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# the South Sydney Herald

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## It's time to try Plastic Free July

### ENVIRONMENT

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

A new book by Plastic Free July founder Rebecca Prince-Ruiz and author Joanna Atherfold Finn encourages people to quit single-use plastics. In this Q&A they explain why.

**How did the Plastic Free July challenge grow into a movement across 177 countries?**

JAF: Plastic Free July started with a question that Rebecca posed to a small group of friends and colleagues in WA: "I'm going plastic free next month. Who wants to join me?" The book charts how that question turned into an "accidental campaign" as the idea gradually rippled out into the community and then across the nation and into other countries. The growth was not at all orchestrated, and that is part of the charm of Plastic Free July. It is something people can do to be proactive about their plastic waste in their own way. Some people just focus on the "top 4" single-use plastics, others go completely zero plastic waste for the month and others make the challenge a new way of life.

**What did you learn through working on this book about what plastic is doing to the environment?**

JAF: I think the biggest impact on me was to learn more about hidden plastics – in many tea bags for example, and also in bags that purport to be environmentally friendly but that actually just break up into smaller pieces of plastic. These forms of plastic don't break down and so the problem spreads in a subversive way. I was also incredibly shocked at just how low our recycling rates are.

**How bad is plastic for creatures and ecosystems?**

JAF: One of the stories that really hit home was the effect of plastic on Lord Howe Island's flesh-footed shearwaters. Lord Howe Island

is such a pristine environment and yet shearwater adults are unwittingly feeding their chicks plastic fragments. Dr Jennifer Lavers, who works with the shearwater population, once found 276 pieces of plastic in one chick. That is just unfathomable. It's sickening. It's negligent. It's a problem that humans are 100 per cent responsible for and it is not some distant example.

**How bad are Australian statistics when it comes to plastic waste?**

RPR: In Australia we have a mixed record when it comes to plastic waste. Although we increased our overall recycling rates in 2017-18, the national plastics recycling rate was 9.4 per cent. Over half of this was exported for reprocessing – typically to countries where manufacturing is also occurring and as these countries follow China's lead and ban imports of plastic waste this is set to become even more challenging. One of the most effective steps governments could take is to require recycled content in plastic packaging and products. This would help support the recycling industry and decrease the demand for virgin plastics.

**What changes have you implemented in your life since working on the book?**

JAF: I'm far more conscious about reading the small print. It is easy to see a green leaf printed on a bag and just assume it's environmentally friendly, but that is often not the case. Rebecca gave me some great produce bags for fruit and vegetables and these now travel with me along with my reusable grocery bags. Our family has also been doing a lot more home baking, which greatly reduces plastic packaging. That has been a response to the pandemic too. It seems as though many people are reverting back to a more simple and sustainable way of life.

**What is one thing people can do to reduce their use of single-use plastics?**

JAF: Pre-packing some produce bags and a reusable water bottle or coffee cup doesn't



Rebecca Prince-Ruiz (left) founded Plastic Free July and her new book co-authored with Joanna Atherfold Finn outlines why we should all commit to reducing plastic waste. Photo: Supplied

take up a lot of room and if we all did just that it would make a huge difference. There are many stories in the book about how individuals, communities and

businesses are reducing their reliance on single-use plastic, so there really is something for everyone in learning to be part of the solution.

*Plastic Free July: The Inspiring Story of a Global Environmental Movement and Why It Matters* by Rebecca Prince-Ruiz and Joanna Atherfold Finn, is published by NewSouth Publishing, July 2020, \$32.99.

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distribution@ssh.com.au

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Community Development Officer Adam Antonelli and Bilingual Educator Denise Fung in Waterloo. Photo: Andrew Collis

# Enough is enough

**WATERLOO REDEVELOPMENT**

MIKE SHREENAN

**I have had the pleasure of working with the Redfern and Waterloo community for over 14 years – four years as a community development worker and 10 years as Executive Officer at Counterpoint Community Services (The Factory).**

As part of that work, I have witnessed how this community has been poked and prodded much like a doctor performing surgery on some unfortunate patient. This has been under the guise of planning and redevelopment proposals and place-based interventions by “well-intentioned” government departments, politicians and expert consultants.

All of them have promised to be better than the last. All of them promised community ownership and guaranteed complete transparency. All have failed to deliver their undertakings before riding off into the sunset to chase their next career move while leaving behind anxiety, frustration and confusion. This has only exacerbated mistrust between government departments and

the communities they represent.

The latest version is in the form of the part “masterplan” for the Waterloo redevelopment recently lodged with the City of Sydney, which was supposed to be matched by a comprehensive human services plan.

It has been nearly five years since NSW Minister Brad Hazzard’s insensitive “have I got good news for you” announcement in the lead-up to Christmas 2015, that the government would attempt a third go at redeveloping the Waterloo social housing estate.

During this time, there has been three-and-a-half years of start-and-stop consultation and an array of promises made for how the community would be meaningfully engaged during the journey.

The release of the preferred masterplan in January 2019 was followed by a year-and-a-half of complete silence as the government was busy focusing on itself, its department restructures, rebranding and the politically shifting landscape. There was no care given to the community. The original plan was changed and lodged behind closed doors, leaving the community in the dark.

Has the community seen the details of the plan or reason for the changes as promised before lodgement? NO.

Was the matching human services plan developed? NO.

Will the City share full details of the lodged plan before any changes are made by its processes? NOT YET.

Will LAHC continue to fund the Community Development Officer, the Aboriginal Liaison Officer, or the bilingual educators who have all supported the Waterloo community on this complex journey to date? NO.

Will the community be given independent support at crucial times such as during the formal exhibition phase? LAHC has said it cannot justify funding for this.

Will the human services plan that has been promised for over 16 years ever eventuate? With this government’s bureaucratic wrangling and deflections of responsibility – who knows!

Can we meet the executive officer in charge of the redevelopment? Not anymore.

Can we meet the Minister responsible? NO.

Will I mention the Waterloo history website, the Ross Smith memorial or the independent social workers for relocations? The Redfern Morehead Street community centre, perhaps? The rumoured withdrawal of funding for RedLink

and Northcott Connect? Or the loss of the Housing Communities Program, the Tenant Participation Resource Service and the UNSW Community Development Program – despite the promise that there would be no loss of services in the area? Should I ask whether the taxpayer-funded research and evaluation reports will ever see the light of day? Better not I suppose.

It is time that the government and those given the responsibility to serve the community step up, show some leadership and honour their undertakings. It is time they realised the damage and unnecessary trauma they are causing through their action and inaction. It is time we as a community stand up and say enough is enough!

If the government is genuine about community ownership, it needs to stop the waffle, the empty placations and the shallow attempts to engage. It needs to make its Waterloo plans public as promised and treat the community with the respect and decency it deserves, and stop taking away meaningful resources and support from the Waterloo, Redfern and Surry Hills social housing estates.

The government needs to put an end to the inward, selfish focus on itself and realise the impact of its in/action. Public servants are supposed to serve the public – not themselves!

# Waterloo-Redfern development updates

**URBAN DESIGN**

GEOFF TURNBULL

**Waterloo South site plan released**

In response to community requests, Council has released the site plan for Land and Housing Corporation’s Waterloo proposal covered in the June SSH. The map provides the location of the nine tower buildings between 20 and 32 storeys, three buildings of 15 storeys, and other buildings up to eight storeys as well as the location of parks and streets. The plan is subject to change as Council

assesses the material provided and prepares its own proposal for consideration. LAHC’s own proposal and supporting reports were not released.

**Council reworks Redfern build-to-rent**

LAHC’s proposal for the PCYC and surrounding site was reworked by Council staff in their proposal for what should happen on this site. In the proposal, LAHC gets similar floor space and height but the Council planning proposal is highly prescriptive. The proposal includes both an option for retaining the PCYC onsite or for

what happens if LAHC provides space for the PCYC or similar community facilities nearby in Waterloo. The LAHC proposal and studies are referenced but are not available until formal exhibition later this year.

**Waterloo Metro redesign consultation**

The Mirvac and John Holland Joint Venture is getting feedback on its early planning for above the Waterloo Metro. It is unlike the earlier proposal with tower heights reduced and greater height facing Cope Street. The southern tower will contain 475 Igloo student

housing units with 70 LAHC social housing units facing Cope Street. The middle tower will have 126 private units and some St George affordable housing above a childcare centre. The northern part of the site has 30,000sqm of commercial offices managed by Mirvac with a reduction to 160 car-parking places and a small increase in retail and public space. Contact Faye on 1800 171 386 or email WaterlooMetro@transport.nsw.gov.au to comment.

