



SOCIAL JUSTICE → PAGE 6

REVIEW → PAGES 9-10

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# the South Sydney Herald

Number One Hundred and Ninety Six ~ September 2020

Circulation 10,000 ~ First Published 2002

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## Calls for premier to implement legislation to end modern slavery

### HUMAN AFFAIRS

AMY CHENG

A consortium of more than 117 organisations has come together to urge the NSW premier to put into force the Modern Slavery Act by January next year.

In a letter addressed to Gladys Berejiklian, the consortium, which also included academics, lawyers and community and faith leaders, expressed its concerns over further delays in implementing the Act.

Carolyn Kitto, co-director of Be Slavery Free, a global coalition working to prevent, abolish and disrupt modern slavery, said there are more slaves in the world today than any other time in history.

“Every day, 25,200 people, as a guestimate, enter slavery. So, every day that this is delayed, NSW, which is the seventh largest economy in Asia, loses an opportunity to set a standard about ending modern slavery.”

Ms Kitto, one of the signatories of the letter, believes the Act, if put into force, will help end slavery in the supply chain.

“It’s estimated that 70 to 80 per cent of slavery is actually in the supply chain of the goods that we buy, and we’ve been an importing country,” she said.

“Our manufacturing is largely offshore, and so asking businesses to check their supply chains sends a message that we are not only interested in profit, we’re also interested in people.”

The Act will make it riskier and less lucrative to use forms of modern slavery, according to Ms Kitto.

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about additional concerns. The restrictions put in place have made it easier for businesses to hide things, she said.

For example, a factory could refuse to let its workers leave the building to protect them and others from getting the virus. However, under normal conditions, restricting people’s movements would be considered an act of modern slavery.

“People who end up in slavery are there because they’re



Image: Sam McNair

vulnerable, because they’re women, because they’re children, because they’re poor and because they’re desperate,” Ms Kitto said.

“So, any opportunity, people are more likely to take a job that has less protection and standards, and therefore they’re more open to exploitation.”

People are also more desperate during these times, she said. “If children can’t go to school, families may be more tempted to put them into work.”

Sometimes, modern slavery is not detected because it’s been referred to as something else, such as wage theft or sex with a minor rather than forced marriage.

“Modern slavery is an umbrella term which covers a range of crimes ... These crimes have three things in common: the person who ends up in that situation has been

deceived, tricked or coerced into what they’re doing,” Ms Kitto said.

“Their freedom is withheld in some kind of way so they can’t leave ... and the third thing is that they’re exploited for the benefit of another person.”

There is no globally agreed definition of modern slavery. According to Be Slavery Free, there are eight crimes associated with it, including human trafficking, slavery, servitude, forced labour, debt bondage, deceptive recruitment, forced marriage and worst forms of child labour.

The NSW Modern Slavery Act was passed in 2018 but is yet to be put into force. It is unclear to Ms Kitto what the cause of delay is.

“It seems to us that everything in the democratic process and more has been done,” she said.

“My local member, I’ve



Carolyn Kitto (second left) from Be Slavery Free delivers a letter urging the premier to implement the Modern Slavery Act by January 2020. Photo: Supplied

requested a meeting on four occasions and it’s been denied. I’ve never had this experience in my life before because it’s part of a politician’s job to meet with members of their electorate, and they’re not.”

The letter was delivered to the premier on July 20; there has been no response yet. Ms Kitto said the premier has 28 days to respond.

To support the campaign, see [www.beslaveryfree.com/nsw-msa](http://www.beslaveryfree.com/nsw-msa)



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South Sydney Uniting Church  
Raglan Street, Waterloo.  
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A new social sustainability report for the redevelopment of the Waterloo estate touches on important issues but does not offer a clear plan. Photo: Elton Consulting

# Delivering social outcomes in Waterloo South

**URBAN DESIGN**

DAVID LILLEY

**FIVE years after the announcement that the Waterloo Estate will be redeveloped, a Social Sustainability Report has just been released to the public. Its purpose is to look at how to "maximise positive social outcomes for current, neighbouring and likely future communities through the project".**

The report touches on many important issues, including the need for community development, a human services plan, new community facilities, consistent communication, ongoing resident engagement, and place making. However, there are few specific commitments or timeframes. Most of the issues and actions are intended to be taken up by a private developer who is yet to be appointed.

Politicians and staff associated with the project are fond of saying that it applies the lessons of previous redevelopments, including those in Minto, Bonnyrigg, Airids, and Riverwood. However, the Social Sustainability Report makes no mention of any of these projects, or the extensive research that has been conducted on them.

Clear evidence is available regarding the importance of supporting residents throughout all stages of a redevelopment. This should commence as soon as residents are notified of the project, as this can trigger substantial stress and anxiety for some people. One of the most effective approaches is to have a human service plan that is tailored to the stages of the redevelopment project and is continually revised in response to emerging issues. However, five years after the redevelopment of the Waterloo Estate was announced, there is still no such plan.

Research also indicates that one of the most effective ways of maintaining the health and wellbeing of communities is to provide them with continuous communication, to provide them with a sense of certainty and control. However, there have been

large gaps in communication in Waterloo. A newsletter in January 2019 explained that a preferred masterplan for the estate had been prepared and described its attributes. The next newsletter was published in June 2020, nearly 18 months later. This newsletter described the results of a new planning process that related to only part of the estate. There were no newsletters in between to explain that revisions were being made, why this was happening, how long it would take, or how community members might be involved.

Over the past five years millions of dollars in staff time and consulting fees have been spent planning for redevelopment. Unfortunately, there has not been comparable effort to sustain the health and wellbeing of the community, despite it being a period of significant uncertainty.

While it is not an exhaustive list, here are eight things the NSW Land and Housing Corporation can do to support the health and wellbeing of the community, consistent with the Social Sustainability report recommendations. Articulate the social outcomes the project is intended to achieve and explain how current and future work is designed to deliver these outcomes.

Commit to a regular cycle of newsletters and other forms of communication, to ensure that the community has access to reliable and timely information. Create and maintain a community engagement plan that makes clear the opportunities for residents to participate in the project, and the level of influence they will have when they do.

Review research conducted on previous redevelopment projects in NSW, make this available to staff, contractors, and stakeholders, and ensure that it is incorporated into all strategies and plans for Waterloo. Work with residents and other stakeholders to periodically identify, assess, and respond to risks to the social sustainability of the community.

Develop an interim human service plan immediately, to ensure that stress, anxiety, and other immediate needs



Sunrise over Redfern, May 19. Photo: Featogrefi

# Support for Redfern Fire Station crew

**COMMENT**

LINDA SCOTT

**THE NSW government needs to commit to increasing fire and rescue services in the City of Sydney, and rule out any cuts to stations or services.**

If current global warming continues, the frequency of extreme-heat days in the City of Sydney local area will increase from three days a year in 2015 to 15 days a year in 2070. Higher temperatures will increase the likelihood of fires.

As the impact of climate change worsens, the City's growing population will rely more heavily on the support of our fire and rescue professionals. By 2030, there will be approximately 1.7 million people in the City each day, with an additional 56,000 housing dwellings by 2036.

Redfern Fire Station responded to 1,300 incidents in 2019, and this will increase with dangerous climate change and increasing City populations.

We need more rescue professionals in our City, not fewer. In 2019, Redfern Fire Station celebrated the very first all-Indigenous platoon of permanent firefighters at Redfern and their story and connection to the community was featured by SBS News.

City residents have always been so proud of our Redfern Station crew, and their connection to our communities. Redfern Fire Station is 120 years old and thriving – long may it continue to serve our diverse and growing City communities.

I'm proud to have successfully moved for the City of Sydney Council to unanimously resolve to support the continuation of fire and rescue services in Redfern, and to call on the NSW government to commit state funding to ensure all NSW Fire Stations in the City of Sydney remain open and permanently staffed. Stay tuned!

