

anzjat

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF ARTS THERAPY

Editorial Team

Editor Sheridan Linnell

Editor / Chair Toril Pursell

Book Review Editor / Inaugural Editor Joy Schmidt

Editorial Assistant Liz Fitzgerald

Former Editor Tarquam McKenna

Copy Editor Constance Ellwood, Publishing in English

Proofreader Rigel Sorzano

Committee Members

Annette Coulter, Fiona Fitzpatrick, Adrian Lania, Julia Meyerowitz-Katz, Joy Schmidt

International Advisors

Andrea Gilroy, Ronald Lay, Jordan Potash

Peer Reviewers (2013)

Jan Allen, Claire Edwards, Cornelia Elbrecht, Patricia Fenner, Fiona Gardner, Bronwen Gray, Katishe Grudnoff, John Henzell, Joanna Janniste, Carla van Laar, Catherine Keyzer, San Leenstra, Radhika Santhanam-Martin, Jill Westwood

Published by Australian and New Zealand Arts Therapy Association

ABN 63 072 954 388

PO Box 303 Glebe, NSW 2037, Australia

www.anzata.org

© Australian and New Zealand Journal of Arts Therapy, 2013

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any other information storage and retrieval system without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Opinions of contributors are not necessarily those of the publisher. The publisher makes no representation or warranty that the information contained in articles is accurate, nor accepts liability or responsibility for any action arising out of information contained in this journal.

ISSN: 1833-9948

Design and production Jill Segedin, Dragonfly Design; Kim Allen, Kim Allen Design

Printing Peachy Print Australia Pty Ltd, NSW

anzjat

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF ARTS THERAPY

Contents

President's welcome 4
Amanda Levey

Editorial – Ways of knowing: Voice, image and diversity in arts therapy narratives 7
Toril Pursell and Dr Sheridan Linnell

Contributors to this edition of *ANZJAT* 11

Contributions

Towards an Indigenous Australian knowing: A personalised perspective on art therapy –
Carmen Lawson talks with Tarquam McKenna 15
A/Prof Tarquam McKenna

Discovering authentic voice: An expressive arts therapy exploration of voice 27
Rosalie Ann Stanton and Dr Linda Wilson

Shelving grief: Heuristic benefits of producing a glossy 'coffee-table' book from
a grief journal 38
Dr Caitlin Street

Illuminating voices: Perspectives on professional identity 45
Jo Kelly

Nicola sings a response 56
Carla van Laar

Reviews

Framing marginalised art, by Karen Jones, Eugen Koh, Nurin Veis and Anthony White 58
Reviewed by Prof Colin Rhodes

Art psychotherapy and narrative therapy: An account of practitioner research,
by Dr Sheridan Linnell 61
Reviewed by Dr Jan Allen

Creative approaches in dementia care, edited by Hilary Lee and Trevor Adams 64
Reviewed by Dr Heather Hill

Trauma healing at the Clay Field: A sensorimotor art therapy approach,
by Cornelia Elbrecht 67
Reviewed by Maggie Wilson

anzjat

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF ARTS THERAPY



Editorial – Ways of knowing: Voice, image and diversity in arts therapy narratives

Toril Pursell ANZJAT Chair

Dr Sheridan Linnell University of Western Sydney

On behalf of the ANZJAT Editorial Sub-committee

We greet readers this year with a ‘timely’ and colourful eighth edition of *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Arts Therapy* (ANZJAT). The process leading to this tangible artifact of ink on paper involved an intricate editorial dance that took on a life/choreography of its own – wonderful, edgy, frustrating, enlivening, precipitous. The smoothing of ruffled editorial and authorial feathers while pushing a timeline requires a strange and sometimes uncomfortable combination of skills – an almost therapeutic tact working in tandem with an inky bottom line, drawn with a rule. The tempo of our ‘working-dance’ was generally consistent and rapid, keeping us on our toes and in motion. As mentioned in Amanda Levey’s President’s welcome, we can now take pause and again express our gratitude to all those who contributed to realising an ambitious publication. Our intentions for 2013 were to diversify style and content without compromising peer-refereed standards, and to include different voices and perspectives, as well as diverse approaches to research, that may otherwise remain unheard and unseen on the professional margins. This task of inclusion falls in line with the expansion and growth of ANZATA as an association, and the need for its journal to capture the pulse of that change and to showcase contemporary practices.

