

ARTS RESPONDER CHECK LIST: ARC List.

1. ABSTRACT

Following a natural disaster there is significant and immediate response by Emergency Services: Fire Brigades, Army, Navy, Army Reserve, Red Cross, Police, Salvation Army, Chaplains, Health Workers, and infrastructure rebuild bodies. This work by necessity creates overlay mechanisms working towards the provision of basic survival needs but are often unable to attend to the needs of more nuanced cultural and social community behaviours and may actually inhibit or occlude previously important community networks, bonds, and activities, in particular, within the arts. The Arts Responder Check List attempts to create balance, suggest perspectives and discuss ways to respond to these crucial community needs.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The ARC List is research-based, and derived from infield experiences and observations in the period following the Mallacoota 2019 NYE Bushfire.
- 2.2 Although there is extant lateral Australian and International research developed towards assisting arts responders, there is no significant compilation of this work.
- 2.3 The ARC List has been developed primarily for use by artists and art management bodies working in disaster impacted communities.
- 2.4 In the ARC List, I offer a set of protocols and practices which may assist in understanding and responding to a community in disaster, discussed through the Arts lens. The guidelines are action based and goal oriented, assisting in best practice in arts-based recovery contexts.
- 2.5 I suggest and argue that the human cultural and social component of recovery is under-resourced and almost totally absent from awareness within Triage management and I argue further that it is as important as basic triage, and that if this knowledge were to be articulated, more widely understood and available, these social and cultural components of community recovery would be easier.

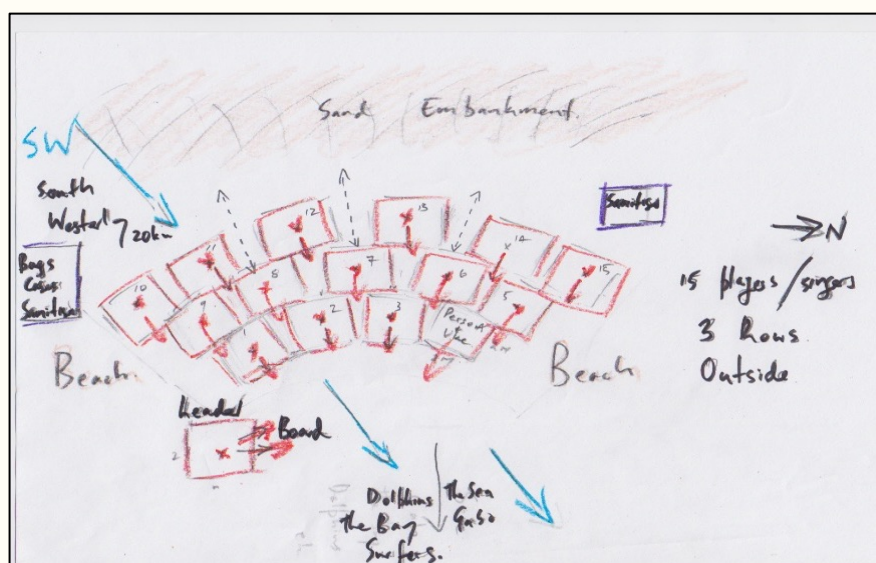


FIG. 1

FIG.1 *BeachUke@* Bastion Point Mallacoota, Vic. July 2020.
Adaptation post-fire and CV19 Community Music. Ukulele share/making on the beach.
Looking out to the sea towards Gabo Isle with the fire grounds behind us.

3• ARTS RESPONDER CHECK LIST (ARC List)¹

What happened to us?

How did it affect us?

How did we adapt?

The ARC List is designed to provide a set of protocols, practices, and discussions aimed at informing practice in post-disaster recovery through the arts.

It has been developed as a key interim outcome of ongoing site-specific infield action-based research currently underway in the small town of Mallacoota, the site of the 2019 NYE Firestorm and ongoing 2020/21 CV19 long onset disaster. In other words, the document and findings are open.

The insights and advice provided in this ARC List are derived from experientially informed in-situ research (Mallacoota 2020/21) and are also considered here in the context of international perspectives-based research into Arts Recovery.

This ongoing practice-based research has been conducted by two long term Mallacoota-based arts practitioners and co-researchers, Padma Newsome and Susannah Keebler. As such, this research provides valuable insider perspectives and insights into the arts-based recovery needs of this particular community and its members. The ARC List is authored by Padma Newsome.

Included in the ARC List are recommendations and key areas for consideration and discussion. These have emerged from an in-situ real time informed analysis and are aimed at supporting arts-based recovery and continuity in post-disaster contexts.

3.1 WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

- 3.1.1 Nothing is static.
- 3.1.2 Each of the areas included in the ARC List are organically overlapping fields of reference. The core focus is on working towards greater awareness and 'best health' outcomes for the artist participant and the community.
- 3.1.3 The work of an Arts Responder is necessarily energised, reflective and ultimately skill based.
- 3.1.4 Each paving stone is fundamentally and innately problem-solution oriented and will therefore co-evolve with the other paving stones, as part of an overlapping framework in an ever changing dynamic field.
- 3.1.5 First-hand experience and ongoing research into Arts Recovery reveals that Self-Care and Self-Practice are the most important tools and will strengthen the reflective exigencies.
- 3.1.6 Continuity of practice requires adaptive mechanisms to respond to ongoing iterative and evolving sets of needs.
- 3.1.7 Kindness, gentleness and patience towards oneself and others are essential.

¹ Susannah Keebler. "Artists, arts educators, and arts facilitators visiting a place that has experienced disaster are 'arts responders'." Dec. 2020.

4. THE LIST. I am a musician. My historic work within the Murrumbidgee community and surrounding areas has been cultural development (2004 – 2021). The NYE Firestorm and the 2020/21 pandemic inhibited continuity of arts practice within the Murrumbidgee community and has strongly impacted my work. In addition to infrastructural damage and loss, loss of equipment and homes, we also experienced heightened disruption to the town's social and cultural fabric. Within this context I sought to develop a set of guidelines, ethics, and behavioural lenses to assist my own work with community in recovery.