**Linda Scott is a Labor Councillor with the City of Sydney and President of Local Government NSW.**

of the Waterloo community are addressed. Develop a long-term human service plan and appropriate governance arrangements to respond to the needs of different population groups during different stages of redevelopment (ongoing planning, rehousing, demolition, construction, and new residents moving in). Involve residents, stakeholders,

and technical experts when developing the tender specifications for engaging a private developer, to ensure that social sustainability is a core priority of the project. David Lilley is a consultant and PhD student at the University of NSW School of Public Health and Community Medicine. He has previously worked on estate renewal projects for LAHC.



# OzHarvest market offers food relief to locals

## HUMAN AFFAIRS

SSH

**WATERLOO:** A former local grocery store in the Waterloo Estate has been transformed into a food relief market to support the vulnerable community in inner-Sydney.

OzHarvest Market Waterloo was launched in late July as part of OzHarvest's new emergency services to address the drastic rise in demand for food relief.

OzHarvest Founder and CEO, Ronni Kahn AO, said the new market has been made possible thanks to wonderful partnerships with City of Sydney and NSW Land and Housing Corporation to take over a long-term lease at the site and serve the local community.

"The impact of COVID-19 has seen food relief hit an all-time high, with so many men, women and children experiencing food insecurity for the first time ever in their lives. OzHarvest is committed to feeding as many people as possible and has expanded its services, beyond the usual food rescue operations to offer new emergency food relief.

"We know the importance of providing a nourishing meal. It's more than just food. It means that families who are struggling will be able to take

stronger steps to rebuild their lives during this pandemic."

Once a week throughout June and July, OzHarvest ran a "pop up" Hamper Hub, which distributed 600 bags of free groceries and pre-cooked meals to local residents. This trial confirmed the need for the new "take what you need, give if you can" market, which is open from Friday-Monday, 10 am to 2 pm, at 95 Wellington Street, Waterloo.

Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore, said the City of Sydney (CoS) had identified access to food as a significant issue early in the pandemic and part of its emergency response provided OzHarvest with a \$1 million donation to help support vulnerable communities.

OzHarvest's volumes of rescued food had fluctuated dramatically during the pandemic, she said, forcing the organisation to purchase food for the first time in 16 years to help meet the increased demand.

This is why the CoS had launched a fundraising campaign urging the community to dig deep and help OzHarvest, Ms Moore said.

The pandemic has seen OzHarvest introduce a range of new emergency food relief services including; regular weekly Hamper Hubs for international students, a mobile market distributing food to



The new Oz Harvest market in Waterloo supplies food to people in the area who need it most (and of course follows strict Covid-19 safety protocols). Photo: Lyn Turnbull

regional and bushfire affected communities and pre-cooked meals by OzHarvest chefs and external hospitality partners.

Ms Kahn said the fundraising appeal, alongside the City's \$1 million donation, will help

OzHarvest to expand its food rescue operations and offer emergency food relief to enable people to take steps to rebuild their lives during the pandemic.

"This problem is not going away and support is needed to keep our

wheels turning and make sure we continue to get food to those who need it most."

Donations to the City of Sydney/ OzHarvest Food Relief Appeal can be made online at [www.feedsydney.com](http://www.feedsydney.com)

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## COVID-19 UPDATE

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The 15th of August marked the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, when Imperial Japan announced its surrender in the Pacific. At 9:30am August 15 1945, Ben Chifley broke the news over radio: 'Fellow citizens, the war is over'.

Almost a million people served the nation. They fought in every corner of the globe – from continental Europe, to North Africa, to Asia and the Pacific. They faced the biggest military threat in the nation's modern history, and with remarkable bravery, they pushed it back.

To acknowledge this important anniversary, the Department of Veterans' Affairs has produced a *Commemorative Medallion* and *Certificate of Commemoration* to honour the service and sacrifice of Australia's living Second World War veterans.

**Veterans can apply through the DVA website – [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au) or by calling 1800 838 372.**

I encourage all living Second World War veterans to apply for a commemorative medallion to acknowledge their service and sacrifice.

## TAX HELP

I am so pleased to announce that Tax Help will be operating from my office on Friday afternoons until October.

Tax Help is a vital service provided by volunteers with the Australian Tax Office to assist people completing their tax returns. Every year, my office facilitates this service for Sydney.

**You are eligible for Tax Help in 2019–20** if your income is around \$60,000 or less for the income year and you did not:

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- sell shares or own an investment property
- own a rental property
- have capital gains tax (CGT)
- receive royalties
- receive distributions from a trust, other than a managed fund
- receive foreign income, other than a foreign pension or annuity.

**Call my office to book an appointment on (02) 9379 0700.**

## ELECTORATE OFFICE

My electorate office continues to provide support with Centrelink, Veterans' Affairs, Medicare, Immigration, NBN and other federal matters. However, for the first weeks of September, we will not be able to provide our usual Justice of the Peace service. **Please contact us anytime for assistance or to make an appointment.**

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

1A Great Buckingham St, Redfern NSW 2016

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## Engaging students during Covid-19

## SPONSORED

MICHAEL SPENCE

**AS she describes it, Associate Professor Marian Vidal-Fernandez is not your typical academic. Her career in academia was not by design, but one she fell into.**

From studying economics, to her PhD research into the educational opportunities given to students from low socio-economic backgrounds, and then finally coming to teach at Sydney, she stumbled into all these major life decisions. But what drove her throughout was her natural curiosity and desire to learn. These are qualities she tries to impart to her first-year Introductory Microeconomics (ECON 1001) students.

"I teach a mandatory first-year class, so many of the students are there because they have to be. The challenge is to get them engaged with the course," Associate Professor Vidal-Fernandez said.

"When I can pass on the joy of learning, that's when it clicks. The challenge for me is to make it click for the least engaged student."

In trying to make it "click", Associate Professor Vidal-Fernandez draws inspiration from a diversity of sources – from Hollywood movies to experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Economics is life: we can apply economic concepts to everything that is happening around us. So, I try to make economics relevant to the students. I ask them what they like and what they are interested in. When the TV series *Breaking Bad* was popular I used it to explain the theory of monopoly and how that may impact the price of drugs. During Covid-19, we have been discussing scarcity around toilet paper," Associate Professor Vidal-Fernandez said.

Associate Professor Vidal-Fernandez has been teaching a foundational economics class at the University of Sydney for the last four years, however, this past semester has been one of the toughest. The Covid-19 pandemic meant all Semester 1 lectures and tutorials had to be moved online.

"I made a particular effort this year because we were all in lockdown. Aside from the academic support I provide my students, I wanted to support them in other ways too. Each week when I sent out an email updating the class on the course content, I would also send them a list of activities they could do that was unrelated to class, including virtual museums they could visit, online gyms, and free movies from the library. I would also add a personal note about what I was doing that week, like watching a Star Wars movie.

I wanted to remind them they still needed to have fun," Associate Professor Vidal-Fernandez said.

"I'm an immigrant here and 50 per cent of my class are international students, so I could understand what it was like to be away from your family during this time. I remembered that when I was in the US doing my PhD, I would have appreciated someone reaching out to me to make sure I was okay.

I wanted to create that human connection with my students.

"This last semester was a steep learning curve for all of us. I showed my students empathy and that I cared about them and in many ways, I think it made me a better teacher."

The effort Associate Professor Vidal-Fernandez poured into her ECON 1001 paid off. She had a retention rate of 90 per cent – a significant achievement for a semester taught almost entirely online.

SSH



Authorised by Dr Michael Spence, Vice Chancellor of the University of Sydney.

