



Their Shadows in Us

Their Shadows in Us



Tutti Artists:

Jenna May

Aimee Crathern

Kimberly Sellers

Scott Pyle

James Kurtze

Dougie Jacobssen

Jackie Saunders

Michelle Hall

Joel Hartgen

Charlie Taplin

Kathryn Evans

Alice Green

Their Shadows in Us

An artistic interpretation by Tutti Arts of the last 100+ years of Minda Incorporated

Pat Rix, project initiator

Melanie Fulton, exhibition curator

Catherine Murphy, researcher and writer

Laura Wills, lead artist and researcher

Nina Rupena, lead artist

Madison Bycroft, media artist

Sascha Budimski, sound artist

Pavlos Soteriou, project photographer

Their Shadows In Us

14 December 2013 – 16 February 2014
Flinders University City Gallery
State Library of South Australia, Adelaide

Tutti Ensemble Inc
PO Box 115
Hove, South Australia 5048
T 08 8422 6511
E info@tutti.org.au
www.tutti.org.au

Pat Rix, project initiator
Melanie Fulton, exhibition curator
Catherine Murphy, researcher and writer
Laura Wills, lead artist and researcher
Nina Rupena, lead artist
Madison Bycroft, media artist
Sascha Budimski, sound artist
Pavlos Soteriou, project photographer

ISBN 978-0-646-91431-2

Published 2013 by Tutti Ensemble Inc
© Tutti Ensemble Inc, the artists and authors

Catalogue design: Sandra Elms Design
Printer: FiveStarPrint

Cover image:
Nina Rupena and Jenna May
Who the heck is Minda? (detail), 2013
graphite, ink, watercolour, paper
120 x 160 cm
courtesy the artists

Image on page 2:
Nina Rupena and Tutti Artists
Minda Pines (detail), 2013
graphite, ink, charcoal, pastel, synthetic
polymer paint, collage, card, paper
150 x 107 cm
courtesy the artists

Images Pavlos Soteriou

Acknowledgements

Tutti Inc. gratefully acknowledges the support of the South Australian Government, through Arts SA's New Exhibitions Fund for making possible an exhibition of this scale by SA's leading Disability Arts organisation Tutti, in partnership with Minda Inc. For enabling the Tutti Artists to work in collaboration with professional artists, in research processes and interpretive art making, over a sustained period of time.

Tutti gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the Australia Council for the Arts.

Tutti thanks Project Partner Minda and specifically, Minda's CEO Catherine Miller, for ongoing enthusiasm and support of this project. This has taken many forms, including significant financial support; approving our access to Minda's Archive; to interviews and photographs of staff, residents and clients; and promotion of the project. This support has determined the success of the project.

The enthusiastic, generous support and guidance of Flinders University City Gallery Director, Fiona Salmon, is gratefully acknowledged. The Curator also thanks the Flinders University City Team, including Celia Dottore and Madeline Reece. Special thanks to Julian Tremayne for stunning gallery installation work.

Special thanks to designer Sandra Elms, for patient guidance and elegant catalogue design.

Tutti Inc. appreciates the support of Dr Paul Hoban and Jack Condous.

Tutti Inc. gratefully acknowledges the work of Project Researcher and Writer Catherine Murphy, whose dedicated professionalism, grace and enthusiasm extended far beyond the project limits.

The Curator acknowledges the contributions of all Project Artists. To Laura Wills whose vision and aesthetic established the artistic standard of the exhibition; to Nina Rupena who took on the role of Lead Artist and who revealed new ways of seeing with great sensitivity and skill; to Madison Bycroft who thoughtfully and efficiently engaged in hours of sewing with Tutti Artist Kimberly Sellers, and who created the multi media piece; to Sascha Budimski for interpreting hours and days worth of interview recordings into the Soundscape. To the Tutti Artists involved in the project in numerous ways, from research and interviews through to the art making. This project would not have eventuated without this enthusiasm and ongoing engagement. To Aimee Crathern, Jackie Saunders, Dougie Jacobssen, James Kurtze, Jenna May, Kimberly Sellers, Alice Green, Scott Pyle, Joel Hartgen, Michelle Hall, Kathryn Evans and Charlie Taplin.

The *Their Shadows in Us* team thank all Minda staff, past and present, who contributed their time and reflections. Special thanks go to Kaye Kay, Dariusz Swiderczuk, Allan Semple, Walter Galka, Pat Kaufmann and Marion Zafry. To the Minda House Managers, who supported residents and clients to participate in the project. Thanks go to

Minda Pottery Team leader Roger Gillison for loan of work, and to East End Art Group Coordinator Mark Warren for client support. To the families of people accessing Minda services, who embraced this project and agreed it was time for some of the story to be told.

Tutti and Minda extend gratitude to the staff at the State Library of South Australia for their interest in including items from the Minda photographic archive in their own State Archive. Thanks to Sue Ward, Coordinator Archival Collection Development; Margaret Southcott, Kate Filsell, Bev Jennings, Mary Ryan, Toby Woolley, Liu Steven.

Tutti Visual Arts thanks Jake Holmes and Cassie Alvey from Tooth and Nail Studios, for the fun printmaking workshop they conducted with the program in 2012, making dozens of prints from old letterpress plates found in the Minda archive.

The Curator wishes to acknowledge the support of the talented and dedicated Tutti Visual Arts Team, including Program Coordinator Patricia Wozniak, Key Support Worker Annalise Donders, Artsworkers Desma Kastanos, and Francis Buring-Pichler. Our appreciation extends to Tutti Arts Performance Program Coordinator Juha Vanharkartano for guidance with the multi media piece, and to Michael Ross for technical assistance. Grateful thanks to our Tutti Visual Arts Volunteers Wendy Michell, Taryn Flint, Robyn Zerna-Russell and Jenny Smith. To Wendy Michell for painting assistance with Tutti Artist Alice Green; to Robyn Zerna-Russell for design consultation and cutting the large paper cut piece; to Jenny Smith for coordinating the sewing of the beautiful quilt for the crib; and to Taryn Flint for ongoing artist support.

Much appreciation goes to Tutti Graphic Designer Pavlos Soteriou, for ongoing project support and advice, and for extensive photographic documentation of this project.

Thanks also to the dedicated Tutti administration team, including Jackie Smith, Rebecca Jeffries, and Rachel Fisher. And to Tutti General Manager Dorothy O'Brien. The Curator gratefully acknowledges the support and encouragement of the previous Tutti General Manager Sharon Manning.

Thanks to all those who have supported this project in a great variety of ways. Every contribution has been valued and has been part of the complex history of the project. To Lyn Leane for the loan of the 1970s Minda Pottery; to Zyg Kulesza and the Brompton Community Garden for the loan of the iron bed; to Student Placement Ella Lawry for cheerful project support; to the Minda Op Shop staff for numerous happy project finds. The curator acknowledges the generous and ongoing support of artist/curator John Foubister throughout this project.

Melanie Fulton
Exhibition Curator

Contents

10 Foreword

Pat Rix, CEO and Artistic Director, Tutti

15 Introduction: Shadows, voices and portraits

Melanie Fulton, Exhibition Curator

19 Their Shadows In Us

Catherine Murphy



Flinders University
Art Museum
& City Gallery



Their Shadows in Us has been supported by the Government of South Australia through Arts SA.

Tutti's vision has always been to be an international leader in creating opportunities for disabled artists.

Minda is the largest non-government disability support organisation in South Australia, that assists individuals with intellectual disability to thrive in their local environments as valued members of their communities, by offering residential and lifestyle services, employment and respite support.

"Tutti began at Minda, an organisation which over the years has shown great foresight in recognising the power of the arts to engage... both organisations have striven to be at the forefront of thinking about disability services"

Pat Rix



Pat Rix
CEO and Artistic
Director, Tutti



John Miller
President, Tutti Board



Catherine Miller
CEO, Minda



Tony Harrison
President, Minda Board



Nina Rupena and Tutti Visual Artists

Portrait of Dougie (detail), 2013
graphite, ink, charcoal, collage, card, paper, 150 x 107 cm
courtesy the artists
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Melanie Fulton and Robyn Zerna-Russell

Pine tree, 2013
synthetic polymer paint, paper-cut, 180 x 200 cm
courtesy the artists
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Nina Rupena and Jenna May
Who the heck is Minda?, 2013
 graphite, ink, watercolour, paper
 120 x 160 cm
 courtesy the artists
 Image Pavlos Soteriou

Foreword

Tutti artists came to me in late 2009 (around the time of the planned redevelopment at Minda's Brighton site) with questions about the older Minda residents, who had come to Minda as children. Tutti artists were keen to interview and draw or photograph people, perhaps even make a movie, before everything changed.

To embark on such an epic project without outside help would have been impossible and I thank Minda's Cathy Miller for funding that enabled me to approach two highly respected artists who combine excellence in their own practice with a deep commitment to community.

Catherine Murphy is a writer and oral historian who lives and breathes in the world of personal histories. I'd admired Catherine's widely celebrated work for many years and heard about her everywhere. When my own work took me into far-flung corners of the state, invariably someone would ask, "Do you know the writer Catherine Murphy, she's been here interviewing everybody in town". It was like following Arthur Stace, the man who wrote the word 'eternity' on the streets of Sydney. For a time I even suspected Catherine had cloned herself to reach so many extraordinary places and people and bring their stories to life.

More recently I'd discovered Laura Wills, an exciting contemporary visual artist, whose diverse practice explored social and environmental themes using found materials. I'd been particularly drawn to Laura's use of maps and the powerful statements

about place and people that resulted from the way contours, points and lines triggered her imagination. Laura worked with Catherine as a project researcher and then as project Lead Artist throughout 2011 and 2012. She developed individual and collaborative art works for the exhibition with Aimee Crathern, and Jenna May before the appointment of another remarkable lead artist, Nina Rupena, just before the birth of Laura's twin boys.

Since early 2011 Catherine and Laura have worked their way through boxes of information tucked away in the Galway archive room, scrutinising historical interviews, photos, newspaper clippings, Super 8 movies and resident records. In the company of long time staff, residents and Tutti artists they explored the grounds of Minda, made sketches, took photos, and conducted many, many interviews. They made field trips to Craigburn Farm, to the homes of community residents and retired staff and I began to wonder how they would ever present such complex and at times confronting historical information, in an accessible way.

Midway through research, the final piece of this jigsaw fell into place when Melanie Fulton, who had begun the Visual Arts Program with us in 2005, expressed interest in becoming exhibition curator. Now as I look at the works created by Laura and Nina individually as well as collaboratively with Tutti artists, plus the work of the exhibition team comprising Mel, artist Madison Bycroft and sound designer Sascha Budimski, it becomes clearer than ever that projects like ours give voice to those who

might otherwise not be heard. *Their Shadows in Us* shows once again that "no history is mute" but is made up of many points of view and realities and that it is indeed the stories that are repeated often enough, that tend to become 'truth'.