More information on the SSH website or at www.redwatch.org.au

# Wear the Change for migrant and refugee women

## LOCALS

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

**NEWTOWN:** As Covid-19 lockdowns lifted, Newtown-based sustainable fashion label, the Social Outfit, came up with a fun way to raise awareness and vital funds for its non-profit community programs.

The idea was #WearTheChange2020, an ethical fashion styling challenge held during #RefugeeWeek2020 – funds from which will support women from refugee and new-migrant backgrounds with training and employment pathways in the fashion industry.

To fundraise for #WearTheChange2020 participants committed to wearing the same garment every day – styled in five different ways – from June 15-19. Their aim was to rally sponsors but also to show the community their commitment to fashion that is “made fair, made for good and good for the planet”.

Greens Member for Newtown Jenny Leong quickly jumped on board as an ambassador and committed to wearing the same garment every day in Refuge Week. Then she realised parliament was sitting!

Despite having to wear the same Louise Zhang Shell Top each day for three days straight in the chamber (and for two

days outside of it) her resolve didn't waver. “For me, it is about transparency and equality,” she said. “What I choose to wear can contribute to the empowerment of workers not their exploitation, it can protect our environment not further its destruction.”

Jenny took the Wear the Change challenge to the NSW Parliament and other women leaders who got involved as Wear the Change ambassadors included Greens Senator Mehreen Faruqi and City of Sydney Councillor Jess Miller.

The Social Outfit is a fashion label as well as registered charity and social enterprise whose purpose is to employ and train people from refugee and new migrant communities. All the funds raised from #WearTheChange2020 will help the Social Outfit expand its free community training programs for refugee and newly arrived migrants.

“We know that work empowers women and supports families to have a positive settlement experience in Australia,” said Camilla Schippa, CEO of the Social Outfit. “All our clothes are made ethically right here in Newtown by our incredible sewing team from refugee and new migrant backgrounds.

“Having come through Covid-19 a little worse for wear (in terms of our finances), the funds raised



Mehreen Faruqi and Jenny Leong embraced the challenge of wearing the same garment for five days to raise funds to support the Social Outfit and its work with migrant and refugee women. Photo: Supplied

through #WearTheChange2020 will help the Social Outfit sustain these important efforts.”

Wear the Change raised just under \$50,000\*, an incredible achievement, thanks to a great effort by everyone involved.

“After the stress and uncertainty of recent times,” Ms Schippa said, “these funds are certainly helping us feel excited about the future now we know the full-colour extent to which you, our community, are standing with us.”

\*A total of \$49,990 raised including \$2,707 raised by Westpac as an employee initiative (likely to be matched by the bank – amount to be confirmed). [www.thesocialoutfit.org](http://www.thesocialoutfit.org)

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## Indigenous scholarships

*in the heart of Sydney's CBD*

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If you are seeking a strong culture of learning within a caring Christian environment, where your child is instilled with pride about their heritage, please apply for one of our Indigenous scholarships.

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For more information, visit:  
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**Gawura**  
Founded 2007

[www.gawura.nsw.edu.au](http://www.gawura.nsw.edu.au)

## COVID-19 UPDATE

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

As we start to return to some form of normality, it is important that we continue to follow the advice of medical experts, while our economy gets moving again.

For all of us, Covid-19 has been a time to reflect on the world we live in and think about the world we want to share after the pandemic.

To continue stopping the spread of Covid-19 follow these three steps:



WASH HANDS



TURN ON THE APP



PHYSICAL DISTANCE

## LIBERALS' PLAN FOR UNIVERSITIES

Across the board people agree that Scott Morrison's university plan is a disaster.

The changes announced make it harder and more expensive to go to university. Fees for some degrees will more than double. Even Scott Morrison's former colleagues, former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and former Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party Julie Bishop have spoken out against the changes.

Youth unemployment has gone through the roof in this recession, with around one in six young people unable to find work. In these already dire circumstances, Scott Morrison's changes mean that many young people now will be locked out of university.

If you get the marks, and you're prepared to work hard, you should get the opportunity to go to university - simple as that.

## ROBODEBT

The Government has agreed to repay the money that was illegally taken under the Robodebt scheme. If you were a victim of this scheme then please ensure that you are reimbursed for what you are entitled to - most refunds are expected to be made before November 2020.

Labor has called for a Royal Commission into the Morrison Government's illegal Robodebt scheme.

## ELECTORATE OFFICE

My electorate office provides support with Centrelink, Veterans' Affairs, Medicare, Immigration, NBN and other federal matters - please contact us anytime for assistance (contact details below).

## JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

My office has reopened and Justice of the Peace services are now available - **but appointments are essential.** Please call my office to arrange an appointment.

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

1A Great Buckingham St, Redfern NSW 2016

T: 9379 0700 E: Tanya.Plibersek.MP@aph.gov.au



## Compulsive internet use by teens linked to emotional issues

SPONSORED

MICHAEL SPENCE

A new study has found internet addiction in teenagers leads to difficulty regulating emotions. However, there was no evidence that pre-existing emotional issues are a predictor of obsessive internet use.

Published in the peer-reviewed journal *Emotion*, the paper is the first longitudinal study to examine the connection between internet addiction among teenagers and emotion regulation difficulties.

Over 2,800 adolescents from across 17 Australian high schools took part in the study. Participants were from years 8 to 11 inclusive.

Lead author from the University of Sydney Business School, Dr James Donald, said the research tested two hotly-debated ideas: first, whether compulsive internet use leads to emotion regulation difficulties over time; and second, whether underlying emotion regulation difficulties lead to this compulsive behaviour.

"Parents and schools have an important role to play in teaching their kids about healthy internet use. We observed a pattern of behaviour over time that suggests internet addiction leads to emotion regulation problems, but not the reverse," said Dr Donald from the Business School's Discipline of Work & Organisational Studies.

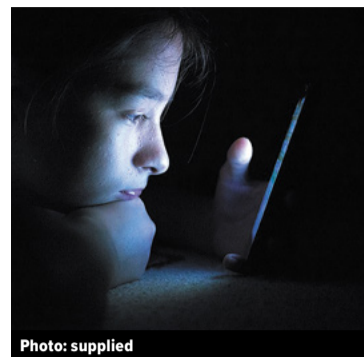


Photo: supplied

"We were surprised to find the negative effects of compulsive internet usage on things like the ability to set goals and understand one's emotions, remained stable across all four years of the study."

The study found no evidence that, among young people, having pre-existing emotion regulation difficulties leads to problems regulating their use of the internet.

Collaborating with researchers from the Australian Catholic University, the team found that compulsive internet use has more severe effects on "effortful" forms of emotion regulation such as difficulties pursuing life goals and understanding one's emotions.

"Our research shows compulsive internet use has little impact on less complex emotional processes like self-acceptance and awareness," said co-author Professor Joseph Ciarrochi.

"A 12-month period of compulsive internet use might not be as harmful as we first thought. However, if this behaviour

persists into a teenager's later years, effects compound, and emotion dysregulation can become a problem."

The research also suggests that teaching adolescents general emotion regulation skills, for example through programs at school, may not be as effective in reducing compulsive internet use as more direct approaches like limiting time spent on the internet.

"Since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, high school students are more reliant on the internet than ever before. The internet is both a site of learning and play, which makes it difficult for parents to monitor," said Dr Donald.

"While it might be difficult for parents to control internet access, our study suggests that parents and schools have an important role to play in teaching their kids about healthy internet use, monitoring the activities they engage with online, and ensuring they have meaningful and engaging offline activities that provide balance."



Authorised by Dr Michael Spence, Vice Chancellor of the University of Sydney.  
Contact Details - Security & After Hours:  
1800 063 487 (24/7). Enquiries: 9114 0523  
local.community@sydney.edu.au

## Where everybody feels equal and welcome

LOCALS

ANDREW COLLIS

**REDFERN:** The Park Café on Chalmers Street is an integral part of the community, welcoming coffee connoisseurs, crossword and Rabbitohs fans, artists and writers, dog lovers and dogs. New owners Peter and Elly Huttly have a happy and hopeful story to tell.

The Huttlys grew up in the housing commission flats on Walker Street. Elly was born there, and Peter moved there when he was 12. "Our mums were single parents and did the best job in raising the both of us," Elly says.

"As kids growing up in Redfern, it was fantastic," says Peter. "The city was our playground, and though we were exposed to things that kids shouldn't see, we had a core group of friends; we supported each other through many hard times and those friendships are still strong today."

The couple started dating as teenagers, and soon were married.

Elly recalls: "After leaving school I wanted to become a chef and did a few stints as an apprentice in various hotels. I joined Australia Post, hoping to work in the mail centre kitchens, but that never eventuated and I found my way into human resources."