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## Ministers agree to Waterloo cuts

## URBAN DESIGN

GEOFF TURNBULL

**LAND and Housing Corporation (LAHC) defunded the Waterloo Community Development, Aboriginal Liaison and Bilingual Workers (Mandarin and Russian) in June. Local organisations, Counterpoint Community Services (CCS), Inner Sydney Voice (ISV) and REDWatch wrote to Minister Pavey (LAHC) and Minister Ward (Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)) to ask for continued funding. The reply on behalf of the ministers is on the REDWatch website.**

The response acknowledged and appreciated "the valuable relationships developed with the community and the meaningful contribution and support provided by the independent community workers over the last few years in Waterloo", but said, "LAHC is not in a position to continue the community worker contracts, as the City of Sydney is the consent authority and will lead the community consultation". LAHC will provide critical information regarding the Waterloo redevelopment where required.

The reply highlights that DCJ funds Mission Australia to deliver the Tenant Participation and Community Engagement (TPCE) program to "support social housing tenants to access information and services, connect with their local communities and participate in housing and

community issues which affect their lives".

The immediate implication is that Waterloo tenants have to get future support from Mission Australia's TPCE workers. The TPCE Program Guidelines with DCJ State and Sydney District Requirements are on the REDWatch website. Tenants can then take up any support issues with Mission Australia, and DCJ district and state officials that manage the contract obligations.

TPCE replaced tenant support services provided locally by ISV and Counterpoint in December 2018 and DCJ moved funding that supported community gardeners until 2016 to another disadvantaged community as it only supported a small number of tenants in Waterloo.

Using the City of Sydney as cover to cease funding needs closer examination. The Waterloo Metro proponents undertook engagement when DPIE was the consent authority. LAHC does not have to stop support because the City is the consent authority.

The independent support positions were for the preparation of the masterplan. LAHC has yet to finish its master planning for the rest of the site. This and the promised Human Services Plan and Community Facilities consultations will happen without these workers.

NGOs argued the positions were needed for the life of the project, not just master planning. The Social Sustainability Study recommends crucial elements, such as community development,

place making, community facilities and human service planning be "part of the procurement for the redevelopment". This works when LAHC relocates everyone for a redevelopment like at Ivanhoe. LAHC puts future requirements into the contract so the developers pay for it during the development or in ongoing operations.

LAHC has submitted a plan for only 37 per cent of the estate's public housing units. At procurement, the developer will be responsible for its part of the site. LAHC has said it is unlikely there would only be one developer on such a large site.

Until they were redeveloped there would be no developer-delivered benefits to deliver social sustainability for the rest of the estate and the 500 public housing properties in the adjoining conservation area.

There are major problems and gaps in leaving community development, community facilities planning and place making until procurement. They have nothing to do with the consent authority.

One breakthrough in the ministerial response was a commitment to deliver a Human Services Plan for Waterloo. It is to be led by the Housing and Property Group within the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment (DPIE) with support from DCJ. LAHC sits within this DPIE group.

SSH

Geoff Turnbull handles SSH  
Urban Design content and is a  
co-spokesperson of REDWatch.





Felipe Vilches at 107 Projects. Photo: Andrew Collis

## A creative hub at the centre of community

### LOCALS

ANDREW COLLIS

**REDFERN:** Felipe Vilches is a resident artist at 107 Projects on Redfern Street. A visual artist, poet and musician, he is also a sound engineer and radio presenter (with several years' experience at Koori Radio 93.7FM).

"Initially, I wanted to use [the studio] as my own artistic space," Felipe says. "But then there's also a multimedia room here, so I can use that as a music room, as a recording space. I felt it was important to use the art studio in a way that I had set out in my residency brief – to share the space, to bring artists together, bring them out of their silos."

Felipe is excited to have met a

young Aboriginal artist, Jessica Tobin, with whom he now shares the studio. "Jess does a lot of canvas art, and also art on clothing and fabric, as well as working with her dad."

Artist Ana Maria also works in the space. "Apart from painting, Ana does beading," Felipe explains. "She learned beading from traditional elders in Colombia, so spent time over there learning the craft. She also helps support people in South America, families who do this work and send beading over here as well."

Felipe and Ana have recently joined Aimee Flores's podcast platform Sangre Migrante (Migrant Blood). The three artists host a podcast called Between Sacred Lands. "It's about three artists reflecting on what it means to be both Australian and Latin-American. We invite listeners

to join us as we delve into everything from racism to music."

Felipe, whose family are from Chile, is aware that many South Americans are suffering right now. "With Covid-19, it's a very, very different situation over there," he says. "Many governments are just letting people go, letting things happen. In other places there's giant lockdown. And there's no real health system. Intensive care, all of that is very different. So people are just checking in with their families and making sure that they're fine. I think that's the biggest thing from migrants who are here now."

SSM

107 is not currently open to the general public. Major partner the City of Sydney is providing limited access to community facilities and services. Follow on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date.

## Pemulwuy – hands up to live there!

### SPONSORED

AMANDA FLEMING

**REDFERN:** As promised the Aboriginal Housing Company is about to deliver affordable housing for our people first in the "Pemulwuy Project", Redfern.

Our wonderful new housing will be ready by the end of the year and we encourage any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for an apartment or townhouse through our website. Please read through our eligibility criteria before submitting any applications online.

Our dream has always been to create a positive future for the next generation that starts with housing. Children will have the chance to grow up at Pemulwuy, in a proud, strong and safe urban community.

The "Pemulwuy Project" is about giving our future generation a hand up, not a hand out. We want to give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the opportunity to live at Pemulwuy with modern housing that is culturally appropriate, centred around the core values of family and community.

"We have always had faith that this vision for our people was going to happen, it was just a matter of when," says Michael Mundine, CEO, Aboriginal Housing Company Ltd.

The affordable housing consists of 26 generously sized apartments and 36 large townhouses. Internal fit-outs in the apartments are being finished level by level this month, with carpets being laid and fixtures being completed. Construction of the townhouses is in progress and, as each week passes, they are also making great headway.



Mick Mundine is proud that the Aboriginal Housing Company will soon provide affordable modern housing that is culturally appropriate at Pemulwuy. Photo: Amanda Fleming



Authorised by Michael Mundine, CEO, Aboriginal Housing Company Limited

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**Jenny Leong MP**  
STATE MEMBER FOR NEWTOWN

Our inner city community has a significant amount of public housing – with many of those in our neighbourhood living in high-rise buildings. So it was with shock that we watched the situation unfold in Melbourne which saw the Victorian Government go in hard with a police lockdown of whole public housing communities without any warning.



As this unfolded, we immediately got in touch with the NSW Premier, relevant Ministers and the Department of Community and Justice to seek urgent assurance that nothing similar would be done in Sydney – and to ensure all was being done to prevent a COVID-19 outbreak in our public housing communities.

Our office has been working closely with tenants and local organisations on the ground to ensure everyone in the Newtown electorate is kept as safe and as supported as possible – particularly those living in high density social housing across the inner city.

As a direct result of our advocacy, we are pleased to report that significant action has been taken in line with the concerns raised by those living in public housing. This includes:

- ▶ A commitment that any response to a COVID-19 case or cluster in public housing would be led by NSW Health, that notice would be given, and that plans for if there was to be an outbreak including clear communication with tenants has been established
- ▶ Cleaners on site 7am to 7pm, seven days per week cleaning and disinfecting high traffic areas and touch points in high density blocks
- ▶ Hand sanitiser in the main entrance of high rise tower blocks
- ▶ Important COVID-19 Information in a variety of languages displayed in all public housing precincts, and delivered directly to tenants
- ▶ A full audit of all shared laundry facilities to identify and replace any faulty machines by the end of September, in order to allow for greater social distancing and to prevent residents having to travel across floors and buildings

We have also written directly to all those living in public housing high-rise, to ensure that they have the necessary contact numbers and health advice.

**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

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# Pandemic is teaching us how to respond to climate change

AMY CHENG

**RESPONSES to the Covid-19 pandemic offers lessons on how climate change can be addressed, an Australian social researcher and expert on social trends has said.**

Although the pandemic has meant that climate change has not been prominent in recent public discourse, Rebecca Huntley believes responses to the pandemic should bring confidence that people can come together to address climate change.

