

artwork

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LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVISM



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For contact details see the inside back cover.

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TO QUOTE OR NOT TO QUOTE

LISA PHILIP-HARBUTT



Photo: Danielle Schriever

AS I waited for the articles for this issue of *Artwork* to arrive I wondered if anyone would use my favourite Leadership quote. Should I open my editorial with it? Would that be too academic? Is quoting an ancient Chinese philosopher a bit passé? Maybe. I came to understand this quote – really understand it, not just think it was a great idea, when I was researching a few years ago. I was looking at decision-making in the arts and cultural sectors in South Australia and my methodology was Participatory Action Research (PAR). I had to delicately balance the fact that I had been given a scholarship to write a thesis, with the need for the participants to own the idea and the process. The methodology made it harder because in PAR the participants are the researchers themselves (the neutral researchers observing what is going on in a controlled environment does not occur). But in the end I had to write the bloody thesis. Imagine me locked in a small box at Uni questioning my own decision-making while studying it. It was a balancing game and at the time that Leadership quote by an ancient Chinese philosopher helped.

So now a few years later I go back to the quote. Every time I have mentioned it since I have been greeted with an 'Oh yes, Lao Tzu' and a bit of a shake of the head which could have indicated 'yes well been there done that'. And yet for me this ancient quote has resonance which is critical in the current climate. It seems Leadership & Activism (L&A) is to the forefront of many of our brains at the moment. But how do we practice it and what style does it inhabit. Since the Australia Council's restructure announcement in December last year there has been a lot of it going around. L&A that is. Is it catching? Do you get spots or just rising blood pressure? But in reality the decisions that are being

made by our National Funding body have only highlighted what has been going on in the darker corners for a long time. It has brought things (and many of us) out of the dark and into a spotlight in a variety of contexts. One key thing that I have taken out of it all is that the sector's understanding of consultation and change management is very different from that of the Australia Council's Task Group. Lao Tzu would roll over in his tomb.

To comment on what has been happening in this area we have chosen a voice from outside of Australia, for most of us have been very tied up in the ongoing campaign. Arlene Goldbard writes *Trouble in Oz: Australia's Community Cultural Development Programs Threatened* which is also published on the American website <http://www.communityarts.net>. Arlene's fairytale ending sounds bit too good to be true as we are yet to hear of a reversal of the OzCo decisions but we must remember to rejoice in the small wins that we have fought so hard for.

To set the context for this *Artwork* we have included *Why We Need A Revolution Now* in which Philip Adams gives a stirring 'call to arms'. He reminds us of the many injustices that have and are still occurring and challenges us to do something about them. This article is an edited version of the address to the Communities in Control Conference in Melbourne on 7th June 2004.

The quote I keep returning to suggests a leadership style that could be described as 'leading from behind'. Just how tricky it can be is upfront, in my face, most days in my position of Director at CAN SA. For the past couple of years the staff and board of CAN SA have been endeavouring to find ways of adapting our organisational structure to

model our ccd philosophy. But no matter how cooperative, no matter how inclusive our structure, policy and procedures are, I have had to accept that as the Director the buck stops with me. I take pains to not abuse the power that comes with the position and although I do not place a greater value on my contribution I am aware that some people do. CAN SA staff have also discussed at length the dilemma that ensues when in our attempts to empower members, we are sometimes negating (rather than promoting) the important role we play in the process. In these difficult times this can come back to bite you on the bum. For the support and facilitating role is often not as evident and therefore easily forgotten. In his article *General Leadership and Private Doubts* the reluctant leader Graeme Pitts explores many of the issues of leadership within ccd contexts.

If 'Leadership' is the: *capacity or ability to lead*

And 'Lead' is: *to guide or inspire*

And 'Activism' is: *a policy of taking direct action to achieve a political or social goal*

then maybe in an *Artwork* Issue examining Leadership and Activism we are exploring our own and others ability to:

Deliver on the aim of social change through the capacity to guide or inspire

It is clear from Gareth Wreford's article '*Nothing about us without us*'- *Disability, Arts and Activism* that there is also a place for leading from the front. His examples from the disability arts sector illustrate the need to be visible and to gain a profile. Gareth is

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ARTWORK 61 – POSTERS FORUM

In considering the images for this edition we asked what were the strongest pieces of activist art that we had seen in recent years? *We are all Boat People* was the most common answer. So incorporated in this issue of *Artwork* are images from the website <http://www.boat-people.org>. We have contrasted these with historical images from CAN SA archives of political posters. We have details for some of these images but we put out the call to readers for help to fill in the gaps in regard to these posters. If you were involved in the process, production or printing of any of these images or if you are interested in a discussion about the Australian political posters we have set up an online forum on the national ccd website, www.ccd.net. The forum is called *Artwork 61 – Posters Forum* which can be found in the 'All Talk' section of [ccd.net](http://www.ccd.net).

certainly adept at the promotion of the organisation he represents — Arts Access Australia. Maybe this is something that we all need to take on board. Susan Kukucka also promotes practice in her article *Backbone Youth Arts' 2high Festival* when she looks at the unique mentorship model of Brisbane's 2high Festival. She also discusses the links between this festival and the role it has played in mentoring many young women artists and artswomen.

Young Western Australian writer and recent 'Out There Everywhere' recipient, Gemma Pepper, in her article *Plans for Growth: A Retrospective*, examines things from a youthful perspective. She reminds us that to call on young people to act as leaders and then forget them, may not reap the benefits of the money invested in them. She has identified the feeling of exclusion and has linked this to age and location. I think it may be a bit of both but also a lot more. Rather than being about exclusion it may be about inclusion. Who does get included? And why?

I had almost given up on my favourite quote appearing in anyone's article when into my in-box came Eve Stafford's *Leadership, Followership, and Fellowships in ccd*. Eve examines what she calls 'the sheepdog version of leadership'. This conjures up great images for a bush kid like me and there in her article was also the Lao Tzu quote. I was reassured that maybe I am not as out of step as I thought I may have been. Eve also outlines a number of recent Fellowships from the CCDB and what jumped out to me as I read this was the imbalance of gender. In a sector that last I heard is still made up of 75 per cent women we have the interesting challenge of analysing the almost opposite breakdown in recipients of CCDB Fellowships in recent years. Now please don't get me wrong I am *definitely not* claiming bias. The recipients and their fellowship research are all fab and very deserving and of what I know of the application and decision-making processes, they are well chosen. So what is going on and how

does it influence our analysis of leaders in the sector? And how can our deliberations on this feed into the future support of our leaders by the Australia Council?

I imagine that the Ros Bower Award throws up a different, and it could be said equally skew whiffed, set of recipients. In his article Neal Price examines the Ros Bower Award from a personal perspective as well as a bit of an overview. He tells us of Ros Bower the person behind the award and of other recent recipients and ponders how cultural diversity fits within the decision-making process for the Ros Bower. Reading some of the history reminds me of a recent comment which suggested that along with Lao Tzu the current climate would also have Ros turning in her grave.

In considering the images for this edition we asked what were the strongest pieces of activist art that we had seen in recent years? 'We are all Boat People' was the most common answer. So incorporated in this issue of *Artwork* are images from the website <http://www.boat-people.org>. We have contrasted these with historical images from CAN SA archives of political posters.

So rather than open with the ole dead Chinese guy I am going to close with him for, passé or not, both Leadership and Activism take on a different resonance when referenced by the words:

*Go to the People
Live with them
Learn from them,
Love them.*

*Start with what they know,
Build with what they have.*

*But with the best leaders
When the work is done
The task is accomplished
The people will say,
'We have done this ourselves.'*
Lao Tzu, China, circa 700 BC

Trouble in Oz

ARLENE GOLDBARD

Australia's Community Cultural Development Programs Threatened

A commentary on community cultural development as it was in Australia and the recent structural changes in the Australia Council. An international perspective on what we had, and what we may be losing.

ALL

forms of enterprise are fed by innovation. But in contrast to advances in science and technology, innovation in cultural

institutions is stunted by people's attachment to the already do-able, often manifesting as deep suspicion of anything too new or different. Throughout my three decades as an advocate for community cultural development, one of my greatest frustrations has been trying to introduce new ideas to those who judge them solely on whether they are already established as successful practice elsewhere.

I've tried complaining of stodgy thinking and counselling creative social imagination. I've tried asking where air travel or computing would be if the Wright Brothers and Alan Turing had been subject to the same constraints. I wish these arguments worked better, because they certainly make sense to me.

A dream realised

But by far the most effective response has been to point to Australia and rattle off the uncanny truth: While most of the rest of world has been in a frenzy of privatisation inspired by the U.S. government, cutting public cultural spending right and left, the Australia Council (abbreviated OZCO, it's that country's federal arts funding and policymaking agency) since 1987 has recognised community cultural development (ccd) as a legitimate and important field of arts practice. There have been major funding programs, conferences, publications, training programs, academic degree programs, studies — and consequently, tons of interesting and important ccd projects. The field's development has been given major resources and the same sort of attention the National Endowment for the Arts once gave to the development of U.S. dance, musical theatre and art museums.

The result has been a shining beacon of possibility for advocates of cultural democracy. Personally, Australia has sustained my faith that the entire planet has not succumbed to that zeitgeist fever of which the chief symptom is a passion to enrich corporations, expand military spending and tell everyone else to take a hike. For community artists and cultural democracy advocates in the U.S., where resources for ccd have always been scarce and documentation spotty, Australian ccd is an unparalleled storehouse of knowledge.

There, we've seen what can happen when community artists are respected and granted reliable, multiyear support for long-term collaborations with communities under pressure. We've seen how transformative creative relationships can be when they aren't constrained by arbitrary project requirements, such as the need to make inflated claims or focus on instant products, distorting the work to conform to the short-term project orientation of U.S. funders. Australian ccd validates our faith that when this work is sustained, it can change lives. I won't pretend that every ccd practitioner in the U.S. keeps up on the movement abroad.

Australia has sustained my faith that the entire planet has not succumbed to that zeitgeist fever of which the chief symptom is a passion to enrich corporations [and] expand military spending ...

But for those of us who've followed its progress, the Australian ccd support system has been our dream realised, and that has a spill-over effect, even for those too busy with the urgent demands of their own work to notice.

We had to destroy the village to save it

Much to my chagrin, it appears that all of that is about to change. On December 8, 2004, OZCO announced that its Community Cultural Development Board would soon be disbanded and its ccd-related programs radically de-emphasized. These changes result from a review process conducted by a Council-appointed body called the 'Future Planning Task Force'. Not only do I feel disappointed, I also feel a little bit responsible, as U.S. influence has something to do with it. Consider what longtime Australian ccd activists Norm Horton and Sarah Moynihan, co-directors of the dynamic Brisbane-based group Feral Arts, recently wrote me:

'arts in the community' ... cover[s] things like conventional arts classes and workshops for kids or performances held at senior centres, blurring ccd's essential focus on social change and social engagement.

On a broad level and in a global context, you could argue that the rabid corporatisation of arts infrastructure is finally catching up with the Australia Council. There are a wide range of local specific factors ... but there is little doubt

that reforms in the U.K. and the U.S. have been critical sources in the proposed changes. The restructure is fundamentally flawed on a number of levels, in no small part because they developed it without consulting the ccd sector. So the new structure proposes lots of superficially positive elements but without any considered policy or framework.

Under the new system, instead of having their own advisory and policy-making apparatus and their own funding programs with field-specific guidelines and criteria, community cultural development projects would be folded into OZCO's 'artform boards', channelling them through dance or theatre or visual art, there to compete with conventional projects in each arts discipline. (Similar changes are proposed in OZCO's handling of what it has called 'New Media Arts' and that field has been protesting as well.) The ccd nomenclature would be abandoned in favour of a more general rubric — 'arts in the community' — which would also cover things like conventional arts classes and workshops for kids or performances held at senior centres, blurring ccd's essential focus on social change and social engagement. Other task-force recommendations were in line with the top-down policies increasingly prevalent around the world, such as instituting a new post for 'Director of Key Organisations', to cater more directly to major institutions.

OZCO framed its decision in vague and general terms, in the way of most government media releases, quoting Council CEO Jennifer Bott to the effect that: 'We need to focus on supporting excellent, innovative and distinctly

Australian artistic creation by building a vital and more viable art sector, and ensuring that all Australians are engaged with and enriched by the arts.' But to Australian ccd practitioners and their supporters, this sounded a lot like the Vietnam-era commander's rationale for obliterating a rural community, 'We had to destroy the village to save it.'

Protest was immediate and has grown increasingly heated over the intervening weeks. In fact, ccd activists tell me they are forming a national alliance to call attention to the issues and propose alternatives to the task force's recommendations — so a bit of silver lining for the field's self-mobilization appears to be emerging from this trouble.

But that's a recent development. The first line of response naturally focused on stopping the proposals' implementation. A February 9 response to Jennifer Bott from local government cultural development officers in South Australia was typical of the reports on ccd.net, an online community cultural development network based at the Community Arts Network of South Australia in Adelaide:

[I]t appears difficult to see how the new structure will be able to honour the vital role of local community cultural development. The absorption of ccd funding into the discreet Boards denies the hard work that has been put into building up the image and role of CCDB [the Community Cultural Development Board]. The proposed structure will diminish opportunities for communities and artists to diversify and experiment with art forms and contemporary issues ...



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Finally, we find it necessary to protest about the way this restructure has been handled, without consultation with ccd staff of the Australia Council, without consultation with the ccd sector, the State Government arts funding bodies, without consultation with Local Government and ccd workers and without consultation with the community, the people that pay all our salaries. How can we be expected to have faith in the new Australia Council restructure when it is informed by so little meaningful consultation?