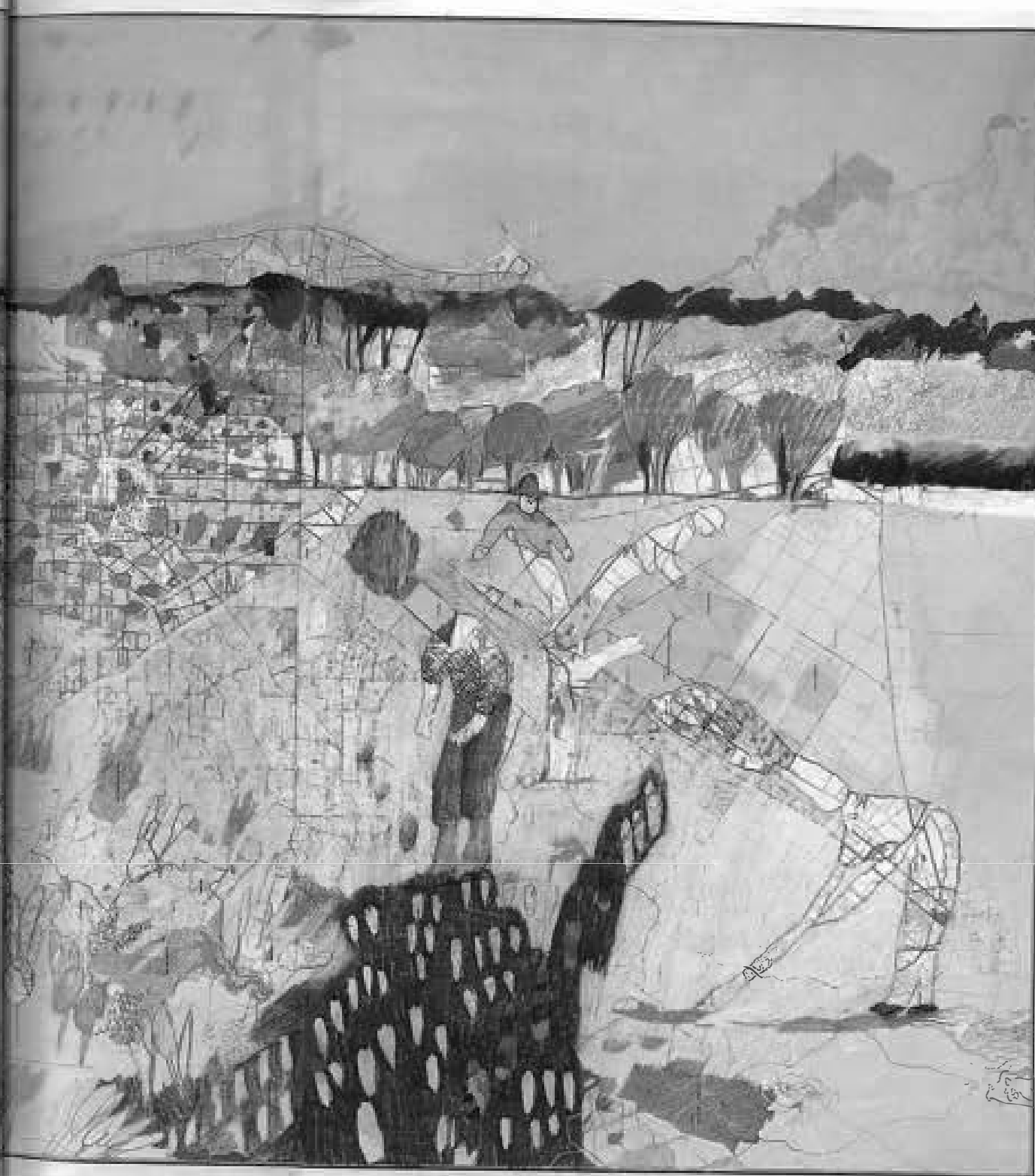
To all the Tutti artists whose curiosity set this project in motion – thank you for asking. To Jenna May, Aimee Crathern, Alice Green, Jackie Saunders, Dougie Jacobssen, Michelle Hall, Scott Pyle, Kimberly Sellers, James Kurtze and Joel Hartgen who have variously contributed to both the research and art making stages of the project – thank you for going deeper.

And, from all of us with an interest in Minda and its pioneering role in the history of disability in South Australia, in the voices of the past and the growing voice of Australia's contemporary disabled artists, I say thank you to each and everyone who has made this exhibition and its accompanying catalogue a reality.

I shouldn't have doubted. Not for a minute.

Pat Rix

CEO and Artistic Director, Tutti



Laura Wills and Jenna May
Minda's Vegetable Garden, 2012
 graphite, synthetic polymer paint, pastel, laminated map of Adelaide and Gulf St Vincent, 101 x 186 cm
 courtesy the artists
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



Laura Wills
Archival letterpress plate print, 2012
 ink, found paper, 9.5 x 16 cm
 courtesy the artist
 Image Pavlos Soteriou

Introduction

Shadows, voices and portraits

Stories told, discovered, researched, and then given new life through art making. The curatorial process of this large project has included that, as well as guiding and supporting the development of artistic interpretations of lives lived, in the past and currently. So much has come to light throughout this project, and yet so much has also remained obscure and unknown, lost in time. Fragments, such as a page in a log book registering someone's admittance, or an unnamed photograph in a box of hundreds. These ghosts, or shadows, have created as much energy through the mystery of their elusiveness, as have the vibrant and passionate stories of the contemporary residents and staff of Minda, and of the Tutti artists engaged with the project.

The challenge as curator of the *Their Shadows in Us* exhibition, and for the exhibition artists, has been to distil from the wealth of accumulated material, the stories and images which would best give life to Minda's complex story. And to work with those stories and images to reveal the very human aspects of this history, as well as recognise the impact which the beautiful Minda Brighton and Craighburn Farm sites had upon those living and working there.

Project artists Laura Wills, Nina Rupena, Madison Bycroft and Sascha Budimski have worked both independently, and collaboratively, with Tutti Visual and Performance artists to create works which honour the stories of Minda's residents and staff. Each artist has thoughtfully and sensitively gathered their material, and transformed it into art through diverse modes of practice. Tutti artists Jenna May, Aimee Crathern, Alice Green, Jackie Saunders, Dougie Jacobssen, Michelle Hall, Scott Pyle, Kimberly Sellers, James Kurtze and Joel Hartgen have each contributed enthusiastically to the collection of material and its interpretation into art.

Working with artists of the calibre of Laura, Nina, Madison and Sascha has enabled the Tutti artists to develop ideas and skills at new levels, and to engage in artistic exchange which has proven to be both

productive and fun. Laura's creative investigations of place and activities, and Nina's sensitive focus on select individuals, together tell a lively and powerful story. Madison and Sascha have extended this story through explorations of new media and sound. The Tutti artists have brought authenticity and energy to the project, through their interest and through their own experiences of the emotional layers involved in telling Minda's story, from pain to humour.

The collective art making process has necessarily been long, with each artist keenly aware of the power and poignancy of the information gathered. Everyone involved in the project has needed time to absorb, reflect on and then transform the material, and everyone has had a sense of awe at the honour of this task. The curation of this exhibition has been complex, with the realisation of it in the Flinders University City Gallery a rewarding outcome.

While this exhibition is the presentation of nearly three years work, everyone engaged on the project feels we have just begun to tap into a vast vein of histories and stories. This is a very small view into a rich, and often unknown and misunderstood, South Australian history.

Melanie Fulton

Exhibition Curator



Aimee Crathern working on *Layitallonthetable*, 2012
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Madison Bycroft and Dougie Jacobssen
Shadow moves (detail), 2013
digital film projection, 127 x 123 cm
courtesy the artists
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Nina Rupena and Tutti Artists

Minda Pines, 2013

graphite, ink, charcoal, pastel, synthetic polymer paint, collage, card, paper, 150 x 107 cm
courtesy the artists

Image Pavlos Soteriou

Their Shadows In Us

Catherine Murphy

Minda: 2011

I enjoy the invitation to 'drive slowly' as I turn into the grounds of Minda at Brighton. It's a pleasure to slide down the register from the hum of hyper daily activity into low gear and take in my surroundings, framed by some very old and very majestic red gums. They trace a grand avenue at the entrance to Minda which I later discover has been a residential facility in this location since 1911.

I begin to feel intrigued about the shape, depth and colour of historical stratifications on this site where I'm starting work today with visual artist, Laura Wills.¹ We're researching a joint Tutti/Minda arts project, *Their Shadows In Us*, which aims to uncover stories about people with intellectual disability who have lived here and staff who have worked here.

We'll join hands on this project with a younger generation of people with intellectual disability, all in their mid to late 20s, who participate in Tutti's visual, digital and performing arts program.

The request for 15 km/h at the entrance to Minda is understandable. Cars take second place to the people who live here. Walking through the grounds to workplaces, or to recreational, craft and occupational groups, they are heading in many directions; to the café for a meal, or towards a nearby house to visit a friend. Some are just strolling in the sunshine or being pushed along in wheel chairs by carers.

My attention is pulled towards a cluster of stately, historic buildings settled onto green, green lawn. They are an imposing statement of permanence, yet one of the towering Norfolk Pines in front of them creates a surprising distraction from this aura of stately tradition.

The pine appears to have started life growing upwards just like its friend alongside. But unknown forces at some point in time have bent it downwards, before an inner strength corrected this trajectory (which would certainly have been its downfall) and once more it grew triumphantly skywards.

A tree which has grown so tall and strong over many decades and left such an inventive imprint on the skyline and its surroundings must surely be acknowledged as a survivor – interesting, quirky, valuable because of, rather than despite of, the twists and turns of its development.



Minda Stables (above), now an administration centre and Galway House (below), Minda site, 2013
Images Pavlos Soteriou



I know about this place and its reputation, as do most South Australians, but I have never before entered the site. The word 'Minda' rests in my mind not only as the name of this institution. It's become embedded in the South Australian lexicon as a term of insult. When someone calls you 'a Minda' it's intended as a slur on your intelligence. Minda is a word which is synonymous with intellectual disability. It is also said to have derived from an Aboriginal word meaning "place of shelter and protection".

Meet the Tutti artists

Today Laura and I will meet a group of young adults who have been coming each week over a number of years to participate in Tutti's post-school arts programs, based at Minda.

They travel to Tutti under their own steam from family homes, or independent community accommodation. They have no experience of life in an institution or knowledge of Minda's history.

Yet interestingly, some of them have recently expressed curiosity to Tutti staff about the stories of people who live at Minda. The title of our arts project, 'Their Shadows in Us', signals our intention to link the present day experiences of young people who have intellectual disability to some of this history.

Young Tutti artists have the skills, through a variety of art forms, to hold and interpret the historical stories which will unfold during our project. And through the strength of identity which heritage lends us all, this history may widen their perspectives, enable and propel their future creative directions.

As I drive towards our first meeting I consider the possible dimensions of such historical shadows and how they might be revealed. Also the difficulties of perceiving and embracing your own shadow.

A slight incline takes me to the top of a sandhill immediately behind the Brighton beach shoreline. It's here, high enough to catch sea breezes in an early 20th century building original to this site, known as Galway House, that Tutti Arts has been functioning since 2007.