Ms Huntley launched her book *How to Talk About Climate Change in a Way That Makes a Difference* in July and has spent the past few months researching what the pandemic could mean for climate change.

Governments have shown a respect for experts, she said, with more reliance on their opinions to guide public and policy responses to the pandemic.

"I think that should be a model for how politicians deal with crises and has been lacking in so many politicians' responses to climate change," she said.

There has also been a dramatic change in people's behaviours to protect others from Covid.



Coming from a position of empathy is important when discussing climate change. Photo: SS4C

"That willingness to change behaviour to protect the collective and to protect the broader community, and particularly the most vulnerable ... If we can maintain that, even as things start to get more dire, that's a really good example of the strength of our society," she said.

Her book helps people to

understand their emotional responses to climate change and aims to break the climate silence.

There are people who are very vocal about climate change and people on the other side trying to shut down the debate, according to Ms Huntley.

"I want everybody in the middle to start to feel like they

can have a conversation about climate change," she said.

"You don't have to be a climate scientist, you don't have to be across all the facts and figures, and you don't even really need to be certain in your views ... but climate change is something that is going to affect us all."

Each chapter of her book

addresses a different emotion. Ms Huntley believes that understanding emotions is key to understanding humans.

"Climate change is largely a human-caused issue and humans will need to drive the solutions," she said.

"So, we need to understand the complex ways in which human beings respond to information, particularly information that is confronting and difficult."

To start a conversation about climate change, Ms Huntley recommends people begin by working out their own emotional reactions and then seeking to understand and empathise with people who feel differently about it.

"So, coming from a position not of judgement but of empathy," she said.

All emotional responses to climate change make sense, according to Ms Huntley, and they can be both productive and destructive.

"Yelling at your uncle at Christmas because he doesn't believe in climate change is probably not the best use of your time and energy, and is probably not going to be effective," she said.

*How to Talk About Climate Change in a Way That Makes a Difference*, Rebecca Huntley \$32.99, Murdoch Books, 2020

## 'We are the change' for LGBTIQ+ young people

### HUMAN AFFAIRS

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

**ON August 28, Wear it Purple Day celebrated its 10th Anniversary, and I helped a colleague write a speech for one of its events.**

Wear it Purple was created in response to the suicide of New Jersey teen, Tyler Clementi, who took his own life after being publicly "outed" as gay by his roommate.

It was co-founded in 2010 by Burwood High school student Katherine Hudson and university student Scott Williams as an annual LGBTIQ+ awareness day especially for young people, based in Australia. It has since grown to be an international day of solidarity in which supporters wear purple to celebrate diversity and young people from the LGBTIQ+ community.

Businesses, councils, schools, community groups and clubs can participate by wearing purple and hosting events.

My research for the speech revealed some chilling statistics – and behind them myriad struggles.

Namely: LGBTIQ young people between the ages of 16 and 27 are five times more likely than their peers to attempt suicide, transgender people over 18 are nearly 11 times more likely, and people with an intersex variation over 16 are nearly six times more likely.

Clearly, as the 2020 Snapshot



On its 10th anniversary, the Wear It Purple Day theme calls people to recognise 'We are the change'. Photo: Supplied

of *Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Statistics for LGBTIQ People* states, this higher risk of suicidal behaviours and poorer mental health outcomes is directly related to experiences of stigma, prejudice, discrimination and abuse on the basis of being LGBTIQ.

Meaning: there are real dangers for our young people in expressing the realities of their sexuality and gender identities – and there is a lot more work for us all to do to before they feel safe.

Another thing I discovered is there is not a huge amount of research about LGBTIQ+ people's experiences of family – or how these experiences vary for people who also identify as culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD).

This dearth is concerning given

that 28.6 per cent of LGBTIQ young people aged 16 to 27 identify with a racial or ethnic background other than Anglo-Celtic and that 18 per cent of them report having experienced a conflict between their cultural background and their sexuality or gender identity.

One relatively recent research paper unearthed by ACON, Western Sydney University and the NSW LGBTIQ Domestic & Family Violence Interagency, shows that while CALD LGBTIQ+ people experience high levels of family violence at the time of coming out and during events like the Marriage Equality vote, families are also an incredible source of support when CALD LGBTIQ+ are accepted by their families and wider communities.

One gay Tongan man cited recalled the same-sex marriage debate exposing homophobic attitudes in his family.

"It was really heartbreaking to see your family say they love you unconditionally, but they will never accept your sexuality."

Another gay man with a Spanish and Italian background said, "We cannot rely on family in ways that straight people take for granted."

"We can never feel fully at home in either our heritage culture nor in Australian society or even in the queer community."

### COVID-19 increase

Dynamic modelling of the adverse impacts of COVID-19 on unemployment, social dislocation, and mental health shows there may be a 25 per cent increase in suicides, and it is likely that about 30 per cent of those will be among young people.

In a joint statement distributed in May, AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, and leading mental health



The Women's Reconciliation Network (WRN) is collecting donations (small and large) towards the Pat Zinn Scholarship established by the Older Women's Network. Pat was a quiet spirit guide and companion to many. She attended the significant Celebration of the Women's Gathering in Sydney, 1996. Soon after this inaugural gathering, Pat became one of the Founding Members of the WRN. Photo: Supplied

experts, Professor Ian Hickie AC and Professor Patrick McGorry AC, said this tragically higher rate is likely to persist for up to five years if the economic downturn lasts more than 12 months.

"Such a death rate is likely at this stage to overshadow the number of deaths in Australia directly attributable from to COVID-19 infection," they said.

The trio identified seven actions needed to address the crisis, including the expansion of youth mental health services, with particular focus on urgent assessment and support for engagement and participation in education and employment.

The Wear It Purple Day theme "We are the Change" also asks us to act now:

*Advocating for and empowering rainbow young people.*

*Celebrating and promoting the value of diversity and inclusion in communities and families.*

*Raising awareness about sexuality, sex and gender identity and challenging harmful social cultures.*

*Fighting bullying and discrimination to incorporate safety, inclusion and empowerment in our schools, workplaces and community services.*

*Championing rainbow role-models to help young people build the confidence to be who they are.*

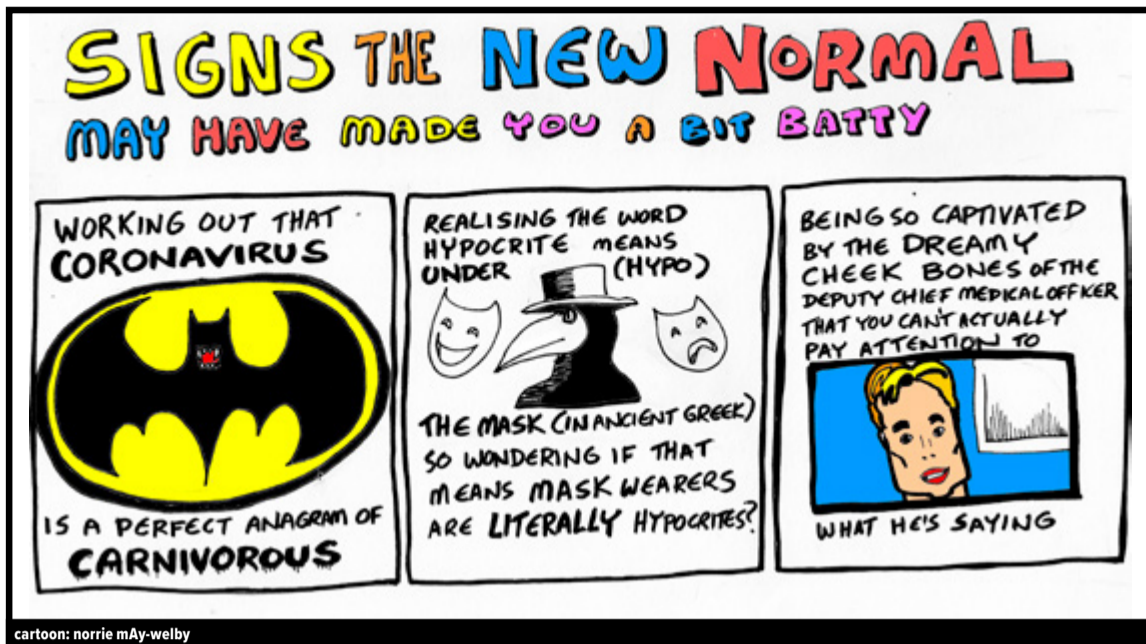
My colleague's speech ended with a more succinct call to action – and she delivered it beautifully.