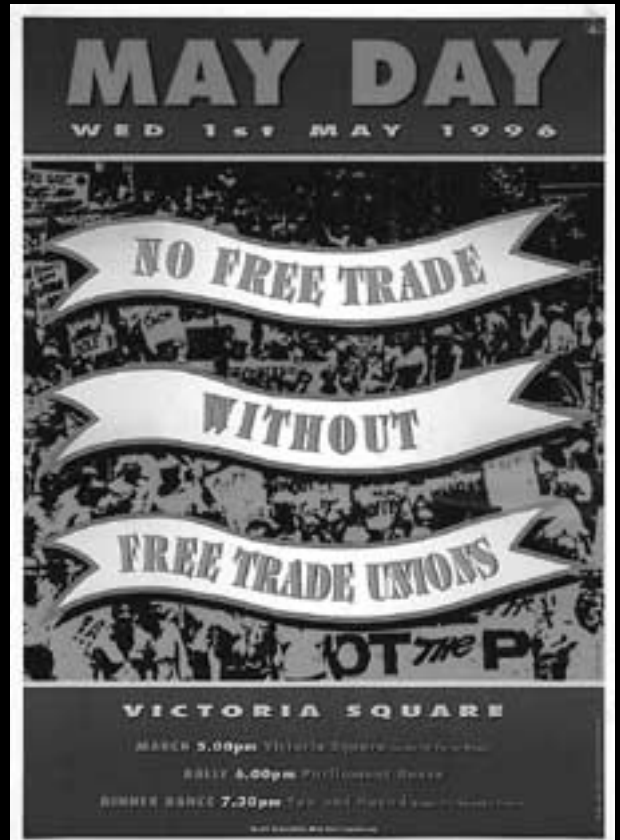
On February 21, responding to protests, OZCO convened a feedback session with members of the task force and 30 representatives from about 25 of the ccd groups affected by it. According to the February 23 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 'Community cultural development groups were asked on Monday if they supported the changes. Not a hand was raised.'

To the contrary, ccd groups asked the Council to declare a moratorium on implementation of the task force's recommendations. In a fact sheet stating their objections, activists said that, 'If OZCO agreed to a six-month Moratorium to consult properly on the changes then the immediate political problem would be solved. It's a face saving option for all concerned and costs virtually nothing. The Moratorium proposal also makes good practical sense and is a modest request in circumstances. The restructure has been developed without consulting. Much better outcomes are possible. Regional communities and people from outside the arts industry need a say in the process. The Moratorium proposal provides that opportunity.' But OZCO has so far refused to pause for input and consultation.

Four main concerns

According to a memo the ccd reps wrote to the task force following their February 21 meeting, their most pressing issues number four:

Review Processes: They feel the ccd sector is being disrespected, subjected to major changes without the consultation and deliberation that would have been part of a review for conventional arts fields: 'Review processes for other artform groups have been preceded by major independent inquiries with extensive sector consultation. These include The Nugent, Myer and the Small to Medium Performing Arts Companies, a dance, two music and two theatre reviews. Why in this instance has there been no proper consultative review before implementing the changes?'



May Day poster commissioned by the South Australian UTLC, 1996. Design: Jayne Amble, Community Arts Network SA. See page 31.

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Poster details see page 31




Peer Assessment: They feel the ccd sector has been singled out for second-class treatment, such as eliminating its own advisory and grant-making board when conventional arts disciplines have been allowed to retain theirs. There is also some feeling that these recommendations are the leading wedge of a move to end peer assessment, withdrawing from artists and groups the right to be judged by their peers: 'Given the FPTF [Future Planning Task Force] support for the principles of artform peer assessment why haven't the same changes to peer assessment structures been recommended equally across all Council's artform boards and divisional structures?'

Research: One main criticism from the field is that the task force has not shared hard data or research on which its recommendations were based, saying only that its members had given things full consideration. CCD activists doubt that, demanding that changes be grounded in solid information: 'What research and information on ccd was provided by management to inform the Taskforce's and the Council's subsequent decisions?'

Budget: OZCO has issued general statements to the effect that the recommended changes will not result in funding cuts, but again, the language is vague. Attempting to refute criticism, Council CEO Jennifer Bott has been issuing letters to news media all over Australia, many of which include language similar to her comments sent to the Adelaide, South Australia-based paper *The Advertiser*, which it published on February 4: 'We have stated that not one cent less will be spent on the arts as a result of any changes, and we stick to that.' But whether less will be spent on ccd itself is strongly contested by activists: 'The current proposal argues that the restructure will not result in any loss of funding to ccd, however, our analysis of the budget, including the cuts of 2004, indicates a net loss to ccd of \$1.67m out of a total budget of \$5.43m — around 25 per cent. Could you please explain this discrepancy?'

On February 23, OZCO's Deputy Chairman Terrey Arcus wrote a letter responding to these points. Arcus dismissed the call for a full review and more research, asserting that 'the reorganisation was focused on internal changes to the entire Australia Council and to ensure we can do things "better"'. Like any internal reorganisation, it was not appropriate to conduct an external review of Council's operations, including artform boards.' In response to concerns about peer assessment, he wrote, 'We are not trying to undermine peer assessment, but we are trying to increase our flexibility in assessing grants ...'

In response to budgetary concerns, Arcus offered lukewarm reassurances: 'We are proposing that funding to Community Partnerships projects that includes ccd projects is retained or increased under the proposed model ... [t]here is no reason why more money should not go to projects employing ccd practice; indeed that is our objective.' Again, ccd activists read between the lines: Are 'projects employing ccd practice' the same as ccd projects? The activists' fear that



OZCO wishes to blur this distinction is rooted in the language of the task force's proposal, which stipulates that funding previously earmarked exclusively for ccd projects would under the new arrangement be 'allocated to a number of ccd-specific grants programs and arts in the community initiatives,' the latter category potentially including things like after-school art classes for kids or music or dance performances in hospitals.

The greater good?

From both its more recent statements and a lengthy if vague public response to criticism posted on its Web site earlier in February, it appears that OZCO is proceeding with the announced changes, asserting they are being undertaken for the greater good:

The Task Force was aware of the successes of the Community Cultural Development Board, of the nature of Community Cultural Development practice and of the risks in removing the status of Community Cultural Development as a board with its own budget focused on Community Cultural Development practice.

But the Task Force took the view that the sort of expertise developed by Community Cultural Development practitioners, and within the Community Cultural Development Board, and the success of the Community Cultural Development Board in forming partnerships with communities and other bodies, could be best utilised where it was most needed: in informing and supporting the new

Community Partnerships section, and the community activities of the Council's artform boards.

Our aim is to see Community Cultural Development skills and expertise employed more broadly, and in a wider range of situations, with potential for increased funding to activities that can demonstrate that they are having impact for Australians and for Australian art.

The task force's proposals did not come out of the blue. CCD practitioners' responses are coloured by precedents, suspicions and other contextualizing information too detailed or subtle for an outsider like myself to easily grasp all the implications. For example, under the current Australian government, there have already been budget cutbacks. Practitioners told me that public investment in cultural research and development is now at an all-time low. To the extent that ccd is intrinsically experimental and innovative, they fear that the whole sector will soon be seen as expendable in comparison with conventional arts organisations and practices — that the government will jettison everything that seems like R&D, concentrating only on what is perceived as tried and true, unthreatening and uncontroversial.

According to Norm Horton and Sarah Moynihan, the ccd sector has worked very hard to be recognised for its own values and practices and to secure its own resources; now it is being punished for its accomplishments. This is from their January 25 letter in response to the task force's proposals:

There has been a big investment by Council and others over the last 30 years in establishing the theory, language, principles and international reputation of ccd practice in Australia. It has taken time for the sector to build this identity and status, but a great deal has been achieved. The ccd sector can now point with some considerable pride to an extraordinarily wide range of partnerships across all levels and government, business and community organisations, that would be the envy the Council's

... the government will jettison everything that seems like R&D, concentrating only on what is perceived as tried and true, unthreatening and uncontroversial.

other artform boards Through work like this the ccd sector has played a critical role in seeding and developing significant levels of support for 'arts in the community' activity in a wide range of departments and agencies and across all levels of government — both within the arts and cultural sector and beyond.

We are concerned that the identity, principles and in particular, the core research and development role and capacity of the ccd sector



that have made these outcomes possible could be lost in the Council's proposed restructure. We recognise and acknowledge Council's assertion that there are many within arts companies and the broader community — and artists working with communities — who believe the time has come to embrace a wider framework for arts in the community, and to build a new model to encourage wider community participation in the arts. Of course there are — and so there should be! In fact this growth in the 'community arts' sector, and the increasing demand for support has in a large part been generated by the successes of the ccd sector over

If you are interested in knowing more about what may be lost, read Norm and Sarah's history of ccd in Australia published in the anthology *Community, Culture and Globalization*, co-edited by Don Adams and myself and published by the Rockefeller Foundation. The book is available free from the Rockefeller Website, or you can download Norm and Sarah's essay in PDF form from their Web site.

the organisation and clout of the newly formed Alliance, as well as convinced by its arguments. People expect that OZCO will reverse its ccd recommendations almost entirely (a follow-up bulletin will appear here when all the details are in). What a fairytale ending! (Especially to advocates in the U.S., where we have yet to see any arts cuts reversed.) See what I mean by a shining beacon of possibility? ■

Footnotes

First published on the American Community Arts Network website
<http://www.communityarts.net>

Check out Feral Arts at www.feralarts.com.au and the Rockefeller foundation at www.rockfound.org

Nothing is perfect: My idea of heaven on earth is the freedom to learn from my mistakes, which is what Australia's ccd sector had for quite a few years. I'm sure that in the aggregate, the resulting projects have been as flawed as all human enterprises. When ccd activists felt more secure, their online forum tended to deal with subjects like the dangers of becoming too institutionalised, too cozy and co-opted, which may be the definitive example of irony in action. But even absent perfection, we have to stand up for what's right. I wouldn't like it to be said I did nothing while ccd's shining example was flushed down the loo (that's Australian for 'toilet'). Increasingly, many of us understand our work as part of a global movement to rescue culture from corporations and recognise its unique value as in healing our societies and our hearts. If that means anything, it entails a responsibility to our global allies, which is why I've taken this opportunity to enact it.

Arlene Goldbard is a writer, social activist, and consultant who works for justice, compassion and honour in every sphere, from the interpersonal to the transnational. Arlene's essays have appeared in many arts and political journals. Her books include Crossroads: Reflections on the Politics of Culture; Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development; Community, Culture and Globalization; and the novel Clarity. Arlene has helped dozens of activist and cultural organisations plan and solve problems; and given talks at dozens of universities and conferences in the U.S. and abroad. Visit <http://arlenegoldbard.com> for information on her writing, speaking and consulting. She would love to visit Australia!

I was going to ask you to join me by writing in protest to the Australia Council, but once again, the Australians seem to be showing us there's a better way. In the time between completing this article and its publication, Australian ccd workers have organised the National Arts and Cultural Alliance to advocate for their work. Evidently, OZCO's leadership was surprised and impressed by

the last two decades in developing and promoting policies, campaigning for community involvement in mainstream artforms, and delivering innovative arts and cultural projects. The demand is a key indicator that the development role of the ccd sector is working!

Community cultural development groups were asked on Monday if they supported the changes. Not a hand was raised.
Sydney Morning Herald
February 23 2005

Ros Bower

A reflection of the origin and purpose of the Ros Bower Award, and how things may change under a newly structured Australia Council.

The Moonah drive-thru car wash in Hobart is not a particularly auspicious place but that is where I was in 2003 when I received a phone call telling me I had received the Ros Bower Award. I hadn't been a contender for anything since that Richardson kid pipped me at the post in the 1963 Hobart Eisteddfod. Mum was pretty disappointed but she never let on.

My initial surprise was mixed with a good deal of self-doubt and confusion about what was expected of a recipient. After a while I grew into the idea and my self-consciousness was replaced by an appreciation of the history that underpins the award.

Architect of community arts

The Ros Bower Award was initiated by Andrea Hull and colleagues to honour Rosalie Bower's vision of furthering the philosophies and principles of community cultural development (ccd) and the founding of the Australia Council's Community Arts Board, precursor to the Community Cultural Development Board (CCDB).

Ros is fondly referred to as 'the architect of community arts' in Australia. In 1979, she wrote:

The arts should not be seen to be incarcerated in respectability. Nor should they be isolated, physically or psychologically, from the broader concept of the people's culture: leisure, sport, shopping, recreation, parks and gardens, activities associated with the environment and the national heritage, and the world of work and commerce. In Australia especially, without the massive backup of a visible historical culture, the arts must be integrated or they may perish.

(Ros Bower information sheet, Australia Council CCDB)

**She argued for
cultural democracy
and the right of all
Australians to have
access to the arts.**

As a policy officer for the Australia Council Ros quickly identified an enormous area of arts activities in Australia not qualifying for arts subsidies. She argued for cultural democracy and the right of all Australians to have access to the arts.

An honour and a duty

After the initial honour of being a recipient of the prestigious award ebbed I felt I couldn't rest on my laurels. I felt the onus was on me to provide something back to the sector. Receiving the accolade on the whole is a positive experience, but it is not without its detractors, some who describe the award as a ticket to a new direction out of ccd, the superannuation fund of the ccd or a swan song at the end of a ccd career! Perhaps fuelled by a dose of healthy cynicism, their comments amplify the issues of the low payment structure inherent in our work, of artworker burn out, [and the difficulties of] establishing a career path in an insecure sector.

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1981



Poster commissioned by the South Australian Council of Social Services.
Design: Deborah Kelly, Co Media, Adelaide c.1987
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The award is one of several non taxable awards offered by the Australia Council for the Arts and while there are still some grey areas surrounding the decision by the taxation office not to tax the award, it remains a windfall for ccd workers fortunate enough to be nominated and acknowledged by their peers as a ccd worker who has unique qualities and has made a lasting contribution to the sector.

Whatever your personal opinion of the award it remains one of the most prestigious arts awards in Australia with a monetary gift of \$50,000. The Archibald, Australia's premier visual arts portraiture prize in comparison is worth \$35,000. The Ros Bower isn't just about the money, with it comes the recognition and prestige of being a leader in the field.

In selecting a nominee to honour with this award the Community Cultural Development Board, assisted by the Ros Bower Memorial Trust, takes into account the following qualities of a nominee's work:

- Sustained commitment and dedication to community cultural development
- Artistic leadership
- A substantial body of work which has resulted in an improved quality of life in a particular community or communities; and
- Innovative contribution to extending the range and scope of ccd

Michelle Kotevski, Acting Manager of the CCDB, indicates that the Ros Bower Award along with the Young Leaders Award will be offered in the future under the auspices of [the new] Community Partnership (CP) section of the Council. The CCDB's current awards will all sit within CP and be assessed by the Community Partnership committee.

Other Australia Council Boards have their own awards such as Writers Emeritus Award, Red Ochre Award, Don Banks Music Award and the Visual Arts/Craft Emeritus Award and Emeritus Medal.

The list of recipients can always be used as a resource of leaders and advisors ...

Alumni

The list of past recipients of the award reads as an impressive who's who of ccd. It includes Sally Marsden, Scott Rankin, Ruby Red, Maude Clark, Cath Cantlon, Bryn Griffith, Marla Guppy, Vivien Binns, Flying Fruit Fly Circus and Gararge Graphix to name only a few.