Peter and Elly Huttly at the Park Café in Redfern. Photo: Andrew Collis

Elly was with Australia Post for 20 years, then left and worked for a union organisation that represented postal workers.

Peter's path was not dissimilar. "I worked in a few of the major city hotels, in cooking roles, aspiring to become a chef. I ended up in the corporate world, working for Australia Post in their international section for 23 years."

The couple lived in Redfern up until their mid 30s, then moved to Mascot.

"Our dream was always to purchase a coffee shop. We were regulars at Harry's [Park Café] and always would say to him, when you want to sell please keep us in mind," Elly says. "So when Harry decided to sell, he came to us first, and we jumped at the chance."

Peter and Elly hope the Park Café is a place where everybody feels equal and welcome.

They also want to support local organisations including the PCYC, Souths Cares, the Salvos and South Sydney Uniting Church.

2020 has brought significant challenges. "Coronavirus absolutely gutted Peter and me," Elly says. "We took over the business on January 13 and we saw the virus really come into effect around the end of March. Unfortunately, we had to close our doors for a number of weeks, but the hardest part was having to tell our staff we had to stand them down for that period."

Staff members Debbie and Ally are back at work. Oley is now making coffees most mornings.

Peter says: "Redfern will always feel like home to us. We look forward to greeting our regulars as well as new customers."



Mick Mundine and Alex Tui are pleased to see the gym's bare bones – a glimpse of the fabulous fitness facilities to come. Photo: Supplied

## Pemulwuy – Elouera Tony Mundine Gym shapes up

### SPONSORED

AMANDA FLEMING

**REDFERN:** Our gym manager Alex Tui and Uncle Micky were on site at the new Elouera Tony Mundine Gym last week with a photographer. Alex uploaded a number of photos on social media afterwards and was happy to report that there was a great buzz and excitement among former gym members when they saw the bare bones of the new gym.

We are currently planning the fit-out. We are working hard to make the most of our fabulous

new space located next to the affordable housing. The new gym consists of the main floor plus a mezzanine level with lift access. Both floors will house a boxing ring, and a sauna will be installed on the main floor.

The gym will have a wide range of the most up-to-date resistance and cardiovascular equipment as well as weights – with fully qualified staff on hand to help members achieve their health and fitness goals. Our amazing new facilities and fitness programs will cater for all levels ensuring no one has an excuse to not to get fit and improve their overall health and wellbeing.

We believe the gym is a vital ingredient of the Pemulwuy Project as it will be a gathering place for people to connect and spend time whilst pursuing their goals. The gym will offer first-rate facilities and provide a welcoming, inclusive fitness environment for our community.



Authorised by Michael Mundine, CEO, Aboriginal Housing Company Limited

## Residents query new housing code

### URBAN DESIGN

WAYNE MOODY

**ROSEBERY:** It used to be considered a sleepy little suburb. But lately Rosebery residents have been concerned about proposed developments and now the introduction of a low-rise medium-density housing code proposed by the state government for implementation in July 2020.

The Rosebery Residents Action Group (RRAG) formed itself as a sign of strength and solidarity, in opposition to the massive Hillsong Church entertainment centre and bible college that was to be built in 2008. Created with only eight people, the grassroots RRAG has grown into a congregation of more than 150 members and meets only when required.

Residents took on and won against local Council in 2012 when the City of Sydney thought it was a good idea to locate a garbage transfer and truck parking depot in one of the vacant factories, as well as the Dan Murphy's and McDonald's developments on Botany Road.

We know we must take our fair share of new housing and we do not want to stop development. Our concerns relate to the continued disregard of the original and existing covenant that sets the character of the Rosebery estate.

While the area has seen massive developments in specific parts of

Rosebery, most residential homes have retained and sympathetically preserved the character of the area, including predominately single-storey California bungalow-style houses with garden frontage.

However, since the introduction of private certifiers, regulators have allowed the knock-down and rebuild of two-storey homes that overshadow other residences, are completely out of character and don't maintain the intended frontages and streetscape as set out by the "covenant" and the "Rosebery special character" as identified by Council for the Rosebery estate.

The new code for low-rise medium-density will allow further development of each block by allowing it to be divided into smaller blocks for duplexes and subdividing a long block with the rear block then becoming "battleaxe block" or dual occupancy, which will further erode the green frontages and cause more overshadowing and crowding.

While Council has now started to show its support for the residents, is it too little too late? Council only commissioned a community survey in June 2020, to seek residents' opinions and to allow them their say. It has taken way too long for Council to take action and enforce the local planning law to protect the estate.

It appears Council had two years to do this, as noted by Minister Stokes' letter to Council:

"As you are aware the government deferred the commencement of the local government area at your request in 2018 and again in 2019. This was to allow time to reflect on the housing needs and local character of your community in order to prepare a planning proposal, and if necessary amend local planning controls to best provide for two-storey medium-density housing in your area."

All that residents are requesting is some accountability at the right time to the right people. We seek appropriate notifications to residents at application stage; penalties for not having regard to the code and regulations (eg. reg 1.20(2)(c) – an active and valid covenant that is stipulated on Titles of Land); penalties for providing false or misleading information; and appropriate checks on private certifiers.

At the time of going to the press, the Residents Action Group has engaged the services of a local barrister who will provide legal advice on the strength of the covenant and its enforceability. RRAG hopes to be able to rely on this advice in support of its fight to have the covenant adhered to, and also use it to notify the new Building Commissioner in regards to enforcing an active and valid covenant.

Council has agreed to commission its own legal team to review the status and enforceability of the covenant.

RRAG spokesperson  
wayne.moody64@yahoo.com.au



**Jenny Leong MP**  
STATE MEMBER  
FOR NEWTOWN

## Thank you, Newtown!

The past few months have been incredibly tough for so many people. In our local neighbourhoods, where so many of our residents are renters, young people, artists, creatives, musos, international students and non citizens and so much of our community is about vibrant and busy bars, cafes, cinemas, venues and retail outlets, things have been particularly tough.

It has been truly inspiring to see that at a time when there is so much cause for despair, our community has come together. At a time when they could have chosen fear, the good people of the Newtown electorate have chosen kindness.

**We have made a video to thank all of the incredible people who have worked so hard for our community during this time. Use your phone camera to scan the QR code on the image below to check it out.**



You can also watch the video here:  
[bit.ly/thankyou\\_newtown](https://bit.ly/thankyou_newtown)

Like and share the video to help us spread the message far and wide.

*Jenny Leong*

**Jenny Leong, MP for Newtown**

If you have a question or are keen to be involved, send a text to 0421 665 208 with your name, suburb and message and we'll give you a call or you can email [newtown@nsw.greens.org.au](mailto:newtown@nsw.greens.org.au)

Authorised by  
**Jenny Leong MP**  
State Member for Newtown

383 King St, Newtown, NSW 2042  
T: 02 9517 2800 F: 02 9230 3352  
[Newtown@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Newtown@parliament.nsw.gov.au)



# Working to extend the safety net

## HUMAN AFFAIRS

DEE DAVIDIAN

**HOW many times during the Covid crisis have we heard politicians say, “We’re all in the boat together” – while continuing to leave some people in our community out of the rescue vessel?**

Throughout the pandemic, Uniting has worked alongside other faith groups and civil society organisations in the Sydney Alliance to address this inconsistency.

We’ve raised our voice with our partners to call on federal and state governments to extend vital safety-net measures to everyone living in the community, regardless of their visa status.

The campaign has involved a concerted effort of story collection, leadership development, writing to Members of Parliament, direct lobbying efforts and getting media attention.

In May we welcomed the NSW government announcement to provide \$20 million in emergency assistance for international students, and recently \$6 million for all temporary visa holders –

including \$1.5 million specifically for people seeking asylum.

As part of Refugee Week in June, we held an online forum where we invited the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Australia and other church members to share stories from the frontline.

We’re asking everyone to take **two key actions** to help people currently left behind:

1. Write to your federal MP and ask them to ensure everyone in need has a safety net, including access to Jobseeker and Medicare.



Jesuit Refugee Service Australia CEO Carolina Gottardo is keen to receive food bank donations to help people who are suffering most in the Covid-19 crisis. Photo: Supplied

2. Drop off a food donation at a series of food bank drop-off points throughout Sydney as part of a new collaboration with the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney and JRS. If you’re not in

Sydney, find a food bank service offered by a Uniting Church or other organisation near you. **SSH**

More information: Dee Davidian  
at [ddavidian@uniting.org](mailto:ddavidian@uniting.org)

# Regular income needed for asylum seekers

## HUMAN AFFAIRS

AMY CHENG

**LIVING without a regular income can make life difficult for anyone, but the situation is particularly difficult for asylum seekers, who do not have access to the necessary government benefits. Many of them work three or four part-time jobs to keep themselves and their families afloat.**

However, when the Covid-19 pandemic hit this year, many of these jobs were affected.