"Let's do it, together," she said.

"In purple."

"We are the Change."





## September 25 – fund our future not gas

### EDITORIAL

SSH

**SCHOOL Strike 4 Climate (SS4C) and SEED Indigenous Youth Climate Network ask supporters to take part in a national day of action on September 25 and call on the government to “fund our future not gas”.**

Governments around the world are spending vast amounts to stimulate their economies in the wake of Covid-19. This is an opportunity to build the future we, our children and grandchildren can all thrive in by creating clean jobs that care for country, climate and our communities.

Instead the Australian government and its National Covid-19 Commission, which has heavy representation from the oil and gas industry, are planning to spend billions on expanding the gas industry – a potent contributor to climate change.

In a report released in August as part of an inquiry into Australia’s gas supply arrangements, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has criticised the gas industry for charging local gas users almost double the prices paid by overseas customers. And far from providing evidence for a “gas-led recovery”, the ACCC found that the industry was failing to support recovery for local industrial users and manufacturers.

The gas industry is one of the least labour-intensive industries in Australia – providing around one eighth as many jobs per dollar spent as the average for all Australian industries, according to the Australia Institute.

SS4C and SEED ask us all to host actions on September 25 in our suburbs, towns and homes, and then take to local and social media with a message to government to #FundOurFutureNotGas.

Covid-19 recovery funds should not be spent on gas and other damaging fossil fuel projects.

Instead, they should be spent on:

- Resourcing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led solutions that guarantee land rights and care for country
- The creation of jobs that fast-track solutions to the climate crisis and help communities recover
- Projects that transition our economy and communities to 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030, through expanded public ownership

Actions on the day can include an online group selfie, gathering with a small group in a park to take a photo with a banner, or creating a giant art installation. Wear yellow and make sure your action includes the words “fund our future not gas”.

.....  
[www.schoolstrike4climate.com/buildourfuture](http://www.schoolstrike4climate.com/buildourfuture)  
[environment@ssh.com.au](mailto:environment@ssh.com.au)

## A Buddhist response to Covid-19

### FAITH

DHARMACHARI DHARMANANDA

UNDER Covid-19 we find ourselves absorbed in a common experience of suffering. Previously we have perhaps known about many kinds of suffering, but often these were things “other people” or “other countries” suffered, but not ourselves.

The Buddhist perspective regards “suffering” as an ever-present common experience of human existence, and recognises that we have a deep wish to avoid it. But, for Buddhists, the many sufferings of Covid-19 are held in acceptance of the human situation.

Common sufferings we see under Covid-19 are uncertainty and death. Faced with these possibilities, we may well experience denial, anger, anxiety and many frustrations – but it doesn’t need to be this way. We can work collectively and individually with the great uncertainties and the shadow of death. Buddhist methods for cultivating mindfulness and practising compassion can help us all to overcome the underlying fears and anxieties of life with Covid-19.

Fear, anger and anxiety can take over our mindset, colour our thoughts, and make it harder to see and feel our way through the issues of Covid-19. We need something fairly simple that we can do at home to help restore a more grounded awareness of what’s happening in our lives, and to develop a compassion that is big enough to hold our collective response to Covid-19.

Buddhist practice centres around mindfulness: a grounded presence of mind, fully aware of our actions, speech and thoughts, and how our felt experience, emotions and

thoughts react to our predicament. We can start being mindful simply by being aware of our body as we quietly walk along. We can also try a fairly easy meditation, sitting quietly, carefully watching the breath come and go. Whatever we can do to be more mindful can help us to stem the reactive mindset that can arise from this crisis situation.

The measures we are asked to follow to contain Covid-19 call upon us to forego self-interest and put the communal good first. This compassion is the hallmark of Buddhist life. We again have direct ways to cultivate compassion “at home”. It starts with a quality of “mettā” – open friendliness-kindness. Sitting quietly, we can bring to mind what is good for ourselves, our friends and everyone in our community – wishing all to be well, happy and free from suffering. By acknowledging other people’s sufferings – ill-health, death, economic stress – we can take that feeling of mettā into a wish for all to be free of Covid sufferings, thus creating a compassion that brings us all closer together.

Some traditional Buddhist countries have done well in the management of Covid-19. Places like Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand have remarkably low infection and death rates. I believe their success must in some way reflect the worldview of the “ordinary” people. They have this deeper acceptance of suffering and an emotional preparedness to deal with trauma. They enjoy a more profound worldview of the interconnectedness, not just of all people, but of all life.

Covid-19 is no longer “unprecedented” it is our new normal and will be for some time. Let’s hope that we can learn to meet all the new challenges with mindfulness and love.

## Housing diversity and affordability in Waterloo

### COMMENT

PETER PHIBBS

**IF you want to get an idea of what’s wrong with housing policy and planning in Sydney, reading the Housing Diversity and Affordability study is a great place to start. It is written by HillPDA, whose speciality is financial feasibility analysis for property development.**

The study HillPDA has prepared is for Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC), which is responsible for the NSW government’s social housing portfolio. It is a public trading enterprise. LAHC wants to redevelop the government’s land holdings in Waterloo. The key to this approach is to sell off government-owned land to developers. How does LAHC justify this when we have such a shortage of social housing in Australia?

The number that LAHC has plucked out of the air is 70 per cent private and 30 per cent social as the ratio for housing on any

Sydney social housing renewal project. Apparently, when you get that mix, social housing tenants get the advantages of all those private sector neighbours who will offer them life tips and line up jobs for their children!

But as my colleagues Michael Darcy and Dallas Rogers point out in a recent article in *The Conversation*, there is no magic number and no evidence that a 70:30 split is optimum. After reviewing the extensive literature on this topic, they conclude: “Social mix renewals that apply a simplistic 70:30 target within a narrowly defined boundary around an ‘estate’ risk seriously undervaluing large public housing assets.”

In my view, the 70:30 mix seems more focused on saving the government money. A different mix might produce better outcomes for social housing tenants and reduce our shortage of social housing. Indeed, this is an ambition of the City of Sydney, which has the public view that it wants the site to work harder and has suggested a 50:50 split.

How do our friends at HillPDA deal with this debate between LAHC and the City of Sydney? They ignore it. Even though the report is about housing diversity and affordability, it doesn’t address this key debate.

The index refers to City Makers as “professionals, knowledge and key workers that support and enhance the effective operation of a global city”. I would like to think we all can be city makers – social housing tenants, shopkeepers, retired people, etc.

The report seems to work pretty hard to come up with the answer the client wants. HillPDA comes to the following conclusions in its analysis of housing affordability: “Retaining and/or improving housing choice within the study area and the City of Sydney is a real and growing challenge.

- Whilst historically a range of factors have enabled a diversity of dwelling and household types to reside within the Sydney LGA (such as social housing, lower entry costs, etc.), its growing attraction as a place to live is

positively influencing property prices which in turn increases barriers to affordability and therefore diversity.

- Of the households within the study area that were renting, 43 per cent were experiencing rental stress.
- The housing affordability challenge in Sydney is affecting more than just the socially disadvantaged or low income earners.
- Households on very low or low incomes cannot afford to rent a one- or two-bedroom apartment in the Sydney LGA. Households on a moderate income could afford a one-bedroom but not a two-bedroom apartment.”