Many of these people I know and respect and I have often found opportunities to meet up and have long discussions with them on the problems and issues that surround working in ccd. It's always been both personally and professionally rewarding. The list of recipients can always be used as a resource of leaders and advisors who have sometimes a great diversity of approaches to ccd and the areas in which they work.

Sally Marsden, Ros Bower recipient 2000, comments:

In terms of leadership, the Ros Bower recipients are under utilized by the sector. Many of us in fact have not found a role for ourselves within the field other than the role we occupied prior to receiving the award. Recently, the CCDB drew us forward for policy and direction debates, but we are not really fully recognized by others in the field. I am not

Why we need a

A lament on Australia's growing conservatism and half won causes and a rallying cry for social leaders and civic activists. First delivered to the Communities in Control conference in Melbourne, 7th June 2004, convened by www.ourcommunity.com.au and Centacare Catholic Family Services.

Hard to like the country I love

I usually end speeches by trying to cheer up glum audiences with my favourite aphorism. Today I'll begin with it, because then I can get it out of the way and we can have a happy ending instead.

Many years ago Pablo Casals, the great Spanish cellist, was having his eighty-something birthday in Madrid, and they held a press conference for him and the dear old soul came out and was droning on the way elderly people like him (now I) do about what a mess the world was. And at some point he obviously heard himself; he stopped, and then said two sentences, which I love, because though they don't at first sight seem to fit together I think you'll eventually agree that they do. The first sentence reeks of fatalism, and the second has just a hint of audacity and courage. And they're universally applicable to whatever tasks we might face, and most of us are in tasks beyond belief and almost certainly beyond human ability to fix, and he said **'The situation is hopeless. We must take the next step.'** So I'm starting where I usually finish.

For the last eight years I have been despairing. I despaired of living in a country where the toxicity of bigotry had been released into the environment, had taken hold, and had not let go – as in, for example, the appalling Tampa episode. At every moment, though, I take comfort in the thought that there are still people who won't cop it – people who insist on being against the government, or the Council, or indeed the Labor Party (after all, when it came to the Tampa the electorate had no choice at all – both Labour and Liberals reacted with identically draconian positions). The country that I love I was finding very hard to like. Something terrible had happened.

I presume that the reason so many people are here is a sense of optimism (mixed, perhaps, with a little desperation; on such a brief acquaintance I won't speculate on the proportions of those two.) Hugh McKay is a brilliant social researcher, and I think he has one important thing terribly correct. He talks of the phenomenon whereby people seem increasingly detached from politics, not wanting to know about it, just drifting off, feeling so alienated from what passes for government and from what passes as opposition that they just don't care any more. Hugh tells me, incidentally, that from his sampling he sees insufficient evidence of change of heart to bring about a change of government at the next election. As a qualitative, not a quantitative, researcher he thinks that people are still thrilled to bits that the value of their house has doubled, and that the war against terror will provide them with a rationalisation for staying with the current mob.

Another notion of social involvement

However, he also says that while families are still shrinking (and pretty soon a majority of older Australians will live alone in households of one), that isolation will be

offset by, or create, a deepening desire for a sense of cohesion and a sense of community which will lead to an unprecedented warp and weft of the social fabric and collective effort. In other words, we'll substitute for family another notion of social involvement and perhaps activism. This makes us sound rather like coral polyps about to start building a multi-coloured reef, and that's not a bad thing.

Nobody wants to be an island and polyps and people both want to create either profoundly beautiful coral reefs or social structures of increasing strength and transcendental beauty. But we've both had a bad time – coral polyps have had to contend with crown of thorns starfish, global warming draining them of their vibrancy, and waters polluted by farm chemicals, while social reef builders like us have had to contend with the toxicity of recent Australian politics and now globally with the genius of George W. Bush for herding people into pens of prejudice and Disneyfied patriotism.

Mistrust and bigotries, inchoate fears, rafts of resentment have been used to create dysfunction, to break down notions of society and cohesion, and to encourage a fearful and resentful individualism – a lower form of social consciousness which is then further dulled by the crap that passes for mass entertainment and the narcosis of shopping. But throughout this dark era, I have found that on every issue where you ask people to stand up and be counted individuals and organisations can still be created, rallied, or powerfully choreographed, and looking around at the

And it taught me that if you want to change things, you do it with people, not to people.

revolution now

PHILLIP ADAMS

awesome size of this conference and knowing that at least half as many people again wanted to get in, I think it's fair to say that we might be at the beginning of a new revolution.

It's a quiet one. Thus far too quiet. It might be time for the mice to start roaring and remind everyone about the changes that can be brought about when the community coalesces around a cause, focuses on an issue, decides to attack the mighty forces of cynicism and the all-powerful opposition on any issue. For while we have been through a dark period, and whilst we're far from out of it, much has been achieved that we should all be proud of.

It's good to sit up here with Rhonda Galbally, a crazed revolutionary if ever I have seen one. I have a long history of working with Rhonda in a number of campaigns [where] she's whipped me into political shape. There was the case of the disability movement, where with all my good intentions I profoundly misunderstood the nature of the task. I was hired by COAG to come up with a campaign to launch the International year of Disabled Persons. Well, I knew all about that. After all, I was a friend of Alan Marshall. I wrote these dazzling scripts about Beethoven, who was deaf, then Stephen Hawkins, who's in a wheelchair and who I had in fact just interviewed for the first time – brilliant people with disabilities, and my idea was to tell the able-bodied how clever people with disabilities could be.

Then Rhonda, who I'd never met in my life, suddenly appeared in my office, raging at me, and within a couple of weeks we'd become Torville and Dean. And I had to go back and tell all the governments to scrap the campaign that they'd happily approved, and indeed applauded, on the grounds that it was totally and utterly wrong. I don't think that in the whole history of the world anyone had told such a posh panel of

Ministers that everything they'd agreed on was tosh, but I knew it was, because Rhonda had shown me. My problem was that I'd had a lot of political influence, but I'd done it from the top down. The great thing about a newspaper column is that it gives you access, and leverage, and I'd managed to set up all the film and cultural bodies mentioned in Rhonda's introduction [to this presentation] by talking to a rapid succession of Prime Ministers and Premiers. I'd never been involved in grassroots activism, and didn't know anything about it.

Well, along came Rhonda and gives me buggery. And she made me realise that the people who should be taking decisions about the campaign weren't the clever dicks like me but the disabled communities themselves. So we threw away our glowing sentimental lines and came up with the simple argument 'Break down the Barriers'. The barriers were physical, psychological, everywhere. As Rhonda dragged me around the country and forced me to confront issues I realised that organisations which I'd always thought of as progressive and compassionate were in fact little short of gulags for people with disabilities. I was shown around places where, I discovered, disabled people weren't allowed to have sex. It was a series of shattering revelations. We decided we'd make the year a source of political activism, and we went on to win awards – the Golden Lion at Cannes, that sort of thing. And it taught me that if you want to change things, you do it with people, not to people.

I look back and wonder whether the celebrations we had then were too early, because suddenly you realise that all these years later the same problems still exist. Some have been modified – some good legislation has been passed – but physical access is still difficult, and bigotries and prejudices towards disabled people are still powerful – not perhaps as powerful, but still present. On no issue I can think of have we

That's why we need an ongoing revolution. That's why the people in this room need to roar. Because the best ideas belong to the community.

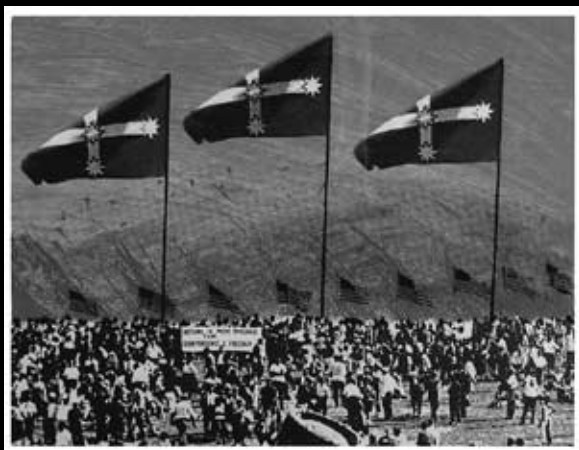
achieved a lasting and final victory. It's always a process, not an event. The revolution has to be ongoing. The challenges we're faced with are different from those faced by community activists over the past five decades.

For a start, what advocate these days can express a point of view without it being viewed from the prism of right and left or – more correctly – right and centre-right politics. Ideas are not judged on their merits but too largely on their politics. Rights are championed or ignored only when and if the political parties sense that a political advantage can be eked out of it. Where there is no advantage there is no change. That's why we need an ongoing revolution. That's why the people in this room need to roar. Because the best ideas belong to the community. The agenda belongs to the people and we have to fight back and reclaim the debate. In any mature society ideas, opinions, criticisms, and debate are tolerated, and not just tolerated in some disinterested way but encouraged because the community is the eventual winner when people are encouraged to think, to speak out, to dare, to prod, to shake off the shackles of the prevailing left/right, pro/anti conventions and talk about what is best for their community.

Are we going backwards?

In preparing this I thought about some of the battlegrounds of the past where great change was brought about – and where we stand today. One of those areas was in the

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1981



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women's (and men's) revolution arising out of the women's rights movement in the early 70s – where the young Rhonda, along with many of the women and men here today, showed courageous leadership by fighting for equal opportunity for women. Why the idea of equal rights was regarded as a travesty and the destruction of everything Australia knew to be good and true I'll never know. I still can't fathom the vehemence and the opposition to women being treated as equals and the spurious arguments that were floated to stop it happening. Women were at the ramparts – and change did come. Most of it begrudgingly, most of it in a mean-spirited minimalist way in which the ground was given up inch by inch by inch, but at least it was taken. The women's movement empowered itself through the strength of argument, the strength of advocacy and with determination. Women forced people – men and women – to change attitudes about what is a normal family; that women are entitled to the same roles in the workforce as men; that women do have the ability to be leaders and are entitled to the opportunity to lead. We had these powerful voices calling for change and only the bigoted, the belligerent, the bombastic or the bloody tone-deaf failed to listen. We were seeing social change – slow, but the momentum was turning. Women's rights became an issue, if not the issue.

Now, however, the question that has to be asked is 'Are we going backwards?' While we still have a situation in which women receive only 80 per cent of income for work of equal value; where there are still numerous visible and invisible barriers to women having equal access to participation in all walks of life – including work; we have in fact, drifted into a surreal Alice in Wonderland zone where the major players are joined at the hip in an unholy, bi-partisan scramble to protect men's rights. We have a situation where women who are not staying at home and pumping out one for mummy, one for daddy and one for the green and gold are almost seen as un-Australian, and where their lack of output can be solely blamed for the ongoing ageing of our country.

At the same time we still can't convince these same men who are so demanding of women to populate or perish [that] there is a need for blanket paid maternity leave. We still have a situation where a female CEO is considered a freak to be gawked at in the business pages – not because she is a great manager or leader, or thinker – but because she is a woman. Even most of our non-profit boards have men acting as the chair (unless they are broke or small – or both). Supporting the 'equal' rights of men and women is paramount.

But again – as a community – we seem to have taken our foot off the advocacy pedal and the result is that rather than a debate over equal rights, equal access, equal opportunity it has instead turned into a pissing competition. Again it comes down to a simplistic (and divisive) version of men versus women, the so-called men's movement turns out to be about he versus she. It's as though we are incapable of having a debate that doesn't get down to a simplistic equation that equal rights for one has to come at the cost of the other. This might suit the politicians' need to turn everything into adversarial black and white issues, but it isn't helpful. It creates the false and ridiculous question of whether the opportunities provided by the liberation of women have gone too far. To even contemplate that suggestion for a moment is to give it far more credence than it deserves.

It's as though we are incapable of having a debate that doesn't get down to a simplistic equation that equal rights for one has to come at the cost of the other.

The revolution was to create a cradle-to-grave equality of opportunity and equality of value. It is far from over. Far, far from over. Of course, it was ever thus. If you listen to the arguments now swirling around the refugees they're exactly the same crap that was produced in the era of White Australia, and if you listen to the appalling nonsense that was used in the fight about the Republic it was word for word the dialogue you would have heard in 19th Century colonial Australia. I am constantly astonished with the way we revisit the past, or are drawn back into it as though by some powerful and implacable force of gravity. Everything seems to be a series of déjà vu moments. Like Groundhog Day. Where the minute we finish pulling down a wall and stop to draw breath, someone comes along and re-builds it so the only thing you can do is start again.

I was delusional to think the revolution was one that could be won in a short time. There is still systemic discrimination in education, employment, sport and recreation – and lifestyle. We are still haranguing to get kids with disabilities equal standing in sports and to be able to attend schools and have their presence be taken as normal and not an imposition. Where we still have building codes in a number of states, including here in Victoria, which don't guarantee access to every building to those with a disability there is still some way to go to say we have a fair and equitable society. Today you would be considered a fool for even suggesting that people shouldn't have to work for the dole. We have a situation today where some welfare agencies can default people from receiving the dole. We have a situation where the people who can least afford it are punished for being overpaid by Centrelink. They read about themselves in newspapers as 'welfare cheats' who have been caught in a massive 'fraud' crackdown. The same newspapers carry stories about politicians taking toyboys overseas in apparent breach of the rules – but that is okayed by Ministerial decree. No talk about 'welfare cheats' or crackdowns in that case, just a little bit of fence-mending. The transgressor is referred to as 'one of the hardest working people around'.

Oh for the right for everyone to be able to work so hard. Why are we making the people who have the least amount of power

grovel for scraps? Why do they have to prove again and again that they are worthy of this or that measly benefit? Why do we rush to persecute and prosecute instead of asking whether the system is working as it should? Is the whole issue of social justice passé? Why do we have a competition for the title of who is the toughest on welfare recipients? Why are politicians prepared to fight for the kudos that comes with being tough on those at the bottom of the pile and yet blanch or prevaricate when it comes to taking the same action against those at the top?

It is easy to ask the questions. It is a lot harder to answer them, and I think the enthusiasm for both asking and answering has been missing of late. I want to state an unpopular truth - that every Australian has a right to NOT be homeless. As a wealthy country it is a disgrace that so many can't change that situation. Every Australian has a right to health care, and every Australian has a right to free education – yes, even at tertiary level. Rhonda Galbally was the only person in Australia to resign from a university council in protest at the 25 per cent increase in HECS fees. Like me, she believes in free university education for everyone who qualifies to get into university. It amazes me that those who have prospered for so long from the benefits of a free education can so easily – and with so little debate – condemn another generation to have to make such a life-determining decision based on their ability to pay.