THESE IDEAS HAVE COME FORWARD

4.1 When relating to my SELF:

- 4.1.1 Mentor, or mentors: unknown mentors
- 4.1.2 Looking after my own health; or self-care
- 4.1.3 Looking after my own musical practice and needs: self-practice: music and research
- 4.1.4 Fostering a sense of duty of care, well-being and health outcomes.
- 4.1.5 Seeking research based thinking

4.2 When relating to COMMUNITY:

- 4.2.1 Autonomy: self-design.
- 4.2.2 Agency and respect
- 4.2.3 What's past? what's next?
- 4.2.4 Skill based delivery
- 4.2.5 Looking/waiting for requests and ideas that come from outside creating easier routes forward: what I call "attending energies".
- 4.2.6 Pause before **inventing** the creative space.
- 4.2.7 Pause before **entering** the creative space
- 4.2.8 Pause before **creating** a space/place and inviting others into it.

4.3 a few practical ideas when designing activities:

- 4.3.1 Provision and expectation of regular sessions
- 4.3.2 Freedom to attend or not
- 4.3.3 Freedom to attend without expectation of skill acquisition
- 4.3.4 Simple economic principles: e.g., no-one pays
- 4.3.5 Ability to interact and have agency over the playing level, the materials chosen, and the manner of the sessions, to have fun.....

4.4 RESILIENCE (defined within the arena of Creative Practice)

..the adaptive tools and resources inbuilt within a system to support relative continuity of creative practice...

4.5 SELF PRACTICE

..the adaptive tools, skills, resources, and rehearsal techniques I need in order to support relative continuity of my creative practice...

4.6 SELF CARE

..the adaptive tools, skills, activities, and resources I need in order to support relative continuity of my health...

DISCUSSION AREAS AND SUGGESTIONS. Section 4

[4.1.1] SUPPORT, MENTOR, SUPERVISOR, FRIEND

- i. Maintain ongoing formal and informal relationships with people who you can chat with about your work, give you feedback, or just listen.
- ii. If possible, have a mentor, supervisor, or a professional, with whom you are able to freely share in confidence, your thoughts, feelings, and ideas, and who can give you feedback from a skills and knowledge-based perspective.²
- iii. Key Problem: Your particular experience is unique. Your ally may not necessarily understand, therefore it is important to keep communication open and on-going, and/or have multiple advisors.
- iv. My experience was that most external social and cultural support was not suitable for me. There were, however, many locals with long held knowledge and the best help came from within my own community.
- v. Locals also support locals through non-visible connectivity, anchoring through shared simple on-ground wisdoms.
- vi. These simple connections can be mirrored in musical settings.

[4.1.2] SELF CARE: KEEPING HEALTHY

- i. It is important to do what you normally do for maintenance of self-health. You may find yourself away from home in a disaster-affected community. It may be your own community. The environment may be overwhelming and you may forget about your own health, which by necessity must come first.³
- ii. Help yourself before trying to help others.
- iii. Key Problem: There may be an overwhelming lack or change in ability to replicate normal health practice.

[4.1.3] SELF PRACTICE: MAKING YOUR OWN ART

- i. Keep up your own creative practice and/or creative processes and routines. This is essential when working with others whose moment-to-moment expressive needs will be your primary focus.
- ii. Your own creative work must needs be in the background. It is important to understand the difference between your creative practice, what works for you (your needs) and the needs of community. With this awareness it will be easier to navigate within each domain.
- iii. This suggestion also relates to managerial processes, arts advisors, etc.
- iv. It is also important to allow for some self-forgiveness in this space.
- v. The most important formal protocols are to not take or move into, or make and inhabit a creative space that might be inhabited by a local, or to invent a space for a local.
- vi. It is also important to understand that you are not a healer, but a resource provider.
- vii. Key Problem: There is an overwhelming external change which may limit your ability to practice your own art.
- viii. Key Question: What is my own practice?

² <https://creativerecovery.net.au>

³ https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/Essential_Guidelines_for_Arts_Responders_1.pdf

[4.2.5] ATTENDING ENERGIES

- i. *Attending energies* [4.2.5] refers to requests of support by members of the community, instigated by members of the community, for an activity that they have imagined or are re-establishing.
- ii. Infield knowledge and appropriate skill sets are of primary importance.
- iii. *Waiting* was the tool that gave me some assurance that I was not inventing the creative space, and not asserting myself into someone else's delicate project or accessing a space which already had highly contested dynamically filtered entrance point.

[4.2.6 – 4.2.8] PAUSE BEFORE INVENTING, ENTERING, AND INVITING INTO..

- i. In my view, this set of protocols or behavioural filters are potent tools for working within a trauma impacted community.
- ii. Key notions in this discussion are “reflective” and “reflexive” and “skill based” and I suggest that there is a dynamic interplay between these behavioural fulcrums.

5. ASSESING THE FIELD: WHAT'S GOING ON?

- 5.1 Counting in *ones*. Individual needs and resource provision data informs the manner and substance of the service delivery to groups, and in my view constitutes the primary information resource.
- 5.2 Your work must be research based, asking - who, what, and where? It is focused on meeting people, finding out about ideas, needs, finding out about places, finding out about projects, and sharing.
- 5.3 Key Problem: Time is moving differently. People are traumatized. Connectivity is disrupted. Your own connectivity and that of the residents will be compromised. Isolation is separation. In addition, people are often uncomfortable sharing their needs, and may be distrustful.
- 5.4 Key Problem. The most difficult work is finding ways to connect with breadth and patience.

6. CREATING A HUB, WORK/PLAY GROUP, OR WORKING WITH A PRE-EXISTING WORK/PLAY GROUP

- 6.1 The hub is not filled with you. (see 6.6)
- 6.2 A hub is initially and primarily an information seeking body: seeking input, sharing pathways to resources, assisting with the provision of resources, pursuing resource acquisition through funding applications and networking with other individuals or hubs.
- 6.3 A working hub in Australia will need to become an incorporated Not For Profit body in order to receive and distribute funds. It may be simpler to request support from an existing NFP to auspice and house your project.
- 6.4 Co-evolution with other bodies will likely make your work much simpler.
- 6.5 Co-design and collaboration are essential ingredients.
- 6.6 Problem: If you are working alone, you are the hub.