So, despite the pretty obvious conclusion from this evidence that we have a shortage of affordable housing and that a target like the City of Sydney’s preferred option might be more apt – no, the answer is 5 per cent affordable!

It gets worse when we look at how we deliver the social housing in the renewed development.

On page 69 the report states:

“Of all approaches examined, the building-by-building approach

presents the lowest level of risk and based on community engagement sits most comfortably with **the majority** of tenants.”

A building-by-building approach is when you separate out the social housing tenants in one building and the private residents in another. This is LAHC’s preferred option. You get some more details on what tenants think in the consultation section on page 74:

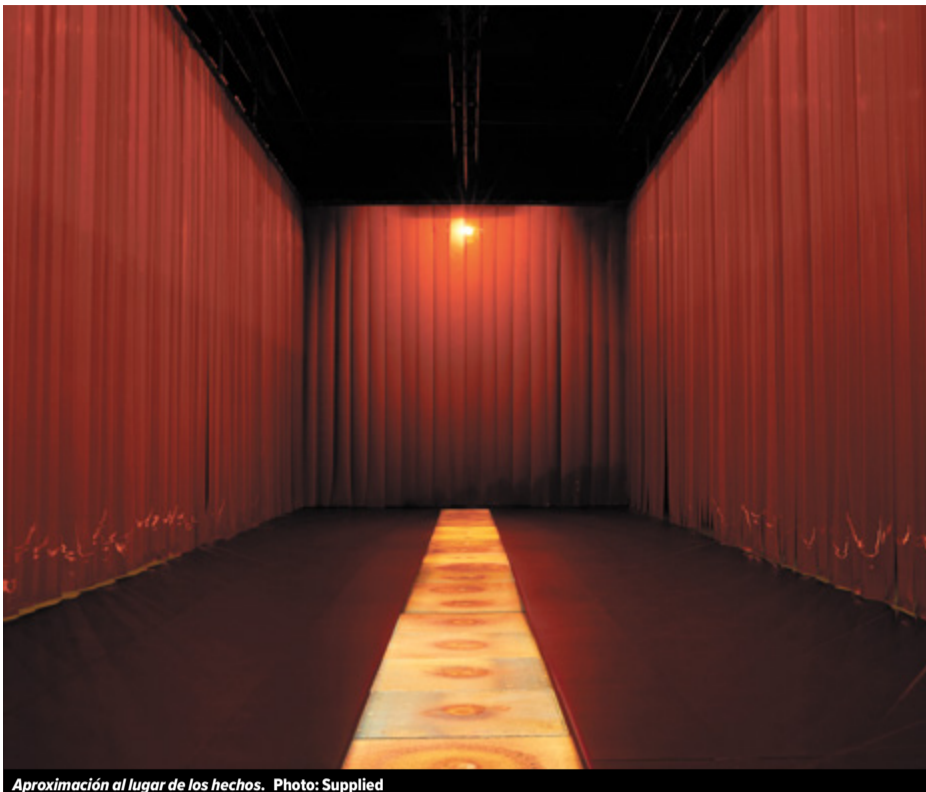
“46 per cent of respondents wanted social, affordable and private housing to be provided within the same building.  
 “26 per cent wanted social and affordable housing together within the same building, alongside private housing in separate buildings.  
 “16 per cent wanted all three types of housing to be separate.  
 “13 per cent had no preference.”

By my maths, the majority of tenants ask to be located in the same building – i.e., not a building-by-building approach. Maybe the consultation results aren’t important because tenants aren’t really city makers?

My one-word summary is ughhhhhh!

.....  
**Professor Peter Phibbs is Director of the Henry Halloran Trust at Sydney University.**





Aproximación al lugar de los hechos. Photo: Supplied

## Beauty, compassion – and a fierce message

### ART

ANNA NORTH

**CARRIAGEWORKS** was placed into voluntary administration on May 4. Two weeks later help came from philanthropists and the venue rose from the dead. The venue reopened to the public on August 7. Since that time, free access to a range of visual art, including eight new installations commissioned for the 22nd Sydney Biennale, have been on display.

*Aproximación al lugar de los hechos* (*Approach to the scene*), created by Teresa Margolles, is a work I was immediately drawn to for its beauty, compassion, and its fierce message.

Margolles was born in Culiacán, Mexico, in 1963. She originally trained as a forensic pathologist, and holds diplomas in science of communication and forensic medicine. She has been creating sculptural installations, photographs, films and performances about trauma and loss for over 25 years, and works closely with communities that have no access to systems of social care.

Her work as a forensic scientist informs and inspires her art, and her art explores and lays bare the relationship between poverty, violence, marginalisation, gender and the anonymous victims of violence who can't be identified but deserve to be mourned.

Margolles worked with a group of students from the National Art School in Sydney to create this installation. They sought out and visited 20 sites where violent acts, homicides and disappearances of women have taken place in Sydney and surrounding suburbs. They poured water onto the ground where the homicides and the disappearances of women took place, then absorbed small pieces of material left by each violent act.

The finished artwork, surrounded by red industrial plastic, shows 20 steaming iron plates onto which the drops of water, laced with the residue of violence, fall from above.

The effect is both churchlike and hellish. The silence accentuates the hiss of falling water, and the faint smell and proximity to a scalding hot iron combine to create an air of sinister yet sacred ceremony. See it if you dare ...

Welcome back Carriageworks!

SSH



Hiromi Tango, 'Heart', 2020, Textile, 35cm diameter. Photo: Aaron Anderson

## Art that flies beyond borders

### ART

SSH

**JAPANESE-AUSTRALIAN** artist, Hiromi Tango, says the series that make up her exhibition *New Now* represent an artistic response to overwhelming situations, and a quest for healing.

"How do we define now? How can we build resilience? How do we adapt to new realities? How can we build hope in this challenging time?"

The sculpture, paintings and drawings in *New Now* were developed in 2019 and 2020 – a period in which Tango's hometown of Tweed Heads was engulfed in bushfire and she was isolated from her ageing parents in Japan due to Covid-19.

Beginning with 'Kimono's Will', a series of colourful textile sculptures made from kimono fabric, Tango unwraps and resolves "the relationship between generations of women" and associated cultural expectations.

Through these works, she says, pain related to her complex relationship with her mother "released like the kite without thread, and I felt a heavy weight taken from me".

Having just negotiated this peace between her two worlds of Japan and Australia, the chaos of the bushfires began in late 2019.

"I remember feeling so helpless, watching the news while working overseas, and wanting to somehow heal the landscape."

From this came her series of drawings, the 'Healing Circles'. Beginning with the grey palette of the earth's pain and suffering, and working through the meditative process of drawing and redrawing, these finally evolved to encompass a bright palette of positivity and joy.

Next, Tango says, just as she and other Australians began to think they might recover from the bushfires, Covid-19 changed everyone's world radically and borders closed.

"Beyond Borders' captures that moment of deep anxiety, fearing for the safety of loved ones in Australia and in Japan, not knowing when or if we can meet again.

"I began to focus on the things we could still share even across the ocean, and imagined a bird that could fly beyond borders, and the perspective of all the ways that nature can still connect us through this time.

"The lockdown period has been so difficult for so many of us: isolation, lost income, uncertainty about the future. For my practice, it has also meant a time of reimagining how to create collective experiences that are joyful and uplifting, and that can help us all to feel connected at a time when we must be 'together apart'."

The final works – 'New', 'Now' and 'Heal' – focus on the things we can influence, Tango says, to find the beauty in the moment.

"Now' is where we discover our own ability to be resilient in the face of all the things we can't control."

SSH

*New Now* runs from September 3 – October 3, 2020, at Sullivan+Strumpf, 799 Elizabeth Street, Zetland.