While the Opposition makes sport with the Government about its high-taxing status, the reality is that we, as a nation, are still among the lowest taxing countries in the developed world. Surely the debate could be about whether our tax levels are sufficient to ensure the country as a whole enjoys the benefits from economic growth. Most people, when asked, say they would prefer a better society to a few bob off every week from Peter Costello's tax cuts. Tony Vinson recently produced a report for Jesuit Social Services (and the changes in Australian society, incidentally, can be gauged by the fact that I've moved from being condemned from every Catholic pulpit in Australia on the same Sunday – the congregations being told that it was a sin to read any newspaper that published me – to being in bed with the Jesuits; not only that, I'm now involved in

refugee work with Malcolm Fraser. My fellow leftie on the issue is John Hewson, and my best friends on the barricades are Josephite nuns) and that report found that the opportunities for the poorest in our community can be determined not by their own qualities or abilities but by postcodes. That has to change.

Why are politicians prepared to fight for the kudos that comes with being tough on those at the bottom of the pile and yet blanch or prevaricate when it comes to taking the same action against those at the top?

Multiculturalism is another area where we appear to have gone in reverse, in a few short years erasing many hard-fought gains. It was an area that I for one was proud to say was a great success. Australia became what it is because of the waves of migrants that have thankfully washed up our shores (and in the earlier years, of course, many of them were also reffos). We encouraged people and enabled people to maintain their own culture. Instead of trying to make them exactly the same as us we celebrated the fact that they had their own culture as well. And we all gained from it. It set us apart from so many of the divided countries they left behind – as I once said in an Australia Day talk at the National Press Club, the rest of the world was full of San Andean faults, immovable forces grinding away at each other, while what we had in Australia was more like a bucket full of gravel; such a complicated society, so many ethnicities, that it was our strength. A lot of people don't believe that any more.

The last few years have been a disgrace. The use of simplistic and divisive propaganda to brand refugees as some sort of evil threat to our national security rather than troubled people deserving of our compassion was a useful political wedge. We have never had a refugee problem. We have had, on average, one thousand boat people per annum for 20

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years. That's it! Two British Airways jumbo-loads landing at Mascot will have that many tourists overstaying their visas, but they're not whacked into detention centres. It was always bullshit, the great lie, along with queue-jumping, illegals, and kids overboard – boy, have we had some lies lately. Was our flirtation with tolerance, simply that – a flirtation? Surely our strength comes from being a hybrid nation - a bitser nation, or as Michael Oondatje once said, 'a mongrel population'.

I have written often of the rights of our Indigenous people – and again, after slowly making some progress, we seem to have come across an almighty Stop sign. In the 1960s Australia did something that astonished the world, and ourselves; we passed referenda removing Constitutional discrimination against Aborigines (and very few referenda are passed; a majority of people in a majority of states hardly ever happens, let alone the 90 per cent majority that was achieved here). On the 30th anniversary of those referenda I had Faith Bandler in the studio – one of the most beautiful human beings I've ever known, with one of those faces that just radiates goodness – talking about her efforts back in the 60s to get them passed. I asked her 'Faith, if that referendum was to be held tomorrow, would it pass?' She said 'No way.'

'Is it because we've become more bigoted?'

'No,' she said, 'but racism has become better organised.'

What has happened to the revolutions?

I suppose if the whole debate about Indigenous rights stops at the office of a man who can't get his head around the impact he could have by uttering a single five-letter word, what hope have we got of having a real debate about the other issues facing our Indigenous people. There is a revolution going on – but it's well and truly stuck in reverse. I don't want to sound like an old grump harking back to the good old days, but I have to wonder what has happened to the revolutions? They're probably more important than ever before. The need for community leaders to reclaim the revolution is greater today that it was 20 or 30 years ago, because the enemy is more powerful today. Who could have imagined that someone as bizarre, as baroque, as ludicrous as Dubya [George W. Bush] would become the most powerful man on earth? Would you hire that man to do anything? The mind boggles. Reagan was bad enough, but Bush II would make Dan Quayle seem like an intellectual. Around the world his voice is now being heard and his values echoed – in our own case, echoed and amplified. I don't know exactly when politicians stopped listening to real communities. Recently, remember, we had the largest demonstrations in human history as millions upon millions around the world marched against the Iraq war. In every country, popular opinion was overwhelmingly against the war. In every country that counted, the people's leaders simply ignored them. No wonder people switch off, no wonder people feel completely disaffected. Even when you speak out nobody wants to listen, and that's another reason to give up. The 'pollies' now make policy to influence or drive the polls and then, in a self-satisfying, self-fulfilling script, use the same polls to drive their politics. It's their very own feedback loop. There seems to be a sense of futility eating into our faith in politics – even in democracy itself – and as a result we seem to be giving up on trying to influence it. Not everyone. Certainly not everyone, but there is definitely

The need for community leaders to reclaim the revolution is greater today that it was 20 or 30 years ago, because the enemy is more powerful today.

a sense of disengagement, of indifference. And if we don't arrest it, our ability to affect change, to achieve monumental policy victories and transform communities, will be diminished.

It wasn't always like this. Those courageous, often unpopular leaders of the movements I mentioned earlier, always felt they could change the world. They knew it wasn't easy, that it was a journey of a thousand steps but they were prepared to take that step and the next one – and the one after that. If they lost a bit of ground, they dusted themselves off and had another go. Many of those leaders are still kicking around today. I don't have to look far to see the fire in the eyes of the next generation of change merchants. The fire in the belly is still there, but we need to breathe some more life into the fires. We need them to blaze, to spread. The flames must be fanned rather than trying to stamp them out. In many ways revolutionaries today are operating in a tougher environment. It's a climate of terror in more ways than one. Terror is used as the tool to stifle debate, to stifle thought, or to enable appalling laws to pass through parliament or congress.

And yet people are here today from the entire community spectrum. Look around. Leaders are in here from all over the community spectrum – the disability movements, self-help movements, Indigenous groups, health groups, welfare, education – sports, the arts, local government, bureaucrats from state and federal government and business – groups from rural and regional Australia. We're here together, looking not for the things that divide us but for the things that bring us together, the things we can change to build a stronger Australia. This is a very broad church. As an atheist I mean that in a totally secular way, but it does lift the spirits that in this coming together there are signs that the revolution has not entirely failed, but has been rekindled. The leaders are here among us. What we need to do as a community – as communities – is to support them and to support the search for ideas, for new ideas. We need to return to the stage where we are not scared of debate, where we are not intimidated out of tackling the big issues. We must reject any attempts to drive wedges amongst us.

Giving birth to creativity

Rather than the present situation where politicians set the debate decided upon by pollsters and their own political imperatives, let us set the debate. It means that as a collective we have to fight for each other for the right to fight, we have to protect our democratic right to be heard. This, and this alone, is what makes a civil society. We can't sit back and say that's not our argument because we have all done that and as a whole, we have all lost out. All our causes have gone backwards. No one has gained by the fear that in speaking out, our own cause might be disadvantaged. All our causes, all the revolutions, big and small, have been stalled by the divide and conquer ethos of the past decade. Look, I have to say that the only reason I've survived at the ABC, or indeed at News Limited, is that I keep ranting. I've become too difficult to sack. I'm kept around to demonstrate pluralism. There is hope in this. Don't give in. Don't give up. Be cheeky. What have you got to lose except your job, your career, your house, your family, and your life? Apart from that it's a laydown misere.

Several years ago I was running the national Australia Day Council, and I was encouraging people to submit new preambles to the Australian constitution, because our present Constitution is a dirge written by real estate agents. I wrote one myself, and I would like to quote one of the paragraphs I included in that preamble:

Rather than fearing difference, we wish to be a people who celebrate it, recognising that diversity can give birth to creativity as much as conflict. Yet we do not seek to be a society that fears even the most vigorous debate, for it is through the testing of ideas, through endless argument and negotiation, that a nation retains its vitality and survives. But let our debates be based on mutual respect and a denial of violence. Australia wants no blood upon the wattle.

We don't want blood on the wattle. But we do want to be able to wave the wattle with pride. We do want to be able to say that we are a country that encourages ideas and the community leaders who have the courage

to put them forward. We want to be a country that takes pride in the way we treat and include those that need our help.

On the centenary of Federation I wanted Australia to celebrate the opposite approaches to those it began with. We began in exclusion, and I wanted to celebrate inclusion – because before that lightning struck we were tantalisingly close to that ideal. We want to be proud that we are the most progressive nation when it comes to providing opportunities, assistance and access for everyone – no matter their postcode, no matter their level of physical or mental capacity, no matter the colour of their skin, no matter the accent, no matter their age, no matter their sexuality (and, incidentally, I find it extraordinary that Bush and Howard are going on about same-sex marriage – what about their own? Though of course that's a ménage à trios with Tony Blair ...). This is the revolution. A revolution that cannot rest. A revolution that can't be stifled. A revolution that brings into being the just, fair and equal Australia we can all vaguely envisage. We need it now. We need it tomorrow and I'm afraid we're going to need it the next day and the day after that. And the one after that. Forever. Because the need, and the task, will never end. It is a process, not an event.

We need you. You're the architects of this revolution. You're the leaders that are already making it happen. We need your leadership. We need your fight. I'm sorry, but we need you not to rest. It's a hard task. It's a thankless task. But we need it to happen.

'The situation is hopeless. We must take the next step.' ■

Footnote

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Philip Adams is a well known Australian broadcaster and social commentator.



'Untitled' by Pierre Comarmond from the Cronulla railway line mural project. Photo: Pierre Comarmond

nothing about us without us

GARETH WREFORD

Disability, Arts and Activism

Considering the arts in isolation from the lives of people with disabilities and the general community only tells half the story, so Arts Access Australia advocates broadly for change.

ARTS

Access Australia is the national arts and disability peak body with members in every State and Territory. Our role is to advocate and lobby to increase access to, and participation in, the arts for the one in five Australians with disabilities. As an organisation that relies on government funding our core business means we need to carefully build and negotiate relationships with government to achieve our goals.

The challenge for a small organisation is to turn what often starts as reactive issue-based advocacy into something more strategic, based on our longer-term priorities. Our advocacy activities can also be an opportunity to build relationships with current and potential funders as greater resources are something Arts Access Australia needs to find if we are to be more effective.

Arts Access Australia's willingness to advocate to our one core funding body has recently been put to the test following the Australia Council's announcement of a major restructure by media release on 8 December 2004. The initial media release and documents made no mention of disability as a priority, program or policy area. Having attended the Australia Council's public forum outlining details of the restructure in Sydney on 16 May 2005 Council has since publicly renewed its commitment to arts and disability though it was a worrying few months for us in between.

Disability, art and activism

Disability has never been a more pressing policy issue in Australia. With better health care, greater pride in identifying as having a disability and an ageing population, disability prevalence will rise over the coming decade. The face of this strengthening disability sector is represented by young groups like Arts Roar in Launceston, Tasmania. Formed to address the lack of accessible arts opportunities in the area, the Arts Roar committee has developed numerous innovative ways of highlighting their concerns. Gerard Smith's *no access for me* postcard is the result of a collaboration with TAFE design students and handing the card out to inaccessible businesses and venues is a creative local example of activism.

Looking at disability, art and activism traces a path between individuals and organisations and local responses to big picture issues. For Arts Access Australia our work is about joining the dots at a national level. Arts and disability often falls into the gap between arts sector and disability sector buck passing and this is why Arts Access Australia exists. In this context we're fortunate to have Australia Council triennial support and additional project and company development funding.

Apart from enjoying the right to create art for its own sake activists with disabilities are often drawn to art. Art isn't necessarily problem focussed on disability, instead it can be an opportunity to be a creative person, an artist, to have a voice and be heard. In collaborative art projects the unique nature of the team work involved in problem solving and communication, taking abstract ideas through to a physical form, can create great art, social networks and employment related skills. Overall it's the striving for, and expectation of, excellence that creates achievement and the potential for social change.

Disability, art and careers

Having an interesting job and even running your own business are opportunities people with disabilities are less likely to have. When your mainstream job options are limited and the alternative is supported employment (the new name for sheltered workshops) then pursuing your creative career is made even more difficult by perceptions of the arts as a non-vocational, or therapeutic, activity. There are exceptions as Disability and the Arts, Disadvantage and the Arts Australia (DADAA) WA's FREIGHT Gallery in Fremantle is showing. Opened in November 2003, the DADAA WA FREIGHT Gallery works with over 30 artists with mental health issues and aims to move them from passive welfare to supported employment, vocational training and income producing and self enterprise activities using small business models based around a professional arts studio. Already the gallery is selling up to 60 per cent of work produced.

Examples like DADAA WA's FREIGHT influenced Arts Access Australia to join a disability participation and payments

alliance with the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations focussing on the Government's welfare reform and employment policy agendas. The recently announced Federal budget included changes that invested in employment assistance for people with disabilities, although we will see 54,000 people with disabilities face effective payment cuts of \$20 - \$40 a week from 2006. Arts Access Australia is already hearing anecdotally that people will leave employment in the arts to try and protect their higher paying pension and benefits.

Employment and involvement in the arts creates alternative visions and voices that in the absence of effective policy can show a way forward on relevant issues. The arts are a place for critical thinking, intervention, questioning and humour. Art strives to make people feel and this engaging of emotions contains the potential for attitudinal change. Attitudinal change in the non-disabled population is consistently identified by people with disabilities as a significant, if not the biggest, barrier to inclusion.

The low expectations for people with disabilities are sometimes internalised and when reinforced by stereotyped media views can be demoralising. SANE Australia, the national charity for people with mental illness, has an artist Simon Champ on their Board. Arts Access Australia has joined a SANE Australia initiative seeking to bring State and Territory legislation into line with Tasmania making vilification of people with disabilities unlawful. A 2004 Productivity Commission Review of the Disability Discrimination Act found that it had benefited people with physical disabilities slightly more than those with psychiatric or intellectual disabilities. Public and media attitudes towards people with a psychiatric disability and mental illness were cited as particular targets for future work. What could a local creative response, seeking

Apart from enjoying the right to create art for its own sake activists with disabilities are often drawn to art.



Daniel Daw is a young artist and mentor on reins, rope and red tape. Photo: Chris Herzfeld

A crucial shift in thinking is to involve people for their abilities, what they can do, rather than build up an industry around their need for support.

control over your own representation and the way you are perceived by others, look like?

