

Dance is leading the way

Thanks to a generous grant from The Jack Brockhoff Foundation, Arts Access has been able to run an exciting project during 1990 called the Integrated Dance Project.

The aim of this project has been to join together students from mainstream primary schools and students from special development schools in dance and movement workshops.

Artists Ruth Komesaroff and Marita Smith have been working with ten groups of students, five from primary schools and five from special development schools, in both independent and integrated dance sessions.

Ruth has been co-ordinating the project since it began in early 1990 and is now busy preparing a dance manual and auditory materials for use by teachers.

She said: "At Lincolnville Support Centre, a valuable in-service component of the project has been included whereby the 30 teachers observe dance sessions and participate in workshops.

"This allows for the exposure of a wider group of teachers to the ideas and content of the project. Hopefully it will mean an enthusiastic commitment to integrated dance projects in the future.

"Some of the independent sessions I have been working on at Lincolnville have been with a group of special students. One of the strongest gains for them is their growth in awareness and their interaction with each other.

"As well as developing their individual movement skills, they are encouraging and supporting each other and taking pleasure in each other's company."

Marita Smith, who has been working with a number of different groups in the dance sessions, said:
"It is incredible to witness children from



Photography by Jan Parker

both special and primary schools reach the point where they begin to take on responsibility for their own interaction with one another.

"Dance has proved a very effective springboard for integration, reaching across the boundaries of physical and intellectual capabilities, age and gender.

"Children from primary schools have commented on how they are amazed at what the children from the special schools have been able to do. Yet they themselves are learning so much about their own bodies' capabilities and skills."

For those children from the Special Development Schools, where movement of any kind can be a difficult task, this project has provided them with an opportunity to interact and socialise with 'other' children in a common activity.

This has led to improvements in their self-confidence and given them a sense of trust.

Here are some comments from students from Flemington Primary School:
"Sometimes when we first went to see the children from the special school we did not want to go near them, but now I really enjoy having them as friends..."

Isabella

"Finally the day arrived. We all trooped down to the special school. As we approached we seemed to become quieter. The reason was we were just plain nervous about how things would work with the special school kids."

Meredith

"I wanted to go to dancing to see how the children from the special school dance, how they acted when we were around and to just learn..."

Olivia

Participant's Report

Bruce Plant, a visual artist who has been involved in a number of Arts Access projects, has taken on the role of Participant Representative. This is his first report.

As Arts Access' Participant Representative, it has been my task to report on projects being run and to gather feedback from the participants themselves.

This has been an enjoyable task for me and it was in this capacity that I recently attended the Southport Community Nursing Home in South Melbourne. Here, an Arts Access project was celebrated by a spectacular cocktail party on the theme "Aboard ship on a cruise to Japan." Over 300 people attended.

On the night, I was able to speak to many of those who had been involved in the project. This included more than 50 of the nursing home residents, artist Jenny McCarthy and Dorothy James, Southport's Activities Director.

Much praise must be given to both Jenny and Dorothy for the energy and enthusiasm they shared in ensuring that all participants enjoyed the activities.

The participants themselves, whose average age was 80, spoke of a strong community feeling. They found the project to be a lot of fun and said that "everyone felt involved." This feeling extended during the project to include almost everyone in the nursing home, including staff and even the cleaners.

The project, conducted 1½ days per week for 8 weeks, involved the participants in the creation of a number of large coloured fish and other decorations which fitted in with the nautical theme. These fish had been brilliantly painted and were the pride of all those concerned.

The cocktail party, and from my point of view, the participants' involvement in the project, was most successful.

Dorothy James' view is that any financial outlay had been more than compensated for by the benefits to the participants. Any future involvement with Arts Access, she said, would be welcomed most enthusiastically.

Artists in Prison

Readers will be aware of Arts Access' work with women at Fairlea Women's Prison and the innovative activities run by artists Greg Sneddon, Maud Clark and Sally Marsden.

Thanks to a generous grant from The Ross Trust, Arts Access will continue this work during the second half of 1990.