## SSH Instagram Gallery

Tag your Instagram pics **#sshphotos** and we will include 5 of the best photos, from all suburbs in South Sydney, here each month. See all photos online:

[southsydneyherald.com.au](https://southsydneyherald.com.au)

SELECTED BY MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

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@munqw



@vintonn



# The Review

## Arts & Culture in Your Neighbourhood

### Stay Creative, Stay Connected – and funded

#### THEATRE

CATHERINE SKIPPER

**IT is difficult at any time for our small not-for-profit local organisations working to support vulnerable people to find sufficient funding. So, imagine the stress for Jodie Wainwright, CEO of the remarkable Milk Crate Theatre for less than a year, when she and her staff had to meet the challenges of Covid-19.**



Natural Order. Photo: Milk Crate Theatre

Milk Crate is well known for its performance work with people who have experienced homelessness through its annual production (who could forget 2019's multi-media welfare-recipients-eye-view of Centrelink's protocols) and it runs drama workshops throughout the year at the Ozanam Learning Centre, Woolloomooloo, the Exodus Foundation in Ashfield, and a youth program at Evolve Housing for Youth, Parramatta.

As the participants are not only people who experience unstable housing situations but

also addiction, disability and other mental health problems, Milk Crate makes a major contribution to the reduction in pressure on already overburdened mental health services. As Wainwright says, "It is not just about being part of a theatre project. [Participants] join a group, make lots of social connections, build their confidence. Many have experienced an aura of invisibility for years and they gain a voice through feeling they have contributed to something. The skills they learn and confidence they gain [in workshops] transfer directly to real life."

Regretfully, Wainwright says, Milk Crate made the decision to proactively suspend all its programs from March 18, 2020, onward until further notice. Aware that its community was particularly vulnerable, not just to the health challenges of Covid-19 but also to stress from increasing social isolation, Wainwright's small team – now working reduced hours and from home – initiated a basic program. Operating mainly through email they invited their participants to engage in simple writing tasks in response to a prompt. It was, Wainwright says, "something to get on with in life

and not just be sitting there stressing ... trapped in [their] own space."

Jobkeeper enabled Milk Crate to maintain a core staff, and without this support, says Wainwright, "we might have been forced into hibernation. It was scary." In addition, several grants, for instance, a Westpac Foundation Community Grant of \$10,000, enabled Milk Crate to make a transition to digital technologies and a fully developed online program, *Stay Creative, Stay Connected* came into being.

A range of videos aimed at maintaining a sense of community, fostering good health and prompting creative engagement were uploaded weekly. A 10-week series entitled "Devising Theatre", which included opportunities for discussion through Zoom, kept participants in touch with the skills needed to eventually (and hopefully) move into a new production – *Tiny Universe*.

While an effective means of lessening the impact of isolation, Wainwright felt its success was limited. Many of the Milk Crate community didn't have up-to-date devices or internet plans and, to some,

communicating through the internet was a complete mystery. However, the time has arrived when working together again in small groups is not far away. Wainwright looks forward to it as she feels "it's hard to get a creative flow in a digital environment".

However, one of the benefits of digitalising its programs has been the realisation that Milk Crate need no longer be bound by geographic boundaries. It can, for instance, implement workshops in regional NSW and there is the possibility of sharing its work with much wider audiences.

However, Wainwright foresees that a return to "normality" – and she doesn't think things will ever be quite the same again – will be a challenge financially even to an enterprise that is skilled in managing things on "the smell of an oily rag".

Milk Crate, along with Dress for Success, the Social Outfit, and the Women's and Girls' Emergency Centre, who also received Westpac Foundation Grants, will be competing for the donation dollar in a very competitive environment.




## TAKING 'EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST'

**Welcome to the PEMULWUY PROJECT in the heart of Redfern. Our fabulous new affordable housing is on track for completion and we are looking forward to moving in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tenants by the end of the year.**

PEMULWUY offers an amazing inner-city location across the street from Redfern Station. It is only 3km to the CBD and close to schools, university and EORA TAFE. Walk up the street to numerous cafés, shops and services or take a stroll down to Broadway and Central Park.



**PEMULWUY features:**

- ▶ 26 apartments with a mixture of 2 or 3 bedrooms
- ▶ 36 townhouses with a mixture of 2, 3 or 4 bedrooms
- ▶ Generous size floor plans for singles, couples and families
- ▶ Large balconies/terraces for outdoor living – townhouses also have courtyards
- ▶ Latest modern design and high-quality finishes throughout

To apply to live at Pemulwuy please fill out our "expression of interest" form online (NB: please check our eligibility criteria before applying).




[www.ahc.org.au/housing/applications](http://www.ahc.org.au/housing/applications)

# A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

After six months without performances, Belvoir St Theatre will re-open this month when *A Room of One's Own* takes to the stage from September 10 to October 18.

Adhering to strict Covid-safe guidelines, the theatre will stage this adaptation of Virginia Woolf's ground-breaking feminist essay by Carissa Licciardello and Tom Wright, starring the Helpmann Award-winning Anita Hegh (*Twelfth Night*, *The Seagull*, STC's *Harp in the South* and *The Resistible Ride of Arturo Ui*).

Originally scheduled to open at the theatre earlier this year, priority will be given to current ticket holders for the show, after which any available tickets will be made available to the general public for purchase.

[www.belvoir.com.au](http://www.belvoir.com.au)



# The Reviews



## Film Review by Lindsay Cohen

### Tenet

Director: Christopher Nolan

Stars: John David Washington,

Robert Pattinson, Elizabeth Debicki

Genre: Forward to the past

I'd love to be able to tell you what *Tenet* is about but I'm not sure I really can. To say that this is a time-travel sci-fi film really doesn't do it justice. Time isn't travelled so much as it is scrunched up and folded over multiple times, a bit like toilet paper but without the satisfying conclusion after the initial effort. Beyond trying to save the world, from what or whom I'm not really sure, I can't elaborate on any plot lines or enlighten you with any insights.

That's not to say that *Tenet* is a bad film. Far from it. Like any good sci-fi offering there are impressive special effects including a real 747 being driven into a real building.

Then it all gets difficult and complicated when parts of the action go backwards, though this does make for the most extraordinary and sometimes confusing fight scenes ever in cinema where one protagonist or battle group moving forward through time battles another moving backwards. Give an Academy Award to the choreographers and editors.

But to what purpose is difficult to grasp. Just when you think you know what's going on, the scene changes for reasons at best loosely understood, and while you try to come to terms with the

dual timelines you also try to grapple with the why. I do wonder if any of the actors understood what they were doing while performing. Unlikely, so full credit to them because across the board they are good, even Michael Caine, though he was one of the few that didn't travel through time. I think. Probably.

In a post-Covid world where everything is either too real or two weird, *Tenet* is the perfect film to blow your mind on your return to the cinema, but in a good way.

Rating: Half-and-a-three.

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



## Theatre Review by Catherine Skipper

### Why not binge watch STC Virtual?

The Sydney Theatre Company is plugging the large "theatre-shaped" hole left by the forced closure of public venues to prevent the spreading of Covid-19. Rather than using archival material to ensure that audiences and artists stay connected, STC chose to present a series of short videos featuring well-known actors, writers and directors.

The videos came in weekly instalments with in-home actors either performing original commissions from STC's Emerging Writers Group (EWG), excerpts from plays in which they had performed (or were about to perform), and speeches, poems and passages of prose which they found personally meaningful. A key initiative in keeping artists and theatre in the public eye,

and providing some employment in a difficult time, STC Virtual also provided an attractive platform from which to appeal for much needed donations to an entertainment industry in crisis.

Writers from the EWG jump-started the series. An engaging Miranda Tapsell gives a lively performance of *Tiger Scare* (writer, Wendy Mocke), which satirises airline peculiarities but also pays a tribute to the wisdom of Aunties. Both funny and moving, *Ex Utero* (Jordan Fulcher), performed by an utterly convincing Stephanie Somerville, explores a pivotal shift in power in a mother-daughter relationship. While in *Lebanese BBQ* (James Elazzi) Priscilla Doueihy gives a sensitive portrayal of a young woman's "betrayal" of her protective father as she pursues a desirable stranger.