Pierre Comarmond is a NSW based sculptor, visual, multi-media, public artist and project leader on the Cronulla railway line mural project working with Simon Champ, fifteen other artists and the support of City Rail. Installation of the murals will take place in mid 2005. In an article he wrote for the Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW newsletter Pierre says;

'... the process and the results of the mural workshops will counter a lot of the bad press we hear about people with mental illness... with exposure to thousands of commuters each day!'

Challenges for arts and disability

Pierre's project is supported by the restructured Community Cultural Development Board (CCDB) of the Australia Council. The dissolution of the CCDB to the new Community Partnerships section is

significant for the disability sector. It is community cultural development practice that has supported entry points and pathways in the arts, ensuring creative control of projects by people with disabilities, and investing in long term arts development to produce some highly innovative, excellent contemporary art and arts leaders. We hope this recognition and support will continue in the new Community Partnerships section.

For Arts Access Australia we know our work is more effective when taking place in tandem with Australia Council leadership like that of the old CCDB. Our conversations with the Australia Council predate the restructure announcement as Council had a three-year disability and the arts action plan due for release in late 2003. It didn't happen. An action plan, as the name suggests, is a practical document that outlines what a whole organisation will do to ensure people with disabilities are included in all aspects of the programs and services offered. Council has a history of leadership in advocating for the rights of

people with disabilities and demonstrating the benefits of inclusion for all. This has been demonstrated through original and unique research on cultural participation rates for people with disabilities and two subsequent publications giving practical advice to arts organisations on the 1992 Disability Discrimination Act and the benefits associated with attracting people with disabilities as audiences for the arts. Arts Access Australia wrote to the Australia Council on International Day of People With a Disability, 3 December 2004, inviting Council to clarify their position. We also asked if Council was including people with disabilities in their Future Planning process. Little did we know what was about to happen.

Our subsequent response to the restructure announcement included meetings with, and letters to, the Australia Council in addition to our formal response to the Future Planning process, a media release, an article on artshub and e-bility and distribution of a pro forma advocacy letter to our sector encouraging their direct action. The decision

to make our concerns public was not taken lightly. It was driven by the lack of response to the issues we raised and tight consultation timelines. The best reply was an email on 29 April that outlined Council's renewed commitment to arts and disability.

Being part of a protest movement to improve the lives and opportunities of people with disabilities has a sense of a common and worthwhile purpose and can be exhilarating in between the moments of frustration. One highlight was the March responses of Artspeak and the National Arts and Culture Alliance (NACA) to Council's Future Planning process. Both made specific mention of Council's silence on disability. Arts Access Australia was encouraged by this level of arts peer interest in disability and know that our response alone would not have been as effective without this broader support.

A time of change can also be a time for reflection and refining of individual and organisational goals. Within the Arts Access Australia network of national, State and Territory organisations the artists employed are people with and without disabilities including Executive Officers. Leadership by, rather than for or with, people with disabilities is a recurring theme in our discussions. As someone without a disability representing Arts Access Australia in various forums it's an issue I'm aware of.

People without disabilities who have relevant experience and knowledge of disability can work in the disability sector though I would be more comfortable with this argument if people with disabilities had the same education and employment rates in mainstream areas as the non-disabled population. The equivalent experience is walking into Indigenous organisations and talking to the white people who run them. There is a need to provide a voice for those who

are silent or unable to participate in debate while also developing skills and pathways to leadership. The balance is often a question of resources and requires more than a simple organisational commitment towards empowerment. The disability sector mantra 'Nothing about us without us' neatly captures the desire of people with disabilities to be involved in decisions that affect them. Where is the handover point? Those individuals with disabilities who succeed are often the exceptions who prove the rule showing just how difficult it can be.

Leaders and activists

A crucial shift in thinking is to involve people for their abilities, what they can do, rather than build up an industry around their need for support. In looking at projects that work with disability it can be instrumental to examine the budget behind the rhetoric and identify who is getting paid. The Arts Access Australia network is also interested in identifying and promoting the work of younger leaders and directly developing younger leaders to continue the work of older disability activists.

Emma Butler formed the Arts Roar committee in April 2003 and her ongoing leadership has been recognised through a Tasmanian Young Achiever of the Year Award for Community Service in 2004. Arts Roar is based around a strong core of young people with a physical disability who are committed to making a difference for Launceston people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Committee members meet once a month to discuss projects, update everyone on developments and plan future activities.

In Adelaide, Arts In Action noted the deaths of prominent local disability activists Jeff Heath and Richard Llewellyn and, along with the disability



L'il Devil 2000. Digital print 99.5 x 149.5 cm
The L'il Devil is Caroline Bowditch taken as part of the intimate encounters series on disability and sexuality.
Photo: Belinda Mason-Lovering

Art strives to make people feel
and this engaging of emotions
contains the potential for
attitudinal change.

NO



ACCESS FOR ME

Gerard Smith, Arts Roar committee member, designed the 'No Access For Me' postcard for distribution to inaccessible establishments. Arts Roar is an arts program established in Launceston Tasmania to address the lack of accessible arts opportunities in the area.

community, asked where the next generation of activists were? Arts in Action's *Reins, Ropes & Red Tape* is a significant project that they hope will inspire and develop new disability rights activists. Due to start this year the project marks a long-term commitment to young leaders. Theatre designer Gaelle Mellis, film maker Quentin Kenihan and dancer Daniel Daw will work with up to ten young people with an interest in the arts and experience of disability. Having an artistic team with disabilities and in particular Dan's involvement as a young artist and mentor will drive the success of the project. In order to best explore leadership, activism, disability issues and the role of individuals in social change Carclew Youth Arts Centre and Disability Action will partner with Arts in Action.

The links between art, disability and identity is often strong for activists. Any minority identity political movement is at some stage in opposition to the mainstream. For Arts Access Australia we see great strength in the diversity of views around arts and disability, disability arts and those who just want to be artists and not identify as having a disability. Our common aim is the social model of disability that seeks to remove disabling barriers to participation and inclusion rather than focus on the perceived deficits of an individual. In breaking down the barriers activists and outsiders play a vital role in allowing the centre to shift by fulfilling the function of inventiveness rather than adhering to cultural constraints. The activist creates unique art, making visible what is invisible or hidden away: bodies, personal narratives, sexuality, broadening understanding of what is normal or possible and fulfilling the modernist cry to 'make it new'. It is then disappointing when arts organisations appear to regard disability as a compliance issue enforced by the Disability Discrimination Act rather than an integral and exciting part of their core business.

In our campaign with the Australia Council the act that drew a detailed positive response was the March pro forma letter we distributed. Individuals and organisations in our field sent to the Council, both federal arts ministers and their local member of parliament. Pierre Comarmond's letter was answered as were the forty others representing every State and Territory and other national peak bodies like the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations. It's tempting to speculate why this letter was effective. It was a cumulation of Arts Access Australia's previous efforts and showed that the issues we had been raising were based on the concerns of our field and people were willing to do something about it. This unified action demonstrated that

... being both bold and creative can magnify the
impact and effectiveness of your message ...

Overall it's the striving for, and expectation of, excellence that creates achievement and the potential for social change.



Pauline and her work exhibited in the FREIGHT Gallery Fremantle run by DADAA WA.
Photo: Chris Williams

Arts Access Australia is a representative voice and we depend entirely for our effectiveness on this base of support by people with disabilities.

The Australia Council's 29 April 2005 emailed response commits Council, through the Community Partnerships section, to:

- An evaluation of the Council's 2000-03 Disability Action Plan, and proposed strategic direction.
- Triennial funding of Arts Access Australia, plus Company Development Program funds.
- Coordination and implementation of access strategies across the Council.
- Working with Arts Access Australia as Council develop the terms of reference for the Community Partnerships scoping study in 2005.

We're now cautiously optimistic and will be meeting with the Australia Council to discuss how best to progress these commitments. The timing is also right for a broader review to drive the next ten years of our sector's work as 2005 marks ten years since the previous Council supported research into arts and disability.

For the arts and disability sector we will continue to challenge ourselves to step beyond our own comfort zone. In a rights based environment it can be tempting to try for what you want and if not immediately successful then play the discrimination card. The reality may be that the person or organisation you're looking to influence sees you as one of many competing priorities and needs to be convinced of your case. Thankfully the disability sector has a piece of legislation to assist our arguments. Since the 1981 Year of the Disabled Person and the 1992 Disability Discrimination Act there is generally good will and desire expressed towards including people with disabilities. Some of this good will is genuine and can be an opportunity to build lasting relationships.

In activism it is the loudest voices that get heard. Emma Butler, Gerard Smith, Pierre Comarmond and their peers demonstrate that being both bold and creative can magnify the impact and effectiveness of your message. As people with disabilities and Arts Access Australia struggle for legitimacy and support across Government and with the general public our collective activism has never been more vital ■

NO

Gareth Wreford is Executive Director of Arts Access Australia. Gareth has worked in Audience and Market Development and Community Cultural Development for the Australia Council and has completed the CANSA Graduate Diploma in Community Cultural Development.
ed@artsaccessaustralia.org or visit
<http://www.artsaccessaustralia.org>

ACCESS FOR ME

Plans for growth: a retro

GEMMA PEPPER

Community cultural development (ccd) is fundamentally about activism. Not necessarily the militant variety, although militancy certainly has its place, but all ccd is about changing things for the better; shifting prejudices, strengthening communities and developing, through culture.

AS

ccd activists we have great strength in facilitating change. Supporting communities to make those long hard introspective examinations and then following through, by supporting them on the long hard road of implementing change for the better. However, since the 8th of December [2004] we have no longer been outside facilitators, it is the ccd community itself who is making the introspective examination and screaming passionately for change for the better: being activists.

We have endured five months of great turmoil punctuated by much activism (largely of the militant variety) and, as with any period of significant change, we have all been tested; realising our strengths and displaying our weaknesses. Now the Australian ccd community stands at the edge of a brave new world, the landscape is new and maybe not as we may have hoped it to be, as compromise never delivers quite what everyone wants, but none-the-less the new is upon us. The emergence of the National Arts and Cultural Alliance (NACA) and the new Community Partnerships Division [within the Australia Council] heralds a new era of ccd but before we do take that step into the relatively unknown and largely untrusted, what was it that we gained from these months of introspection and examination? How can we build on our strengths and weaknesses, and ensure these fledgling structures grow from the experience?

At this point I should qualify my use of the term 'WE', I do mean everyone as this is not an us-and-them situation between the sector and the Australia Council. 'WE' are all on the same team and ultimately we all want the same thing – for all Australians to have the opportunity to create, perform and appreciate the arts supported by a healthy, invigorating arts sector. The conflict arises in the diversity of opinion around how this should be achieved, none-the-less we all have an important role to play in making it happen.

Understanding the ccd process

If we are going to effectively support ccd in Australia we all need to understand what it means, how and why it works, as well as the results it achieves. The last five months have demonstrated that some of us have not kept up and that this understanding is lacking in some quarters.

Whilst the Australia Council's determination that '... arts in the community would be embraced across the entire organisation, with ccd outcomes continuing to be a vital component' is admirable, the announcement of its strategy to realise this commitment demonstrated two key misunderstandings: the Australia Council did not understand that ccd outcomes cannot be achieved through anything but a ccd process, and that the essential elements of a ccd process are engagement and participation.

spective

Had the Australia Council understood these two key points we would have seen the active encouragement of discussion and consultation from the outset, engaging all parties affected by the change: staff, artists and communities across Australia. Instead what we saw was a technocratic decision making process, behind closed doors, based on limited information and without an initial intention to consult those whom the decision most affected.

... what we saw was a technocratic decision making process, behind closed doors, based on limited information and without an initial intention to consult those whom the decision most affected.

Whilst the last five months have been spent trying to explain to the Australia Council the things it did not understand and to improve its proposed strategy for change, now is the time to search for the lessons to be learned. How do we ensure that 'WE' all understand the key components of the ccd process? Is it simply a matter of publishing more books that explain it, writing them in more easily understood language, or simply having the good sense to pick them up and read them?

We're all in this together

One of the comments raised again and again, at the meetings I attended, was that the Australia Council's restructure plans, whilst poorly informed and largely misplaced, had the positive effect of pulling the ccd community together. We had a reason to meet, to discuss and to debate; vigorous deliberation and strategising was taking place all over the country and we became united in our quest to see change made for the better, united in our activism.

... vigorous deliberation and strategising was taking place all over the country and we became united in our quest to see change made for the better, united in our activism.

1979
1981
1983
1985



Co Media/Findon High School screenprinting project. Adelaide c.1984.
See page 31

1999
2001
2003
2005

1979
1981
1983



Co Media/Findon High School screenprinting project. Adelaide c.1984.
See page 31

But were we united, were we even all there? Where were all those young leaders we have been supporting over the past few years? The Out and Abouters, The Roamers and the Out There Every Wherer's, these celebrated young 'leaders' of Australian ccd didn't seem to be leading very much in this debate. It's probably also worth noting, that on the occasions when we did stand up and have our say we were greeted, from some quarters, with an air of scepticism; 'who does this young upstart think she is and what credentials does she have?'

So as we step into this brave new world of NACA and Community Partnerships how can we make sure the young crew are in the loop? Easy, the young 'leaders' need to step up, get familiar with what's going on and get involved. But is it that easy?

The key to involvement is knowing what's going on and how to contribute. While the ccd elders have their networks and the information flows relatively freely, there are very few young ccd practitioners who have cracked it into those networks. Partly this is because many young ccd practitioners do their work autonomously, without knowing there is a vast community of artists doing similar work. However, once you have broken through that barrier and realised that ccd land does exist the second barrier to being included is not knowing the knowledge brokers. Of course that's why we have conferences and 'networking opportunities', but for many ccd elders, conferences and the like are about going to the pub and catching up with comrades, not 'networking' with the up and coming.

So, in my experience, these people who have been identified as 'Young Leaders' cannot do justice to their title unless they are included in the information loops. Ms Bott [Australia Council CEO] isn't dishing out invites to special Sydney meetings to us young ruffians. We might be good at what we do (for such a young age) but unless we are initiated into the information loops we will continue to be a subculture, disassociated from the main.

The other mob that seemed to have missed the game was anyone outside a capital city. The real action seemed centred around Sydney and Melbourne; the other capital cities knew what was going on and chanted from the sidelines whilst the regions didn't even know to buy a ticket. I realise that in the heat of the moment, when things just need to be done you work with those around you and those you know. But it is unfortunate that when crunch time comes, our structures mirror the same east coast, metro-centric government structures we all too often criticise for their lack of broad geographic involvement. So as NACA goes about compiling its database, lets consider how we can develop and maintain those all important networks across state borders and the masses of rugged Australian country side.