Later, we discover that the chrysalis from which Tutti emerged – then named the Holdfast Bay Community Choir – was first located inside Minda grounds ten years earlier – in 1997. Only 16 years after this date, Tutti has become a leading multi-arts and disability organisation, acknowledged in America, Britain and across Australia for its successful groundbreaking programs and the achievements of its artists.

Tutti's headquarters, or Galway House, is a homely cottage rather than an impersonal public establishment. It's brightened now by exterior creative expressions on walls, glass doors and windows.

Inside at large work tables in two expansive studio rooms garlanded with creative output, about 23 young participants in the Visual Arts Program (one of the units offered through Tutti Arts), are intently engaged with their choice of art materials. The atmosphere feels highly individually motivated as well as vitally cooperative and organised.

Around the walls, figurative, precise or fantastical creations on paper and canvas mix with brightly painted paper mache portrait masks. These are punctuated by an occasional clipping from a contemporary art magazine, leaflets for recent exhibitions, postcards, a written reminder about the power of constructive criticism and the need for personal goals. And there's another posted statement which encourages the artists to consider that thinking, looking and reading about art is just as important as the actual task of art making.

Aimee Crathern, Laura Wills, Dougie Jacobssen and Jake Holmes in the archival printmaking workshop held at Tutti, Galway House, 2012
Image Pavlos Soteriou

It all indicates the serious purpose of this supported, post-school, visual arts studio program facilitated and guided by professional, practising artists with teaching skills and a Certificate III in Disability Support. It's a wholistic program which offers an individual goal plan for each artist.

The primary aim of Tutti Arts moves it beyond the realms of therapy and personal development to the provision of opportunities for talented people to exhibit and earn income from the skills they develop in visual art, new media, singing, music CD production, performance in co-productions of theatre and opera, photography and movie making.

In turn, these creative outcomes provoke changes in perceptions held by the wider community about people with intellectual disability who are increasingly regarded as able – with training and support – to be valuable and highly regarded contributors to our society.

Inside Tutti's visual arts studio today, a creative buzz of activity, conversation, music, is occasionally peppered by queries about style or form directed at one of today's four staff members or the two volunteers. As Laura and I are introduced we are embraced in an open, friendly enthusiasm both touching and rare.

There's no chance of remaining an outsider for long within this group. These young people routinely experience discrimination and have set their hearts on actively practising inclusion.

Aimee, a 25 year old visual artist, performer and singer who has been attending Tutti Arts up to five days a week since 2005 said in a later, recorded conversation with us:

"I would like for more people to be aware of disability. I'd like people to not be so judgemental and so scared. It's unbelievable how many people are scared of us and I just think if we could put a stop to that it would be great."

Top: Nina Rupena, Charlie Taplin (with mask) and Melanie Fulton, Tutti studio, Galway House, 2013
Above: Aimee Crathern with archival letterpress plate print, Galway House, 2012
Images Pavlos Soteriou



Top: Catherine Murphy, researcher and writer
Image Italo Vardaro

Above: Nina Rupena in the Tutti studio, Galway House, 2013
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Top: Dougie Jacobssen, Laura Wills and Aimee Crathern, archival printmaking workshop, Tutti, Galway House, 2012
Above: Alice Green working on a portrait of Pat Kaufmann, Tutti studio, Galway House, 2013
Images Pavlos Soteriou



Top: Nina Rupena and Scott Pyle collaborating on *Mapping*, Tutti studio, Galway House, 2013

Above: Madison Bycroft stitching *Quilt*, 2013
Images Pavlos Soteriou



Jenna May working on *Haunted Galway House*, Tutti studio, Galway House, 2013
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Top: Laura Wills and Jenna May collaborating on *Haywood Dream*, Tutti studio, Galway House, 2012

Above: Kimberly Sellers and Madison Bycroft stitching *Quilt*, Tutti studio, Galway House, 2013
Images Pavlos Soteriou

Tutti artist/researchers

A tiny, dim archive room in Galway House becomes an office refuge and source of inspiration for Laura and I throughout this project. We both have a history of, and strong commitment to, working within communities.

Laura is a professional visual artist based in Adelaide. She has a wide range of skills and in response to the research materials we uncover, will work collaboratively towards our project's exhibition with the visual artists in Tutti's program using a range of forms to suit their concepts – painting, drawing, installation, photography, media arts.

I confide to a group of Tutti artists during an introductory presentation about this project, that my skills as a writer and oral historian will enable me to create pictures with words. This is offered almost as an apology because I'm acutely aware these young people with learning difficulties have easier, more comprehensive access to visual rather than written materials.

As our research progresses, Laura and I struggle to make sense of unsorted, uncatalogued history – written, photographic, film, audio – jumbled into the archive room. We are grateful for the unstinting assistance in this task from long term Minda staff members who have expressed a wholehearted commitment to documenting Minda's history. Their individual experiences with residents span 40 to 45 years service.

Two staff members take us around the Brighton site on an extensive familiarisation tour of its maze of historic and contemporary residences and workplaces. Individuals and families are recalled through name plates on buildings, hinting at multiple layers of embedded history.

We make plans to interview as many current and past staff members as possible, as well as Minda residents, Tutti artists and Tutti staff, parents of people who have, since the 1970s, left Minda to live in the wider community.

Sifting through random records of Minda's history covering more than 100 years we discover, among many other exciting finds, references to Galway House, the headquarters of Tutti.

These slivers of information become useful stimulants to engage a dedicated group of five Tutti artists – Aimee, Dougie, Jackie, Jenna and Michelle – who are based at Galway House and have expressed interest in our skills-based workshops which will prepare them to become contributors to project research.

During one of these training sessions, we all troop outside the cottage to locate a brass plaque commemorating the 1918 opening of Galway House by Lady Galway, wife of the Governor of South Australia. This material evidence becomes an entry point for these artist/trainee researchers to consider how historical material can be distilled into an engaging question plan for an oral history interview.

Some of their questions provoked by viewing this plaque: Why was the cottage originally built? Who lived in it? How old were these people? Why didn't they live at home? What was their life like at Minda? Did their parents visit them? Did they have friends? Did they go to school or work?

In the archives we learn that Galway Cottage was originally built to accommodate residents with epilepsy who, it was thought, might gain health benefits from the healing qualities of fresh sea air.²

And as our work progresses, we uncover a further synchronicity involving Galway House which has the potential to create another instructive link between our project research group and the past at Minda.

Dariusz, a long term staff member since 1966, tells us that in 1974 Galway House had been the launch pad for a daring training program to equip Minda's first residents – six women – to transition from the institution to independent community living in a home at Tarragon Street, Mile End.

"Five of these six women worked at Phoenix Industries and one remained at home to do the housework and the shopping and cooking etc. These six ladies never ever returned to Minda and from that point Minda established more and more community housing."



Aimee Crathern and Laura Wills with *Lay it all on the table*, 2012
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Madison Bycroft stitching Quilt, Tutti studio, Galway House, 2013
Image Pavlos Soteriou

A revolutionary move at the time, this piece of historic research has the potential to forge a bond between present day Tutti artist/researchers and 1970s Minda residents whose rights were hard won with help from disability activists who assisted them to achieve deep seated change in our community's consciousness.

These shadows of the past relating to Galway House may encourage young South Australians with an intellectual disability to acknowledge that the basic human rights they enjoy – living and working in the community, forming relationships, being consulted and making decisions about their future – are very recent achievements.

Such finds have the potential to encourage appreciation for an inherited legacy, pioneered by Minda residents who achieved independence despite many having been institutionalised from an extremely young age.



Archival letterpress plate
Image Pavlos Soteriou

Interviews: Minda residents and Tutti artists Maria

With our skills-based workshops well underway and the Tutti artist/researchers feeling confident, we begin to schedule interviews with people currently living at Minda who are interested in sharing their life histories with us. We are starting to have a clear, joint intention.

Pat Rix, Founder and Artistic Director of Tutti, lends a wealth of experience to our process by joining these interview sessions:

"What we're doing in this project is very delicate, pioneering work. People with learning disability have been involved as researchers in UK projects but to my knowledge this is the first research project generated by a group of people with learning disability. It's likely that for the first time, young learning disabled people will gain a sense of the history of disability, and where they fit in that history both as people living with disability and in their role as documenters of the past. Therefore it will be important to document their experience as well."

While very few Minda residents participate in Tutti Arts, there are some who were founding members of the Tutti Choir. Friendships between them and Tutti artists have developed over many years as they have shared opportunities to rehearse and perform together.

It seems obvious that 22 year old indigenous Tutti artist, Jackie, would interview Minda resident, Maria, whom she has known from choir practice and performances. They share an indigenous heritage, although Maria is decades older than Jackie.

Bubbly, confident, assured and fiercely independent, Maria insists on walking without assistance, despite cerebral palsy. She fills in information for Jackie about her background as a Larrakeyah woman from Darwin coming to live at Minda in the late 1970s when she was 19 years old.

"My mother couldn't look after me any more because she was very sick. And she had to go to an old timers home."

In 1997 Maria was one of nine foundation members of the Holdfast Bay Community Choir which evolved into Tutti Ensemble in 2001 and then branched out into Tutti Arts in 2005. This choir was founded by Pat Rix and has been based in the Verco Hall at Minda ever since.

During her interview, Maria tells Jackie that after the death of her mother, Muriel, she planted a memorial 'Black Beauty' rose over her mother's ashes in the garden at Minda.

The rose inspired song lyrics Maria co-wrote with Heather Frahn and Pat Rix in 2003 for 'Circles' a music-theatre work based on human relationships.

*"From Muriel to Maria, Black Beauty has travelled
Nurturing the ashes... of a life-time
Little girl in the sun, with the beach water flow
Now as a woman she greets the sun
Watering Black Beauty Rose"*

Maria reveals to Jackie that in the 1980s she had a negative experience of transitioning from Minda to living in the community. *"There was a guy out in the community and he was not very nice and he ill-treated me. Then the Manager of Minda Campus asked me if I wanted to come back and I said I thought it was the best place 'cause my sisters and my mum wanted me to come back."*

She decided to return to the safety of life at Minda where the campus environment also encouraged physical independence since her living quarters were only a short walk to her work place.

Trained in Minda's Self Advocacy program, Maria has been elected as a Consumer Representative which gives her input into Minda's current redevelopment plan. She has become a self applicant for a new unit to be built during this redevelopment and says she looks forward to moving in with her long-time boyfriend. This style of living arrangement is not currently available at Minda.

Tutti artist/researchers

A tiny, dim archive room in Galway House becomes an office refuge and source of inspiration for Laura and I throughout this project. We both have a history of, and strong commitment to, working within communities.

Laura is a professional visual artist based in Adelaide. She has a wide range of skills and in response to the research materials we uncover, will work collaboratively towards our project's exhibition with the visual artists in Tutti's program using a range of forms to suit their concepts – painting, drawing, installation, photography, media arts.

I confide to a group of Tutti artists during an introductory presentation about this project, that my skills as a writer and oral historian will enable me to create pictures with words. This is offered almost as an apology because I'm acutely aware these young people with learning difficulties have easier, more comprehensive access to visual rather than written materials.