7. CONTINUITY AND CREATIVE, CARING, OPEN SPACES

- 7.1 It is recommended to facilitate the development of open healthy creative spaces for community use.
- 7.2 It is not recommended to make *trauma* awareness a way forward. It is simply not necessary, and may even be harmful.
- 7.3 Initially, it is useful and important to look at what people were normally pursuing in their pre-disaster state, and to consider that which is easy and practical to reboot.
- 7.4 Some spaces or projects may be contested (that is, not everyone may share the same idea as to what the function or purpose of the space might be, and may even question whether they (the space, or projects) are needful at all.
- 7.5 Key Problem: A contested space may be unwelcoming to traumatised people.

8. WHAT'S PAST, WHAT'S NEXT?

- 8.1 Your research will show what has come before, and this may prove a good starting point.
- 8.2 In a small regional community it is often one person who has the energy and time to continue to drive an activity or project, even though they might be part of a larger committee or group.
- 8.3 One approach is to try to attend energies that have come to you unsolicited, and if you are following this protocol, patience is essential.
- 8.4 Problem: Places may be traditionally associated with specific activities They may not be available for use.
- 8.5 Problem: Activities are often run by specific groups or individuals who may not wish to continue or are unable to continue.
- 8.6 Problem: There is no knowing what will work and what won't. That's OK.

9. RINSE AND REPEAT

- 9.1 Rinse and repeat means: *Have a go. Have another go. And then again.*
- 9.2 Don't hurry. Solutions may be found in unlikely places and ways, and especially within your own practice.

10. ESSENTIAL COLLABORATION SPACES

- 10.1 Establish lines of communication with First Nations groups
- 10.2 Establish lines of communication with government organisations, NGO arts and recovery bodies

11. KEY RESOURCE AND COLLABORATION SPACES

Education Bodies	Spiritual or Religious Bodies	Youth Support Bodies
Aged Care and Support.	Arts Bodies and Artists.	Health Delivery Bodies/Services
Galleries	Men's/Women's Sheds	Meeting Groups
Notice Boards	Pubs and Coffee Houses.	Local Volunteer Organisations
Business Associations	Sporting Bodies	Local and Regional Industry

IMPORTANT DISCUSSION AREAS

12. ARTS TRIAGE

12.1 Arts Triage is the immediate post-disaster response. This consists of a resource focused inquiry and delivery. Immediate Arts Triage field assessment data is unlikely to be attained from Emergency Management sources and will primarily be garnered through social and informal forms of inquiry.

12.2 The immediate post-disaster Arts Triage response concerns resources and spaces, and is typified in particular by:

- i. Loss of equipment and other necessary and key resources
- ii. Loss of places to play, dance, and make art
- iii. Loss of connectivity

12.3 LONG TERM TRIAGE needs are associated with the continued breakdown of connectivity and reflect ongoing personal situations of hardship, homelessness, and health. The fact that we can observe *Triage* needs, six, twelve or even twenty two months after the disaster event, suggests to us that the concept of *stages* in recovery may be incorrect or at best temporally blurred.

12.4 MALLACOOTA INSTRUMENT COMMONS Instrument Replacement and Provision.

12.4.1 In July 2020, Robin Bryant and I, in collaboration with CHIRF Inc. and utilising a Newscorp/FRRR grant, formed the Mallocoota Instrument Commons. The intention is to resource and distribute instruments and equipment which are owned by community and played by community.

12.4.2 To date, the Mallocoota Instrument Commons has provided more than 30 instruments to individuals and households consisting of Ukuleles, Guitars, Violins, Organs and Keyboards, Congas and Bongos, Saxophone, Harmonicas, public announcement and projection gear, live stage equipment, and The Martin Heritage Collection of Violins and Bows.

12.5 The issue of long term Triage needs may highlight the importance of message and delivery plurality. It also suggests the need to focus on the realities of slow on-set or long-term disaster outcomes.

12.6 The current situation in Mallocoota and surrounds (as at October. 2021) presents a complex set of challenges and strains associated with febrile social networks and strained relations. These networks and relationships may become increasingly more important as the Emergency Management and governmental presence and assistance recedes.⁴

12.7 *Counting in ones* will assist here, in that the personal interface might need to be discrete to one individual at a time, or to small groups. This may help inform your action based inquiry and service delivery, including to larger groups. This is *inside-out thinking*.

⁴ Kien Nguyen-Trung, Helen Forbes-Mewett, and Dharmalingam Arunachalam, "Social support from bonding and bridging relationships in disaster recovery: Findings from a slow-onset disaster," International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction 46 (2020)

13• WHAT IS PUBLICS?

13.1 The notion of Publics refers to an emphasis on and a move towards plurality and easier access through multiple methods of delivery and communication. It has a computer analogy: as in *Virtual Publics*: the development of “click through” behaviours modelled to develop speed of delivery in online use. This is a useful analogy in trying to understand who and why and what is needed in order to service multiple needs and voices simultaneously.

13.2 Individuals may be able to source more discrete tracks, more appropriate and more streamlined in both style of communication, the nature of delivery, and how the resources are presented.⁵ This approach may limit intrusion and instead focusses on access and resources.