The project, which will run from September to December, will involve women in drama workshops, focusing on character and myth, culminating in a short performance that will be videoed.

The opportunity for the women to develop performance pieces has always resulted in better self-esteem giving them a chance to show new abilities. In the past, their performances have been inspiring.

Arts Access is also currently seeking funds for projects at Pentridge and is hoping to work at the new Remand Centre. Murals, music and writing are the planned outcomes of these projects.

Special accommodation in the west

For the past 2½ years, Arts Access has been working with Special Accommodation Houses in the western suburbs, running workshops in visual arts, drama and music activities.

The project has been highly successful in establishing networks and social interaction between the clients of SAHs (Special Accommodation Houses), hostels, nursing homes, day care centres, senior citizens' clubs, local councils, arts groups and aged care workers in the western suburbs.

Barkly Gardens is one of three SAHs involved in the current phase of the project.

The Barkly Gardens Breakup Party, which took place at the end of July, was a big step forward in terms of involving the residents of the SAH in a community activity in a community setting.

The Breakup Party, which was held at Westhaven Hostel, was an afternoon of entertainment with guest performers including The Tombolas, Rob Eastcott, an Arts Access artist who orchestrated a small performance by Barkly Gardens residents and the West Footscray Senior Citizens' Choir.

Over 100 people from all over Footscray attended the afternoon including residents of Westhaven Hostel and Nursing Home, residents from Barkly Gardens SAH, participants from the Westhaven Day Care Centre, some West Footscray Senior Citizens, service providers from Footscray Council and general friends and family.

In the next few months the project will be expanding its contacts to include an ever broader cross-section of homes, hostels and day care centres.

Programming Update

With the end of 1990 now in sight, Arts Access still has a number of programmes that will be carrying on over the next few months. Many of these are detailed in other sections of this newsletter. Some of the others include:

Gill Memorial Mural

This project has involved artist Linda Richards working with homeless men at the Salvation Army Centre in Wills Street, Melbourne on the creation of a mural. This project is nearing completion and the mural will be unveiled in mid-September

Host Artist Scheme

This project has been funded by the William Buckland Foundation and involves connecting emerging artists with disabilities with host professional artists with whom they can discuss progress, difficulties and other issues related to surviving as an artist. Arts Access' project officer is currently compiling a register of artists with disabilities and professional artists and the matching of the two groups should begin within the next few weeks.

Castleford Mural and Festival

This recently commenced community project is working with a new housing estate in Sandringham and has been designed to bring together many of the diverse groups living in the estate. Artist Maria Fillipow has begun work with the community on the first phase of the project which is a mural.

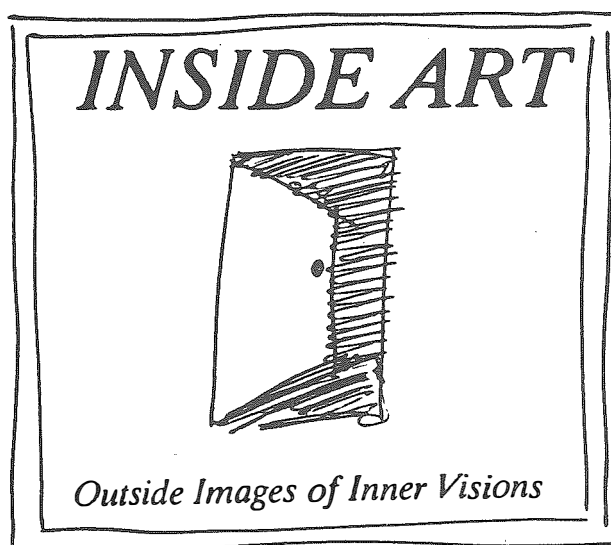
Community Liaison Project

This ongoing project has been established to assist people with disabilities to link into existing community based arts and recreational activities. Demand for the project is exceeding the project officer's time, however many successful links have already been made. The current project officer for the Community Linking Project is Diana Stewart.

