

Creativity Art Energy ~~Dis~~ability



**Accessible Arts Inc.
Wagga Wagga
Community Arts Project
1991**

The Artists

Kyle Powderly - Project Co-ordinator

Pam Garsling

Karolina Kovacs

Canny Kitch

The Participants

Grant McMullen

Norma Sheedy

Anne Townsend

Barbara Ceeny

Kerr McCraig

Ray Griffiths

Cathie Gain

Tania Green

Dennis Sheedy

Kim Townsend

Cameron Hall

Carolyn Heely

David Bell

Linda Wilson

Shane Blachford

Jean Magennis

Wayne Close

Helen Makem

Wendy Cowley

Libby Biar

Plus many other people who attended occasionally.

Workshops aim to give the disabled access to arts

The first in a series of community art workshops involving people with disabilities will be held in Wiggins at the end of this month.

Several local artists, including Casey Kitcher, Pam Goring and Caroline Evans will conduct the workshops, with the support of the Leisure Company and The Forum Centre.

The three artists will hold workshops throughout August, focusing on painting, posters, sculpture and more.

The first workshop will be held at The Forum Centre, near the Cabot Hospital from 1pm on Sunday, July 28.

After that, two workshops will be held on each of the subjects, culminating in a final workshop where participants from all the groups can finish off any work and view the results of the work.

The workshops are part of a project initiated by the Sydney-based organisation *Autism Arts* and seek to establish regional activity in community arts.

Autism Arts is leading the project to promote and develop arts opportunities for people in the Western with disabilities.

The project is being co-ordinated on a local level by Wiggins artist, Kyle Powderly.

According to Kyle, about 20 disabled people plus their carers have indicated they will attend some of the workshops.

Kyle said the immediate focus of the project would be directed towards an exhibition on September 1 to display the creative products designed and made by the participants in the workshops.

She said the long-term objective of the exhibition and

of the workshops project, is to make public the creative abilities and needs of people with disabilities and to inspire involvement within the community for on-going art activities.

"The main aim of this project is to give art access to people with disabilities who have not previously had many opportunities to explore their creativity," Kyle said.

"This project aims to build skills and techniques by direct experience of art-making processes and to provide a stimulating supportive environment in which to work."

Kyle said participants will set up their finished works for the final exhibition, where different creative groups from the disabilities community would come together and display their products to the public.

She said as well as the display of works by the art groups, there would be performances by the multi-talented musical drama group and the disabled dance group.

Kyle said the group wanted to encourage both community involvement in the project and welcome any other artists, students, teachers, parents, disabled carers or anyone interested in the project to come along to the workshops.

As the project is being run on a low budget, Kyle said old scraps of material and wood, pieces of timber, half used paint or wallpaper or anything which could be used for anything would be much appreciated.

Part of the workshop being organised to promote disabled people's involvement in the arts is a Wiggins Gallery exhibition on Sunday at the Wiggins City Library.

The exhibition includes works in progress by a group of handicapped disabled people being encouraged by Kyle. It also includes an exhibition of any of the work done at the workshops, opening the exhibition Kyle Powderly on 27/08/88.



Preparing a work by one of her handicapped disabled art students, Barbara Corry and Wiggins Centre, is local co-ordinator of the community art project, Kyle Powderly.



At one of the community arts workshops at the Forum Centre are Jane May and Kyle Powderly.

Exploring creativity through art

By RACHYL CHEASE

A series of community art workshops for people with disabilities is currently running in Wiggins at the Forum Centre.

The workshops have been organised by local artists, Casey Kitcher, Pam Goring, Caroline Evans and Kyle Powderly with the support of the Leisure Company and The Forum Centre.

The new month program is part of a project initiated by *Autism Arts*, a Sydney-based organisation which seeks to establish regional activity in community arts.

According to artist Kyle Powderly, the main aim of the project is to give art access to people with disabilities who have not previously had many opportunities to explore their creativity.

"The project aims to build skills and techniques by direct experience of art-making processes and to provide a stimulating supportive environment in which to work in," she said.

A changing display in the window gallery at the Wiggins City Library will follow the development of the projects.

Ms Powderly said the immediate focus of the project was directed towards an exhibition on September 1 to display the creative products designed and made during the workshops.

"The long-term objective of this exhibition and the workshop project is to make

public the creative abilities and needs of people with disabilities and to inspire involvement within the community for on-going art activities," she said.