As our research progresses, Laura and I struggle to make sense of unsorted, uncatalogued history – written, photographic, film, audio – jumbled into the archive room. We are grateful for the unstinting assistance in this task from long term Minda staff members who have expressed a wholehearted commitment to documenting Minda's history. Their individual experiences with residents span 40 to 45 years service.

Two staff members take us around the Brighton site on an extensive familiarisation tour of its maze of historic and contemporary residences and workplaces. Individuals and families are recalled through name plates on buildings, hinting at multiple layers of embedded history.

We make plans to interview as many current and past staff members as possible, as well as Minda residents, Tutti artists and Tutti staff, parents of people who have, since the 1970s, left Minda to live in the wider community.

Sifting through random records of Minda's history covering more than 100 years we discover, among many other exciting finds, references to Galway House, the headquarters of Tutti.

These slivers of information become useful stimulants to engage a dedicated group of five Tutti artists – Aimee, Dougie, Jackie, Jenna and Michelle – who are based at Galway House and have expressed interest in our skills-based workshops which will prepare them to become contributors to project research.

During one of these training sessions, we all troop outside the cottage to locate a brass plaque commemorating the 1918 opening of Galway House by Lady Galway, wife of the Governor of South Australia. This material evidence becomes an entry point for these artist/trainee researchers to consider how historical material can be distilled into an engaging question plan for an oral history interview.

Some of their questions provoked by viewing this plaque: Why was the cottage originally built? Who lived in it? How old were these people? Why didn't they live at home? What was their life like at Minda? Did their parents visit them? Did they have friends? Did they go to school or work?

In the archives we learn that Galway Cottage was originally built to accommodate residents with epilepsy who, it was thought, might gain health benefits from the healing qualities of fresh sea air.²

And as our work progresses, we uncover a further synchronicity involving Galway House which has the potential to create another instructive link between our project research group and the past at Minda.

Dariusz, a long term staff member since 1966, tells us that in 1974 Galway House had been the launch pad for a daring training program to equip Minda's first residents – six women – to transition from the institution to independent community living in a home at Tarragon Street, Mile End.

"Five of these six women worked at Phoenix Industries and one remained at home to do the housework and the shopping and cooking etc. These six ladies never ever returned to Minda and from that point Minda established more and more community housing."



Aimee Crathern and Laura Wills with Layitallonthetable, 2012
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Madison Bycroft stitching Quilt, Tutti studio, Galway House, 2013
Image Pavlos Soteriou

A revolutionary move at the time, this piece of historic research has the potential to forge a bond between present day Tutti artist/researchers and 1970s Minda residents whose rights were hard won with help from disability activists who assisted them to achieve deep seated change in our community's consciousness.

These shadows of the past relating to Galway House may encourage young South Australians with an intellectual disability to acknowledge that the basic human rights they enjoy – living and working in the community, forming relationships, being consulted and making decisions about their future – are very recent achievements.

Such finds have the potential to encourage appreciation for an inherited legacy, pioneered by Minda residents who achieved independence despite many having been institutionalised from an extremely young age.



Archival letterpress plate
Image Pavlos Soteriou

Interviews: Minda residents and Tutti artists

Maria

With our skills-based workshops well underway and the Tutti artist/researchers feeling confident, we begin to schedule interviews with people currently living at Minda who are interested in sharing their life histories with us. We are starting to have a clear, joint intention.

Pat Rix, Founder and Artistic Director of Tutti, lends a wealth of experience to our process by joining these interview sessions:

"What we're doing in this project is very delicate, pioneering work. People with learning disability have been involved as researchers in UK projects but to my knowledge this is the first research project generated by a group of people with learning disability. It's likely that for the first time, young learning disabled people will gain a sense of the history of disability, and where they fit in that history both as people living with disability and in their role as documenters of the past. Therefore it will be important to document their experience as well."

While very few Minda residents participate in Tutti Arts, there are some who were founding members of the Tutti Choir. Friendships between them and Tutti artists have developed over many years as they have shared opportunities to rehearse and perform together.

It seems obvious that 22 year old indigenous Tutti artist, Jackie, would interview Minda resident, Maria, whom she has known from choir practice and performances. They share an indigenous heritage, although Maria is decades older than Jackie.

Bubbly, confident, assured and fiercely independent, Maria insists on walking without assistance, despite cerebral palsy. She fills in information for Jackie about her background as a Larrakeyah woman from Darwin coming to live at Minda in the late 1970s when she was 19 years old.

"My mother couldn't look after me any more because she was very sick. And she had to go to an old timers home."

In 1997 Maria was one of nine foundation members of the Holdfast Bay Community Choir which evolved into Tutti Ensemble in 2001 and then branched out into Tutti Arts in 2005. This choir was founded by Pat Rix and has been based in the Verco Hall at Minda ever since.

During her interview, Maria tells Jackie that after the death of her mother, Muriel, she planted a memorial 'Black Beauty' rose over her mother's ashes in the garden at Minda.

The rose inspired song lyrics Maria co-wrote with Heather Frahn and Pat Rix in 2003 for 'Circles' a music-theatre work based on human relationships.

*"From Muriel to Maria, Black Beauty has travelled
Nurturing the ashes... of a life-time
Little girl in the sun, with the beach water flow
Now as a woman she greets the sun
Watering Black Beauty Rose"*

Maria reveals to Jackie that in the 1980s she had a negative experience of transitioning from Minda to living in the community. *"There was a guy out in the community and he was not very nice and he ill-treated me. Then the Manager of Minda Campus asked me if I wanted to come back and I said I thought it was the best place 'cause my sisters and my mum wanted me to come back."*

She decided to return to the safety of life at Minda where the campus environment also encouraged physical independence since her living quarters were only a short walk to her work place.

Trained in Minda's Self Advocacy program, Maria has been elected as a Consumer Representative which gives her input into Minda's current redevelopment plan. She has become a self applicant for a new unit to be built during this redevelopment and says she looks forward to moving in with her long-time boyfriend. This style of living arrangement is not currently available at Minda.

"We've learned to control our lives. We live (now) in separate accommodation and we see each other at breakfast, lunch and tea times. Or we can sit with each other or see each other when we have birthdays, Easter, Christmas and things like that."

.....

Jackie

Witnessing how this interview creates a vital connection between Maria and Jackie, Laura and I are inspired to deepen our understanding about the experiences of this group of young people with intellectual disability.

We propose scheduling our own interviews with the Tutti artist/researchers and begin by asking Jackie who is happy to exchange her role as interviewer to become our first interviewee.

Jackie lives at home with her foster family and six other foster children, although this number can sometimes swell to 11 or 12 children.

Jackie begins her story with the day she joined the Tutti Choir and Tutti Arts in 2007. She reveals that this participation eventually encouraged her to embrace and be proud of her Ngarrendjeri/Wirangu Aboriginal heritage in a way she had found difficult at school.

"I was teased a lot at school, like racist names and when my dad passed on people were teasing me about that. I was very naughty in school. The thing is, the teachers wasn't listening to me. Like they kept suspending me. At Tutti I've learnt about people listening to and respecting others."

She jumped at the opportunity she was given through Tutti to learn dancing and Kaurna language from Aboriginal dancers at the Warriparinga Cultural Centre in Adelaide. She used these skills in a 2007 Tutti Ensemble music-theatre/opera performance, 'Northern Lights Southern Cross' in Adelaide and then in America.

This show was a collaborative exploration between Australian Aboriginal, Native American and disabled artists on the themes of personal, racial and environmental trauma. It premiered at the Bundaleer Forest Weekend Music Festival before touring to America in 2009 for a Tutti/Interact co-production at the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis.

In 2010, Jackie won the NAIDOC Award for Young Person of the Year as well as the Peter Edwards Memorial Award for a leadership achievement by a young person with a disability.

If some of the indigenous children in her foster family are having problems, Jackie describes her mentoring role: *"I just try to calm 'em down and try to talk to them and maybe take 'em for walks, stuff like that."*

.....

Janet

The Tutti artist/researchers express their enthusiasm for continuing this interviewing pattern. They will conduct interviews with residents of Minda as well as contribute their own life stories to our project research.

We're hopeful this process will not only encourage direct comparisons between the journeys made by Minda residents and those of the younger generation, but that unexpected elements might emerge to shed light on the unknown shape and texture of historical shadows.

Aimee, a Tutti singer, performer, visual and new media artist, expresses interest in interviewing Janet who lives at Minda and whom she first met at rehearsals and performances of the Tutti Choir. Despite having known Janet over a number of years, Aimee is unaware about many details of her life story.

Janet tells Aimee that she has lived at Minda since she was six years old and she is now in her 60s. She says she has only recently moved out of Minda to live in a community unit she shares with another Tutti Choir member, Emma. Janet returns to Minda each day to work in the campus laundry with other residents she's known for years.

She recalled how she was one of the original members of the Holdfast Bay Community Choir (1997) but her choir involvement ended when her long time friend Harry, also a chorister, died. She and Harry used to walk together across the Minda campus to weekly choir practice. *"I used to go everywhere with him... and sit with him."*

Janet said she had originally developed a love of singing as a school girl at Minda whose principal, Mrs Pat Kaufmann, had established a renowned school choir.

During her recorded interview and without a hint of hesitation, Janet broke into perfect recollection of the lyrics to the first song she ever performed with the Tutti Choir in 1997 called 'Louise the Elephant'.

.....

Aimee

Laura and I complete this interviewing cycle by recording Aimee's story. She's always regarded herself as a singer, and remembers finding her singing voice when she was only a toddler. Her long-held ambition to become a professional singer was launched in 2007 when she cut her first CD, 'You Give Me Fever' with assistance from Philip Griffin, then a Tutti Arts staff member.

A vibrant performer and passionate disability advocate, Aimee joined the Tutti Choir before becoming a foundation member of the Tutti Visual Arts Program in 2005. She has sung and performed in most of Tutti's public productions. She is a member of the in-demand alt-pop girls singing group, Hot Tutti with Annika, Caroline, Jackie and Michelle.

"Tutti is like a bunch of flowers. You know how many flowers you have in a garden and it's like they blossom all the time... and things keep going and they don't stop. Tutti has been the best thing in my life... And I love being here. Sometimes (at home) I can be angry or sad, but that helps me to get over things quicker, because I go to work and say 'OK, let's make some music' or 'Let's make something that is worth making.'"

Among her most memorable Tutti performances, Aimee nominates 'Northern Lights Southern Cross' (which included the 'Daddy Song' she co-wrote with Pat Rix when her father was ill in hospital); and the Tutti Ensemble's tenth anniversary concert in Elder Hall when *"the crowd was on their feet... and I had tears running down me. I was just so happy"*.