Frances Rush, CEO of the Asylum Seekers Centre (ASC) said their need for a regular income became even more urgent when restrictions came in. “A lot of that happened to other Australians, but most other Australians had JobKeeper or JobSeeker. People seeking asylum aren’t eligible for any of that support,” she said.

The centre, a not-for-profit organisation in Newtown, provides practical and personal support for people in the community who are seeking asylum. When most of Australia went into lockdown, the centre continued to operate by keeping its primary health clinic open, providing healthcare assessments, consultations, counselling, physiotherapy, and other services.

“We set up a hotline and the biggest request was ‘we have no food’”, Ms Rush said. “So, from that week on, we’ve had really tremendous support from volunteers and our staff and the community, from getting donations of food and us buying it.”

To help ease the stresses of the pandemic, the NSW government announced it would provide more than \$6 million assistance for multicultural communities, which includes people seeking asylum. Although the centre welcomed this announcement, Ms Rush believes a Centrelink payment is the only long-term solution.



Frances Rush (CEO) with football legend Craig Foster, staff from Jarjum College in Redfern and the Asylum Seekers Centre (Frances is back right in green pants). Photo: Supplied

Unlike refugees, who can access the Jobseeker and Jobkeeper payments provided by Centrelink, people seeking asylum do not have access to these. The ASC is proud to be a part of the NSW Joint Partnership Working Group for Refugee Resettlement whose advocacy, amongst others, has led to the NSW government’s package. But more is needed.

“People from all walks of life are saying, ‘We want an Australia that includes everybody, it doesn’t exclude some,’” she said. “It’s so important that people [like asylum seekers] feel included. People do need access to basic income. The idea that people become destitute because they’re not included is terrible.”

This year, Refugee Week went digital for the very first time. The week helps raise awareness of the issues affecting refugees, and this year’s theme was about celebrating the year of welcome.

“Normally, in a non-pandemic time, there will be lots of functions people could attend,” Ms Rush said. “[There are] lots of ways to interact and celebrate diversity and the story of people who’ve come to seek refuge, and the better Australia is for it. But in a pandemic ... we can’t bring people together,” Ms Rush said.

The ASC marked the week with an at-home movie night. Australians were invited to join by making a donation. They would then receive a movie night pack, which included recipes, talking points, and movie recommendations.

“That idea of ‘share a meal, share a story’ is part of this year’s theme in the context of welcome,” Ms Rush said. “And in the context of a pandemic, I think welcome and how we look out for each other has really been highlighted in the community.” **SSH**

“You can’t pay your rent on a one-off payment. You can’t negotiate with the landlord on a

one-off payment because you don’t have a sustainable income,” she said. “If you’ve got no income,

how do you top up your phone? If you can’t make contact, how do you get help when you need it?”

See ‘Working to extend the safety net’ story above to take action to extend Jobseeker and Jobkeeper to asylum seekers.



cartoon: norrie maAy-welby

# Stop Black Deaths in Custody

## EDITORIAL

### FAITH BLACK

**EACH time I see BLM initials I think of the generations before us who have paved the path to freedom. The Black Lives Matter movement resonates with First Nations, bringing to light systemic racism, police and prison brutality.**

The recent death of George Floyd in Minneapolis sent ripples of anguish throughout Aboriginal families recalling the death of David Dungay Jr. at Long Bay in 2015, who cried out repeatedly, "I can't breathe", as six burly correctional officers deprived him of oxygen. Safe and peaceful rallies in June and July have coincided with other

BLM protests around the world. Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Families have joined together to promote awareness of inequalities in the system and gain justice for their loved ones who have died in custody at the hands of both police and correctional officers.

The rally in the Domain on July 5 saw thousands gather, including representatives from School Strike 4 Climate, the Maritime and Construction Divisions of the CFMMEU. Protesters took part in a smoking ceremony and demanded an end to the genocide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through incarceration and deaths in custody.

Families paid tribute to their loved ones by retelling stories so others might understand the pain they suffer on a daily

basis - why, why, why did they take away their child? This alone is a difficult task, retelling and reliving the chain of events which led to the death of Mother, Father, Son, Daughter without receiving answers or ever seeing a single conviction laid on the authorities.

Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Families deserve justice and are requesting that cases be reopened, including cold cases, with independent investigations into each.

People are encouraged to attend events in the coming weeks, and details can be found on the Indigenous Social Justice Association website.

**Faith Black is a First Nations woman and a descendant of the Batjala people, Fraser Island, and Meriam people of Merisle in the Torres Strait. She is a member of ISJA.**

# Messages we convey to children can help prevent DV

## KATIE GOMPERTZ

**IN late June a major newspaper ran the headline "Tiny tots sex agenda" criticising a "professional development course, for preschool teachers, that requires them to 'secretly' study subjects ..." and I won't finish that sentence.**

Firstly, let's be clear that the course is not "secret" - it's on full display here [multiverse.com.au/my-friend-has-two-mums/](http://multiverse.com.au/my-friend-has-two-mums/)

Secondly, it's been widely studied that the societal construct of gender (and subsequent gender-focussed marketing) has negative and lifelong effects on children as young as 18 months old.

Can we consider for a moment that all things associated with gender stereotyping may have a significant impact on inequality, one of the key precursors to domestic violence?

Let's do a quick exercise:

- Picture a man about to hit someone - a woman, a man, a child, a wall. Is it at this moment he has decided he is more important, more relevant than the person he is about to abuse? Maybe no.
- Go back, see him as a younger man at work where he's received someone else's payslip, a female colleague. They have the same job, the same experience, the same qualifications. Is it in this moment he decides he is more important than her? Perhaps a little.
- Watch him, as a teenager, when he sees his sister assigned household chores for pocket money and he gets to mow the lawn. Is it then?
- His sister isn't allowed to go out by herself, her dad grills her on a date who's picking her up, he gets to go out, no questions asked. Is it then?

- He's 9, and he notices his mum gives him more pocket money than his sister for the same amount of work. Is it then?
- Now go back further. He's a boy of 3. He's with his mum in the girl's section of a department store looking up at a white shirt that says "Happy and Smiley". Later, they're in the boy's section where the T-shirt says "Brave and Strong". It's right here that the imbalance and social structures of stereotyping start.

From 18 months to 6 years of age are some of the most formative years when it comes to how boys and girls see themselves and how they view their peers. The messaging that girls should be happy and smiley, and boys should be brave and strong sounds so simple, but those messages set kids up for failure in how they view themselves (particularly in the way they deal with their own emotional wellbeing) and how they view others. That messaging starts when

# Reliance on God

## FAITH

OMAR CHAAR

**AS a Muslim, born and raised in Australia, you are faced with challenges that test your faith. You are questioned about your beliefs, you are different from the norm around you, and you are dealt situations where you must defend certain aspects of your religion to counter people's misconceptions.**

One key feature that comforts me is that God is all-knowing. He is aware of the struggles that I face, and I will be rewarded for my efforts. I experience this world with the awareness that I have a greater purpose; whether it's my career, day-to-day errands and chores, or practising my faith. To be able to cope, I rely on God.

I reflect on the trials in my life, the interactions I have with family, friends and complete strangers and I see it all as a test - a test that God has chosen for me. I remembered this life lesson while I was completing pilgrimage (Hajj).

We are taught to stay patient during this time and not quarrel with others. Imagine 40-degree heat. Tens of thousands of people from different cultures and walks of life moving in the same path around the Ka'ba (the cubed structure covered in a black cloth located in Mecca).

Personal space is non-existent. You can only take a step at a time, seeing just a centimetre of the white floor in front of you. Everyone is there for the same reason. It feels as though people are pushing and shoving you. You are being swept in the direction to follow. But you look around and they are walking at the same pace.

I remember thinking to myself, that God has placed me in this position, and it's as though He is asking me, how will you deal with this? Are you going to get angry at the stranger that accidentally trotted on your toe? Are you going to be patient? That's where my reliance on God comes into action.

I know that God would not put me through something I was unable to handle. "Allah does not burden any individual more than his/her capacity" (Quran 2:286). This gives me

a sense of empowerment and I have a choice in my actions. I choose how I respond. I have to be patient. All these people are gathered here to surrender to God, just like me. They are my brothers and sisters whom I must be kind to and look after.