The first image that meets readers’ eyes is Nona Cameron’s *Matchbox moments: 11 days of a year in reflection*, composed of collaged cardboard matchboxes. From amongst other unique MIECAT entries, we chose this charming three-dimensional piece on the cover of ANZJAT for its playful, reflective and relational qualities. *Matchbox moments* tinkers with scale and point of view, and might have us considering the multiplicity of meaning. Rubin (2005) expands eloquently on this idea with reference to the visual arts, and it could be argued that her observation is relevant to other arts modalities too:

...It is the peculiar power of art to be able to symbolize not only intrapsychic events, but interpersonal ones as well, and to collapse the multileveled or sequential happenings into a single visual statement. The artistic symbol is a condensation, a carrier of many meanings, and by its very nature able to integrate apparent polarities – like reality and fantasy, conscious and unconscious, order and chaos, ideation and affect. (p.359)

Each “little storied box” in Cameron’s image can stand on its own, illustrating some of her lived experiences. Yet like the articles, artwork and book reviews inhabiting the journal – including this Editorial – the boxes ‘speak’ and interact with each other in unexpected ways.

Tarquam McKenna's opening contribution was written as a response to an invitation from *ANZJAT* to conduct an interview with an Indigenous art therapy practitioner, Aboriginal elder and art therapist Carmen Lawson. We learned that Lawson has, of latter years, retired from work, including the work of formally co-authoring articles or being recorded for publication, but that she was happy to yarn with McKenna so that he could write this paper. Their conversation, woven together with McKenna's story of their relationship and his philosophical and historical positioning of wider issues, is brought sharply to life by McKenna's inclusion of Lawson's visual and written documentation of art therapy with a young Aboriginal man called 'Evan'. The integration of apparent polarities, such as ancient and modern, is a theme that arises in this first article. It seems fitting that readers start with the subject of Indigenous Australian 'knowing' in relation to the practice of art therapy, as it provides an historical context that deserves serious consideration. In keeping with the journal's hope to decentre dominant perspectives, McKenna incorporates Lawson's personalised view on her practice, an act of remembering (Herman, 1997), and together they draw attention to collective trauma and the need for healthy cultural narratives.

McKenna's article adds nuance to the politics of representation, through the way that friendship and trust stand guarantor for the inclusion of Indigenous voices. The intention to provide space for voices not usually heard in the pages of *ANZJAT* is also reflected in the title and substance of the next contribution, 'Discovering authentic voice'. The writers, Rose Stanton and Linda Wilson, skilfully complicate issues of representation, and add an important dimension to *ANZJAT 8*, by nesting a courageous disclosure about the extent of their collaboration within the pages of the article. They enliven a single-case study drawn from movement, visual imagery, poetic imagery, poetic metaphor and dialogue and deftly draw out themes in their analysis. They propose that therapeutic voice work alongside

expressive arts therapy can lead to the integration of past experiences and can be self-affirming, promoting a range of benefits such as increased self-esteem, expressiveness and personal insight. Stanton and Wilson respond to the ambivalence within arts therapies to verbalisation and voice, and encourage readers to imagine this multi-modal approach applied across different settings.

Caitlin Street takes the disclosure of what is often privatised one step further in her account of the production of a memorial to her partner, in the form of a glossy 'coffee table' publication. Street takes us inwards during a silent retreat. Then, mixing poetry and narrative with images and extracts from the self-published book, she describes an intensely personal yet resonant journey. Her contribution charts the movement from a private experience of loss to the sharing and public 'authorisation' of grief. The structure of Street's language, a tribute to her deceased partner's love of poetic form, is juxtaposed with the memorialisation of their relationship within a radically contemporary and popular cultural form. The authority of 'books', whether carved into stone, pressed into papyrus or printed on paper, is an interesting sub-theme that might have us ponder the status of books and personal journals, across cultures and over time.