At 25 years of age, Aimee says her next ambition is to write and perform in her own show: *"I want to go out there, I want to tell the whole world how wonderful people (with a) disability are. (I have) Williams Syndrome, an intellectual disability and it's something to do with Gene 7 and 8. It's really weird."*

While Aimee's first love is singing and performing on stage, she's also been involved with Tutti's New Media/Film-making Program. *"Oska Bright came here (from England) and did some workshops with us about how to make our own video clip. We want to make our own Film Festival called 'SitDownShutUp&Watch'."*

She is candid about her school days: *"Primary school was fine, but high school was the worst in the world. I went to all these different (high) schools that didn't want me to be in normal, mainstream classes and I left all those to find a school that had people with just intellectual disabilities. That was awesome for me because then I thought I belonged there. I didn't belong anywhere else."*

Asked about her connection to Minda she explains: *"Minda is quite a friendly place to be, it's quite unique, even though the word 'Minda' seems to be a bit negative in the community. I got told I was 'a Minda' most of my life, so I don't want people to feel bad if they come here. It's good here."*

.....

Minda: 1911

In tandem with these interviewing processes, Laura and I continue to search for ideas and information about people who might have lived at Minda from the earliest days and whose stories could light up the historic experiences of South Australians with an intellectual disability.

This material would give our present day Tutti artist/researchers the opportunity to symbolically communicate across time with Minda residents of the early 1900s.

We are thrilled when we open an unlabelled manila folder stored inside a cardboard box in the archive room at Galway House, to discover the story of Joe which reaches out to us, vividly, from the shadows of Minda's past.

While the tape recordings of this interview no longer exist (that we could detect), Joe's spoken words, transcribed with an old-fashioned typewriter, were there for us to read and his voice shone through.

Scanning the transcribed pages of this interview we realise with deep gratitude that Joe's recollections take us back to that landmark day in 1911 when residents first inhabited Minda Home's Brighton site. And that his recollections have survived because of a tape recording made in the 1970s by Allan, a nurse at Minda. By then Joe was 79 years old.

Joe's story becomes central to the historical jigsaw we're contemplating. It's a source of expressive colour and detail which brings the 1900s alive through his personal reminiscence. His opinions, perceptions, memories and attitudes are richly instructive compared to Minda's Case Book, which records Joe's admittance to the institution and some personal details, in a way that is profoundly limited.

The self-directed oral history project by 1970s Minda staff is proof of their respect for elderly residents whose unique life histories they'd come to know and value enough to preserve.

Laura and I begin to appreciate that their interest and regard for residents is a striking departure from previous eras as noted by Don Crawford, who lent his weight to many important reforms when he became Superintendent of Minda in 1958.

In this era, people with intellectual disability were not regarded as credible witnesses to events they personally experienced and which shaped their lives. *"There was a presumption among the staff, that may have been universal, that anything which was said by a client must be wrong."*

.....

Joe's story

The transcript of Joe's 1970s interview inspires us to imagine this journey. He says about 37 children set out from Minda Home at Fullarton in November 1911 to travel south for some hours to the seaside village of Brighton. They may have been sitting close together along with female nursing staff wreathed in *"white, starched aprons and white capes secured at the front with chain"*.

Joe, whose 14 years made him the oldest boy in the group, remembers 62 years later, that he and the other children and staff travelled to Brighton in open carriages called *"horse drawn drags"*.

He knows the names of female staff who rode along with them that day: *"Nurse Bessie, Nurse Eva, Nurse Lizzie, Matron Veerstadt and Miss Edna Fox, from England"*. She was Minda's first school teacher.

The paddocks they passed in their approach were probably bountiful with wheat and vines, cultivated for more than 70 years since the district had been surveyed. The rural and coastal character of the area, only a short distance from Adelaide city, had attracted wealthy professionals and prominent citizens to build imposing holiday retreats.

As the horses turned off Brighton Road into a sweeping, tree-lined driveway, a substantial two-storey gentleman's residence would have come into view.³

In 1909, Minda Homes purchased this residence along with 52 acres of land.⁴ It was a foresighted plan to meet increasing demand on Minda Home facilities at Fullarton which, limited by size, could accommodate only 22 children.

.....

Minda Home at Fullarton was the first South Australian residential facility for children with intellectual disability. It opened in 1898. Until this time, the children, many of whom were under 14 years of age, were housed in the Parkside Lunatic Asylum where they *"had nothing to do but spend the whole of their days looking at stone walls"*.⁵

Minda, a Kurna Aboriginal word meaning 'shelter, retreat, home' was established by visionary benefactors who secured a government grant, matched by public subscription, to provide a shelter, a home and an education for these children.

Arriving at the new Minda Home site in Brighton, Joe and the other children would have unfolded themselves from the horse drawn transport in front of an imposing stone building built and opened the previous year in preparation for this relocation.⁶

Joe finds himself unable to embrace this change: *"They were building that before we come down... We were (sleeping) one end of it and the girls on the other (and) there were more (children) waiting to come in... For a long time, I will be honest with you, I was not too happy. Because we had been there all together at Minda Home at Fullarton."*

We discover another interview transcript in the archives, recorded with former Minda Superintendent Mr Leverington when he was almost 90 years old. We learn that in 1911, this unmarried 24 year old farmer's son had been on hand to help the children and nurses unpack.

Hired to live on the site for six months prior to their arrival, Mr Leverington tells his interviewer that he had camped in the existing two-storey building and spent his days marking out an extensive vegetable garden, planting some lawns and laying lino inside the new Rogerson building.

He continued to live and work at Minda Home for the next 47 years and three months, first as the Outdoor Superintendent and in the late 1930s as Superintendent of the Home until his resignation in 1958 when Don Crawford was appointed.

Joe's interview confirms how acres of open paddocks and sandhills were transformed into a huge productive market garden of vegetables and fruit trees watered from a reservoir; how large new buildings such as Verco, constructed in 1914, began to accommodate the waiting list of children; the joyful announcement by Matron of the signing of an Armistice marking the end of WW1 and how he enjoyed summer evenings on Brighton Beach.

His interview is also peppered with pain and regret. He says he endured unfair treatment, to which he sometimes retaliated, which then resulted in further punishment.

.....

Joe's deep uncertainty about the chain of circumstances which brought him from Roseworthy at the age of 11 to live at Minda Home in Fullarton and then subsequently to the Brighton site is revealed.

"Miss Taylor brought us from the State up there (to Fullarton). She said 'Come with me, you are going to a very nice home'. So out the front (was) a big board (perhaps she did not know I could read). I said, 'This won't be a private home Miss Taylor, this is Minda. That sounds to me like an institution'.

Joe, like many other children, was a designated Ward of the State.⁷ In many cases, these children were only very mildly intellectually disabled and in Joe's own words, *"a lot of (these children) were normal"*.

He confides that he had been the youngest child in a family of four and thinks his parents died at a young age. At the time of interview, he hadn't seen his two brothers and one sister for 30 or 40 years although *"nothing would give me more pleasure"*.

Alternative accommodation was scarce for South Australian children who came from families facing insurmountable difficulties and disruptions. Minda met this need and until the early 1970s was the only residential facility for children with intellectual disability. Their admission policy was routinely stretched to include children who had nowhere else to live and may have had only mild learning difficulties.



Laura Wills
Verco Boys, 2013 (work in progress)
graphite, pastel, paper, 70 x 80 cm
courtesy the artist
Image Laura Wills

By the 1970s, Minda was severely overcrowded: *“the Department of Community Welfare would run out of room... and the overflow would come to Minda”.*⁸

Legally, Joe was a Ward of the State until his 18th birthday. Support which might have enabled him to leave Minda and find independent work and accommodation in the community was not available in this era.

Instead he spent 71 years living and working at Minda and died when he was 84 years old. Thirty three years were spent at Craighburn Farm with *“about 30 other boys”* who were all farm hands and in later years he helped out in the farm kitchen.

When Joe had his 80th birthday in 1978 he was celebrated in the local newspaper as Minda’s oldest resident.

A further hidden chapter in Joe’s life is described objectively by Don Crawford: *“The years from 1933 to 1937, from the age of 35 to 39 (he) spent as a patient at Morris Hospital suffering from tuberculosis. After 30 years he was still bitter that he was denied help when he was in great need. He did not have one visitor in four years.”*⁹

Joe would have been one of Minda’s 400 residents (then referred to as ‘inmates’) Don Crawford met on arrival from Sydney with his family in 1958 to take up residence on Minda campus as the new Superintendent.

Don Crawford was a progressive. He lived at Minda until his resignation in 1976 and was instrumental in advocating for and introducing important changes which benefited residents as well as staff.

His values and processes were supported by many staff, a few Board members and Pat Kaufmann, the Principal of what became in 1962 an Education Department school on Minda campus: *“(Her) appointment was important... the Superintendent now had a colleague on the campus with whom he could discuss his concerns about the needs and future of the residents.”*¹⁰

A microcosm of the broader community, Minda was not immune to social and political challenges to the old order which swept through 1960s Australia and left their mark on the nation’s social fabric, including disability policy.

Our research helped us understand how these changes heralded opportunities which young people with intellectual disability, such as the Tutti artists, can now take for granted.

Ettie and Bill’s story

On his arrival at Minda, Don Crawford would also have met Ettie, another long-term resident. Her impressions of the institution where she had lived for nearly 60 years were preserved in a 1970s joint interview with her and her friend, Bill, conducted by staff member, Allan.

“I didn’t like the olden days. Never. I suppose in a way we had to like it though. But now this new idea has come out, it’s much better... everything has gone brighter for everybody.”

Philosophical and physical barriers which kept Minda residents segregated for their own protection as well as to inhibit interactions which might be challenging to the community outside its fences, were gradually being dismantled.

Ettie recalled, *“We were not allowed to go out. They had gates and fences right around and there used to be a key to let us out. We were not allowed to talk to any boys in those days. That would be a great big punishment”.*

Despite this rule, Ettie’s enduring friendship with Bill prevailed from the time they each arrived at Minda as teenagers in 1915 and 1916.

In the 1970s interview Bill mourns the feeling of being *“left behind”* when Ettie sometimes went home for Christmas. She explains to him and the interviewer, *“I was not even allowed to talk to you much in those days. But when I used to see Bill I used to talk to him through the fence”.*

Only a few years before his death at the age of 85 in 2001, Don Crawford reflected on his first years working at Minda, *“The challenge was to understand the residents and their needs and to determine what changes were desirable... what should be done with and for these disabled people?”*

He wrote that on his arrival in 1958 he met all Minda Board and staff members and *“it was obvious none had any training or contact with the literature on intellectual disability.”* Instead, he observed a belief among some staff and Board members that it was reasonable to treat the residents as children and keep them busy for their own good.

Minda: 1950s – 1960s

In 2011, Laura and I were fortunate to meet Don Crawford’s daughter, Rosemary Clancy. She agreed to be interviewed along with her friend and former Minda resident, Vince who was 11 in 1953 when he was relocated from Glandore Boys Home.

