

A new landmark for St Kilda

A new Arts Access mural in St Kilda was unveiled in early April by The Hon Mrs Kay Setches, recently appointed Minister for Community Services.

Images in the mural are drawn from the St Kilda foreshore and are the result of three months work by a group of young adults with intellectual disabilities working with artists Maria Filippow and Lynden Bobbitt.

Located on the old 'Venue' site of the Upper Esplanade, the mural spans some twenty metres and will remain on the site for up to two years.

Both the boards for the mural and the site were donated by the Ministry for Housing & Construction. Funding came from CSV's Intellectual Disability Services.

The group of nine artists, from Gawith Villa and Milparinka, worked with Maria and Lynden to develop their ideas and skills before arriving at the final product. Their involvement in this exciting project has assisted them to develop their sense of belonging to the wider community. Arts Access worked with the St Kilda City Council and the Save St Kilda group



The Hon Mrs Kay Setches (right) and an artist discuss the new mural

to ensure the mural becomes part of the St Kilda community. So far, the mural has remained graffiti-free-and, hopefully, will remain so.

This unique work of art will surely become a landmark for the people of St Kilda, enlivening what would otherwise be just another building site.

What is it about the arts?

For those of us working in the arts, or even those who simply enjoy the arts, there is something unique about the experience which is not present in anything else we do.

As Richard Attenborough said, "Over the ages, the arts have been the field for and prompted some of the finest achievements of the human spirit"

It is this special quality of the artistic or creative experience which Arts Access is exploring in the production of a new

video.

The video, undertaken by Evensong Films, will use a range of arts projects involving disadvantaged individuals and groups and look at the enjoyment and benefits of this involvement.

It is designed for an audience of people in self-help groups, community groups, support workers, professionals, families and volunteers.

We hope it will inspire them to get involved in the arts, show them the

benefits and give them information about how to develop and manage their own arts activities.

The video will be a vigorous advocate for the arts as a valuable and empowering area of activity and a catalyst for people to take positive steps in their own lives and services.

The project will be completed this year and the video will be available for sale, hire and as part of Arts Access' resource activities.

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Access Studio off to a good start

Arts Access' new studio space, opened last November, has been the home of two successful exhibitions so far this year.

In April, local artist Bruce Plant's exhibition "Plantscapes" reflected thoughtful observations on art and life.

May saw Myra Hilgendorf present her "Fleurs de Mal" series to a huge opening crowd including Arts Access patron Jean McCaughey. Myra's works of charcoal or pastel on paper were beautiful images of flowers inspired by the poems of Baudelaire.

The next scheduled exhibition will be works by Renaldo Portelli. "Occhio dell' Artista" (the eye of the artist) will open for two weeks at the end of June. This promises to be an exciting show with recent work revealing Renaldo's perspective of life as an artist.

The Access studio is a low cost gallery providing opportunities for artists to workshop, create or exhibit work. Enquiries are welcome on 699 8299.

Access for Kew residents

Kew Cottage residents have an exciting prospect ahead of them.

An Arts Access artist-in-community project will be under way from early June thanks to assistance from the Sidney Myer Fund.

Arts Access' Executive Director Kate Brennan said many Kew Cottages' residents have had few opportunities to become involved in the arts in the past for varied reasons, including transport difficulties and lack of motivation.

She said: "For some time it has been clear that although current policies of integration have improved opportunities in the community for people with disabilities, there are many people, particularly those with profound disabilities, who are still under-resourced."

Contributions from local groups and residents will be added to the Myer Fund's grant and make the project a two year possibility.

The project aims to cater for the arts interests and needs of people with profound disabilities at Kew Cottages. It will involve the community in developing arts projects and activities that may be on-going and will make arts links, where possible, with the broader community.

The development phase of the project will involve the employment of two artists for three months to liaise with the community and to plan for the second 'activities' phase, to begin in July.

The commitment from those at Kew is enormous and a reference group will support the project at weekly meetings. Staff will be involved in information and hands-on workshops. We'll hear more from the project as it develops.

The launch with a difference

Riding on the back wheel of his BMX bike, a young artist from St Vincents school in South Melbourne broke through a ribbon to mark the unveiling of an exciting mural.

Skateboards, animals, the street, their friends and music are some of the images in the mural which occupies a concrete court in the school grounds.