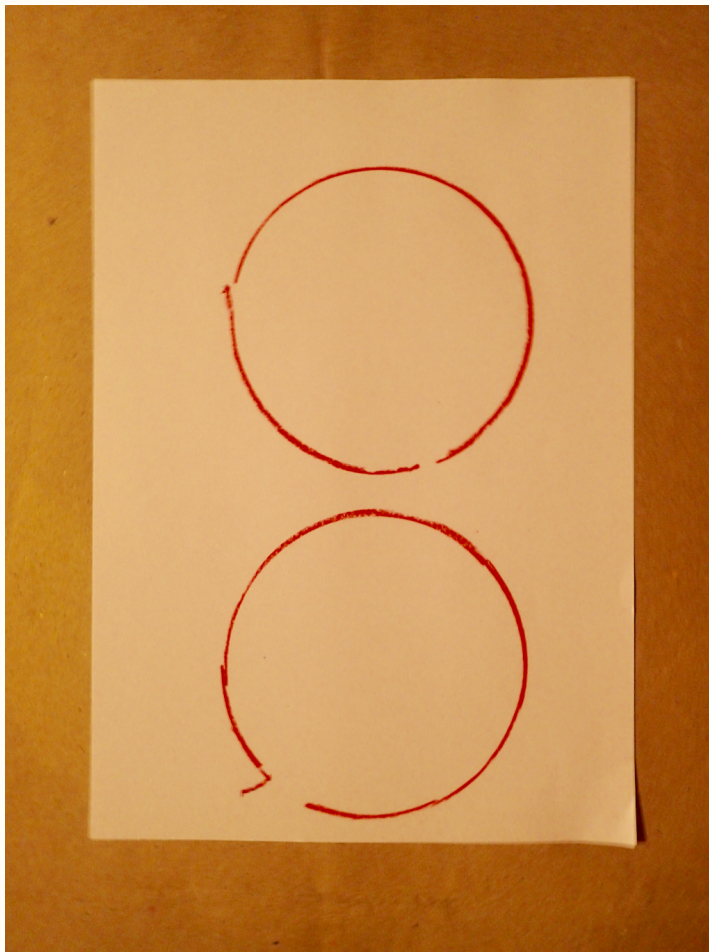


Fig. 2

People’s Commission Fund #1
by Padma Newsome, Oct. 2019.

“Access and entry points to resources may appear narrowly targeted and non-inclusive to some, and programmes outside your own social and recovery network may also seem insurmountably inaccessible.”
ARC List. Page 7

This crayon drawing depicts a closed circle and a circle which has an open entry point. The circles are metaphors for spaces and places, e.g. a hub, a think tank, or a working group. Both may appear intrinsically closed to those outside the group, even though we have “opened” the circle.

14• WHAT IS ADVOCACY IN AN INFORMAL SETTING?

14.1 Do we need to formalise Arts Triage, for example?

14.2 Some victims/survivors may have a reduced capacity to make some decisions. They may also not appreciate “good deeds”, no matter how well intended. They may be wary of your intentions and motives.

⁵ Quentin Jones, Sheizaf Rafaeli, www.electronicmarkets.org. Volume 10 (4): 214–223.

14.3 This quote from David Grusky may exemplify attitudes held by those that assist, and more importantly, those that may need assistance.

“The families of the upper and lower strata of the upper classes are organized into social cliques and exclusive clubs. The men gather fortnightly in dining clubs where they discuss matters that concern them. The women belong to small clubs or to the Garden Club and give their interest to subjects which symbolize their high status and evoke sentiments necessary in each individual if the class is to maintain itself. Both sexes join philanthropic organisation whose good deeds are an asset to the community and an expression of the dominance and importance of the top class to those socially beneath them.”⁶

Access and entry points to resources may appear narrowly targeted and non-inclusive to some, and programmes outside your own social and recovery network may also seem insurmountably inaccessible. This will be an ongoing challenge.

In stark behavioural contrast to a possible reticence from "clients" to receive and accept acts of beneficence is the reality that resource workers, shops, charitable organisations, for example, are often more open to advocacy and negotiation during the early period of Post-Disaster. In other words, you can be proactive in asking for deals and discounts, and not afraid to ask twice on behalf of community or clients.

It is sometimes easier to provide resources if the interface is less personal and more formal. In this work, the Arts Responder may become an advocate. This is a serious and ongoing responsibility and regardless of whether working inside or outside of formal recovery structures, one may end up making strong decisions which will affect other people's lives in real ways. It is not always easy to predict whether this will be a positive or negative for the individual and/or the community, and therefore caution is essential.

There are issues here also with the perceived relationship between 'good deeds' and charity, and issues related to social stratification. That is, if the work appears normative and without special consideration, it is sometimes easier to deliver and to receive assistance.

15• AGENCY AND VOLUNTEERISM

Agency and volunteerism are very important issues in the post-disaster response. Emergency Management (E.M.) is by necessity fast and brutal. This may take away personal agency and replace it with an overseer mentality. It can also unwittingly take work and agency away from locals. Professionals from outside of town take positions and actions that are often supported by the E.M. infrastructure. Speed is essential and there may not be enough time to incorporate unknown and untested assets. These quick steps can also be mirrored in the Arts arena. People step in where they have never been before. When the ashes settle, or the flood recedes, these new and now taken spaces, made within the *trauma* context, may become stabilised as a new accepted norm. This norm may however have left people behind, or excluded people, and Arts Responders, if working *for* community, might need to shift their gaze to this problem.

Loss of agency is real and has real consequences for both individuals and groups.

⁶ David Grusky, "Social Stratification, Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective" (London: Routledge, 2019), 2nd Edition. 241

There will be art makers in the community, who for a variety of reasons may lie *under the radar*. Art-making occurs in a continuum, that is, it is everywhere. The breakdown of normal routes to art-making/sharing may be obvious in certain arenas: no concerts, no gallery showings, for example, but may be hidden in other more nuanced manners and settings: community shelters, open mics, *Strumalong*, community choir, non-performative café and pub events, private drawing groups, writing groups, dance-night and so on.

Furthermore, people who have been historical drivers of community art-making, including public presenters, may quickly reach exhaustion, physically, emotionally, and intellectually. This is because they have so much else they may be dealing with on a basic level: caring, house repair, property damage, mental health, and very importantly, where people can't share and make their art, they may feel a repeated sense of loss and sadness. They are artists. They need to make and share their art.

Speaking from the perspective of a community resident, what we did before the disaster is important to us, even if we were doing this as volunteer community workers. However, volunteerism should give us pause for thought in the post-disaster phase. It needs to be balanced with the economic needs both of a town in disaster and of the needs of individuals within the town. The power of income and spent income is tangible in small towns. Loss of agency and the regaining of agency is connected to well-being. If we are volunteering or accepting volunteerism within our group or organisation, a more informed and nuanced balance may need to be sought through inquiry, discussion and collaboration.

- Key Problem/Question: Am I taking or interfering with someone's agency or work?

16• FEBRILE NETWORKS

Each client or client group will be dealing with the disaster in discrete and potentially different ways. They may or may not be aware of other groups' activities or thinking and there may be some resistance to the idea of combining resources and forces. Kien *et al* speak of "bonding networks", "bonding social capital" and "bonding relationships" based on trust and understanding. These are real and active. However, much of which was previously extant may no longer exist in the community due to social breakdown and the hierarchy of the disaster's effect, which may have destabilised normally proactive communal relationships.⁷

Rob Gordon and Ann Leadbeater suggest that part of the immediate community response will be a sense of communal cooperation.⁸ However, this may be quick to break down after the initial disaster-response. Expectation of post-disaster organisational support may or may not be relevant to the community you are working in.