"The exhibition opening will be an 'open' where different creative groups from the disabilities community will come together to display their abilities to the public."

The venue of the exhibition is still being negotiated, according to Ms Powderly, but the requirements are that it be central, public, accessible and large enough to house an "open" exhibition.

"We are considering several venues and are open to further suggestions or involvement from business or the community," Ms Powderly said.

"As the project is being run on a low budget, charitable organisations or business may contribute or donations which can be made by businesses and individuals."

"You can use scraps of material, wood, pieces of timber or half used paint or wallpaper can all be used."

"At the end of the project, a booklet will be produced promoting the project and any support or sponsorship will be fully acknowledged."

For more information contact Kyle Powderly, phone 213445.

Accessible Arts Inc. is a state-wide organisation which encourages and promotes the development of opportunities for people with disabilities to have access to and participation in all creative art forms.

In the begining...

In May 1991, Accessible Arts, approached the Wagga community with the idea of generating a network of people interested in developing arts opportunities for people with disabilities.

After the initial community meeting it was decided that a community arts project would assist in establishing the network and promote better access to the arts for people with disabilities.

The aims of the community arts project were to promote the arts to people with disabilities and to inform the community of the need to integrate people into existing arts services and programmes.

The project was to provide people with hands on experience in as many visual mediums as practicable. This was in response to the difficulties experienced by people when faced with making choices when they have no knowledge/experinece of a particular art form.

The project aimed to bring together a variety of art forms combining drama, painting sculpture, silk scarves, banner-making and poster-making, and then to draw these different creations together in an exhibition event to display the abilities and achievements of the group.

The visual arts project was to become unique in that it catered for people with physical disabilities, people with intellectual disabilities and the broader community.

To this end, several local artists banded together to organise a series of ten community arts workshops. These workshops were designed to give a diverse range of people the opportunity to work together and learn from each other.



The First Workshop

This was a big introductory workshop to involve and inspire over fifty people in the community through the processes of creativity and art. All of the project participants attended, as well as their carers and many practicing local artists.

We wanted to explore the elements: Earth, Water, Air and Fire, as a starting point for accessing creativity, on the basis that everyone feels and everyone interprets the environment in their own way.

Drama Tutor, Janette Crowe (pictured), led a drama workshop to explore these metaphors using movement, sound, voice, music and dance.





When all of the group had experienced through drama the: HEAVINESS of Earth; the FLOWING of Water: the LIGHTNESS of Air: the FLICKERING of Fire; the group was directed to extend these experiences and movements into colour and onto canvas. The larger group broke into four smaller groups and began to work together on four large canvases in each of the four corners of the room.







"... to have overcome some of the barriers I have put up so that I can keep away from people who I thought were unlike me are amazing. I mean, the barriers just dropped away as contact was made. I was the one with the disability." - C.K.



Some of the participants had very limited verbal skills and they found painting to be a powerful means of expression.





There was an enormous enthusiasm generated by the group, with many of the participants regularly proclaiming that they "LOVE ART". The works which they created reflect the positive energy with which they approached their work.



Silk Scarves



A group of participants decided to try silk painting, and together they learned how to make silk scarves, using Procean Dyes which produce vibrant, glowing colours. They experimented with calligraphy brushes and Gutta to create beautiful scarves.





Poster Project



One project undertaken by the group was to produce posters to publicize the needs of people with disabilities in issues like transport, leisure activities, etc.



A poster project was also launched to promote the Art Exhibition Event, with the lettering being done on computer and copies made on a photocopier, with a space left in the centre of the page for hand drawn images. This made each of the posters unique and interesting, and everyone was able to enhance the message in their own way.