Those who develop and maintain [ccd] infrastructure must ensure their loyalties lie with the communities they have been established to service above their loyalties to the mechanisms developed to deliver the service.

Be prepared to make the hard decisions

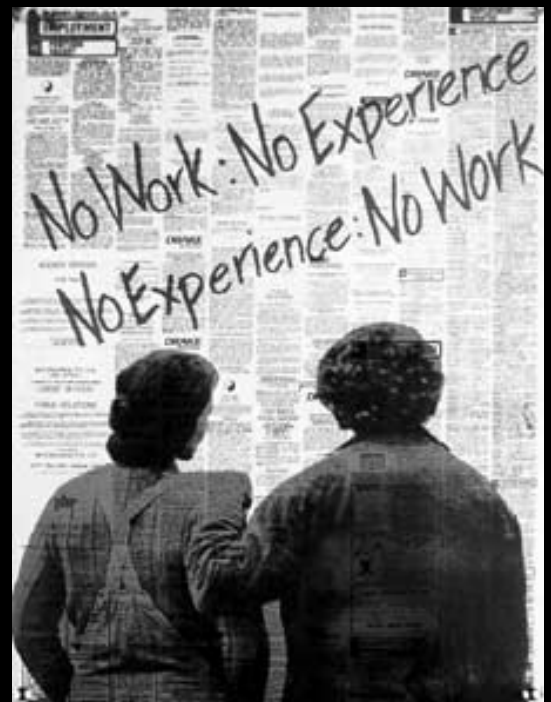
It was soon after the Australia Council's announcement that the weaknesses in ccd infrastructure became apparent. As we all scrambled to spread the word many of us realised that the only centralised body we did have had just been dissolved and its staff silenced. So we were left to sift through our personal email lists to rally support and contributions for a considered, coordinated response.

So what happened to our infrastructure, why was it unable to do what we needed it to do in our hour of need? It would seem that, over time, elements of ccd infrastructure have solidified into institution, neglecting their central tenant to remain responsive to the needs of the community they service; resulting in a declining support base, reduced networks and a diminished capacity to effectively represent the needs of the sector.

If we are to invest in infrastructure, which is essential for the growth of ccd, it MUST remain responsive; responsive to both communities and ccd practitioners. Those who develop and maintain this infrastructure must ensure their loyalties lie with the communities they have been established to service above their loyalties to the mechanisms developed to deliver the service.

In the past, it seems, our militancy has softened when confronted with our own flaws, but we can't afford to shy away from the difficult decisions any longer, we must accept when a process or organisation has out-lived its usefulness and use the space left behind to grow in new directions. I would hope that the custodians of the newly formed National Arts and Cultural Alliance have established the organisation, not with the view to it lasting forever, but for it to exist for as long as there is need; remaining responsive to the ccd community. It is only through maintaining dynamic responsiveness that we can continue to make change for the better and ensure that ccd practitioners are supported in their activism ■

Gemma Pepper works with diverse communities and young people creating distinctive performance and multi-artform work. She has recently returned to Australia after an action packed residency in Sierra Leone and working with vulnerable young people in Nottingham (UK). She is currently being a reclusive student, undertaking a Masters of International and Community Development in her home town of Denmark, WA.

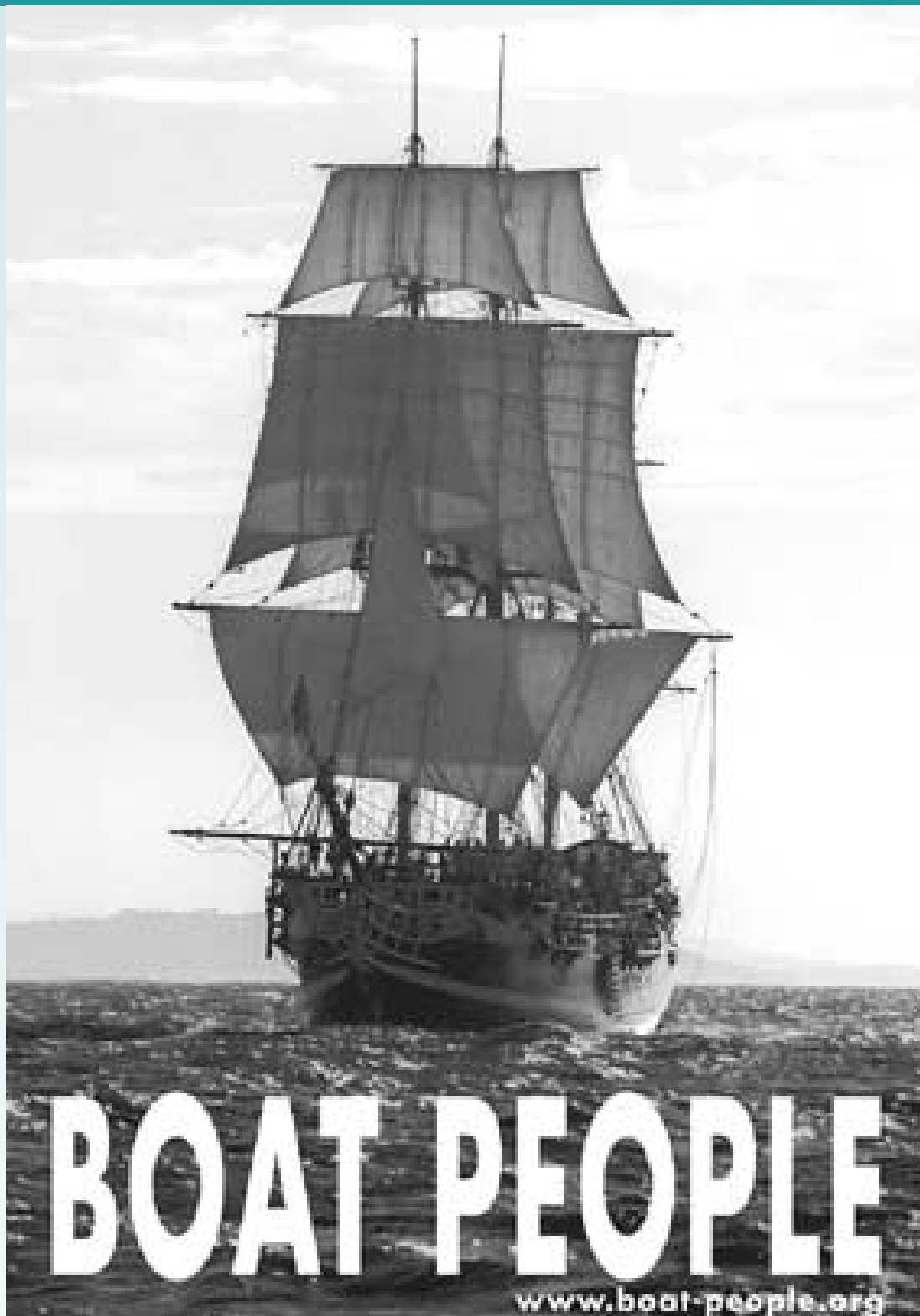


Poster details see page 31

We are all boat

In considering the images for this edition we asked what were the strongest pieces of activist art that we had seen in recent years? In response we have reproduced some of the artwork and images from the website 'We are all Boat People' and have included the information and stories about the work which also appears on the website. The 'We are all Boat People' campaign uses this multi function website as a primary organising tool and is well worth the visit. The campaign provides most of these images for the ongoing dissemination of the ideas behind the campaign and the issues surrounding it.

Visit the website at
<http://www.boat-people.org>



people

We are ordinary Australians who are appalled at the inhumane treatment of refugees by our government. We have decided to get involved and challenge the border panic encouraged by the current rhetoric of fear.

Our goal is to create a shift in the minds and hearts of our fellow Australians who have not seen the truth behind the lies told by the Howard Government and the mainstream media outlets that broadly support its views.

We know that these unjust laws will eventually be changed - and we know that Australians will look back on this period with great shame. However we must act **now** with urgency to bring about this change before more people suffer. We believe that this will only happen through constant and increasing pressure from compassionate people like **you**.

So we ask you to start with this simple act: spread the 'We are all Boat People' idea in your community and beyond.

For more information go to the 'We are all Boat people' website at <http://www.boat-people.org>

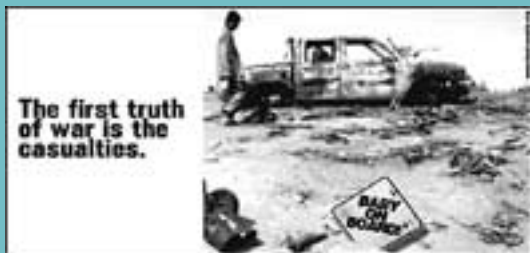
OPERA HOUSE JAMMED!

October 2001: The Sydney Opera House became a 15meter high billboard! Passers by rallied to support the Boat People's actions when security guards demanded a shut down.



END THE LIES

Liberal Party rats were present at the End the Lies rally to present the Liberal party promise of a trustworthy government - one you can trust on the economy (recent economic performance is largely due to initiatives undertaken years ago by the Hawke Labor government - and under Howard our national debt has doubled to an unsustainable \$393.5 billion), employment (the REAL figure is in double digits as the govt figures don't take into account people who are under-employed, some only working a few hours and subsisting) , WMDs (either he knew or handled it incompetently), children overboard (perhaps the worst lie because it won him an election) and so on.



FREE POSTCARD

This laminated postcard responds to the plague of lies engulfing us during the ongoing invasion of Iraq.

It is a small reminder that bombs don't discriminate.



BORDERPANIC - SYDNEY

September 2002: Artists Deborah Kelly and Zina Kaye curated the BORDERPANIC project, co-produced by Performance Space, Redfern, and the MCA, Circular Quay. For the exhibition part of the project at the Performance Space, this humble shrine was our contribution. Much more powerful and evocative works of art regarding the border hysteria gripping much of the 'white' world were also presented.

A reader incorporating essays and images was also produced as part of the project. It is available for AUD \$10 inc. p+p from Performance Space: www.performancespace.com.au

TALK BACK TO ISLAMOPHOBIA!

Are you tired of 'veiled' threats to Muslims? Sick to death of government racism? Bored stupid by the xenophobia pushers? Just cut out the designs, stick them onto both sides of standard matchboxes, leave lying around in your local pub, cafe, RSL club...and watch the fun begin.



ARTWORK 61 – POSTERS FORUM

In considering the images for this edition we asked what were the strongest pieces of activist art that we had seen in recent years? *We are all Boat People* was the most common answer. So incorporated in this issue of *Artwork* are images from the website <http://www.boat-people.org>. We have contrasted these with historical images from CAN SA archives of political posters. We have details for some of these images but we put out the call to readers for help to fill in the gaps in regard to these posters. If you were involved in the process, production or printing of any of these images or if you are interested in a discussion about the Australian political posters we have set up an online forum on the national ccd website, www.ccd.net. The forum is called *Artwork 61 – Posters Forum* which can be found in the 'All Talk' section of [ccd.net](http://www.ccd.net).



Design: Chia Moan



Poster designed by Kurwingie, Kerry Giles, Co Media Adelaide



Design: Jayne Amble, Co Media Adelaide

General leadership

GRAHAM PITTS

Ruminations on leadership, activism and the recent Australia Council fracas. Graham Pitts considers the conflicts inherent in ccd principles, the cult of leadership as managerial tool and why we don't celebrate our experts.

'Der Fuhrer' means 'The Leader' and without doubt Adolf Hitler was The Leader of the Nazi Party. If you do doubt that, hire a good spiritual go-between and have a chat with the many dead of his murdered party rivals. The Fuhrer, though, was a prime example of the principle that in general leadership is not necessarily a good thing. It's best to remember this in the current cultural climate wherein leadership has become the celebrity cult of the executive class. The times are such that internet bookseller Amazon.com currently lists 18,784 books on leadership. Only a very small number, such as *The Dignity of Resistance* and *Enough is Enough: The Hell Raiser's Guide to Community Activism* are ostensibly about leadership and activism (the theme of this issue of *Artwork*).

Idolisation of the leader

It must be doubted if all the books in this small sub-section would be valorised by community cultural development workers or the political left in general, even though leadership and to much greater extent 'activism' and 'community' are often taken to indicate leftist or progressive values. One of the foremost organisations of the neo-conservative and religious right in the USA is The Leadership Institute. It publishes books of its own and its mission is 'to identify, recruit, train and place conservatives in politics, government and media'. Budding Congressional staffers are schooled in 'Grass-roots Activism'. The Institute is supported and endorsed by an even more popular conservative organisation entitled 'Citizens for Community Values'.

In any event, the overwhelming majority of the Amazon.com books such as *Developing the Leader Within You* and *What Would Buddha Do at Work?: 101 Answers to Workplace Dilemmas* combine personal development and business management. Present-day booksellers rely on such stock for a quick-turnover, a role that was formerly filled by cook books. The triumph of neo-conservatism and corporate managerialism contains a devastating and quasi-religious irony in that its most devoted proselytizers are often its victims. So it's not uncommon, in bookshops, to see stressed-out business executives alone and palely loitering by the management shelves before seizing on further new releases such as *The Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun*. A week later they're back, their hopes dashed, looking for something else to get the anxiety monkey off their backs, to alleviate the dreadful fear that they're not *The Extra-ordinary Leader: A Person Others Want To Follow* deified by managerialism.

The irony deepens if you recall that lists such as 'Time's 50 Leaders of Today' are notorious for nominating tomorrow's political failures, business bankrupts and suicides. Yet the ideology of The Leader, like so many other elements of corporatism, has metastasized into the arts and infiltrated community cultural development. For example, we have awards for Youth, Indigenous or Community Leaders. Texts referring to Workshop, New Media, Audience Development and Team Leaders abound. Sometimes I wonder, with so many leaders, where are the followers?

and private doubts

You cannot have, or think about, leaders without also having, or thinking about, followers. Indeed mathematics suggests there must be more followers than leaders. A leader without at least one follower (excluding his or her Mum) would be powerless. Surely leadership is about power over other people though we politely call it something like 'influence' or 'persuasiveness'? The inconvenient logic of power is usually ignored in a community context. For example, how insulting would it be, when working on a cultural project, to praise someone as a 'community leader' and refer to everyone else as his or her 'followers'? The insult is based on the individualistic competition inherent in most notions of leadership. Those not good (or Machiavellian) enough to be leaders i.e., winners are by implication followers, i.e., losers.