Rosemary was nine years old when she came to live on the grounds at Minda with her parents and siblings. She and her brother attended school in the local area. *“I think my brother found it more difficult at primary school because people would say ‘You come from Minda’. If anyone made a comment to me, I would take them on and just say, ‘Well you’re very lucky that you haven’t got any disabilities and you’re able to live in the community.”*

Remembering her father as *“committed to the cause, idealistic”*, she added that he was *“passionate, difficult, driven... a bit like a bull at a gate, wanting to change things very quickly”.*

Don Crawford was renowned for knowing every member of staff, every resident by name and all their issues. *“People came to the house and dad ran a program (for) residents to talk about what they thought could be done better at Minda. I’d be involved in that discussion. I’d bring in cups of tea or sandwiches.”*¹¹ Because I was young I used to wander around the grounds... and spoke to lots of people. When (my husband and I) got married, we did this

drive through the Minda grounds and everyone was out to see me because they considered me part of the family.”

Vince never knew his biological family. He made a point of telling us he regarded Don Crawford as a father figure who had supported him to make the transition to living and working in the community. Vince’s own family now includes grandchildren.

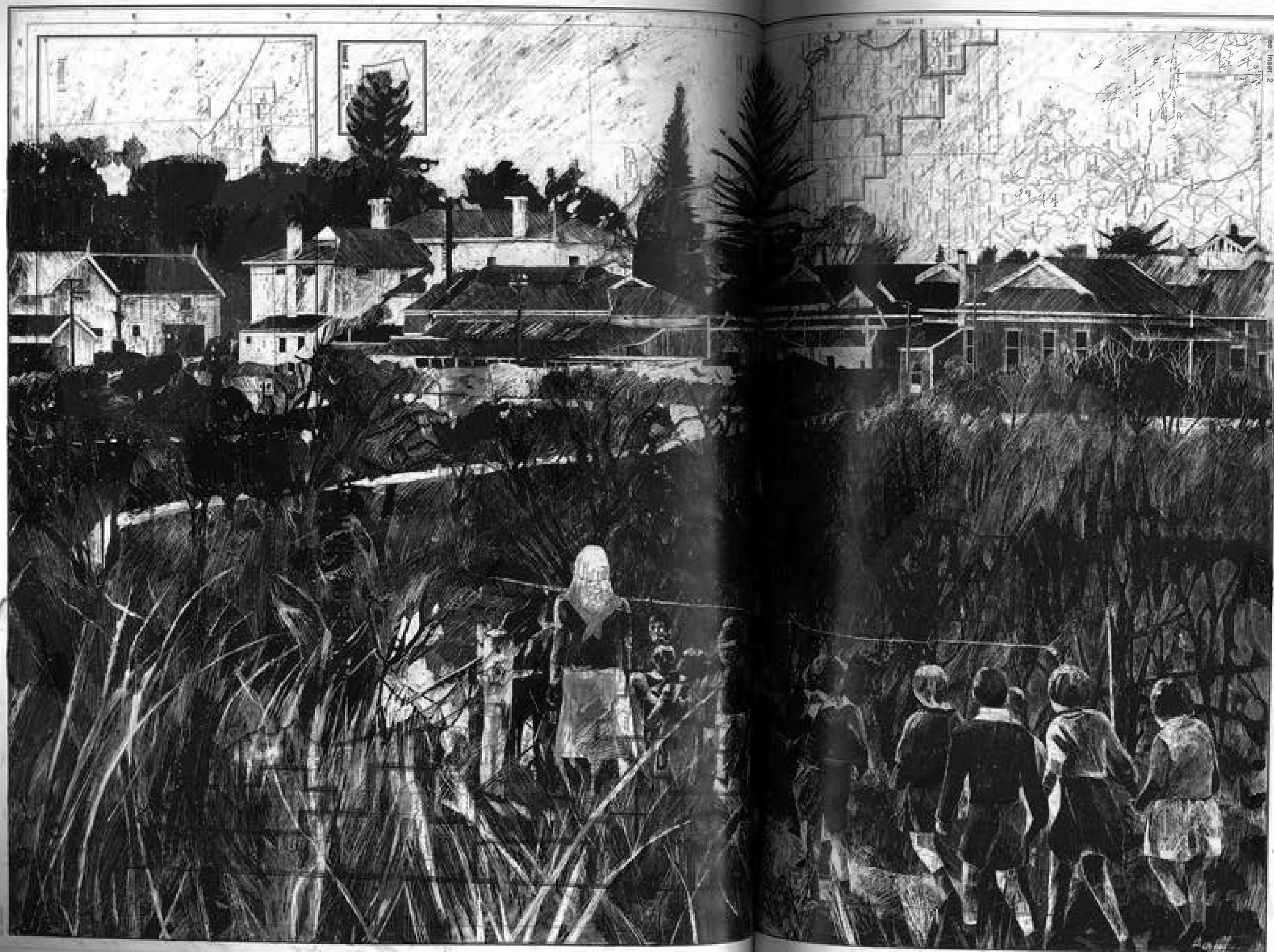
He confided, *“(Life) was touch and go but Mr Crawford made it easy. I got in trouble and he came down and picked me up from the police station and he stood in court”.*

Vince joked with us: *“He committed perjury (because) he said ‘I’m a good fellow!’”*

Rosemary recalled her mother, Joy, was a wonderful support for her father. *“Mum was a great sounding board for dad to talk to about how he could get change...”*¹² For instance Rosemary’s mother was instrumental in having modern sanitary products replace the old fashioned menstrual rags.

Don Crawford wrote about his push to implement a social services model at Minda to replace the custodial policy under which residents didn’t have *“the opportunity to live and work in the community. They were denied the right to form relationships, have children and live as ordinary citizens”.* Instead they worked (unpaid) in the kitchen, laundry, boiler house, garden, lawns, dairy piggery, painting and the maintenance of the property. *“At Craighburn residents were actively involved for many years in developing the property from bush land to pastures for grazing... The labour they provided was essential to the functioning of the institution.”*

Minda residents who lived on Craighburn Farm in the 1970s and 1980s worked alongside paid Minda staff to run 1500 sheep, 300 beef cattle, produce 38,000 gallons of milk annually from 80 Friesian cows and collect 75 dozen eggs daily.¹³



Laura Wills
Back from the Beach, 2013
 pastel, laminated map of South Australia
 72 x 105 cm
 courtesy the artist
 Image Laura Wills

1500 acres of scrub land at Blackwood, Craighburn Farm, had been purchased in 1923 by Minda. Male residents and a supervisor travelled each day from Brighton to the farm to work and clear scrub. By the 1930s, there was a building to accommodate 40 boys and men and Minda's full requirements of mutton, firewood for heating and cooking, fruit and eggs came from this farm.

It became one of Minda's greatest assets and one of the most diverse farms in the State which included the valuable Craigcoropig stud.

In recent years, a joint venture between Minda Board and Adelaide Development Company at Blackwood, has transformed this farm land and open space into a huge residential estate. Sales of homes in this desirable location have funded the first stage of a masterplan redevelopment of the Minda site at Brighton which began this year.

Minda: 1960s – 1970s

Images of Minda in this next era were brought out of the shadows by Kaye, a long term staff member who kindly took Laura and I on a walking tour of Minda campus in 2011.

We stood with her outside one of the buildings which provoked this memory: "A total of 97 girls were living in both wings (of this building) in long dormitories which had a row of wooden lockers at one end, brown lino and no pictures on the walls to personalise the environment. The Institution was run along a medical model. It was all sterile, because people were regarded as 'sick'. It was not a homely environment where people lived.

"Because the second hand clothing was shared or communal, it was always difficult to find matching socks. Staff would try to get each child one nice outfit to call their own and try to lock it away. In the late 1960s a wardrobe dresser was put between the beds to delineate privacy of some sort."

Michael, a 1970s Minda resident described these dormitory living conditions as "one boy there, another boy there. No privacy. It was like you were in the Army. A very scary place. Everything went 'crick, crick', you'd think there was a ghost in there".

Standing with us outside another building during our campus tour, Kaye recalled: "There were 46 ladies living here in the 1960s, many with severe behaviour problems. They would go into what was called a large playroom or day room which had no equipment. In the era before people had jobs they would sit in chairs around the walls and listen to music or march around and clap their hands. If it was not raining they would march and clap outside in the courtyard. There were often only two staff on duty. Their only other 'entertainment' was a walk on the weekend. This started to change in the late 1960s and early 1970s when Activity Centres were set up and an Activity Officer was appointed."

By the late 1960s, the physical environment at Minda hadn't modernised like much of post-WW2 Australia. It had retained an old-fashioned, self-sufficient productivity. Dariusz began working there in 1966 and told us it felt like "a time capsule that had opened. You could see the fields being ploughed by horses and the people who lived here at Minda working the carts, the ploughs... There was a stable and two chicken runs.

"There was a small paddock at the back with a dozen cows milked twice a day by the lads as part of their training regime. When they became proficient enough to handle those cows they eventually went to work at Craighburn (Farm). There was an orchard for fruits and market gardens. It was quite a time warp. You went back in time by at least 40 years."

People living in the suburbs around Minda in the 1950s and 1960s are likely to have vivid memories of long "crocodile lines" of residents getting fresh air and exercise: "It was nothing unusual for the charge nurses to tell staff they were taking residents to the Craighburn Farm at Blackwood on a weekend or a public holiday... between 25 and 30 people would go for that long trail walk, one line, or two abreast... We'd leave Minda just before 8am and we'd get to the Farm about 11.30am, have lunch with the guys up there and then....get back for tea time, a shower and bath and be ready to knock off at 7pm. We slept well!"

In the 1970s, 75 staff members worked extremely long hours (12 hour shifts, often 10 days straight) caring for resident numbers of over 600, yet staff recollections of these days are surprisingly positive: "We were sort of like one large family...we were all out to take down these barriers, not only within Minda, but we ventured outside into the community more frequently... staff would fit up to seven clients or residents into our cars to go to an outing .. all at our own expense."

Dariusz continued: "(In) the 60s a lot of things changed... we spoke to the Superintendent and we did away with the barbed wire fence around Minda. Then we did away with a yard which held residents after meals. It was a cyclone fenced area with barbed wire on top... we (began to) venture outside into the community more frequently... we'd go 15 to 20 people en masse by bus or by train and we hit the communities and we kept going."

Rosemary Clancy remembered how her father shortened staff rosters from 12-hour shifts to make them more family friendly and also began, in 1963, what became known as the Minda Lectures. Held in Hollidge Hall, a capacity audience of 400 people, either employed in disability services or parents of residents, soaked up ideas presented by renowned international and Australian professionals in disability care, research and studies. "Because the (Minda) Board was so difficult, (the lectures were) a good way of getting other people in who had new ideas."

A 1960s Behaviour Committee was established by Don Crawford to assist care staff to develop plans to manage and modify behaviours by "changing or manipulating the physical or social environment so as to enable or encourage the client to lead a happier life and not have to engage in destructive or socially unacceptable behaviour."

He notes this committee eventually led to about a two-thirds reduction in the use of psychotropic drugs because resident's behaviours were being improved without them.

In 1964 a sheltered workshop opened at Minda which employed ten workers packaging and dismantling disused electrical equipment. The following year, there were more than 50 men and women of various ages employed and it was also that year that the first person from Minda was placed in paid, open employment in the community. "When John was placed in employment in 1965 it seems certain that he was the first person in the 67 year history of Minda to be granted leave by the Board to go to employment." ¹⁴

In another early groundbreaking move, Minda Home was accepted, in 1965, by the Nurses Registration Board as a training school for the three-year Certificate of Mental Deficiency Nursing and this began the important process of staff training.