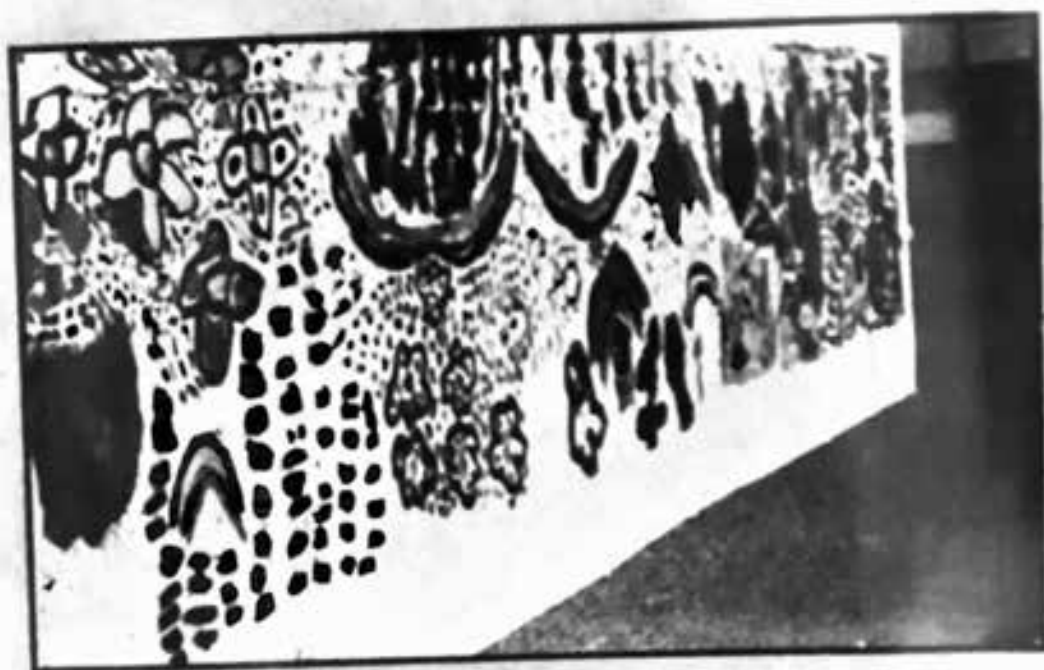
These posters were placed all over town, in cafes, banks, shops, disabilities service areas, etc., to let people in the general community know of the project and the Exhibition Event.



Banners



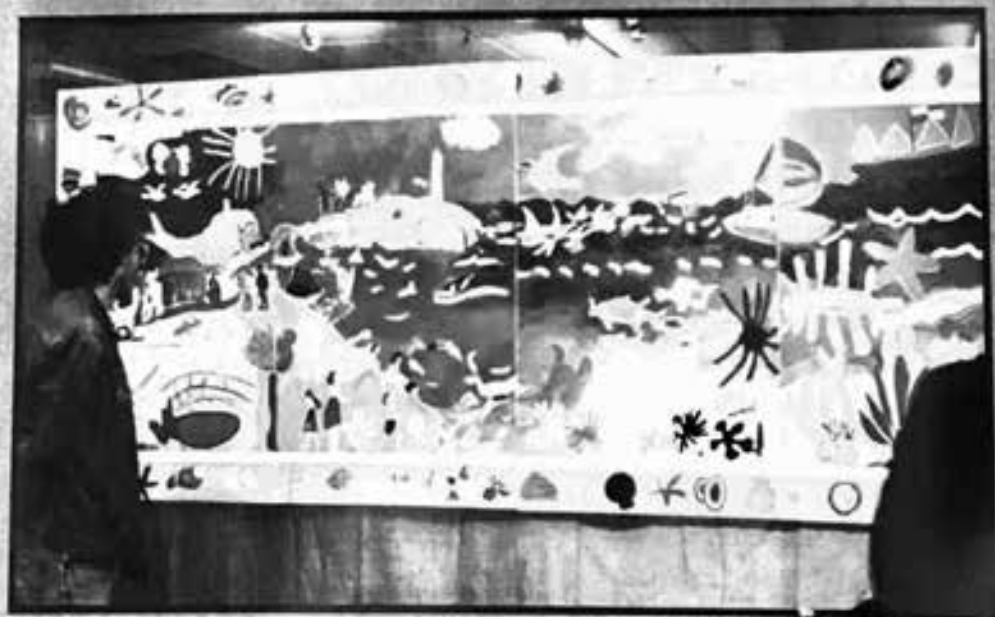
Over a few successive workshops, some members of the group, worked on a series of banners, exploring painting, collage and small wrapped sculptures which were sewn onto the fabric.





These banners were produced dynamically, with the group working around a table and moving on at regular intervals to work on another area to develop an homogenous group artwork.

The Exhibition Event



The culminating event held on Saturday 31st August 1991 was an exciting and rewarding experience for both the proud participants and for the large audience who attended. The exhibition was hung in the Strand Arcade in a double shop generously donated by Hore and Davies Real Estate for the two weeks that the show was hanging.