One of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is to "Tie your camel first, and then put your trust in Allah (God)". This highlights the ideal Muslim relationship between God and creation. The rituals completed during Hajj date back to Ibrahim AS and his family. Perched on top of the mountain with nothing and no one around her, his wife Hajar peered into the distance. She saw no one. She ran down the mountain and across the valley and climbed another mountain, peering into the distance again. Yet, nothing could be seen.

Her son Ismael AS was crying from thirst. His mother, not having a single drop of water to give to him, continues running back and forth between the mountains, with the harsh ringing of her child's cries. Hajar took action to the best of her capabilities. God sent the angel Jibreel (Gabriel) to strike the earth and bring out water for her and her child. To this day, this run of Hajar is performed by millions of pilgrims who perform Hajj, as well as a constant supply of fresh pure water that serves to quench the thirst of millions. She took action, entrusted God and received her reprieve.

In recent times we've all faced a global pandemic. The buzzword was "unprecedented". Humanity has been impacted upon in various ways, some losing their jobs, some with having to home-school their children, some facing health concerns. The not knowing could have been seen as problematic. What were the next steps?

Through the Muslim's perspective, life during Covid was dealt with in the same way as any other trial. I do what is in my capacity and rely on God. I take the precautions stated by the health authorities, as this is in my control. However, I don't live in fear of the "what ifs".

"Whoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him" (Quran 65:3). And what more can a person ask for?

they're young and continues all the way through their lives. Early education is perfectly positioned to help navigate our

children through the complexities of our society - whether that's with two mums, two dads, a mum and a dad or a single parent.

**WOMEN DEAD IN JUNE: 4**  
**WOMEN DEAD IN 2020 SO FAR: 27**  
**DO YOU NEED SUPPORT?**

- If you or somebody you know is in immediate danger, call 000 now.
- Domestic Violence Line 1800 65 64 63 1800 671 442 TTY (Hearing impaired)
- Rape Crisis Service 1800 424 017
- Interrelate Family Centres 1300 736 966
- 1800 RESPECT - 24 hour hotline for any Australian who has experienced, or is at risk of, family and domestic violence. Call 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit their website.
- Safe Steps is a 24 hour family violence response centre. Call 1800 015 188 or visit their website.
- MensLine Australia (24 hours) 1300 78 99 78 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
- Lifeline provides all Australians with access to 24-hour crisis support & suicide prevention services. Call 13 11 14 or visit their website.

# Public housing transfers well managed?



'Going Home', collage, 2020. Image: Carolyn Miller

## HUMAN AFFAIRS

SUGANTHI SINGARAYAR

**BETWEEN October 2018 and September 2019, the NSW government transferred the management of over 14,000 public housing rental agreements throughout NSW to 10 Community Housing Providers (CHPs).**

In March this year, the Tenants' Union of NSW (TU) published a report, *Change Management: Social Housing Management Transfers Best Practice Report* on the tenants' experience of this move.

The TU commissioned the report because it was concerned that the management of over 14,000 public housing tenancies was moving from a single landlord – the state government – to multiple not-for-profit landlords, each with their own different processes and policies which might impact negatively on public housing tenants.

While over 95 per cent of tenants transferred reported a positive experience, it is the 5 per cent who did not that is of concern to the TU, because that 5 per cent represented people who were the most vulnerable or had the most complex needs, the people that we would assume would require the most amount of help during a transition of this nature.

Its concerns resided in the fact that public housing tenants had not been able to make an informed decision as to whether

they wanted to transfer to a different landlord or even which landlord they might transfer to.

In order to carry out the transfer the state government had amended the NSW Housing Act so that the ability of the tenant to make a choice or have a voice in the transfer process was removed.

In consequence, the report said, many tenants were disengaged from the process and did not have a clear understanding of what was happening. The lack of choice also meant that in some cases new service providers disregarded standards of respectful customer service.

The report recommends that in future transfers tenants are given the opportunity either individually, or in groups, to decide whether or not their tenancy is transferred and to whom.

In its response to the draft report, the Department of Community and Justice (DCJ) acknowledged that while it had “enabled” legislation that allowed the transfer of the management of tenants without their consent, this was done after a large number of tenant forums and individual visits “to ensure that tenants were informed and were assisted during the transfer process”. It added: “It should be noted that large-scale reforms such as the SHMT (Social Housing Management Transfer) program could not have been achieved effectively or efficiently without mandatory tenant transfer legislation.”

According to the TU report, the government's stated reason for the

transfer is that CHPs will provide more diversity, and the competition between landlords would ensure better services for tenants.

However, the TU's report argues that where landlords did not have to provide information about their services to the tenants but rather to the state government, and where CHPs have been provided 20-year contracts to manage the tenancies, competition to provide better services is not going to happen.

In its response to the draft report, the DCJ pointed out that although each CHP “has its own policy regarding rent, eligibility and access, they are contractually obliged to base these policies on the requirements of the DCJ community housing policies”.

The DCJ goes on to say that CHPs are independent and distinct from government and it is important that they stay that way because their business model is not viable without “the tax exemptions and other benefits that flow from charitable status”. The whole point of the transfer was to encourage alternative delivery mechanisms and diversity and therefore “forcing the standard public delivery model through absolute policy consistency negates one of the basic tenets of the program”.

The author of the report, Professor Michael Darcy, argues that it is not that community housing is not as good as public housing but rather that the different providers have different approaches and it's “a bit of a lottery” as to which you get as your provider.

One issue that came to light when large numbers of people were transferred on a single date is that not everyone managed to fill out forms transferring their rent and/or their Commonwealth Rental Assistance (CRA) to their new providers or the CentrePay forms that allowed the money to be transferred via Centrelink by the due date. Some service providers found other ways of dealing with this issue, including allowing longer times to process forms and data and making a determined effort to find out what was behind this mix-up. In other cases, people were evicted from their homes.

Professor Darcy emphasised that this was a small number of people, but they were also the “people who were most likely to get confused and not get the forms done right”. They were also the people “with quite complex family lives and so on, they're the people who are going to be most vulnerable to those sorts of things and I have interviewed people as part of that research, who basically, you know, were now sleeping on their friends' couch”.

When asked what happened to those people Professor Darcy said that, if people have been evicted for being in arrears, until they pay those arrears they will not be able to access social housing.

Public housing tenants pay 25 per cent of their income to their landlord. When people were transferred to a CHP this 25 per cent, and the added CRA, is given to the new landlord.

If you are living in a capital city, are on a full pension, in a high-rent area, and have been means-tested, the CRA benefit is around \$67 weekly (according to Professor Darcy). This money does not come into your bank account, it goes directly to the CHP via your Centrelink account.

If for some reason there has been a mix-up, a person on a pension is not going to be able to find an extra \$67 or be able to pay the back-dated rent.

The report mentions a mother of four who had continued to pay her original rent and had not received any information that she was in arrears. She had changed her email address while with the Department of Community and Family Services. However, she only found out that she was in arrears at the first inspection, three months after her transfer to a CHP. At this point, she signed forms for CRA and CentrePay and yet, at a future date, she was taken to court for being in arrears. At the time that she was interviewed she was homeless.

The DCJ has acknowledged that when carrying out “future transfers, early and more comprehensive planning around a small cohort of highly complex tenancies is required to avoid issues at go-live and post-transfer. This has been noted by CHPs as well”.

The SSH was unable to get a response from the Community Housing Industry Association or a Community Housing Provider for this article.

SSH



# The Review

Arts & Culture in Your Neighbourhood



David Art Wales with his Warhol-esque art and his rescue shit tzu Mr Puppy. Photo: Supplied

## The Warhol of Darlo

ART

ANNA NORTH

AFTER 20 plus years in New York City artist David Art Wales is back in Sydney. Earlier this year he returned to his favourite inner-city suburb and since then the “Warhol of Darlo” has been busy. Not even Covid-19 slowed him. Instead, the image of the molecule inspired his latest show, *Going Viral*, showing at Duckrabbit’s street window, 138 Little Eveleigh Street, Redfern, until June 30.

**Do you work daytime or night?**

On a typical day I might start work at 6am and go till 8pm, fall into bed, sleep till 1am, and then work till 4am, fall asleep again, then wake up at 6am and start all over. It’s a recipe for burn-out but after a few months I can hang a whole show. Then I need recuperation until inspiration strikes again.

**Have you always been so productive?**

As a struggling artist in NYC during the ’90s I was super prolific and sold a lot of work, even to celebs, but I was still just scraping by. So in ’99 I broke up with art and started a consultancy called Ministry of Culture ([www.ministryofculture.com](http://www.ministryofculture.com)). For 20 years I worked with clients like Nike and MTV – and did zero art. When my wife and I moved back to Sydney two years ago, art and I finally got back together. The reason I’m so prolific now is probably because I bottled it up for 20 years and now that the cork’s popped I can’t stop.