Minda: 1970s – 1980s

It becomes clear as our research progresses that the avalanche of achievements which began in the 1960s continued for the next decades to improve the lives of Minda residents and provided opportunities for individuals into the future.

In 1974, six women with mild intellectual disability prepared to move from Minda to live in a rented house in Mile End. They were trained by Minda staff in money handling, housekeeping, cleaning, cooking and transport and all skills to assist them with daily living.

While some parents expressed "reluctance, some fear and worry about what would happen, would their children be taken advantage of, would they cope, would they survive?" ¹⁵ there were many other parents just as determined to make the community aware that their children living with intellectual disability could and should live in the community.

Minda's Superintendent, staff and Board members had many issues to consider as they encouraged more individual rights for Minda residents "the capacity to exercise rights (even the use of public transport) had to include the question of capability and how much training was necessary, and the balancing of human rights of an individual with the duty of care of the care providers." ¹⁶



Nina Rupena and Tutti Visual Artists

Portrait of Dougie (detail), 2013
graphite, ink, charcoal, collage, card, paper, 150 x 107 cm
courtesy the artists
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Laura Wills

Head in the Clouds, 2013 (work in progress)
graphite, ink, pastel, paper, 105 x 150 cm
courtesy the artist
Image Laura Wills

After the success of the Mile End community living model, Minda quickly established houses in many Adelaide suburbs and currently has more than 60 community accommodation houses and services that provide residential support.

Sharon, a former care support worker, offered this image of former residents living in the community: *“Some of my fondest memories of supporting individuals in their own home on a Saturday afternoon are of them just sitting in front of the TV. Somebody would be knitting, somebody else would have a boyfriend sitting on the floor and they’d be rubbing their back and it was a nice little social group. I felt quite satisfied that somehow I’d contributed to these people having a really ordinary life.”*

During our research, Laura and I were introduced to and interviewed three people who successfully transitioned from Minda in the 1980s to live and work in the community – Ian, Michael and Fay.

Even though they had lived at Minda since they were children of five to seven years old (in one case for a total of nearly 40 years), each confirmed this big step had the positive result of giving them more individual choices and independence: *“You haven’t got anyone behind you saying: ‘you got to do that, you got to do this.’”*

Peter, their accommodation support worker and friend observed to us, *“The reason they have grown and developed is because they’ve been allowed to make mistakes. (None of us) always makes the right decision, so it’s about having that support network that makes it OK to learn from that. The people we support learn from their actions, not through books and observations”.*

.....

Minda: Babies and the elderly

Laura and I felt profoundly privileged to have witnessed some highly personal accounts of triumph and survival throughout a period of South Australian history which has remained un-illuminated. We were also saddened by our glimpse of Minda’s sometimes dark and mysterious shadows.

An enduring image at the end of our project research in 2012, was of Minda as an institution which over several decades had provided accommodation, schooling and training for babies and young children, but which in the future will respond to the needs of people of all ages.

We were fortunate to meet Louis, a kindly, fun-loving, extraordinary gentleman who came to live at Minda in 1937 when he was one year old. We met him in 2011 at a reminiscence group of elderly men convened by the Chaplin on Minda campus.

Throughout history it had been common for very young children with an intellectual disability to leave their parental home to live at Minda. Doctors routinely recommended to parents that their child be placed in an institutional setting as young as possible to give them the best chance to learn and be trained.

In the 1940s children under five years were accepted at Minda. By the 1950s, children needed to be over five years and by the early 1960s, it was six year olds who were accepted as residents. In some cases parents were told that if their child was not placed by the age of six years, Minda wouldn’t take them.

Former principal of Minda school, Pat Kaufmann recalled, *“There was a rule when I came to Minda (in 1961) that when children were admitted – and we were admitting six year olds – that they wouldn’t see their parents for six weeks”.*¹⁷ These incidents of loss and separation were unbearably sad for Pat Kaufmann to witness and she battled to have this rule changed.

Sharon began working in the Minda Children’s Ward in 1977: *“There were 34 children and it was just so much fun... The youngest was six and they .. were only like the size of a three or four year old. Because they didn’t have a lot of physical contact, they just loved being hugged or sitting on your lap, or listening to stories. It was just delightful.”*

By the early 1980s, a policy shift across SA Disability Services encouraged parents to support their children at home. Minda was, by then, accepting teenage residents rather than young children. Disability SA now handles the waiting list which was historically handled by Minda.

Just like the general community, today’s Minda residents are getting older. Their average age is about 46 years and they face issues brought about by ageing. Sharon observed: *“Many Minda residents who managed to learn independent living skills and move into the community have now been faced with early dementia in their mid 40s and early 50s. They have had to return to Minda.”*

This year construction began at the Minda site in Brighton on a redevelopment predicted to take ten years and cost \$200 million. There will be new accommodation options for residents, new businesses and apartment living for retirees from the wider community.

.....

Tutti and Minda today

The historic lack of options and support services for people with intellectual disability was most poignantly revealed by the life story of Joe who arrived at Minda as a 14 year old in 1911.

When Joe is interviewed in the 1970s, aged 79 years, the interviewer asks: *‘Did you ever get married?’*

Joe replies, *“...in the kitchen one morning (a staff member) said to me ‘You shouldn’t be here Joe, you ought to be married.’ I said: ‘Oh that’s how it goes, I had no choice’ ... I’ve been lonely ... I would like to ... get in with someone who would really look after me, take an interest in me, a lady”.*

Joe’s story provides a striking contrast with the more fortunate life histories of young Tutti artists who confidently contributed to this project a wide range of art and media skills acquired through Tutti programs.

Reflecting on the development of the partnership between Tutti and Minda over the past 16 years, Tutti Founder and Artistic Director, Pat Rix said:

“From small beginnings of nine people, Tutti has emerged as one of Australia’s leading disability arts organisations. This may not have happened anywhere else: the conditions were right.

“A big factor in the success of the original choir on Minda campus was the opportunity to include non-disabled people from the wider community. This led quite early on to a process of ‘reverse integration’ which continues to this day. The camaraderie and friendships which grew from working together towards so many great productions here and overseas have, in their own way, supported Minda’s aims of respect, inclusion and choice.

“As the partnership between Minda and Tutti has matured, both organisations, in their respective areas, have striven to be at the forefront of thinking about disability services.

“This year as Tutti transitions towards independence as a service provider I believe the partnership will grow in other ways. Tutti artists have much to offer their peers in Minda’s Day and Leisure Option programs and are already generating income from their skills. Many are ready to take a step up to becoming leaders.”

Melanie Fulton, who has been the backbone of Tutti’s Visual Arts Program since 2005 describes participants as *“very distinct artists who all have very clear ideas about what they want to do, and some have developed very strong practices. Much has been achieved within the group and by individuals through the opportunities provided by Tutti”.*

.....

Digital artist and film maker, James, a participant in Tutti's New Media/Film-making Program, was central to the visual documentation of our project. He filmed the first and most important research meeting in February 2011 which defined our project's research parameters.

At this meeting, four long term Minda staff members, Allan, Kaye, Dariusz and Walter, who have nearly 160 years cumulative working experience between them, generously shared their insights with Laura and I, Tutti staff members and Tutti artists.

21 year old Dougie attended this meeting. Since 2007 he has been a member of Tutti Arts and participates in each of their programs five days a week. He lives independently in the community. Without hesitation he says he "wouldn't like to leave Tutti because if I leave here it will be all haywire".

Dougie worked with us to develop question plans for each of the project interviews. A regular guest on the Peter Goers' ABC radio show on Tuesday nights, Dougie has become well known across South Australia for "giving a voice to people with a disability".

James joined Tutti's Visual Arts and New Media Program in 2007. His achievements are indicative of the dedicated work which has led to wider respect and acclaim for many Tutti Arts participants.

He lives at home with his parents and benefited from integrated schooling (kindy, primary, secondary) from which he graduated in 2003 aged 19 to become a student of film appreciation and screen studies at Flinders University through their integrated program, 'Up The Hill'.

He has consolidated his media artist skills through exhibitions of digitally manipulated photographic images in a number of Adelaide galleries as well as having them projected onto the sails of the Festival Centre during 2011 SALA's 'Moving Image' Festival.

In 2011, he travelled with his parents and Pat Rix to attend the Oska Bright Film Festival in Brighton, UK and that year gave a PowerPoint presentation about his work at the 'Inventura' Conference in Prague. In 2012 James successfully applied for a Richard Llewellyn Arts and Disability Trust Program grant to make a ten-minute documentary with animation screened this year.

Displaying his awareness of media history James described a film he made by animating digital stills: "The (earliest) cartoon was first built by flipping the cards. (My film is) like that, but (done) by the computer."

James' mother, Felicity expressed this perspective: "I feel a bit sorry for people who don't want to mix with people with disabilities, because they're really missing out on something in life and they never know. James always surprises us. He's going along all these interesting paths because of his passion for art... and he meets all these interesting people."

"No history is mute. No matter how much they own it, break it and lie about it, human history refused to shut its mouth. Despite deafness and ignorance, the time that was continues to tick inside the time that is."¹⁸

Catherine Murphy

Oral Historian, Writer

Endnotes

- 1 Laura Wills and Catherine Murphy worked together researching the *Their Shadows In Us* project for a total of ten weeks beginning in February 2011 until July 2012. They completed the catalogue essay and exhibition art works in 2013.
- 2 Bennett, S, Minda, p 9
- 3 This two-storey residence, the Hayward building, was built in 1861. The house and 52 acres were purchased by Minda Homes in 1909 for 3000 pounds (from notes compiled by John Green based on Minda Annual Reports, Vol 1, Brighton Council Historical Section).
- 4 An additional surrounding 35 acres and residence were later gifted to Minda by Miss Ivy Hackett. Total acreage in 2013 is approximately 70 acres (28 hectares). Brighton Council Historical Section.
- 5 *Fifty Years of Minda*, Minda Home South Australia 1948, pp 14-15
- 6 Ibid, p 30. This building still known as 'Rogerson', was named after Mr Robert Rogerson who was 'Minda's greatest benefactor'.
- 7 *Minda Case Book 1910-1934*, p 91: Joe is a 'State boy until 18 years of age.'
- 8 Swiderczuk, D, interview transcript, pp 4-5
- 9 Crawford, Don, *The care and training of people who were intellectually disabled in South Australia 1870-1990. A personal perspective*. Submitted for a Master of Arts degree, Flinders University, 2001, p 347
- 10 Op cit Crawford, D, p 138. Pat Kaufmann arrived in South Australia in 1961 to take up her position as Principal of Minda School, a position she held until 1989. She received an MBE for her work at the school and in South Australian disability services.
- 11 Kaye Kay began work at Minda in 1966 and is currently a social worker and counsellor. She told us a formal Resident's Committee, convened by Minda social work staff, had been set up in the late 1970s to provide a forum for residents to air grievances and discuss concerns.
- 12 Rosemary's recollection was confirmed by Pat Kaufmann's interview transcript, p 2. "One of the changes I fought for was that they use Modess pads instead of cloths."
- 13 These statistics were noted in the soundtrack to a 1981 fundraising video made by Channel 9, *Can't Smile Without You*.
- 14 Op cit Crawford, D, p 352
- 15 Op Cit, Swiderczuk, D, pp 5-6
- 16 Op cit, Crawford, D, p 306
- 17 Kaufmann, P, interview transcript, p 6
- 18 Galeano, Eduardo quoted in Colum McCann's novel, *Translantic*, Bloomsbury Press, 2013

Quotations from project interviewee transcripts with: Dariusz Swiderczuk, Pat Rix, Jackie Saunders, Maria Edwards, Janet Dixon, Pat Kaufmann, Aimee Crathern, Rosemary Clancy and Vince Pollard, Michael Lee, Sharon Manning, Ian Hickey and Peter Hodges, Melanie Fulton, Dougie Jacobson, James and Felicity Kurtze.