Arts Access Video

Throughout this year, Arts Access has been working on creating a video about the arts and their relevance to disadvantaged individuals and groups. The video, entitled 'Imagine this...' has recently been completed and will be launched later in the year.

Mental Health Awareness Week



To coincide with Mental Health Awareness Week, Arts Access is mounting an open exhibition of selected works by past and present psychiatric patients from clinics, hospitals, daycentres and community health clinics around Melbourne.

Many of these centres have already held successful exhibitions and it is Arts Access' intention to select and curate works from this client group.

The exhibition will comprise recent contemporary works by established and emerging artists in a variety of mediums - paintings, drawings and 3 dimensional works.

A team of professional artists will then choose a selection of works that will go well together and express the theme of the exhibition.

The theme, Inside Art - Outer Images of Inner Visions, is loosely aimed at encouraging participants to enter work of a personal nature with the emphasis on self-expression.

The exhibition will be held at the Caulfield Arts Complex from the 17th - 28th October and all works will be for sale. If you would like any further information, contact the exhibition co-ordinator, Tracy Naughton, at Arts Access on 699 8299.

Austin Hospital Up-date

Arts-at-the-Austin, the artist-in-residency project at the Austin Hospital, has continued to produce some exciting and innovative work during 1990.

Presently, artists Sally Marsden, Kerri Peters and Jenny McCarthy are working on turning the Outpatients Area into a circus with murals and freestanding signs transforming the large area.

In April, a smaller mural was unveiled at the entrance to Ward 1, the Geriatric Assessment Unit.

This mural depicts a lovely garden with birds, a cat and a gate with a three dimensional effect. Many staff and patients were involved in the painting of the mural and it is now greatly admired by the entire hospital community.

A committee has been established by the hospital to raise funds for the project so that it may continue to operate throughout 1991.

Future plans include wind sock installations on the main forecourt which is a dull, grey, windy area; murals on the ceilings of units where patients have to lie on their backs for extended periods of time; murals on the walls of the long featureless corridors that join sections of the hospital; and a book that incorporates the thoughts and feelings of patients in the Oncology Unit.



A member of staff at work on the mural outside Ward 1.

Six women on show!

"6 Women" was the name of an exhibition opened by well-known Australian artist Mirka Mora at the Access Studio in July.

The exhibition featured prints and works on paper by Sue Robertson, Leslie Anthony, Rosanna Vecchio, Anne Norris, Antonietta Covino and Carol Watson and resulted in a number of sales.

Mirka Mora, addressing the large opening-night crowd, spoke of the tremendous energy and vitality that was obvious in many of the works on show.

Having come straight to this exhibition from the opening of another in St Kilda, she was impressed by the freshness and originality of many of the works and felt she could understand what each artist was trying to portray.

The exhibition ran for two weeks and attracted considerable interest from members of the general public.

Another exhibition held in June was also successful in terms of exposure for the artist.

"Occhio dell' Artista" was the name of Renaldo Portelli's exhibition which

portrayed his experience of life as an artist.

For Renaldo, the exhibition was a tremendous opportunity for his most recent works to be seen by a wide audience.

He said: "This exhibition took a lot of work, but it came to reality and now I believe that dreams do come true."

Further exhibitions will be held during the remainder of 1990 and into 1991. If you would like to receive information on up and coming exhibitions, contact Sam at Arts Access on 699 8299.

Arts Access Resource Centre

Recreation is an important aspect in the lives of most people and the creative arts should be considered as one option within a broad range.

Arts Access' Resource Centre is able to offer individuals and groups assistance to plan, develop or extend arts programmes as a recreation option involving people with disabilities in your community.

If you are an activities officer, arts worker, recreation officer, support worker, program planner or an individual with an interest in the arts contact Arts Access Resource Centre for more information about our services and facilities.

New technology

Arts Access' extensive Resource Collection is currently being computerised.

All information within the collection is being entered into a programme known as "In Magic," a data base which will give people easy access to information about arts and disability.

For instance, the programme can quickly display the range of items (books, slides, videos, reports) containing information as general as 'music' or as specific as 'music programmes with intellectually disabled children in Victoria'.