**How has Mr Puppy changed your life?**

I ran the Ministry for 20 years with a team I loved so making art alone in Sydney felt pretty lonely till this little rescue shih tzu named Mr Puppy came along. She sits beside me all day every day and comes on errands. Famous artists have assistants. Artists like me have a dog.

**How many events have you staged this year so far?**

A bunch. 2020 began with *David’s Art Sale*, my retail art installation in Taylor Square. I merged a posh gallery with a discount store. Then Work Inc asked me to recreate it in their North Sydney co-working space for a few months. For that I collaborated with a textile artist named Sam Tannous who built arms for Mike, an armless boy mannequin I found in the trash outside Gowings during the ’80s. I needed Mike to be my stand-in as the David’s Art Sale cashier. Then I staged *BuyMyLife.co*, where I sold my old life in NYC. At the same time, I was still working on *How I Felt*, the series I showed at Duckrabbit in 2019 (adding 50 more pieces). Once lockdown hit I switched to collaging the Covid molecule into old pop culture. The result is *Going Viral*, the lockdown opening of which had two sets of 10 guests, all carrying pool noodles to maintain social distance!

**Can you describe the process that produced the lighthearted, beautiful and profound *Going Viral*?**

*Going Viral* began when I first laid eyes on that Covid-19 molecule. I figured it was a photo taken through a microscope but then I read that the image was created by medical illustrators to help the public grasp the virus. That visual identity made the virus part of our lexicon of villainy: the skull and crossbones, Darth Vader, Donald Trump, and now Covid. The molecule brings to mind classic sci-fi like *War of the Worlds* or *Day of the Triffids* so I started depicting it as an invading alien or an exotic plant. And people responded. I’ve lost friends to Covid but I don’t want every association I have with this time to be sad and negative. *Going Viral* is my way of imbuing the heartbreak of coronavirus with a touch of lightness, even humour. The job of artists is showing people a different way to see things. In that way, my prints are positive mementos of a dark period in history that we’ve weathered together.



Hayley Megan French (right) during her artist’s talk with Felicity Castagna at galerie pompom on June 13. Photo: Supplied

## Painting the suburbs

ART

CATHERINE SKIPPER

**HAYLEY Megan French’s small (9 x 11 cm) painted-over Polaroid photographs mounted on Tasmanian oak are beautifully presented, placed at a comfortable eye-level in a grooved shelf running along three sides of a square space.**

We walk along looking closely at each tiny image, noticing the differences in colour palette, the detail or lack of it, the arrangement of trees, the deployment of space, much as we would if we were walking along a footpath bordering the broad road of an Australian suburb. In this way, we appreciate French’s observation that walking her neighbourhood was important to her process as it familiarised her with details that became inscribed as “home”.

Late in 2018, French began documenting with Polaroids her experience of living in the western suburb of Guildford where she and her partner have bought land and intend building their own house. Her growing love of Guildford – unceded land of the Bidjigal Clan, home to Australia’s largest group of Arabic-speaking people, and also site of the heritage-listed Pipeline, integral to Sydney’s first reliable water supply – has led her to reassess the value of the often maligned Australian suburbia. In 2019, French’s project expanded to include two places with which French also feels a strong connection – Kunanurra in WA and Toowoomba in QLD.

French makes use of a less restricted colour palette (formerly a hallmark of her work) as a means of signalling unique aspects of each suburb. Light and dark purples and complementary yellows identify regional Toowoomba, the more outback Kunanurra is painted over in shades of ochre and burgundy, and Guildford, anchored to Sydney, while maintaining the light and dark burgundies, introduces a range of warm blues and yellow greens. Notably, the colours leave an

impression of warmth, light, space, while the always present, dense and often edgy shapes of green foliage provide an essential gravitas.

Small is also a new direction in French’s work. While at first sight the rows of tiny images seem uniform, as do rows of grid-like suburban streets, close inspection reveals signature differences. Houses with the same floor plan but placed at a different angle on the block, a high or low front fence, two halves of the one structure painted in different shades, the focal – or not – driveway and the car, or the placement of trees, all of which have their own personal or societal narrative. There is often humour in the details French has chosen not to erase from the reality of the Polaroid, such as the single striped towel on a wonky Hills hoist.

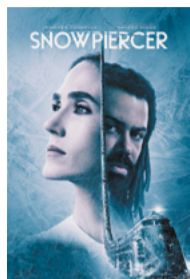
In an artist’s talk at galerie pompom (June 13) both French and her interviewer, writer Felicity Castagna, were mutual in their positive re-evaluation of the suburb and its community life, defence of an aspirational ethos, and affirmation of the uniqueness of individual suburbs. Perhaps a response to the erasure of character from larger Sydney as urban, high-rise, homogenised redevelopments increase and consequent replacement of actual community life by “community centres”, they ask us to reconfigure the suburbs as rich and complex.

Several in the audience queried their enthusiastic reconnection with suburbia, one person noting the total absence of people from French’s images. It is true that while her images convey warmth and richness – the pipeline for instance becoming a thing of beauty and a metaphor for connection – at the same time, they are strikingly empty of activity. Life is implied but it is private: to know the suburb, to see its character, its fullness of being, we have to walk it, as French tells us from the start.

**Hayley Megan French**  
**The Pipeline (A Suburban Painting Project)**  
 galerie pompom  
 May 13 – June 21, 2020  
[www.hayleymeganfrench.com](http://www.hayleymeganfrench.com)

# The Reviews

## Film/TV Review by Lindsay Cohen



### Snowpiercer

Movie (2013)

Director: Bong Joon Ho

Stars: Chris Evans, Jamie Bell, Tilda Swinton

TV Series (2020)

Creators: Graeme Manson, Josh Friedman

Starring: Jennifer Connelly, Daveed Diggs, Mickey Sumner

Genre: Off the rails

In 2013, the film *Snowpiercer* was released to critical acclaim from critics and mixed reviews from the people who paid to see it. I was both, yet didn't review it because I enjoyed it too much – bad films are much easier to review. Whether this says more about me than the film I'm not sure, but either way I had high hopes for the TV series of the same name and same premise released on Netflix early on during the lockdown.

The TV series is set seven years after the environmental collapse of Earth when a deep freeze covers the planet leaving a 1,001-carriage train to permanently circle the globe with humanity's survivors. With passengers divided into classes from the front to the tail, rebellion from the tail against first class is a constant threat and a recurring theme. The movie is set 14 years after the climate apocalypse, when that threat is realised. So, it's a sequel of sorts (perhaps, the second series hasn't been released yet).

The TV series is great but may not reach the cult status of the film. The format and set are restricting almost by definition and better

suited to a film, while production and acting standards aren't quite as good. Jennifer Connolly, though, is at her steely and sultry best, trying to hold train operations together. Mind you, she's no Tilda Swinton, Connolly's film equivalent who was every bit as odd and extraordinary as the train she travelled on.

Bong Joon Ho, the director of the film and writer of many episodes of the TV series, won an Academy Award for *Parasite* (2019). He has an extraordinary ability to animate the absurd while addressing contemporary class realities. And interestingly, he based the film on a French graphic novel, *Le Transperceneige*, first published in 1982. Next time I should review that – or leave it to my SSH book reviewing colleagues to do so.

### Rating

Film: 4½ piercings

TV Series: 4 piercings

## Film Review by Marjorie Lewis-Jones



### Honeyland

Directors Tamara Kotevska and Ljubo Stefanov

Starring: Hatidze Muratova

Genre: Documentary

Lost ways. Lost bees. Lost serenity. It would be hard to watch this twice Oscar-nominated documentary and not feel devastated for Hatidze Muratova – one of the last Macedonian wild beekeepers whose harmonious relationship with the bees and her isolated mountain environment gets

disrupted by an itinerant family.

The family descends on the area like marauders. Kids and cows kick and bellow in noisy confusion. Hatidze is happy at first to find the family are ethnic Turks like her and her mother, and she grows particularly fond of one of the boys. She is less happy to learn that their farming techniques are invasive and haphazard.

Hussein (the father) is pressured by the need to feed and clothe his seven children and refuses to heed Hatidze's wisdom about ancient methods for harvesting wild honey. Propelled by production quotas, he dismisses her advice about keeping half of the honey to sell and leaving the other half for the bees. The consequences are terrible.

