
 'Moving the Posts' (artwork) 103  
 Mt Garnet, bus shelter 103  
*Murray River Story* 116  
   community play 43–45  
   knowledge-building arts projects 113  
   participating community theatre 34–37  
   play development 44  
   synopsis 43  
 Murray-Darling Basin  
   integrated catchment management  
   challenge 115–16  
   previous arts activities 116  
   role of the arts 116–17  
 Murray-Darling Basin Commission 35, 36, 38, 44, 116  
 Murray-Darling Freshwater Laboratory 38

## N

National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality 35, 36  
 National Australian Violence Prevention Award, Burnie, Tasmania, project 25  
 National Environmental Health Strategy 15–16  
 National Farmers Federation (NFF) 65  
 National Landcare Program 111  
 Native Title campaign, Spinifex collection 83  
 Natural Heritage Trust 35, 111  
 natural resource management 36  
 North Richmond Community Health Centre 54, 56–57  
 North Richmond Housing Estate, integrated community program 48

## O

Oak Valley, art centre project 100  
 Orbus group, outdoor civic art 103

## P

partnerships, development of 8  
*Pin Ups* (poem) 26  
 place management *see* community renewal programs  
 power, problem of centralisation 7  
 prison-related projects  
   *Bring Down the Walls* 23  
   Somebody's Daughter Theatre 22–24  
 Project with a Thousand Outcomes 96, 102–3  
 'Public Art Public Housing' project 56  
 public housing  
   action planning approach 113  
   action planning model 115  
   place-based 48–61  
   social issues 48–49

## R

Re-Igniting Community  
   community strengthening 79–80  
   *The Torch* 76  
 Relocated project 51, 52  
 Richmond Housing Estate 54–57  
 rural renewal, community strengthening programs 77  
 rural revitalisation programs 64–73

## S

Salinity Management Consortium 38

salinity programs 35  
 'Salute from Australia' exhibition 103  
 Small Towns Big Picture 88–93  
   active citizenship outcomes 93  
   project origins 91  
 social capital, development of 76  
 social inclusion  
   arts activity involvement 107  
   barriers to 96–97  
   tolerance of difference 101  
 Somebody's Daughter Theatre 14, 18, 22–24  
 Spinifex collection 83  
 Strategic Framework and Prospectus for  
 Regional Development 72  
 Strengthening Communities Unit 77  
 substance use, Artful Dodgers Studio  
 achievements 31  
 SunRISE 21  
   Artists in Industry program 38, 39, 116  
   commentary on achievements 39  
   multi-artform program 34  
   name explained 38  
   partners 38

sustainability, ecological *see* ecological  
 sustainability  
 sustainable regional development,  
 SunRISE 21 39  
 Sustainable Regions Program, Atherton  
 Tablelands 64, 72–73  
 Sutherland Shire Council 109

## T

Tasmanian Craft Fair 101  
 Tet celebration 55  
 Timorese community (North Richmond) 55  
*Torch Project* 79–80  
 totems, representation of 99  
 'triple bottom line' evaluation  
   Botany Bay 109  
   progress indicators 91

## V

values, shift in 8  
 VicHealth  
   partners of 17–19  
   role 17

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation  
 (VicHealth) 14  
 Vietnamese community (North Richmond) 55

## W

water quality programs 35  
 Wauchope, NSW, economic and industry  
 changes 64, 67–69  
 Wedderburn, community garden artworks 92  
 wellbeing *see* community wellbeing  
*Western Australian State Sustainability  
 Strategy, The* 34–35  
 Wilcannia Health Service 99–100  
 William Buckland Foundation 29

## Y

Youth Entrepreneurial Program, regional 72–73  
 youth programs  
   Artful Dodgers Studio 29–30  
   crime prevention, Burnie, Tasmania 25  
   High Water Theatre 23  
   Youth Entrepreneurial Program 72–73  
 Yungaburra women, community tapestry 103

**Front Cover:** *Paper Cranes* from Relocated 2001–03. Initiated and managed by the City of Melbourne's community cultural development program in collaboration with the Victorian Tenants Union, Kensington Public Tenants Association and the Victorian Office of Housing. Photo: Angela Bailey

**Front Cover Inside Flap:** *Emma and Tegan* from Big hART Zeehan, Tasmania. Photo: Christopher Saunders

**Below:** A member of Loose Tooth (WA) with workshop leader, Nunukal Wantamaa Dance Troupe, Wataboshi Festival, Australia 2003. Photo: Sonja de Sterke, QUT.

**Back Cover Inside Flap:** *Milla Milla Cow Sculpture* from Atherton Tablelands project. Photo: Eve Stafford

**Back Cover:** Hai Kara Wulan from Green Turtle Dreaming. Artists: Susan Barlow Clifton and the children of Desa Baing on Sumba, Indonesia .

Green Turtle Dreaming documents the ancient relationship between people and the green turtle. Remote communities in northern Australia and eastern Indonesia have collaborated to create a 40 metre scroll telling their stories.

These images are accompanied by sounds, songs and stories recorded on-site to form the basis of an exhibition that will tour nationally from December 2004.

Green Turtle Dreaming was funded by the Australia-Indonesia Arts and Community Program, a partnership between the Australia Council's Community Cultural Development Board and the Asialink Centre. Photo: Richard Barlow.