Small support hubs may crumble and reform, and geographical, social, and communicative distance may create further disruption. Connectivity exists within work pockets, school and neighbour and familial connections, for example. Some fragmented online forums may still be functioning, however, social bonds may be weakened due to a kind of post-panic hyper-vigilance, which interprets and communicates oddly.

⁷ Kien Nguyen-Trung, Helen Forbes-Mewett, and Dharmalingam Arunachalam, "Social support from bonding and bridging relationships in disaster recovery: Findings from a slow-onset disaster," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*. 46 (2020): doi:10.1016/j.ijdrr.2020.101501

⁸ <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/podcasts/trauma-reactions-and-recovery>

“Trauma destroys time”.⁹ It destroys the sense of time, and we continue to live in the *trauma* events’ extended *now*. Speaking from personal experience, initially in town, we found ourselves having manic quick conversations. Very soon we would take offence, on edge, feeling left out, confused, over managed, misdirected, snappy, and walking away offended and angry, apparently having lost the most important thing to this person, or that managerial decision. These moments resonate strongly and may effect hitherto strong relationships.

There may be some resistance to online discourse, due to an often fractious and binary nature of the discourse. None-the-less, this can comprise a primary research resource, within the brief of “assessing the field”. Online discourse and the use of it is normative and comprises an important useful community information resource. During the Mallecoota NYE Firestorm, social media were the primary communication and information resources, and by March 2020, Facebook and Instagram had receded from their Triage roles and had become busy communication, documentation and discussion platforms. Often only informal inquiry will discover/uncover much of this activity.

17• TENDRILS RATHER THAN HIGHWAYS

Attend energies, or tendrils of energies. "Assessing the field" is a real enquiry. This form of enquiry attempts to firstly understand needs and aspirations. It will be by necessity part formal and part informal. Communication is also by necessity subtle, not blunt, and must be sensitive and socially responsible.

- Notice needs and respond to expressions of needs.
- Do not invent in a contested invention space.
- Do not invent the creative space.

18• WHAT IS A HUB?

People working together. That’s it. Open access is recommended. A practical analogy is derived from computer science: A hub is a node with a huge number of links through which data is replicated.

Function: information acquisition, networking, sources of inspiration and resources.

The word is often used to suggest a working group dedicated towards supporting, actuating or realising a project or projects. It can be a broad body with responsibilities almost as large as a shire or it can be a single person working and networking. Community hubs are generally volunteer based and may or may not have a working budget.

Community Hubs in disaster settings will need to form or join a co-operative non-profit body in order to legally receive and distribute funds in Australia. The distribution of resources by a not-for-profit volunteer body has serious ethical challenges related to enlightened access principles. Mutuality is about shared platforms and needs to be based in an actively self-aware approach aimed at resource sharing. A mutual inclusive approach proposes that the space or arena or project is yours, ours, everyone's.¹⁰ It does not state *I welcome you into my space*.

⁹ Robert D. Stolorow, "Trauma and temporality," *Psychoanalytic Psychology* 20, no. 1 (2003): xx, doi:10.1037/0736-9735.20.1.158 (Page 158)

¹⁰ Keebler, Susannah 2020, Personal communications. June to Dec.2020.

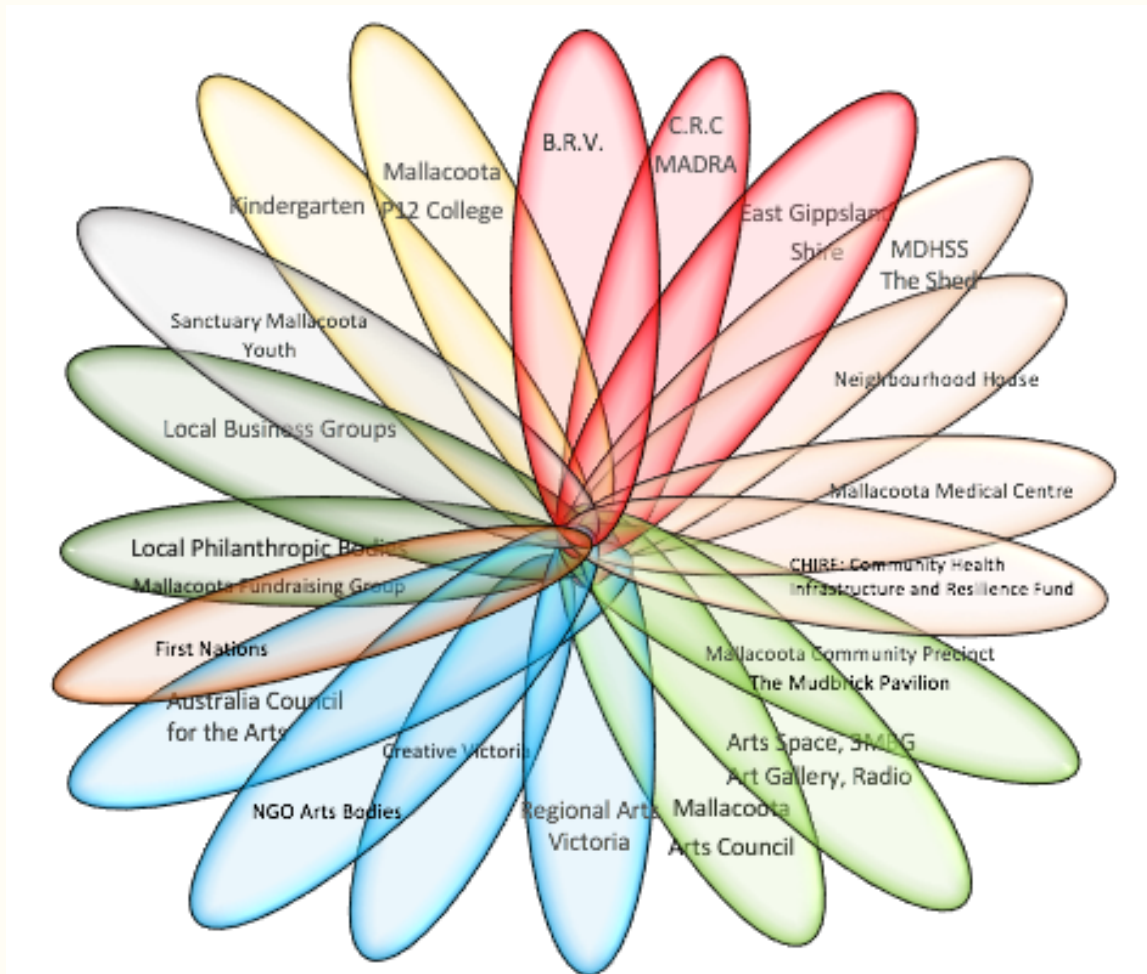


Fig 3. Mallacoota Feb. 27. 2021. State and town bodies intersecting my work. "That's me in the centre". Padma Newsome