Hatidze, who is in her mid-50s, cares for her ailing mother, Nazife, in their threadbare hut – cajoling her to eat, scolding her for not moving her legs, dressing her wounds, and singing to her. She also regularly carts honey for four hours to the market in Skopje, earning just enough to buy bananas and a few other essential items.

To the outsider, her existence may look sparse and lonely but she has a deep affinity with the land and its creatures. While the film doesn't idealise her life, or underplay her longings, it does show how sharing and conservation are key to her survival.

Macedonian directors Tamara Kotevska and Ljubo Stefanov filmed their debut during bitter snowstorms and oppressive heat over three years to bring Hatidze's strength to life on screen. "Hatidze acts with the bees as if they were her family and she takes care of them as if they were her children," says Kotevska. "And through that, even though her life is very harsh, Hatidze doesn't feel lonely."

To watch as the scenes unfold is a slow and meditative experience. When Hatidze harvests honeycomb from rock crevices to reveal their molten goodness, it is profoundly mysterious. You could watch her for hours.

*Honeyland* was nominated in the 2020 Academy Awards in the

categories for Best International Feature Film and Best Documentary Feature. It is the first documentary in the history of the Oscars to receive a nomination in both categories. View *Honeyland* on the documentary and current affairs streaming service iWonder.

» [film@ssh.com.au](mailto:film@ssh.com.au)

## Book Review by Catherine DeMayo



### Phosphorescence

Julia Baird

HarperCollins Australia, \$32.99

While published well before Covid-19 reached Australia, this book – subtitled *On awe, wonder and things that sustain you when the world goes dark*, is a timely read for this global pandemic. Dr Julia Baird is an author (her 2016 biography of Queen Victoria was widely acclaimed), TV presenter and journalist. In 2018, she received an honorary Doctor of Divinity from the University of Divinity in Melbourne.

A keen ocean swimmer, Baird starts *Phosphorescence* with descriptions of the hypnotic creatures that light up the oceans and briefly glow in dark skies (think jellyfish, fireflies). This luminosity is a metaphor for what we need to sustain us in difficult times, she says – and goes on to suggest where to find it.

Baird is no stranger to pain and grief. Her own life experience, particularly of aggressive cancer requiring three major surgeries, while raising two children as a single mother, gives her an air of credibility.

Some of her book's most powerful insights come from her discussion of the importance of awe and

wonder. Being awestruck – whether by watching an electrical storm, hiking the Himalayas or watching life on the ocean floor – doesn't just leave us temporarily thrilled. An increasing body of research shows that it does our psyches lasting good. Even a hospital room overlooking a garden can improve a patient's health (Florence Nightingale observed this in the 19th century). Luckily for us Australians, apparently just looking at the ocean is good for us. So is paying attention, living in the moment, taking our time and savouring everyday things.

Reading this book in early 2020 brought home to me how much access to nature and beauty is unevenly distributed. Witness the numbers who flocked to Sydney's parks and beaches during the Covid-19 restrictions – and how the ease of such access varied dramatically depending on your postcode.

Others of Baird's prescriptions are more familiar: loyal friends, community networks and a supportive family are enormously helpful for those dark nights of the soul. "Meeting wonderful people is luck; keeping them in your life takes thought, care, forgiveness and devotion. Friendship is an art and a gift ..."

At times the connection between her chapters and the book's central themes seems a bit thin. Baird devotes chapters to her struggle (ultimately unsuccessful) for the ordination of women in the Sydney Anglican Diocese; her encouragement of women with PhDs to use their Dr titles; the pernicious influence of Instagram and other social media on the self-image of young girls. *Phosphorescence* is part self-help book, part memoir, part social commentary, but is at its best when Baird sticks closely to the central question: What really matters when life seems unbearable?

But I quibble. This is an uplifting book, well written and researched. Read it, ideally somewhere where you can look at the ocean, a rainforest, or at least a patch of green grass.

» [books@ssh.com.au](mailto:books@ssh.com.au)

# Elaborate, effortless neo-soul

## MUSIC

TESS RIDGWAY

**18YOMAN** (verbalised as 18 year-old man) is Vin Goodyer's neo-soul solo project – he sings, plays keys, guitar and produces the beats. Sydney-based, Goodyer is managed by Calibre/Oneday and a team in the States.

As 18YOMAN he has released a handful of tracks the last few years and each one is a shiny ruby – notably single "Swimming," which features singer Mia Elnekave. Hear their smooth vocals harmonise like gentle waves across water. His sound has been compared to the likes of D'Angelo and Blood Orange – formidable company, but Goodyer keeps his head well above water.

18YOMAN's languid looping orchestrations are elaborate yet effortless. These grooves will pleasantly resurface in your head.

**You're across a lot of elements in your songs (piano, guitar, vocals, beats).**

**How does your creative process work? Where do you begin in making a song?**

I think it comes from an initial idea, either on piano or guitar, and then I'll slowly build around it. Something that I've really been leaning into is getting other people involved, I find it's always going to be a more rewarding experience.

**How do you find doing a solo project?**

I really, really, really enjoy it and it's incredibly important to me. I spend every day producing songs for other people which involves deadlines and a bit of stress so it's very nice to follow my own curiosity and rules without any pressure every now and again.

**Who would you like to collaborate with?**

That's a bit of a tricky one, I would say Meshell Ndegeocello. She is an amazing bass player and singer/artist who has made incredible albums

through the last 30 years. And is one of my biggest inspirations. She seems like one of the most genuine and real people ever.

**What's next for 18YOMAN?**

I've been spending the majority of my conscious life working on samples for a lot of rap music overseas. Something that I'm just finishing is music for season three of the ABC podcast *Little Yarns* which is an Indigenous language program for pre-schoolers. So, really excited for that to come out in the next few months. I've finally got a heap of songs coming out, too, which I wrote in America last year, so I'm very excited about that!

**What makes a perfect song?**

I think a perfect song has to be relatable. Something that can connect people or where they can find a commonality. I guess something that everyone can play on the piano, if that makes sense.



18YOMAN Photo: Calibre Music Management

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## VOLUNTEERS' NEWS

PAT CLARKE

**WELCOME to the Covid-19 winter 2020 issue. Can you believe half a year gone, and what have we got? Hope we all haven't lost our joie de vivre and ability to laugh at life's madneses.**

About the Oz Ballet's YouTube exercises – thanks for asking! Did them every day until I got to the last one, How to Do Jumps, where my utter ineptitude was apparent and it wasn't because of no ballet slippers or tutu. I'm sure our featured ballet dancer from December, Lincoln Sharp, would be laughing himself out of his grande jetes if he could see me. Now back to walking the laneways of Marrickville.

### School holidays are July 6 to July 17

As always check with your local Council for lots of holiday activities to suit all ages. City of Sydney has plenty of ideas at [whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/articles/schoolholidays](http://whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/articles/schoolholidays)

### National NAIDOC Week 2020 – always was, always will be ...

Dates have now been set from November 8-15, postponed from July. Tyrown Waigana, a 23 year-old proud Noongar and Saibai Islander, based in Perth, is this year's winner of the prestigious National NAIDOC Poster Competition (see it on page 3 courtesy CC BY-NC-N4 4.0).

### Our ABC

I try not to get too partisan in this column, but honestly the ABC is close to my heart. Auntie has given us the best news and current affairs, even-handed opinions and sterling programs. And once again the LNP government has decided to cut even more from their already reduced budget. Lots of updated

information at ABC Friends, [www.abcfriends.org.au](http://www.abcfriends.org.au) or you can catch up with them on Facebook and Twitter.

### Face to Face – Joshua's exhibition at the Orchard Gallery

Joshua's works are now on show at the Orchard Gallery, South Sydney Uniting Church. These unique and touching artworks are available for purchase on the gallery's Instagram: @orchardgalleryau The gallery hopes to reopen in the near future.

### Availability of SSH issues for the near future

We are still doing limited distribution (up to 10,000 copies in July), but IGA stores throughout South Sydney have copies in stock each month. Subscribe to the SSH Update on the website where we will send out a new list of pick-up points as part of the Update in July. [www.southsydneyherald.com.au](http://www.southsydneyherald.com.au)

### SSH Volunteers' Meeting

Volunteers' meetings will resume at the Cauliflower Hotel, 2pm on the first Saturday of the month. All volunteers and friends welcome.

### SSH Update

Volunteers and readers are invited to subscribe to the SSH Update – South Sydney Herald digital newsletter ([bit.ly/2AX8nIY](http://bit.ly/2AX8nIY)). Receive monthly news, opinion, culture, sport & more. There's also a link to the PDF copy of the SSH, and information on volunteering.

Goodbye for this month, and as always take care. You never know when this coronavirus will be resurgent, as new cases in Victoria increase.