Designed and painted by the boys at St Vincents and artists Evelyn Vynal and Sue Anderson, the mural reflects the young artists' interests.

The Mayor of South Melbourne, Cr Shane Dowling, attended the unveiling in recognition of the boys' achievement. He

is assisting St Vincents in looking at ways to raise funds for a matching mural on an adjacent court.



Artists Sue Anderson (left) and Evelyn Vynal at the recent mural unveiling

The day of celebrations also included a performance by the fabulous police band Code 1 and a barbecue.



Enlivening accommodation in the west

A grant from the Office of Psychiatric Services has enabled Arts Access to work with residents of Special Accommodation Houses for the past two years.

A review of that programme has altered the focus of the project from individual houses and their community centres to a more broadly based development of links for residents in the Western region of Melbourne.

In 1990, under the co-ordination of Noelle Curry, one of Arts Access' most experienced artists, the project has been extended to involve another three homes

in the Newport, Sunshine and Footscray area.

These homes will host a series of community workshops conducted by artists who are either residents of or who have worked extensively in the western suburbs.

The homes selected for the project have minimal resources and a large percentage of residents who do not speak English. At present there is very little communication or activity shared between the residents of most of these houses.

Music projects have just commenced with three groups of people and Noelle will work alongside these programmes, opening doors for on-going involvement. It is hoped the music workshops will encourage residents to share and learn from an exchange of music styles, songs and stories.

In the long term, it is hoped the project will create a network of opportunities for involvement over time to better service the interests of SAH residents. It will also serve to educate the broader community about the possible contribution and interest of people who are generally isolated.

They had the time of their lives

Senior Citizens' Week this year saw a unique performance by 18 older performers being staged in the AMP Theatre in the city.

The show, titled "The Times of our Lives," was a lively musical revue that included tapdancing, rock 'n' roll and some Charleston-dancing flappers.

The show took a humorous look at public transport and the problems of dealing with bureaucracy. On a more serious note, it also looked at memories that play such a large part of growing old.

All of the stories in the show were based on real-life experiences provided by the cast and residents of Lovell House, Southport Nursing Home, Footscray Society for the Aged, Greenhaven Special Accommodation House and Heathlands Hostel.

The performers included the older people's performance group "The Tombolas" and others from these homes and hostels.

The show's content was developed through several months of workshops and rehearsals under the direction of Will Gluth. For Will, the chance to work with such a diverse group of people was a challenging one—but most worthwhile.

He said: "It was really refreshing to work with a group of people with such a zing for life. Some of the performers who had never been on stage before amazed me with their real comic flair."

Unfortunately, the show was only scheduled for one performance. Despite a less than capacity audience and some delay in getting started, the production went smoothly and was well received.

For the performers themselves, their enjoyment was written all over their faces after the show. Nerves had disappeared and they revelled in the self-satisfaction of their achievement.

"The Times of our Lives," an Arts Access project, was funded by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and dedicated to anyone made to feel old while their hearts are still young...

EASE + ACROD = The Melbourne Venue Guide

EASE, Arts Access' ticketing and information service, has worked with ACROD's Access and Mobility Committee over the past few months to produce a guide for people with disabilities wishing to attend Melbourne's entertainment venues. The guide, known as the "Melbourne Venue Guide," is a collection of the many venue assessments that have been systematically compiled by EASE over the last two years. The guide features 18 of Melbourne's main entertainment venues, including

the National Tennis Centre, the Melbourne Cricket Ground, the Melbourne Concert Hall, the Museum and the National Gallery.

The guide, to be launched in early June, provides clear information on access to the venues including telephone numbers for assistance, descriptions of the different seating areas, notes on parking as well as information on features peculiar to the venue. The guide also gives useful advice on making bookings with BASS, particu-

larly if people have any special seating requirements. The guide aims to assist people with disabilities to gain access to entertainment venues with dignity and the minimum of fuss. It will also be of use to staff at venues, box office staff, and professionals and others supporting people with disabilities.

Copies of the "Melbourne Venue Guide" are available from EASE for \$5.00 (or \$6.10 by mail). For more information, contact Chris Milton on 699 7636.

Programming Update

Although 1990 is now half over, Arts Access still has many programmes due for commencement in the second half of this year.