19• NOT ALL SHEDS ARE EQUAL

People may be very sensitive. There are so many people with so many losses it is at times hard to understand and remember this. Rightly or wrongly, here in Mallacoota people developed a neutral questioning style, since those we knew had lost everything but seemed to be doing their normal things. An important lesson was understanding the loss of sheds. Many people had lost houses, but the variety and importance of shed losses opened our eyes to both the objective and the subjective nature of loss. One friend lost three generations of tools. When working in a disaster zone our own self-care is centrally important. It is best not to assume that you are working at best capacity. You will forget things and will regret it. Counting in ones can really assist in the understanding of the needs of larger groups. Data is resource and is gained through individual enquiry. Documentation and journaling may assist here. Writing down your thoughts and feelings builds reflectivity and is expressional in and of itself. It is a creative endeavour stimulating creative adaptation and ideas.

20• CO-EVOLUTION

You don't need to do everything yourself. In fact, things may be a lot better when you do things with others. Respect, Listen, Observe, Learn, Rinse-Repeat, Network.

21• CANCELLING GIGS, TALKS, AND WORKSHOPS

Awareness by external observers of “on the ground” realities may be limited. Initially, the disaster zone is filled with Emergency Services, Fire Brigades, Army, Navy, Army Reserve, Red Cross, Police, Salvation Army, Chaplains, Health Workers, and infrastructure rebuild bodies.

Within the creative arena, and also socially, everyone wants to help. A magic wand could place all personnel in the perfect place, but in reality what happens is that very few people land in a comfortable place with best potential agency within the specific cultural and social arena.

There may be concerts, talks, workshops that were planned. Here, we recommend a thorough examination of whether these are needed, especially when considered through the following lenses:

- agency in community
- best practice in the skill-based Arts Responder arena

Everybody will want to help, even if they themselves are homeless and in *trauma*. Visiting artists may have visceral and real responses to the devastation they encounter, both human, structural and environmental. Everybody wants to be able to contribute to great benefit.

22• FALSE ECONOMY

Community seeks long term benefits from arts practice. Experience suggests that fast delivery practices ¹¹ are not appropriate at this time. Whilst a boost to our coffers is suitable for things such as musical instruments and other resource replacement, going forward, community benefits most from connectivity and autonomous creative practice. What is needed are arenas for making and sharing: people with people, and people with people making art.

23• MEDIA AND VIEWING

By media, I mean broadcasting, print media, the news media, cinema, advertising, webcasts, and some forms of internet. Developing self-practice in this space promotes learning and understanding of ways to mitigate between reflexive and reflective responses in your own relationship with media, and ways to find a balance between unmediated experience and documentation.

The following three foci can help assess and promote healthy activity planning.

- Autonomy
- Care
- Information Sharing

¹¹ See [29] *Glossary of non-terms, homilies and platitudes*.

Self-empowerment and the ability to make one's own decisions is essential, with links to agency, adaptation and survival. At the same time, duty of care, and care, are intrinsic obligations and are tied to information sharing.¹²

For example, for a film project we might ask,

- Who is the videographer, the producer, director, and for what company/group are they filming?
- Who is funding the project?
- What is the film about?
- Who else is in the film?
- How will the footage be cited?
- Will we be named, and how?
- Where will the film be disseminated?
- What is the financial model of the film?
- What direct benefits will the community and the individuals gain from the project? How is this negotiated?
- How do I protect my cultural and intellectual property rights?
- How can I back out of my participation in the project?

The "care" factor needs to engage common sense and historic parochial and normative practices in the specific community. For example, when working with children in Australia:¹³

- It is normal to practice a conservative approach to image documentation, especially within school environments.
- For example, photos often appear in parochial publications, local papers and may be uploaded to social media, but conscious effort is made by teachers, supervisors, and parents, *et al* to limit the scope and range.
- It is important to understand that any agreements made with children and also others may have a non-comprehension factor, i.e. they may not understand.
- It is important for the Arts Responders to understand and to be able to explain and assure the chain of consent.

24• RHETORICAL REALITIES

Documentation and public presentation are ways to celebrate and share art. It is also common to use film to empower voices, a struggle, point towards an issue, or publicise or celebrate a work of art. It may be tempting to try to consciously influence and use media for perceived rhetorical purposes.¹⁴

In a normative model of creative endeavour in our regional town one might see or experience heightened interest by others outside of the creative group at certain natural times: peers, parents, friends, and other organic tracks aimed at some kind of public presentation outcome of creative work.

¹² <https://www.gotocourt.com.au/civil-law/vic/duty-of-care/>

¹³ <https://www.artslaw.com.au/information-sheet/children-in-the-creative-process-information-for-artists-and-arts-organisat/>

¹⁴ Jessica Hamblen, "Media Coverage of Traumatic Events: Research on Effects," PTSD: National Center for PTSD Home, accessed December 10, 2020, https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/media_coverage_trauma.asp.

Performance can be both challenging and exciting. We would encourage parents and friends to both participate and to come to share/make sessions. Parents snapping shots of their kids is normal and usual, and only needs gentle reminding of school photo protocols. It is the leap to journalism which brings the most complexity.

Some salient points for consideration by the community.