This is not to say I am against the entire concept of leadership. Leaders are necessary when things must be done or new visions explored (attended, hopefully, by the ubiquitous question of 'yes, but to what moral purpose over and above effective organisation?'). What is fascinating, though, is the confusion and at times hypocrisy the current cult of leadership brings about within community cultural development and the political left.

The political right as now typified by neo-conservatism has far fewer problems with the competitive and non-inclusive division of people into leaders and followers, i.e., winners and losers, than does the left. The right tends to see life as a simple, on-going

and competitive struggle in the philosopher Hobbes' universe of nastiness, insecurity and constant threat. In such a scenario, red with tooth and claw, leadership is preferable to democratic decision-making. Often this enables right-wing leaders to make quick if incorrect analyses of complicated phenomena and come to simple decisions which are equally often wrong; or at least counter to the common good. Whereas the modern left (and much of current community cultural development) worries so much about the common good, and the need to be inclusive of a diversity of opinions, that clear analyses and action-based decisions are quite uncommon.

The need for leadership

Many of us who work in community cultural development are, in my first-hand experience, mentally scarred by the apparently endless hours devoted to fruitless committee meetings which may be inclusive but operate in a decision-free zone. Who, honestly, has not sat through yacketty-yak discussions, and more discussions, and yet more yacketty-yak, without at some point yearning for the second coming of Der Fuhrer, The Leader? Give us anything ... anyone ... even a Fascist ... as long as we get a genuine decision!

We sometimes get exactly what we asked for (always a dangerous possibility). How many of us are prepared to admit the fact that the most dominant personalities amongst us usually make the real decisions as we go to or return from the committee meeting? Or that the most vocal, in the

tyranny of the articulate, make our minds up for us in small clusters of confreres or combinations of colleagues in conferences and forums?

And what of those who argue ad infinitum for endless community consultation whilst making the real and affective decisions amidst the resulting vacuum of decisive art-making? Are these ... or at least some of them ... not our 'leaders'?

The fact is (by which I mean 'in my opinion') that leadership is in itself neither a good nor a bad thing. It simply is. And its 'is-ness' in reality has to do with a whole range of factors to do with accidents of birth and upbringing, timing, culture, situations, desires, needs, imperatives and knowledge. Who would dare define it, given that 18,784 currently available discourses fail to satisfy the wan and maladjusted executives who, even as you read this, are purchasing *Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence* and *Leadership by the Book*?

Presumably, the entire range of Amazon.com volumes does attempt to define or describe leadership, as do a plethora of educational institutions and websites. Therefore it seems safe to deduce that wannabe leaders take what they can, or choose, from amongst the cornucopia of rules, regulations, suggestions, advice and instructions. One of the many relevant websites (<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leadcon.html>) has been created by business consultant Sergeant Don Clark. It is typical of the current cult's offerings, mixing sound comments for

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Design: Jayne Amble, Community Arts Network SA.
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wannabe leaders with the usual ideological mish-mash of rhetoric begging the question of 'yes, but to what moral purpose over and above effective organisation?' Don Clark cites a book entitled *Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of Theory and Research* by Bernard Bass.

Bass' theory of leadership states that there are three basic ways to explain how people become leaders. The first two explain the leadership development for a small number of people.

These theories are:

- Some personality traits may lead people naturally into leadership roles. This is the Trait Theory.
- A crisis or important event may cause a person to rise to the occasion, which brings out extraordinary leadership qualities in an ordinary person. This is the Great Events Theory.
- People can choose to become leaders. People can learn leadership skills. This is the Transformational Leadership Theory. It is the most widely accepted theory today and the premise on which this guide is based.

When a person is deciding if she respects you as a leader, she does not think about your attributes, rather, she observes what you *do* so that she can know who you really *are*. She uses this observation to tell if you are a honorable and trusted leader or a self serving person who misuses authority to look good and get promoted. Self-serving leaders are not as effective because their employees only obey them, not follow them ...

The basis of good leadership is honorable character and selfless service to your organization ...

Don Clark is an executive for Starbucks Coffee, aside from being a managerial consultant. The idea of providing 'selfless service' to Starbucks is interesting. An inquiry into how and where coffee-suppliers acquire their coffee may lead you into waters that do not seem the domain of an utterly 'honourable character'. The choice of the female pronoun in 'when a person is deciding if she respects you as a leader, she does not think about your attributes' might well be of some interest also to feminists.

The problem is, of course, that the theory and practice of community cultural development does not sit kindly with the notion of leadership especially when behind that notion is the ideological apparatus of competitive individualism.

Leadership for the times

Leadership, to me, arises when the talents, capabilities and/or knowledge of someone is needed in a particular situation. Obviously it should be irrespective of their gender, race, creed, good-looks, charm or charisma (as if!). If for instance building a house, most lay people would be agreeable to following the directives of a trained carpenter or other tradesmen experienced in house building. But do most community people, in practice, wish to be similarly acquiescent in following the leadership of a trained artist on a community cultural development project? If so, where does that leave the question of community collaboration, participation or genuine control?

It may be argued that the community formulates the vision and the artist is a hired instructor or collaborator on the way to the community's objectives. The problem with this is that artists in such situations often downplay or under-rate their own skills, knowledge and experience. They suspect that only thus will the community have genuine control. At best this is non-self seeking and potentially admirable. At worst the artist ceases to be an artist (which was what he or she was employed for in the first

place) and abdicates a position of artistic responsibility i.e., artistic leadership. Mediocrity, at least allegedly, results. This in a rather simple form was one of the core assessments made by the Australia Council's Task Force For the Future on their road to what many of us thought to be Armageddon but which the Council prognosticated as the new 'Arts Catalyst' restructure.

Another point raised informally in the meetings which took place as a result of the proposed restructure and the resultant fracas was to do with leadership and the public image (or lack thereof) of community cultural development. Every other artform (leaving aside the question of whether community cultural development is a form or a process) has exemplars or leaders known not only to the cultural Big End of Town but also, often, to people out in the suburbs. From Nicole Kidman to Graeme Murphy, from Barry Humphries to Sydney Nolan, from Kath and Kim to John Bell or Max Gillies, these people exemplify their artforms and, consciously or otherwise, both 'explain' what the arts are about and, let's face it, make it more appealing for governments to spend the taxpayers money on the arts.

But comparatively few people even in the arts world and fewer still amongst the public at large know anything much at all about community cultural development. Of those who have heard or seen something, or been involved in projects (and there must in all fairness be tens of thousands of the latter) would many recognise the names of those practitioners or organisers which we, their colleagues, might grudgingly or otherwise identify as representational exemplars or leaders? Robyn Archer, presumably. But Scott Rankin? The Ferals? Robyn Laurie? Ann Dunne? Sally Marsden? Maybe. And, far more likely, maybe not.

Valuing expertise

The problem is, of course, that the theory and practice of community cultural development does not sit kindly with the notion of leadership especially when behind that notion is the ideological apparatus of competitive individualism. The arts in a community context are driven neither by competitiveness nor an individual 'expert' but by the energy and talents of the community. Or just how true is that? Don't the communities with which we work value us for our degree of expertise not only in our ability to collaborate with the

Our fierce but possibly phoney determination to see only playing fields when in fact there may be glorious peaks of endeavour and success has, like it or not, limited attempts to seek a greater public profile ...

The refusal to promote our successful individuals, especially in the current era, has kept us in a ghetto of anonymity of which most of the public are blissfully ignorant.

community but for our artforms? And if that be true, then why do we shyly or ruthlessly refuse to celebrate those amongst us who have such a rare combination of social, personal and artistic expertise?

Our fierce but possibly phoney determination to see only playing fields when in fact there may be glorious peaks of endeavour and success has, like it or not, limited attempts to seek a greater public profile for, and public acceptance of, community cultural development. (Has this woolly-minded and often purblind form of egalitarianism even made words such as 'talent' and 'expertise' highly suss, as if we all genuinely believed that everyone has the same talents and skills, hidden or unhidden, just waiting to be 'developed'?) The refusal to promote our successful individuals, especially in the current era, has kept us in a ghetto of anonymity of which most of the public are blissfully ignorant.

Only the jargon-infested language we typically use, with ensuing difficulties in explaining the intricacies of some versions of community cultural development, is a greater limiting factor when it comes to the retention of a low public profile and scepticism amongst our colleagues in other artforms.

Some may argue that our practice belongs to, and is at home in, a ghetto of the peripheral and perpetual outsiders; but if

this be so, then let's accept that we will never have any influence on the great world and how that world in reality works.

Personally, I believe that now is *the* time to celebrate our best and our brightest of all ages and stages. Through them, and with them, and through and with our host communities, we could present a far better argument as to why the public's money should support cultural activities than can any other artform. The times are coming when such arguments shall be crucial to the continuation of our practice. In essence, therefore, I say we do have leaders, I amongst others have learnt a great deal from them and I'm quite happy to be, at some times and in some circumstances, their avid follower (well, some of them anyway).

I also believe that my advocacy of this form of publicity means that I would best exclude myself from such valorisation (if I were to assume in a wild fit of hubris I deserved it) as otherwise my advocacy could seem self-seeking. The price would be small and remaining unaware of my minor achievement would no doubt benefit the common good. But I'm tired of seeing the generous richness and sheer quality of my colleague's work as artists in collaboration with communities remain unacknowledged. In god's name (which I think is either Fred or Ethel) it's time to rethink this and a whole range of matters including

leadership, activism and the whole nature of community cultural development.

I am convinced that a great many of my comrades think and feel the same way. In the end, as one of those central to the recent fracas with the Australia Council regarding their restructure and our future and as the Interim Chair of the National Arts and Culture Alliance formed as a result of that fracas, I feel a trifle like Robespierre. Watching a Revolutionary mob go rampaging past the cafe in which he was having coffee, he commented: 'I'd better follow them, I think I'm supposed to be one of their leaders' ■

Graham Pitts co-founded Sidetrack Theatre and became a professional writer, coordinator and director in 1978. His best known work as a playwright is the play Emma—Celebrazione! produced in every State and Territory of Australia. He has been working in community cultural development for the past 25 years. Graham is interim Chair of the National Arts and Culture Alliance, formed in response to the Australia Council's planned restructure.

... I'm tired of seeing the generous richness and sheer quality of my colleague's work as artists in collaboration with communities remain unacknowledged.

Backbone Youth Arts' 2high Festival

SUSAN KUKUCKA

Young artswomen have few real supported opportunities to hone the skills needed to work in the diverse world of small arts organisations or as individual practitioners. Their contribution as arts leaders, activists and role models themselves is often dependent on the support received during the years spent learning their craft; and the multi-skills and the confidence needed to function under pressure are often hard won over many years. We all know of formal and informal mentoring arrangements and have witnessed the varied experiences they offer. In this article Susan Kukucka looks at a unique mentorship model of Brisbane's 2high Festival which continues to support young women artists and artswomen in all aspects of festival making.

2high

Festival is somewhat of an anomaly in the Brisbane arts scene. It has stood the test of time by reaching the ripe old age of 11 (not bad for a small, youth-run festival), whilst maintaining

a niche, but committed, following and rock-solid reputation. As the annual signature event for Backbone Youth Arts, 2high has launched the careers and artistic practices of dozens of Queensland's female artists and artswomen.

2high was initiated by Susan Richer and first delivered through a partnership between Backbone Youth Arts (formerly La Boite Youth Arts) and Youth Arts Queensland. Richer, a former Artistic Director of Backbone Youth Arts, developed the concept of 2high after noticing a lack of opportunities for women in the local arts industry, particularly in high-level positions. Richer adopted a model that allowed young women to gain hands-on experience in the areas of events management and curating, at the same time being teamed up with an industry-based female mentor.

Titiana Varkopoulous, current Artistic Director of Backbone, describes 2high as, 'a festival run on a mentorship model. It connects the young festival coordinators with other women in the industry in order for the coordinators to expand their networks and bounce off their ideas.' The product of this training and mentorship is the actual festival itself – a showcase of Queensland's young and emerging artists.

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Each artistic stream of the festival – visual art and film, performance, music, writing and spoken word – becomes the responsibility of two coordinators.

Each year 2high is brought to life by a small group of women who work as the festival's curators, coordinators and visionaries. Each artistic stream of the festival – visual art and film, performance, music, writing and spoken word – becomes the responsibility of two coordinators. The festival also offers a unique and invaluable learning experience for women interested in a career in arts marketing and arts management by including integral roles for production, publicity and workshop coordinators.

'2high is unique because it is the young coordinators who drive it', explains Titiana. 'That's the beauty of it – each year the program reflects the experiences and diverse background of these women.' The introduction of new coordinators each year allows the artistic program to reflect current cultural and artistic trends and to promote itself as unique from previous years.

Kay Drew, one of 2high's music coordinators for 2004, was attracted to the festival because of its special focus on management and skills development. 'The 2high festival is such a unique concept in that it gives young women an opportunity to be involved in the arts industry at the decision-making level rather than just as performers or artists.'



Titiana believes that the festival embodies an innovative best practice model, worthy of being profiled on a national level. 'The core philosophy of 2high is that of access and acknowledging that young women are decision-makers and culture-makers.' 2high encourages its young coordinators to 'learn on the ground' whilst providing them with invaluable professional and personal support courtesy of the mentors. This arrangement creates an ideal space for 2high coordinators to experiment, play, network and develop.

The successful outcomes of the 2high model speak for themselves. The festival has served as a training ground for a number of Queensland women who have since gone on to attain national success in their respective fields. Katie Noonan of 'George' fame came through the 2high program as a coordinator, as did Deborah Mailman (Kelly in 'Secret Life Of Us') and writer Leah Purcell. A significant proportion of 2high coordinators have moved on to take roles in notable Queensland institutions such as the Brisbane Powerhouse, Brisbane City Council, Youth Arts Queensland, Contact Inc., or continue to practice as an independent arts worker or artist.

2004 [saw] the 2high program and festival aided by strong partnerships with Youth Arts Queensland Transit Lounge and the Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC). The festival's events [took] place at QPAC's Cremorne Theatre, a prospect that thrills Titiana. 'I believe that it's important to profile young artists in a leading arts venue such as QPAC because you can reach a lot of people. That's when you see people's consciousness start to shift regarding the abilities of young women.'