A number of programmes have been completed already and some of these are highlighted in this newsletter. Programmes either currently in progress or due to commence soon include:

Integrated Dance Project

A development project to connect Special Development Schools with local state schools in a programme of creative dance. The project is funded by the Brockhoff Foundation for the development period, with the aim that on-going work be funded on a user-pays basis.
Artist: Ruth Komesaroff

Community Liaison Project

Carrying on from the success of this project during 1989, this project is connecting people with disabilities in the community with existing community based arts activities.
Artist: Heather Graham

Castlefield Mural and Festival

Again, this project is due for commencement in the second half of 1990. It is a community project with a new housing estate in Sandringham designed to create a sense of community through the arts.

Gill Memorial Mural

Artist Linda Richards has begun workshops on this 20 week mural project with homeless men at the Salvation Army Centre in Wills Street, Melbourne.
Artist: Linda Richards.

UNLOCKING THE SYSTEM

Consumer Participation Strategies in Mental Health

UNLOCKING THE SYSTEM is a new booklet produced by the Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council and the Victorian Government's Office of Psychiatric Services.

The booklet clearly describes consumers' and service providers' perceptions of the current barriers to effective consumer participation and also provides guidelines and strategies for effective and meaningful participation for both parties.

The booklet provides an invaluable resource for consumers, service providers and others interested in achieving improved consumer rights.

UNLOCKING THE SYSTEM is available from the Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council, 791 High Street, Thornbury. Phone (03) 480 2622



Special Accommodation Programme

Noelle Curry has been employed as an artist/co-ordinator to work across the western region creating links between centres, SAHs, councils and support workers in order to provide a framework for on-going support for those SAHs involved in the scheme in the past and for new SAHs to be developed this year.
Artist: Noelle Curry

Host Artist Scheme

This project, due for commencement in the second half of 1990, is designed to assist emerging artists with disabilities to develop in the professional world by connecting them with host professional artists with whom they can discuss progress, difficulties and other issues related to surviving as an artist.

Turana Development

Arts Access is working closely with the Ministry for Housing & Construction and the Ministry for the Arts on the plans for environmental change at Turana Training Centre. Arts Access has employed artist Peter Stitt to work with the Turana community in developing arts ideas for inclusion in the new development which will be put together in the form of a report.

Parkville Drama

Following the success of last year's drama workshops at Parkville Adolescent Unit, the Unit has come up with funds to run a similar series this year. The workshops commenced in April and will run until July.
Artist: Rhonda Whitaker

Arts Access Resource Centre Update

Arts Access' Resource Centre, managed by Project Officer Carol Downey, is constantly updating and adding to its current extensive collection. The following publications and materials are some of these recent additions:

The Creative Tree—

Active participation in the arts for people who are disadvantaged.

Edited by Gina Levete

Artists' approaches to visual arts, dance, creative writing, puppetry, drama, video, music, hospital arts, integration and more.

The Arts and Disabilities—A creative response to social handicap.

Edited by Geoffrey Lord

A question/answer approach to the arts with special needs groups.

Arts for Everyone

Anne Pearson

Environment, access, technical information.

Art for Health's Sake

Linda Moss

Illustrates and discusses the main arguments for arts provision in healthcare.

Arts Ability—Fifty creative people talk about ability and disability

Simon Goodenough

The Magic Exercise—Twelve arts education projects

Victoria Newmark

Hospital Arts—Annual Reports 1987, 1988, 1989

Slides

Arts for Health (UK)

Set of 15 slides with notes which illustrate the use of arts in the hospital environment.

Peter Senior

Video

A Vision of Caring Environments—Arts for Health (UK) 12 min

Staff Workshops

Throughout 1990, Arts Access' Resource Unit is co-ordinating a series of workshops in Project Planning, Music, Drama, Dance/Movement and Visual Arts for staff and service-providers in aged-care and intellectual disability.

The workshops focus on "hands-on" involvement and action-plans to increase understanding and development of arts-based programmes suitable for the interests of people with special needs.

Emphasis is given to making links with community-based resources and creating an awareness of the value of arts in community life.

Workshops coming up:

June—Intellectual Disability (Box Hill)

July—Aged Care (Dandenong)

Enquiries for these and future workshops—Carol Downey, phone 699 8299.

ARTIST TO ARTIST Professional development workshops for artists and artswriters.

During 1990, Arts Access' Resource Unit will be running a series of professional development workshops for artists and artswriters recognising the need for artists to have 'time-out'.