- Journalists are professional investigators with their own developed skill set and mentality.
- Journalists will not necessarily be sharing the thoughts and ideas behind why and what they are capturing.
- After a disaster, there is a massive media convergence. Huge resources and hundreds of people are pulled into one story. We are seeing only the tip of this.
- "Coming into town to document our recovery" is a phrase we have heard numerous times.¹⁵ *Viewing* changes things and often in ways that might feel uncomfortable.
- Urgency of actions are symptomatic in post disaster. They link to the temporality of disaster times in which every day is full of tasks that need to be done urgently then and there. Gentle awareness of group or personal dynamics in this space may increase the "pause" factor and help align the community's goals with media involvement.
- Press presence influences behaviour and can inhibit natural creative flow.
- Press representatives may be unable to distinguish where and when their presence is disturbing or disruptive.
- Press and media presence and activity may trigger trauma memory.
- Even though community is linked and tied to Media, the press presence may not necessarily be aware of or support longer-term community goals, and may also bring adverse effects for individuals and groups.

But.....*"If we don't get the picture out to the press, then we'll never get the interest needed to show that we have the level of community support for our activities, including our photo shoot, which is principally aimed at getting funds to support those in the photo shoot."*

GLOSSARY OF NON-TERMS, HOMILIES, AND PLATITUDES

25• RESILIENCE - to what? for what?¹⁶ This is a complex term with a variety of historical usages, for example,

- 25.1 It is used in ecology where resilient features can be observed (e.g. in *rufous macropod* in describing their adaptive fecundity).
- 25.2 Studies in child psychology have focused for some decades on the fact that some children are able to function well in school even whilst enduring adverse conditions at home or in community.¹⁷
- 25.3 Infrastructure might also have inbuilt resilient features (e.g. internet delivery might have multiple mechanisms to mitigate foreseeable change due to storms or lines down or poor connection).

¹⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/jan/02/former-coalition-adviser-wins-190000-bushfire-agency-contract-without-full-tender>

¹⁶ Susan L. Cutter, "Resilience to What? Resilience for Whom?," *The Geographical Journal* 182, no. 2 (2016)

¹⁷ Ann S. Masten, "Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development," *American Psychologist* 56, no. 3 (2001)

RESILIENCE - DISCUSSION

Disaster response requires transformation at the forefront of the crisis in order to facilitate adaptation to domestic, socio-economic, infrastructural or environmental changes. During this time, households and individuals adapt to rolling changes such as changes in power delivery and water services, access to food and household needs, and changes in transport and road access.

This adaptation requires resources and choice and requires extra individual or group time and energy. For example, adaptation to rolling power outages requires:

- Access to alternative food preparatory behaviours, such as switching to gas cookers or open fire cooking
- Quicker rollover of food use due to no refrigeration and this then requires more frequent access to shops or centralised food distribution sources

Power outages also require adaptation to lighting changes:

- Candles and lamps
- Changes in bedding hours and routines

Power outages also require adaptation to meet health needs, such as:

- Heating and air conditioning
- Air filters
- Storage of medicines
- Independent living aid devices
- Home health care equipment

These adaptive needs are mirrored in the infrastructure arena:

- Food distribution and changes in stocking at shops
- Access to health services
- Alternative housing and changes to provision of home care

If the disaster has multiple impacts such as rolling power outages and impeded road access, the adaptive measures are compounded. Resources may have to be imported by air or sea and are hierarchically prioritised.

These are ongoing problems that need to be solved, day by day, and whilst we may be able to normalise and systematise (as our household was able to achieve), other social and cultural needs are simply not able to be tended to. For example, for those with chemical addictions or needs, there may be a a devastating and difficult physiological reality with potential social resonances.

It is evident that the cultural and social component to recovery in these kind of contexts can be complex. Temporal aspects are mitigated by external events. People are embedded in transformative behaviours.

RESILIENCE - CONCLUSIONS

- i. Caution might be applied to the use of the word *resilience* in post-disaster contexts. Individuals, families and groups of people who are undergoing a series of hardships are already asking themselves to adapt, to respond and to *get off the ground and have another go*.
- ii. There is a limit. At a certain point the energies and fortitude simply run out of affect.
- iii. We are not psychologists or psychiatrists, and caution may be applied when using the word *resilience*, and especially as a kind of platitude to boost morale such as, “you/we are (a) resilient community/people.” It might be more useful to target the particular issue and try to find resources to support that need.
- iv. Societal and governmental attitude already and often assumes and praises *resilience*: as “undefined mechanisms of adaptation”.¹⁸

RESILIENCE - A POSSIBLE WORKING DEFINITION WITHIN THE ARTS CONTEXT

.....the adaptive tools and resources inbuilt within a system to support relative continuity of creative practice.....

26• THOUGHTS ON MAKING ART AND CREATIVE ADAPTATION

- Solutions to restraints and restrictions are accompanied by skill or skill acquisition.
- Finding new ways is an immersive investigation which is at times similar to art creation.
- Contemplation may elicit variation and mutation of ideas.
- Any core delivery service body has adaptive features:
 - diversity of tools and other resources
 - the manner and modes of presentation
 - personnel
 - learning new skills applicable to the target group

We are not able to provide infinite variety but will learn and expand in relation to our own skill sets and resource availability. Adverse conditions, in particular loss of place and personnel, lack of tools, or a changing or broadening demographic will bring stress on our abilities to find new ways of service delivery.

Here again, there is a limit to our ability to find new ways. We cannot do it all, and communicating needs and limitations, seeking help and working with other co-designers and arts workers is essential for successful outcomes.

27• IN-REACH-OUT-REACH – MUTUAL INCLUSIVITY

Outreach is a term and a behaviour related to inequality of access to cultural resources and is often affiliated with the structures of resource delivery. It is associated with socio-economic factors, demographics and geographical distance. The terms *in-reach-out-reach* or ‘mutual

¹⁸ Chandler, David. *Resilience: The Governance of Complexity*. London: Routledge, 2014

inclusivity' are used here to suggest different notions of exit and entry to spaces, resources, personnel and service delivery.

There is very little that exists in a small rural town without power structures. Although a community might be small, it is not homogenous. Cultural, demographic and socio-economic factors are axiomatic and may be accompanied by both personal and group power dynamics. The *argy-bargy*¹⁹ of this kind of dynamic, whilst normative, is often uncomfortable even in the best of times, and becomes exponentially more complex with external interference, or overlay mechanisms.