Following this sharing, we zoom out and Jo Kelly tactfully confronts us with the knowledge that arts therapists' stories are not always seen or heard. Her qualitative participatory research suggests that what we 'profess' as arts therapists, in Australia at least, is still under-recognised and under-valued in many of the organisations within which we work. This is so to the extent that some participants in her doctoral research described a 'systemic lack of understanding' of their profession, their role, and their needs. Several of the art therapists interviewed by Kelly described how their clients had developed an appreciation and deep understanding of arts therapy that was lacking in the wider organisation. Kelly's study underlines the role of advocacy in gaining recognition for the work

of arts therapists. Her research also highlights the importance of creativity and the arts in sustaining arts therapists through situations where the development and maintenance of a professional identity is difficult.

After Kelly's work in shedding light on the formation of professional identity, we have a visual intermission and cast our eyes on Carla van Laar's painting, *Nicola sings a response*. The brushstrokes render the profile of a woman seated at a piano in mid-song. Van Laar explains in a succinct fashion the alchemy of her research, and how a kind of 'call and response' took place through a series of interactions that included painting, music, and conversation.

After this intermission comes a purposeful return to ethical questions and new approaches to practice, through reviews of books covering the diverse subjects of exhibiting client artwork, creative approaches to dementia care, art psychotherapy and narrative therapy, and Clay Field work for trauma healing. Our reviewers offer perceptive introductions and critiques, while the possibilities for 'reviewing' arts therapies publications are expanded by Jan Allen's reflexive visual response to one of the texts. Given the ongoing struggle for recognition and validation documented in Kelly's article, it is significant that three of the books reviewed in this issue of *ANZJAT* are by Australian authors,¹ and the remaining book includes a contribution from an ANZATA member. Publication is one of the means by which the insufficient recognition of arts therapies might be redressed.

To echo Levey's welcome, the arts therapies are a many-sided house, into which our authors and reviewers open several windows and doors. The narrative line proposed in our editorial is only one point of entry into *ANZJAT* 8. Readers may well experience the journal differently, noticing contradiction and congruence in places other than those we have privileged.

While we often have conversations within and beyond the editorial team about what works, and how to improve *ANZJAT*, it is rare to receive correspondence from our readers. We were therefore surprised and heartened

when Amber Gray, a practitioner and avid reader of arts therapy publications, wrote to Toril about the journal's 2012 publication. We thank Amber for permission to share her response with other *ANZJAT* readers:

I love how the journal is professionally edited and flows well, article to article, and, at the same time, does not lose the author's (and the artist's) voice. Sometimes peer reviewed journals work so hard to have the same voice, the spirit of the work or study or therapy being shared, is lost. As I read, I could tell I was reading the same very professional journal, and, I could also feel the vitality and energy of each author. (Personal correspondence, 17 September, 2013)

Working alongside our wonderfully talented and dedicated colleagues in the *ANZJAT* editorial team, we seek to promote a diversity of voices and images and preserve "the spirit of the work" in future *ANZJAT* editions.

Endnote

1. Sheridan's publisher sent her book out to *ANZJAT* for review after the *ANZJAT* deadline in 2011, but Sheridan shelved the possibility of reviewing it when she took on the *ANZJAT* editorship in mid-2012. In this issue, however, we wanted to foreground local art therapy publications and have expanded the *ANZJAT* team to include a separate book review editor, so Sheridan was able to distance herself from the book review process.

References

- Herman, J. (1997). *Trauma and recovery*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Rubin, A. (2005). *Child art therapy*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.



Figure 1: Toril Pursell, *Visual recall*, Collage remnants on paper, 230 x 250mm.

As a departure from convention and the predominance of the written word, Toril offers an intimate collage, made from remnants that she kept following art therapy sessions with refugee clients. This work is an unpolished and candid visual response to the journal content, and to the virtual and face-to-face exchanges in the editorial process. The collage intends to demonstrate ruptures and cohesiveness in a symbolic landscape – a page torn from an English dictionary with words circled in red ink, unruly book symbols forming wings in flight, desert flowers unfurling, and a tiny figure walking along a serpent-like path from the sky. At the left-hand base of the image is an altered vintage postcard of a mountain, referencing the Australian landscape, raising questions about simplistic and romanticised notions of geographic and cultural identity.