The workshops are designed to give artists opportunities to explore new directions and approaches in a variety of artforms and develop their personal and professional skills. In addition, the workshops will give artists the chance to network, share information and interact with other artists.

Currently, three workshops are planned. These are:

JUNE 6, 9.30am–12.30pm

"Awareness Through Movement"—an introduction to the Feldenkrais Method. Ruth Komesaroff.
"A Multi-arts Approach" Drama- Maud Clark, Visual Arts-Sally Marsden, Music-Greg Sneddon.

JULY 4, 9.30am–4.30pm

AUGUST 2, 9.30am–4.30pm

"Arts in Action"—The artist and people with intellectual disability.

All workshops will be held at Arts Access, 109–111 Sturt Street, South Melbourne. Enrolments and enquiries—Carol Downey, phone 699 8299.

Calling all participants

For all those people who have been involved, in any way, in an Arts Access project, this is an invitation to get together.

The first participants' meeting for 1990 will be held on June 18th at Arts Access at 5.30pm.

Those of you who were able to attend the last meeting in December, 1989 will remember what a success it was, with everyone sharing ideas about their involvement with Arts Access and meeting others who had been involved in projects.

The importance of this next meeting is to continue the good work started by the first meeting and to give consumers a greater say in what Arts Access is doing.

If you are interested in having your say and joining in, we would love to see you there.
RSVP to Samantha Marsh at Arts Access on 699 8299.

New Senior Project Officer.

Ray Richards has replaced Carey Lai as Arts Access Senior Project Officer.

When Carey Lai left in April after more than five years with Arts Access we knew it would be hard to find the right person to step into her shoes.

But one of Arts Access' strengths has been its ability to attract high calibre staff with extensive experience in community arts. Ray has brought renewed vigour to the position and is working hard to become familiar with the 40 or so projects Arts Access has planned for 1990.

Ray has more than 11 years' experience working in community arts as both a co-ordinator and artist.

His commitment to making the arts accessible, demystified and fun, fits well with Arts Access' own philosophy.

If you would like to know more about any aspect of Arts Access' programmes Ray would be more than happy to speak with you. He can be contacted at Arts Access, Monday to Thursday on 699 8299.

Your chance to P-art-ICIPATE

P-art-ICIPATE is the name and theme of a conference scheduled for September focusing on access and participation in the arts. In particular it will examine the interests of people with disabilities.

The conference is being staged by a group of organisations and individuals keen to bring together the exciting initiatives and possibilities which have been taking place in the arts in relation to people with special needs.

These groups have included Arts Access, Kew Cottages, Yooralla, the Disabilities Resource Centre, Community Arts Network, Back to Back Theatre and Diamond Valley Players.

Through discovery, performance, exhibition and discussion, participants will have opportunities to share skills, make links and plan for the future.

A programme of practical workshops and seminars will highlight techniques, training, networks, resources and issues across the full range of arts activities. The conference will emphasise achievements in the arts and explore ways of broadening and supporting the achievements.

It will take place at the Toorak Campus of Victoria College in Malvern from September 21 to 23. Places will be limited so early bookings are advised. For more information, phone 699 8299.

ARTS ACCESS SOCIETY INC

Arts Access Society is a non-profit organisation committed to providing access to the arts for people with disabilities or who are disadvantaged.
Executive Director: Kate Brennan
Development Officer: Judith Isherwood
Senior Project Officer: Ray Richards
EASE Project Officer: Chris Milton
Resource Officer: Carol Downey
Finance Officer: John Paxinos
Office Administrator: Rhona Bester
Office Assistant: Samantha Marsh
EASE Bookings Assistant: Barbara Milne

Volunteer Office Assistant: Suzanne O'Dwyer

EASE Volunteers: Hilary Ash
Betty Rankin
Barbara Fisher

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible.

Have you considered becoming a member of Arts Access? Join now and you will help us reach more people with more programmes.

Memberships range from \$15 for concessional membership, \$30 for single membership to \$50 for organisational

and is tax deductible.

Members are kept up to date with the year's activities through the quarterly newsletter 'Access'. Members receive discounts on all Arts Access publications and are invited to participate by attending those programmes which culminate in public performance or exhibition.

For more information, contact

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ARTS ACCESS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Registered by Australia Post
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