The work of mutual inclusivity within the arts pertains to field research and in my experience, is the most complex and difficult of all the activities involved in post-disaster arts response. Difficult emotionally, exhausting, exhaustive, and requiring tenacity. *Have a go, have another go, and then again.*

It is easiest to deliver services to the *middle of the middle*, those that enter the creative space with most ease. Those that are absent however may also be indicative of need and as such are conspicuous by their absence.

28• SAFE SPACES

We often hear, “this is a safe space”. Rarely is it so. Most spaces are tough going for traumatised people. Repeated, regular, and reliable public activities are therefore essential, and groups and individuals returning to these group activities may constitute an indication that the manner of delivery and accessibility is suitable. It's not 'safe' just because you say it's safe.

Occupational Therapy consultant, Yvonne Wink has suggested that we may be able to develop quiet spaces, less noisy, less busy, and less bright, limiting or reducing sensory information.²⁰ These are simple steps and coupled with Arts Responder protocols: autonomy, provision of non-contested spaces, straight forward service delivery, limiting performative outcome directives, and in particular, limiting rhetorical “recovery” responsibilities, they may be appropriate.

29• FAST-DELIVERY PRACTICE

Fast-delivery practice in the arts and more specifically in music refers to incursions into community by artists or arts management within a restricted time frame. These incursions may have the following limiting attributes, especially within a recovery context.

- Failure to understand and contribute to community art continuity needs (i.e. long term outcomes of benefit).
- Failure to target or understand the specific and general needs of the individuals or groups in community.
- Lacking the in-field research needed to deliver appropriate services.

¹⁹ argy-bargy. XIX. var. of argle-bargle sb. and vb. (XIX), f. dial. argle to dispute, bandy words (XVI), prob. alt. of prec. with -le as in hagggle. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology. ed. T.F. Hoad. Online Version. 2003

²⁰ Yvonne Wink. Sensory Processing. 2021. Workshop handout. 13/4/21.

- Failure to interface with existing community-based in-field arts workers and researchers.
- Out-of-town artists and arts management representatives may have been invited by a community group, such as a town arts council, or community recovery committee, who themselves have failed to assess the needs of the relevant arts workers and community members.
- Regional Arts Councils are ill-equipped to respond to major disasters. Their historic role is often well defined with budget restrictions and self-defined views, ideas, and roles of the arts, delivered within budget and tending towards inertia in breadth and style of delivery, for example, a small concert series or one off workshops.
- Out-of-town artists and arts management representatives may have only had a small window of time to actualise their plans and may not have any follow up or post-delivery support or plans in place.

Fast delivery practices in music are often planned within the context of a tour, organised through an arts body funding cycle and imagined as a package or as a group of activities servicing multiple “outreach” targets. For example, a string group might decide to give a workshop, or a choir leader might decide to offer their skills to a school, or a rock band or ensemble might decide to offer a drumming workshop, guitar workshop, or an arts management body might come into town to talk about arts promotion.

These incursions may be planned and occur without adequate research into what is already happening on the ground, what resources are available, what types and levels of skill and capacity individuals or groups in the community might already have, or the kind of aid or response desired or required. Such responses are often ‘one-offs’ and may be construed more as a form of ‘arts gift’ to the community, one that does not intend to respond to identified longer term community priorities or requirements.

These inadequacies are endemic to arts delivery relationships between big cities and regional towns as well as relationships between regional hubs and remote regional communities.

30• ARTS MANAGEMENT

Systemic arts management structures will mirror those structures in the way they deliver or fund arts and therefore may not initially be relied on to deliver nuance within the arena of arts recovery unless their workers undergo ongoing significant in-field research and effective training.

Arts management systems that are designed to deliver mainstream programs aimed at addressing broad-based community needs may not necessarily have the prerequisite background capacity (knowledge, understanding and skill base) to deliver effective post-disaster arts recovery programs and products.

A reverse flow segmented arm delivery model currently dominates arts funding decisions and support delivery in Victoria. Bodies include, Australia Council for the Arts, Creative Industries, Creative Victoria, East Gippsland Shire, Regional Arts Victoria and Music Victoria, with these last two bodies independent of government.

Whilst some programmes have my support, in particular the ideas behind the Creative Artists in School initiative, 2020/21, other actions such as individual grant artist support schemes

and the Music Victoria coordinator positions, 2020/21, were offered into highly contested spaces.

Both had positional outcomes and seem to be social experiments. This latter continues to be divisive and bring further tensions in Mallacoota, and surrounds. In my view, these bodies' complex and unwieldy management structure and manner do not serve the broad community, in particular one under stress, socially and culturally.

Arts responders in post-disaster contexts require research-informed specialist understanding and skills and need training and support to effectively identify and address the needs of individual and communities that have suffered significant *trauma*. The knowledge and needs are to be found within and of the community, and this may inform the management structures of the appropriate support and structures of support.

31• WELL-BEING

Arts Responders are not health providers despite having the potential to make a significant contribution to health and well-being outcomes. In my view, physical and mental health are no real business of ours.

Titles for arts activities such as “Healing Circles” or Healing Singing” whilst common within normative social-cultural community arenas may not be appropriate for people who have real and current health needs. Instead we may focus on resource provision and assisting and supporting share/make activities.

At the same time, if we are finding places for our music and our Art, others may wish to use these spaces. Similarly it is not the business of Arts Responders to impede or question such activities as others find their feet and grounding. Arts Responders may find that within the general population in post-disaster communities, lay people will and do organise and present activities with a desire to heal, provide safe spaces and encourage spirituality and well-being.

a simple concept

people with people, and people with people making music

“Music and art can be therapeutic without being therapy.”²¹ There is no question that music and art share/making sit squarely within the brief of bringing benefit to community and can be of great value individually and collectively to a community in post-disaster rebuild and recovery. This broader discussion is not within the scope or brief of this document.

It is also evident however, that arts can and have been utilised for personal gain and/or political outcomes with the potential for negative social and health and well-being outcomes. Some of these issues are discussed in the entries:

- Self-Practice
- Agency and Volunteerism
- Rhetorical Realities
- Media and Viewing.

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²¹ Susannah Keebler. Personal communications and discussions. March, 2021.

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