The walls were alive with dynamic colour in a rich variety of artistic styles and expression and the overall impression of the show reflected very much the spirit with which the workshops were conducted. The concepts of the energetic flow between the separate elements which the group began with was again reaffirmed by the flowing together of the individual works to form a cohesive and highly successful show. But that's not all!





The Drama for Intellectually Disabled Group produced a delightful performance called "Buffalo Girl" from an African myth, narrated by Janette Crowe and assisted by Tamsin Cowling.

The Drama Group, who had been working earlier in the year with Janette and Tamsin had developed the story over several weeks, after spending a long period concentrating on expressive movement with body, voice and sound exploration.





"The response of surprise that the work was made by disabled people was typical and shows that the public needs to be made more aware of the many and different talents each disabled person possesses."

"The workshops and public exhibitions need to be held on a regular basis to stimulate on-going interest and support within the community and for the disabled to grow in creativity - and enable at least a few of the more talented to 'make art' on a continual basis." -P.G.



Creativity Art Energy



~~Disability~~

An Exhibition of Works
from the Accessible Arts
Community Arts Workshops.

Performances by the Drama Movement Group

Opening Event

Saturday 31st August. 1 - 3 pm

All Welcome.

Shops 8-9
back of the

Strand Arcade.

Baylis St

Open All Week until Saturday 7th September

Many Thanks to all who helped make this project possible in Wagga.

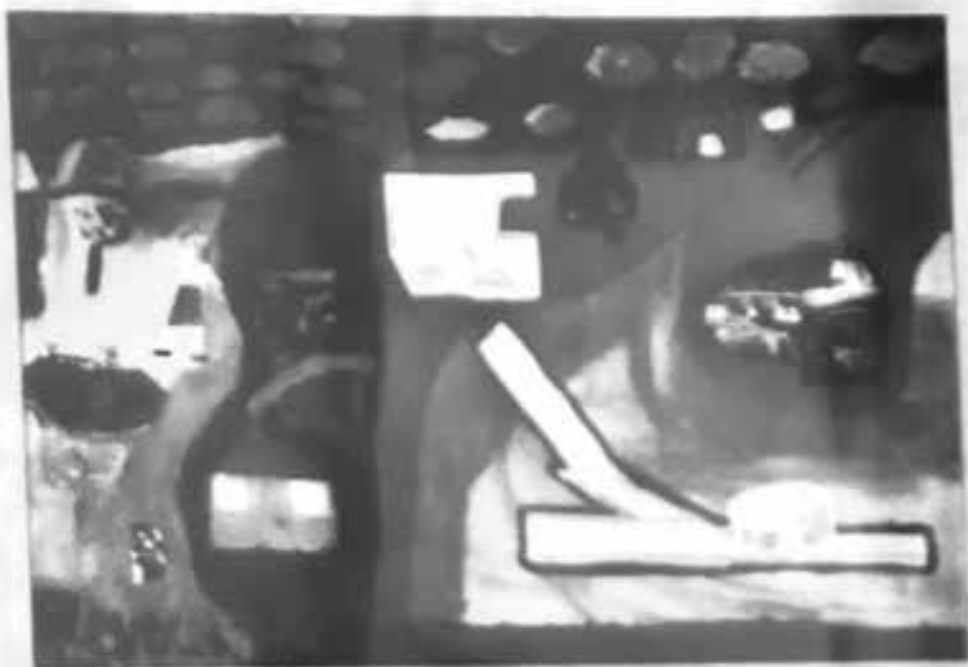
Particularly:

Helen Connors and Accessible Arts.
Jaquie Fell, Helen Abigail, Ted Coop at the Forrest Centre
Susie Roper at the Leisure Company
Peter Lloyd, Hardies Hardware for Sponsorship
The Wagga Daily Advertiser for press coverage
The Riverina Leader for press coverage
Nicolett at ABC radio for interviews
2AAA Radio for interviews
Prime Television.
Carolyn Read, Hore and Davies for the Exhibition Space
Caroline and Brad and the gang at Geneva Cres.
Dianne Johnston for her help in the workshops
Jeremy Nodes for Photographs
Janette Crowe for Drama Movement and support.
The Staff and Carers at Kurrajong Hostel