Until next time,  
Pat Clarke

[volunteers@ssh.com.au](mailto:volunteers@ssh.com.au)

## Uniting Churches



### South Sydney Uniting Church

56a Raglan St, Waterloo  
 Public worship suspended  
 Follow @sundayssuc for prayers, music and reflections  
 Rev. Andrew Collis  
 0438 719 470  
[www.southsydneyuniting.org.au](http://www.southsydneyuniting.org.au)

### Leichhardt Uniting Church

3 Wetherill St, Leichhardt  
 (near Norton St, free parking behind church)  
 Public worship suspended  
 Revs Radhika & Adrian Sukumar-White  
[www.leichhardtuniting.org.au](http://www.leichhardtuniting.org.au)

### Mustard Seed Uniting Church

Cnr Quarry St & Bulwara Rd, Ultimo  
 Public worship suspended  
 Rev. David Gore  
 0449 875 065  
[mustardseed.unitingchurch.org.au](http://mustardseed.unitingchurch.org.au)

### Newtown Mission

280 King St Newtown  
 Public worship suspended  
 Rev. Graeme Tutt  
 9519 9000  
[www.newtownmission.org.au](http://www.newtownmission.org.au)

### Paddington Uniting Church

395 Oxford St, Paddington  
 Public worship suspended  
 Rev. Danielle Hemsworth-Smith  
 Office 9331 2646  
[www.paddingtonuca.org.au](http://www.paddingtonuca.org.au)

### Pitt Street Uniting Church

264 Pitt St, Sydney  
 Public worship suspended  
 Revs Karyn and Gareth Burchell-Thomas  
 Office 9267 3614  
[www.pittstreetuniting.org.au](http://www.pittstreetuniting.org.au)

### Wayside Chapel

29 Hughes St, Potts Point  
 Public worship suspended  
 (Please note that Wayside is still open for those in need)  
 Pastor Jon Owen  
 Office 9581 9100  
[www.thewaysidechapel.com](http://www.thewaysidechapel.com)

### St Stephen's Uniting Church

197 Macquarie St, Sydney  
 Public worship suspended  
 Rev. Ken Day  
 Office 9221 1688  
[www.ssms.org.au](http://www.ssms.org.au)

## YOUR LOCAL MEMBERS Phone or email to make an appointment



Tanya Plibersek MP  
**Federal Member for Sydney**  
 672 Crown St,  
 Surry Hills NSW 2010  
 T: 02 9379 0700  
 F: 02 9379 0701  
[Tanya.Plibersek.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Tanya.Plibersek.MP@aph.gov.au)



Jamie Parker MP  
**State Member for Balmain**  
 112a Glebe Point Rd,  
 Glebe NSW 2037  
 T: 02 9660 7586  
 F: 02 9660 6112  
[Balmain@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Balmain@parliament.nsw.gov.au)



Ron Hoenig MP  
**State Member for Heffron**  
 Shop 117, 747 Botany Rd,  
 Rosebery NSW 2018  
 T: 02 9699 8166  
 F: 02 9699 8222  
[Heffron@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Heffron@parliament.nsw.gov.au)



Alex Greenwich MP  
**State Member for Sydney**  
 58 Oxford St, Paddington  
 NSW 2021  
 T: 02 9360 3053  
 F: 02 9331 6963  
[Sydney@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Sydney@parliament.nsw.gov.au)



Jenny Leong MP  
**State Member for Newtown**  
 383 King St, Newtown  
 NSW 2042  
 T: 02 9517 2800  
 F: 02 9230 3352  
[Newtown@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Newtown@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

# Pride in the jersey

## SPORT

STEVE TURNER

JOHN Lanzky reports that Souths have played some heavy games against the in-form Roosters and Panthers. A gutsy win against the Bulldogs has restored confidence. The Rabbitohs are in the top eight, with games against the Tigers and Knights in coming weeks. The team should pick up the wins.

John says: "Alex Johnston deserves better. He has been a loyal Souths man for a long time, and always gives 100 per cent. He has been told he needs to move on due to salary cap restrictions. It makes me wonder how the Roosters fit all their players in and still have money to spare. I just don't get it!

"I also believe we have players within the group who are not performing to their full capacity. I won't mention names but certain players should have a good, hard look at themselves and show some pride in the jersey.

"I will say that Latrell Mitchell is improving week to week. He is involving himself in attack and defence and will only get better as he adapts to the style of players around him."

### Coronavirus scare

World number six Webb Simpson is competing on the PGA tour again after his family had a coronavirus scare. One of



Latrell Mitchell – improving week to week. Photo: Rabbitohs.com.au

Simpson's daughters tested positive for Covid-19, leading to him withdrawing from last month's tournament as a precaution.

Simpson, who leads the tour in FedEx Cup points and scoring average, is attempting to become

the PGA tour's first player with three victories during this pandemic-interrupted year.

Most importantly, Simpson is trying to stay healthy. He does not believe that doing his job is putting him or his family at risk.

"I mentioned to the commissioner last week that based on our numbers, our stats, the safest place anyone can be in the United States right now is on the PGA tour," Simpson said. "We had at

that point, I think, seven out of 2,300 positive, which is amazing. But I do think the elephant is in the room and the tough thing that they're dealing with every week is these positives."

SSH

## Winter soup

ANGELIQUE WATKINS

Who doesn't love warm, lumpy-free veggie soup on a cold winter's day! Add a chunk of fresh home-made bread, smothered in Nutelex (or your preferred butter-type spread) and we're away on a cloud of chilly-day comfort.

I love soup, without lumps. My favourite is green split pea with Lebanese spices, a sprinkling of za'atar mix on top. This is something you can make easily at home and with your regular pantry supplies. It's healthy, yummy, vegan-friendly (and kid-friendly), quick and cheap!

This kind of soup has only a few steps, with room to substitute ingredients as needed. It has a bit of the "chuck it all together in the pot" going on, so it's a brilliant weekday saviour.

Hungry? Well, this is what you need: green split peas, potatoes, onion or leeks, garlic, cumin, black pepper, cayenne pepper, vegetable stock, celery (if you have it), lemon juice and za'atar mix (thyme, cumin, coriander, sesame seeds, sumac – or that lemon pepper mix works as a substitute, or leave out – salt and chilli flakes).

You can adjust the quantities of these ingredients to taste.

Just one thing I suggest you do as a rule, cook the split peas separately with no salt (15 mins), but add plenty of salt when cooking the potatoes! Do the onion and garlic in a bit of olive oil, add the spices, cooked potatoes, split peas, then everything else, blend, serve with a generous sprinkle of za'atar and you're done!

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## Bring on the sports doco series

### SPORT/FILM

LINDSAY COHEN

**IN this weird sports-free world, sports junkies such as yours truly are looking far and wide for their fix. Replays of old matches provide no suspense or thrill, so desperate times call for desperate measures. Bring on the sports documentary series, a relatively new phenomenon tailor made for the pay-per-view generation.**

There is nothing new about sports docos, but at a time when most people aren't getting out much, the traditional 90-minute sports star expose doesn't suffice. This long format documentary allows for more personalities and detail, and a more in-depth voyeuristic look at goings-on. But the basic prerequisites, a good story and interesting characters, are even more important. And that's where the most hyped of all the sports doco series, *The Last Dance*, fails.

There is no denying that Michael Jordan is a freakishly talented and driven athlete. But the story of his journey from the middle class of Brooklyn to extreme wealth and success is not nearly as interesting or relatable as a cricket team overcoming a cheating scandal (*The Test*), car racers risking their lives for their careers (*Drive to Survive*) or a soccer team struggling just



to win a match (*Sunderland 'Til I Die*).

Indeed, *Sunderland 'Til I Die* is not really about the soccer team at all but the ridiculously fanatical and obsessive supporters riding the emotions of their team's failures and very rare successes. The series is more symbolic social commentary about the demise of the British working class and the collapse of industry in Northern England than it is the plight of a team of multi-millionaire players, coaches, managers and owners.

*The Last Dance*, *The Test*, and *Drive to Survive* are no deeper than the grooves on a ball or a car's tyre. There is nothing that these alpha-male (and they are always male), supremely fit, amazingly talented athletes have in common with the vast majority of humanity.

Don't get me wrong, it's fun to death ride a high performer and watch them fail, but if you want to vicariously live through others and hope they succeed, then have children.

### Ratings

***Sunderland 'Til I Die*: 4½ wins a season**  
***Drive to Survive*: 3½ hundred kilometres per hour**  
***The Test*: 3 hundred more runs from Steve Smith**  
***The Last Dance*: 2½ metres tall**

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