The Resource Centre is open to the public 9am - 5pm weekdays with Resource Officer, Carol Downey available for assistance Tuesday to Thursday.

Anti-Cancer Council Poster Project

Arts Access is approached by an ever-widening range of community groups seeking to run arts activities as part of their programme.

Recently, Arts Access was approached by the Anti-Cancer Council to run a visual arts project with Spanish and Greek speaking women to raise awareness of breast and cervical cancer.

This unusual and exciting community arts project has taken the form of poster design and at the end of 12 weeks, six full colour posters will be produced which will then be printed and distributed throughout Victoria.

The six posters will be designed by the women - three by the Spanish-speaking women and three by the Greek-speaking women.

The project is currently underway and the women's designs will be based on the concerns and issues that have arisen during discussions about breast and cervical cancer and cancer in general.

The messages they are seeking to portray are don't be afraid of cancer, it's curable, don't be afraid to examine your own body and don't be afraid to go to your doctor.

One of the images being discussed is that of a jungle split into two halves - day and night. In the night section, fearsome beasts lurk in the shadows - in the daytime these same animals appear harmless and playful.

Another image is of an apple with a worm in it which is nonetheless, still growing and healthy.

Some of the artworks will be produced as textiles - applique, embroidery and crocheting - and these will be displayed at the centres where they were designed.

The project is taking place at the Richmond Greek Women's Welfare Association and the Kensington Community Health Centre and will culminate with a media launch in late November.

Senior Citizens Week 1991 Encouragement Grants

Those community groups and local councils interested in running programmes during Senior Citizens' Week 1991 may be interested to learn of the Victorian Government's Encouragement Grants.

Encouragement Grants will be provided to assist in the organisation of local Senior Citizens' Week programmes that fit in with the theme "Time for Living." The grants are seeding grants only and are not intended to fund the whole programme but rather to facilitate aspects of a programme that may not otherwise be carried out.

Applications for these Encouragement Grants will only be received from Municipal Councils or Umbrella Groups which have a statewide function that goes beyond municipal boundaries.

Grants are expected to range from \$100 to \$500 and the closing date for applications is Thursday October 18.

Further information and assistance is available from: Peter Sinnott, Secretary, Victorian Senior Citizens' Week Advisory Committee, Projects Branch, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne 3002, Tel: (03) 651 5014.

**Need a play?
Something Contemporary?
Australian?
Perhaps for a younger audience?**

The Salamanca National Script Centre distributes unpublished and published playscripts to individuals and organisations all over Australia.

Subscribers receive regular newsletters and up-to-date catalogues with the details of cast, length, target audience and synopsis for all plays in their current list. Scripts are listed by author and by subject categories such as:

comedy	clowns
migrant/refugee	community plays
historical	musical

Loans are available at a nominal charge and sales of scripts are at discount price to subscribers. Usually you will receive the script within two weeks of requesting it.

The service is particularly aimed at youth theatre, theatre-in-education and isolated theatre groups and schools.

*To subscribe or for further details, contact:
Jennifer Beith
Administrator
Salamanca National Script Centre
77 Salamanca Place
HOBART 7004
Ph (002) 23 4675
Fax (002) 24 0245*

Art/Craft Works on display

**An exciting exhibition will be
opened in late October in Prahran.**

Prahran Mission is presenting "Art/Craft Works," a collection of pieces created by the participants of the Prahran Mission Psycho-Social Rehabilitation Programme.

The exhibition will be opened by Brian Howe, Federal Minister for Health on Monday the 22nd October at 1.30pm at Prahran Mission, 211 Chapel Street, Prahran.

The exhibition will be on for 2 weeks and will be open Monday to Friday from 10am to 4pm, Saturday from 11am to 3pm and Sunday from 1pm to 4pm. Don't miss it.



ARTS ACCESS SOCIETY

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: Julie-ann Willems
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 that culminate in public performance or exhibition. For more information, contact

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ARTS ACCESS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Registered by Australia Post
Publication No. VAW7218

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