The Artworks



Anne Townsend
Still life 61 cm X 61 cm



Shane Blachford
Desert Holiday 99 cm X 144 cm



Shane Blachford
Sydney 109 cm X 109 cm



Grant McMullen
Fire Painting 143 cm X 105 cm



Grant McMullen
Blue Air Painting 60 cm X 115 cm



Group Work
Rainy Day 230 cm X 110 cm



Grant McMullen
Black 230 cm X 100 cm



Grant McMullen
Dark 104 cm X 44 cm



Group Work
Water 116 cm X 230 cm



Group Work
Earth 116 cm X 230 cm



Group Work
Air 116 cm X 230 cm



Group Work
Fire 116 cm X 230 cm



Wendy Cowley & Group Help
Textured Painting for the Sighted 115 cm X 150 cm



Wendy Cowley
Pink and Grey
91 cm X 115 cm



Tanla Green
Flower 79 cm X 69 cm



Tanla Green
Happy Sea Day 110 cm X 110 cm



Dennis and Norma Sheedy
Sunny Day Painting 90 cm X 110 cm





Jean Magennis
Ocean



Wayne Close and Barbara Ceony
Flowers 61 cm X 61 cm



Linda Wilson
Kandinsky Colours 61 cm X 61 cm

The exhibition and the aims of the project were well publicised through radio interviews, newspaper articles, photographs and the poster campaign.

The exhibition, held in a shopping arcade in the main street was well attended and the works were viewed by a wide cross section of the community. The works generated an enthusiastic response with expressions of interest to purchase the works on display.

In October 1991 the works travelled to Sydney for the Suitcase Show exhibition where more than 200 people attended the official opening by ABC Arts Presenter, Peter Ross. A number of the participants from all of the Accessible Arts Inc. regional projects journeyed to Sydney for the opening and were inspired by the positive response they received. Nearly all of the participants involved in these projects are continuing their interest in the arts today.

The original artworks produced through the Wagga Wagga project are now housed there, however, the project will continue to tour regional New South Wales in this format.

This visual arts project has been a great success and there is now a well established network operating in the Wagga Wagga region. In 1992 this network has already begun planning strategies to further improve and develop access to the arts for people with disabilities in the Riverina.

NEXT ISSUE:

Women's Health -
what's to do?

ON THE LEVEL

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Disability & Sexuality
- Relationships
- Contraception
- Sexuality Education
- Parenting
- Teaching Tips
- HIV/AIDS
- Legal rights & Sexuality
- Sexual Abuse
- From the Frontline - New Education Strategies
- New Resources
- Book Reviews

disability & sexuality.. disability & sexuality.. disability & sexuality

We couldn't have done it without...

THE FORREST CENTRE "Caring for the Aged and Disabled"

The project involved a wide cross-section from the community, both disabled and non-disabled. It involved many established local artists, who brought with them a wide range of expertise in Arts and teaching. These established Artists worked along side the Participants, sharing the experiences of these emerging new artists, who were beginning to explore new and different forms of Creativity.

The project was Co-ordinated by Artist Kyle Powderly, who was joined by three other artists, Pam Gartlang, Karolina Kovacs and Camy Kinloch to form the core group for the project.

This group was added to by the involvement of other artists and carers who also volunteered their time and skills. The contributions of several of these people was invaluable. Jacqui Fell, an occupational therapist at the Forrest Centre, where the workshops were held; Janette Crowe, a tutor and director of drama for Intellectually Disabled; Diane Johnson, an Arts Education student; and Caroline, Brad, Nina and numerous other supportive carers who helped make the project a success.

The project was well supported by the business as well as the private community, with substantial donations of: An accessible and welcoming venue and staff for the project to be run, by the Forrest Centre Day Care; administrative help; a leisure company; timber and hardware by Hardys Hardware; and an exhibition space in the Strand Arcade by Hore and Davies Real Estate.

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Painting

In successive Workshops some of the participants developed individual works, while others continued to work together on large group works. Some of the participants wanted to use their art to talk about issues that were important to them, such as the need for transport and accessibility.



"S...s mother is amazed. At home he draws on A4 paper, mainly aeroplanes and trucks. Here he is painting on large canvases and painting cities, the desert and using large spaces of colour. I believe he has found his niche."

"My own comments on S...s work: He appears to be so confident I was sure he had used large canvases before, he knows exactly how the work should happen. He is able to describe the meaning behind his painting. His design oriented paintings, using primary colours are admired by many viewers. I would like to see him have the opportunity to continue." - CK



"Red and yellow have the feelings of the desert. You're driving in the desert and it's hot. There's a town and someone living there. Painting is nice, I enjoy putting the paint on." - S... (participant)

"I enjoyed doing the painting; it was different. I've never done it before." - Participant