Quotations from archived transcripts of 1970s interviews by Allan Semple with Joe, Ettie, Bill and Mr Leverington.

Other interviewees who contributed invaluable perspectives but are not quoted: Jenna May, Trish Ferguson, Terry Fitzpatrick, Barry Olsen, Rosemary Francis and Fay Stein.



Nina Rupena
Portrait of Charlie, 2013 (work in progress)
 graphite, synthetic polymer paint, oil paint, sealer, Arches paper, 193 x 114 cm
 courtesy the artist
 Image Nina Rupena



Scott Pyle
Self Portrait 2013
 synthetic polymer paint, stretched canvas, permanent marker, 101 x 76 cm
 courtesy the artist
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



Jackie Saunders and Annalise Donders

Lady Galway, 2013
 synthetic polymer paint, stretched canvas, lace, synthetic feather, 40 x 30 cm
 courtesy Jackie Saunders
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



Alice Green and Wendy Michell

Pat Kaufmann, 2013
 synthetic polymer paint, stretched canvas, 40 x 30 cm
 courtesy Alice Green
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



Laura Wills and Jenna May
Haunted Galway House and Haywood Dream, 2013
 found pillow cases, synthetic polymer paint, paper, 46 x 72 x 10 cm
 courtesy the artists
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



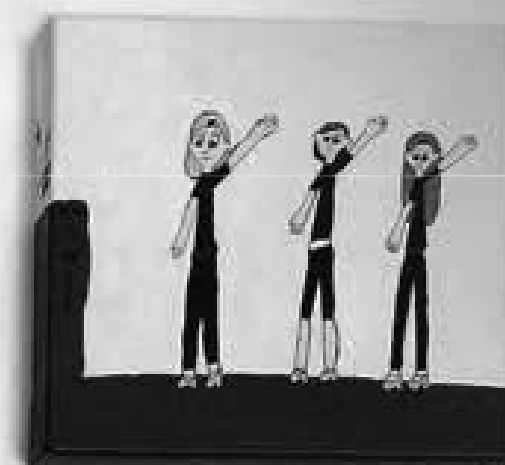
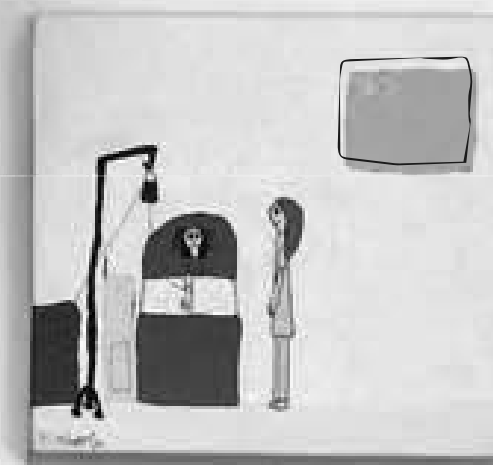
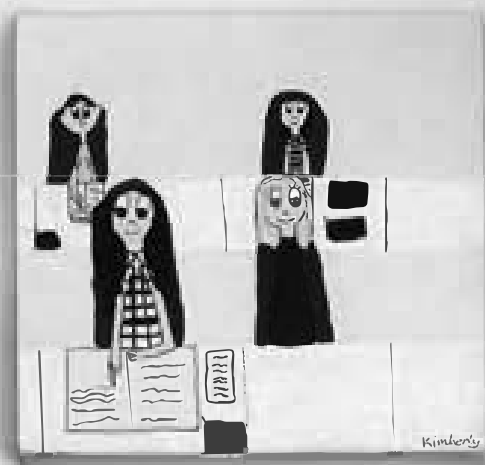
Laura Wills, Melanie Fulton, Madison Bycroft, Kimberly Sellers, Jake Holmes and Tutti Visual Artists (collaborative work)
Bed, 2012-13
 found iron bed, archival letterpress plate prints, fabric, cotton, paper, 88 x 190 x 93 cm
 courtesy the artists
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



Melanie Fulton
Archival Log Book (detail), assembled 2013
 archival log, paper, 34 x 23.5 cm
 courtesy Minda Inc.
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



Melanie Fulton, Jenny Smith, Kimberly Sellers and Alice Green
Baby Quilt and Pillow, 2013
 fabric, thread, tea dye, lace, 57 x 48 cm and 26 x 40 cm
 courtesy the artists
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



Kimberly Sellers
Living with disability, 2013
 synthetic polymer paint, stretched canvas, series of 8, 20 x 20 cm each
 courtesy the artist
 Image Pavlos Soteriou

Above (clockwise from top left): *Sitter*, *High School*, *Bus Stop*, *Uni*
 Opposite (clockwise from top left): *Hospital*, *Unlimited feet*, *In the Wheelchair*, *The Bank*



Laura Wills, Madison Bycroft, Kimberly Sellers, Jake Holmes and Tutti Visual Artists (collaborative work)
Curtain, 2012-13
 archival letterpress plate prints, fabric, thread, 127 x 123 cm
 courtesy the artists
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



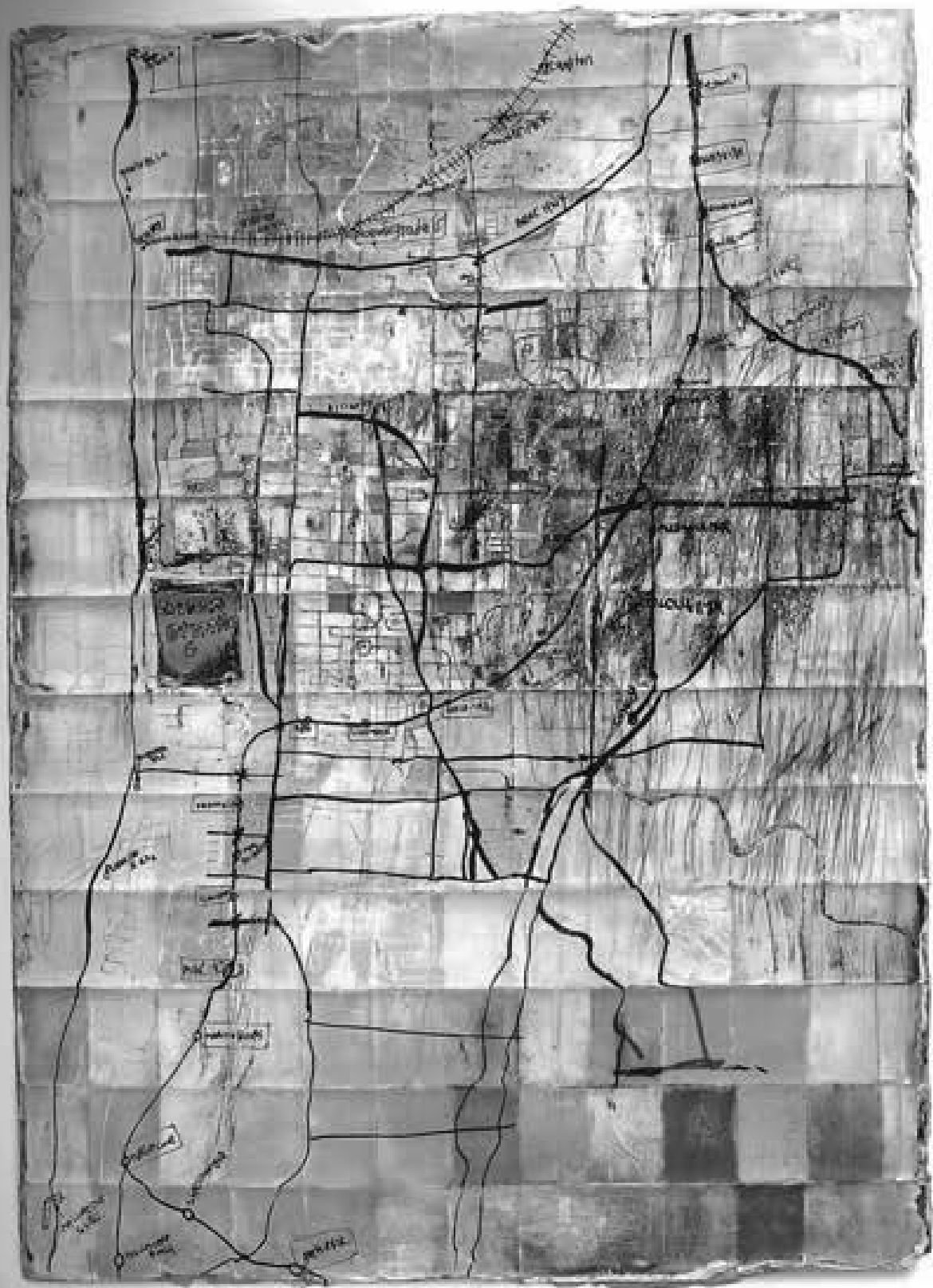
Nina Rupena and Tutti Visual Artists
Portrait of Dougie, 2013
 graphite, ink, charcoal, collage, card, paper, 150 x 107 cm
 courtesy the artists
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



Alice Green and Laura Wills
Unknown Nurse, 2013
 synthetic polymer paint, stretched canvas, 40 x 30 cm
 courtesy Alice Green
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



Alice Green and Wendy Michell
Patricia Wozniak, 2013
 synthetic polymer paint, stretched canvas, 40 x 30 cm
 courtesy Alice Green
 Image Pavlos Soteriou



Nina Rupena and Scott Pyle

Mapping, 2013
graphite, ink, pastel, synthetic polymer paint, collage, card, paper, 150 x 107 cm
courtesy the artists
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Nina Rupena and Tutti Artists

Minda Pines (detail), 2013
graphite, ink, charcoal, pastel, synthetic polymer paint, collage, card, paper, 150 x 107 cm
courtesy the artists
Image Pavlos Soteriou



Nina Rupena and Jenna May
Who the heck is Minda? (detail), 2013
 graphite, ink, watercolour, paper, 120 x 160 cm
 courtesy the artists
 Image Pavlos Soteriou