Nadine Kelly, one of [2004's] performance coordinators, captures the essence of the 2high experience by pointing out that 'the festival empowers young women to believe in themselves and their work and assists them to break into the industry as artists and

... it gives young women an opportunity to be involved in the arts industry at the decision-making level rather than just as performers or artists ...

managers. My experience has been amazing so far, working with a group of ambitious and talented young women and I know our journey will be filled with challenges, learning and fun.' ■

Footnotes

First published in *Lowdown* magazine, October 2004.

www.carclew.com.au/lowdown

Susan Kukucka is a Brisbane-based freelance arts writer, the program manager of the Straight Out Of Brisbane festival, and works in arts and cultural policy for the Brisbane City Council.

For further information about the 2high Festival contact Backbone Youth Arts on (07) 3210 2666 or email info@backbone.org.au

Leadership, followership

EVE STAFFORD

The sheepdog method of leadership is one I've heard applies to ccd. One where the artsworker goes out in front to show direction and how to get there, encouraging community members to step into leadership as they vacate to run around behind to see if a motivating nip to the heels is necessary before running out front again. Exhausting.

Which leadership style for arts?

THE

many leadership styles can be plotted on a spectrum from authoritarian at one end, to laissez-faire or free rein at the other. Right next to the far-righteous authoritarian is the seemingly benign benevolent dictator, who just knows what's best for others, without consulting. And so on across the spectrum where more participatory styles of leadership occur, all the way to the delegatory styles towards the laissez-faire.

While a decline in religious 'thou shalt' styles has given way as Australia has become more secular and pluralist (particularly apparent in parenting), the laissez-faire style, founded on more democratic or libertarian ideals, runs into much bad press as going too far towards anarchy. For example, daily newspaper clippings on youth are overwhelmingly negative. These stories reinforce a prevailing stereotype of youth as dangerously out of control, running amok, or into crime, without much understanding of youth in this critical phase of wrestling with risk as part of successfully navigating a newly formed independent identity. Instead, parents and teachers are castigated as being too permissive (or disinterested) to give young people sufficient discipline and enforce some rules.

But there are no absolute rights or wrongs, as each leadership style has particular contexts. While some people epitomize particular leadership styles, we employ many styles, different approaches and skills to suit situations as required. What works in one situation can be a disaster in another. Volatile military or emergency services situations require a rigidly authoritarian style, with a strict chain of command to be obeyed without question. But whenever creativity or experimentation is called for, styles towards the laissez-faire come into their own, as each person is encouraged to reach their unique potential towards autonomy.

It is easy to see how significant the so-called laissez-faire leadership style is when it comes to the arts that thrive on continuous learning and discovery to foster and communicate new and visionary ideas. Such styles are also important whenever something is not working, and change is required. Plotting a new and unknown future requires both courage and encouragement, as it is a largely collaborative process. This is where ccd practitioners come into their own, utilizing arts forms and creativity as a tool.

and fellowships in ccd

Since community consultation is a fundamental of ccd practice, leadership styles in ccd congregate at this laissez-faire end of the spectrum. But looked at more closely, there are real differences that open up in how consultation is utilised to decide a course of action, and who is ultimately in control.

Some leaders consult to take advice on the action that they themselves will decide *on their own*. Others merely facilitate consultation, putting those consulted fully in charge of the outcomes, effectively empowering by handing over leadership of the future actions and expressions of identity. Some see such delegation as an abandonment of leadership and abrogation of responsibility, but once a collaborating team is fostered as confident, capable and motivated, it is often best to hand over ownership, step back and let them get on with the action. This most often fits with ccd practice, but when we look at some of our Fellowships later, we will see that some fit one or other of these models.

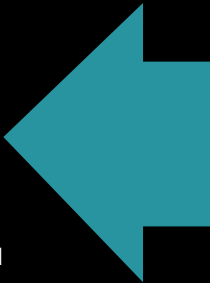
Governments commonly propose a proscribed course of action, then 'consult' the community to endorse it, with little scope to make changes beyond tinkering. Only when governments are in new territory do they design a more open-ended consultation framework that gives the community a real say. It will be fascinating to see how far the Australia Council's ccd scoping study goes in this regard.

Leadership in ccd

Within participatory styles of leadership, a playwright or artist (or funding body) may consult a community, taking all those rich findings back to the garret to produce the work. Common for many documentary makers and oral historians whose purpose is to sell the work on for broadcast, this appears to be an anthropological or largely extractive exercise, but ethical considerations will determine just what kind of practice this really is. Some sort of contract with the community in how these findings are shared or used is likely, including considerations of copyright, and how the work will be distributed. It may well be that the broadcasted film, exhibition or play is so powerful as advocacy, it is *the most effective* change-agent possible for the host community. On the other hand, under the *solo-artist-as-hero* model, it may earn the artist some income, but leave the community unchanged, or worse, feeling they have momentarily identified, expressed and celebrated the disadvantage where they remain stuck. This is the gap where good ccd principles and practice can be applied to provide leadership, and where ccd as a change-agent can become activism.

Innovator – Visionary – Pathfinder – Politically Savvy – Integrator – Communicator – Strategist – Healer? When it comes to skills, values and qualities, hundreds of words resonate. With some even contradictory, it shows that leadership

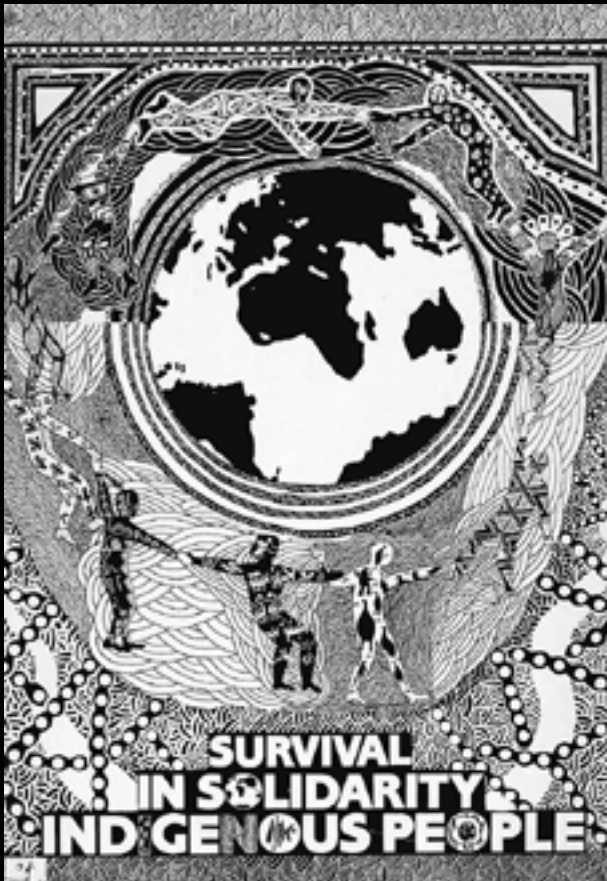
means different things to different people according to their own hierarchy of needs and motivations. All are valid. People identify with those who embody those leadership qualities to which they aspire to acquire, possibly as role models. Grouping is needed into those that best determine direction, how to get there, and those that best foster people's skills and collaborative actions to take an increasing role to self-determine direction for themselves.



... it shows that leadership means different things to different people according to their own hierarchy of needs and motivations.

There is a spectrum of empathy that closely parallels the leadership spectrum. Authoritarians are more interested in results, while leaders at the ccd end are more interested in people, with qualities such as 'negotiates values – fosters trust – builds confidence to take risks – incorporates our ideas – supports group

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collaboration'. Within ccd in particular, the latter are closely linked to empathy, and strongly associated with other recently derided terms like social justice and affirmative action. While the tsunami generosity by Australians defied notions that we are a nation in compassion-fatigue (with the noted 'followship' of Governments contributing), 'do-gooders' and 'bleeding-hearts' are commonly used as derogatory terms in letters to the editor columns and on talk-back radio, presumably from 'do-badders' and 'hard-hearts' who oppose. Yes, as change-agents, it's worth noting that activism of itself is a neutral term that knows no allegiance to good or bad.

Virtuosity and ccd

'How come we don't speak of *virtuoso* practice in ccd?' Scott Rankin was once heard to ask. The perennial problem is that ccd has low status compared to say, the symphony orchestras. Why? One reason is perceptual. The reasoning from the artform angle goes that musicians are all experts in their field, whereas ccd includes community members in active art-making, so is associated with amateur activity. Preoccupied by celebrity, power and money, mainstream media reinforces this view of a hierarchy of artforms in column inches, with followship by funding bodies. This is so apparent in the recent federal budget: SOB (Symphony, Opera and Ballet) heritage arts derived from the courtly entertainments of past centuries are at the top of the food chain. This leads to the irony I witnessed of a well-heeled audience shedding a tear at the plight of the poor 200 years ago in a rendition of *Les Miserables*, without being able to connect with today's marginalised on the street just outside the theatre.

Funding-wise, what is the leadership role of governments: addressing this expanding gap and in maintaining cohesion and a civil society, or making budget submissions for arts funding skewed towards actively widening this disparity? The perception of ccd, coloured by notions of the amateur, pervades all arts funding bodies, where the status of ccd practice has struggled to be regarded with equity. Why is this view erroneous? Because it fails to focus on the ccd leaders themselves. These leaders combine excellence in artform practice with another complete set of skills for working with virtuosity within communities. With ccd leaders, you get double expertise, not less than one.

Invisibility and ccd

This is reinforced by a second perceptual reason for the low status of ccd – *invisibility*. Since ccd leaders are working to empower others with new skills and networks behind the scenes, they rightly step back from the limelight to allow others to shine. Promotion is reserved expressly for the achievements of the group or community, not the artist. This necessity becomes a structural impediment to the status and career recognition for the virtuoso ccd leader. The modern idea of the quiet

These leaders combine excellence in artform practice with another complete set of skills for working with virtuosity within communities. With ccd leaders, you get double expertise, not less than one.

leader and the hidden nature of development has a long tradition tracing back to Lao Tzu in the classic Taoist text *Tao Te Ching*.

Go to the People
Live with them
Learn from them,
Love them.

Start with what they know,
Build with what they have.

But with the best leaders
When the work is done
The task is accomplished
The people will say,
'We have done this ourselves.'
Lao Tzu, China, circa 700 BC

Diversity and ccd

A third reason for the lack of recognition of ccd leadership stems from the exponentially expanding *diversity* of the practice. While Australia is recognised overseas as a ccd leader nationally due to its long development and history of support, the ccd sector itself is like a doughnut. Leaders in ccd are working outwards from the edge, exploring ever new and diverse niches of application demographically, geographically,

technologically and cross-sector. Busily beaver away in diverse ways beyond the rim, there has been insufficient capacity for lively dialogue across the middle of the doughnut. This congress happens every few years to a limited degree, perhaps at conferences, but is seldom sustained as an exchange of understandings or benchmarks, or as a forum of peer critique. Perceived as a national crisis for the ccd sector and its constituents, the recent Australia Council restructure has been a rare rallying point for dialogue across this 'hole in the doughnut'. Of itself, this has thrown up new ccd leaders, this time on behalf of ourselves as a 'community' of interest. Gratifyingly, practitioners nationally have generally demonstrated their interest in being broadly inclusive, participating, consulting and empowering each other, with a great deal of goodwill, cohesion, and risk-taking. The field quickly unified to 'restructure' using its own expertise and by its own hand, rather than be engineered. This has itself proved a testing ground for applied ccd practice, as a kind of *practice what we preach*. If this foundation is used to advantage, the upcoming ccd scoping study in concert with the Australia Council offers more space to grow this capacity to shape and express the sector nationally as a whole.

Perceived as a national crisis for the ccd sector and its constituents, the recent Australia Council restructure has been a rare rallying point for dialogue ...



VIRTUOSO CCD FELLOWS

Within the above ccd leadership frameworks and impediments, here are some illustrative examples of ccd artists who have undertaken Fellowships in recent years.

Anne Dunn

After many roles including a long illustrious career mounting large spectacular community theatre shows for diverse communities over 30 years, Anne is best known as a facilitator between institutions, government and community groups towards collective action, new partnerships and reform. Anne's Fellowship is to broker sustainable development across agencies working in rural and remote communities.

John Hawkes

His Fellowship book *Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: culture's essential role in public planning* is a seminal work already effective in policy reform in Victoria and beginning its influence nationally, successfully engaging culture within the economic, social and environmental sectors in policy development and public planning.

Nat Trimarchi

Developing a model for *Community-Centre Cultural Tourism* based on overseas research that proposes a framework for sustainable cultural tourism development by involving arts and ccd in tourism development to support diversity and authentic tourism experiences. Available for download at <http://www.artsnexus.com.au>

Michael McLaughlin

Travel overseas for professional development and benchmarking leading to new career pathways and skills as a researcher, with publication of *Playing the Arts: Young People and the Community*, collected writings on community-based popular theatre and arts activities with young people in Australia.

Barry Benning

A mentor to many young Aboriginal musicians, Barry has expanded the place of Aboriginal artists within Australian Country Music.

Peter Keelan

As a composer, to research pan pipe music world-wide in its places of origin (Bolivia, Rumania, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Solomons) to produce a documentary, new compositions and new collaborative projects, mostly in the remote Australia.

Scott Rankin

After 25 years as a writer, performer, and as a ccd practitioner chiefly at big hART, Scott's mission is to position ccd as an enabling model across a broad range of government departmental portfolios, while mentoring a new generation of younger ccd artists to achieve outcomes within marginalised communities.

Gillian Harrison

Collation, interpretation and dissemination of 20 years of work in community and Indigenous music.

Khaled Sabsabi

Development of a hip-hop style based on past experience to enhance its relevance as a ccd tool for young people.

Neil Cameron

Research, writing and publication of a book on ccd in an international context, following years of festivals event development.

Bong Ramilo

Exploring the potential and place of ccd and sustainable social enterprise in virtual and new technology environments.

Gregory Sneddon

Recording and scoring 200 songs for future generations after 25 years of writing songs as a composer for ccd projects within various prison communities, including with the *Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company*.

Vahid Vahed

An internationally recognised film and television producer, Vahid's Fellowship explores the parameters of ccd practice within multimedia and screen culture.

June Moorhouse

In-depth research and publication regarding the effects of recent gentrification on the existing Fremantle community and common in other Australian communities, and developing ccd actions to heal the growing rifts.

Eve Stafford is a past CCDB Fellowship holder in rural and remote service delivery and is currently Executive Officer of Arts Nexus based in Far North Queensland, a region twice the size of Victoria. She is currently developing CCD Leadership Practice Profiles for national publication and promotion as a CCDB Strategic Project.

The Editorial Committee has deemed this issue of Artwork as very important and will be distributing as far and wide as possible.

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