The wide-ranging series features two favourite Australian theatre presences, Tim Minchin and Hugo Weaving, both of whom chose to read monologues from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. To play the Danish prince is something both actors have always wished to do – and both disclaim the likelihood of ever being invited to play this role – the difference in their approach is personally revealing.

Revealing also, and fascinating, is the moment that Shari Stebbins becomes Medea (*Black Medea*) and Helen Thomson transforms into Elizabeth I (*Mary Stuart*), and the moment that each returns to their everyday self. Astonishing, in fact, is the rapid transition made by Stebbins from Rose-in-meltdown (*Black is the New White*) back to friendly Shari. Stebbins, a Richard Wherrett fellow at the STC, shows her versatility – playing several different roles throughout the series.

There is so much to see: Tracey Mann reading a savage critique of the '50s from *Home, I'm Darling* and Glace Chase giving a heart-breaking monologue from *Triple X* – both plays that were on the verge of opening only to be cancelled. There are excerpts from the tried and true: Stebbins and Luke Carrol in a scene from Kylie Coolwell's *Battle of*

*Waterloo*, Stebbins and an hilarious Ash Flanders in *Blackie, Blackie, Brown* and that unforgettable speech by Tommy Ryan (Hamish Michael) in *How to Rule the World*.

All this and more, so watch STC Virtual now. Binge, and why not?

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



## Book Review by Catherine DeMayo

*A Room Made of Leaves*

Kate Grenville

Text Publishing, 2020

"A playful dance of possibilities between the real and the invented" is how Text Publishing promotes Kate Grenville's *A Room Made of Leaves*. "What if Elizabeth Macarthur, wife of the notorious John Macarthur ... had written a shockingly frank secret memoir?"

Of course, she didn't (so far as we know), so Grenville has used her imagination to fill in the details of how a historical figure may have thought and acted. (*A Room Made of Leaves*, her sixteenth book, is the fourth in a series of colonial novels, beginning with *A Secret River* in 2005.)

Most of the key historical facts are true, though Grenville takes a few liberties. The fictional Mrs Macarthur, like the real one, sails with husband John from England, pregnant and with a toddler in tow. We hear of John Macarthur's notorious public life through Elizabeth, who is vastly relieved when circumstances force him to spend years in England while she remains in Parramatta.

The rest is Grenville's imagination, from Elizabeth's dislike of her narcissistic bully of a husband to her afterwards spent in the embrace of Mr Dawes, the astronomer, in the leafy room of the title.

While *A Room Made of Leaves* quotes letters written by the real Elizabeth Macarthur, the fictional Elizabeth explains that her letters were always written knowing her husband would read them, as would many others besides the intended recipient. This gives Grenville wide license to present a character very different from the Elizabeth whose actual letters survive.

Her descriptions of her new home's natural beauty are among some of the book's best prose: "Each step revealed a new marvel: a view through the bushes of a slice of harbour rough and blue like lapis, a tree with bark of such a smooth pink fleshiness that you could expect it to be warm, and overhang of rock with a fraying underside, soft as cake, that glowed yellow ... There was an almost frightening breadth and depth and height to the place."

Books like *A Room Made of Leaves* present us with a character who may or may not have said, done, or thought the things we read. This gives the author almost carte blanche, for who can dispute what someone might have thought?

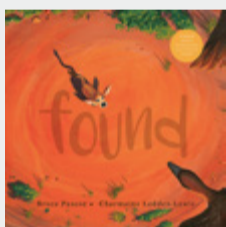
Yet it seems farfetched to have the fictional Elizabeth, 40 years on, chiding herself for being a thief for "every one of those forty years" because "I am not prepared to give them (the Indigenous people) back what has always been theirs". In fact, the real Elizabeth Macarthur referred to the Aborigines as "complete savages ... lawless and troublesome" and lamented that "Our settlements are constantly subjected to their depredations." Why Grenville felt the need to imbue her with such a noble outlook is puzzling and seems more tokenistic than realistic.

Still, this is a minor criticism of a book that is well researched and well written, and which, unusually, tells Australian colonial history from a female perspective.

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

## Five things to inspire connection

SELECTED BY MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES



### Found

*Found* has some of the most adorable cow drawings you'll ever see; their limpidly lashed eyes and big wet noses nuzzling you from the page. Blue Mountains artist, and descendant of the Bundjalung people, Charmaine Ledden-Lewis, has engaged beautifully with Bruce Pascoe's story of a calf who gets separated from his family. It seems her matriarchal lineage – "a living legacy of the Stolen Generation" – helped her connect deeply with this delicate lost-and-found story. Writer, Bruce Pascoe, best known for *Dark Emu*, is of Tasmanian, Bunurong and Yuin descent, and this is his first children's picture book. Read it with your kids until the cows come home!



### Respect

*Respect* is the first title in the "Our Place" series of four children's picture books which welcome and introduce children to important elements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. It has a quiet grace that shimmers through its red deserts and flowing waters – luring readers to listen to Indigenous wisdom about how to treat people and the earth with courtesy and consideration. Lisa Kennedy's illustrations are luscious and vivid – complementing Fay Stewart-Muir's and Sue Lawson's pared back text. Stewart-Muir is a Boonwurrung Elder from south-east Victoria and Kennedy is a descendant of the coastal Trawlwoolway people of north-east Tasmania.



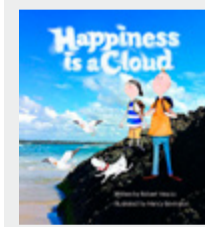
### Family

*Family*, the second book in the "Our Place" series, is a simple story encapsulating an important message about "listening to Aunties, Uncles, Elders and Ancestors," and finding a place to belong. Fay Stewart-Muir's and Sue Lawson's text shows that families can be as different as the stars in the sky – but kinship can be humanity's mainstay. Jasmine Seymour's touching illustrations support the message that we all need to learn how to honour the deep currents that connect us. Seymour is a Darug woman who wants everyone to know through her books that the Darug mob are still here and still strong.



### Decolonisation

If you want to know how to be a good ally to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, *Living on Stolen Land*, is the perfect primer. Ambelin Kwaymullina, writer, illustrator and legal academic from the Palyku people of the Pilbara region of Western Australia, asks readers to challenge settler thoughts and behaviours relating to stolen lands, sovereignties, systemic bias and more. Kwaymullina says, "I hope my book helps people to make a start, or to continue on their journeys, towards a decolonised Australia." She writes: *There are no trees / rivers / hills / stars / that were not / are not / someone's kin.*



### Clouds

When the *Peanuts* gang are lying looking at clouds, Linus sees the stoning of Stephen, the Apostle Paul, and the painter and sculptor Thomas Eakin. When Lucy asks Charlie Brown what he sees, he says, "I was going to say I saw a ducky and a horsie, but I changed my mind." No pressure! In *Happiness is a Cloud* Robert Vescio (author) and Nancy Bevington (illustrator) have captured the ups and downs of a young boy's emotional life, with Harry seeing flying pigs, a rhinoceros ... and finally happiness. Read it outside with your kids and ask them what they see and feel.



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**VOLUNTEERS' NEWS**

PAT CLARKE

**Hooray, it's spring!**

Isn't it lovely to see all the flowers and trees in bloom, and for the days to be getting a bit longer and warmer. It's a pity I keep forgetting to plant my seeds for a spring showing.

One way to enjoy the outburst of spring, besides looking at your neighbour's gardens, is to experience the Royal Botanic Gardens for an explosion of scent and colour.

The *Calyx in Bloom* exhibit is a new display which explores a world of colour and light in flowers, with over 20,000 plants on show. It is open daily from 10am to 4pm, and entry is by donation. There is a very nice café, and you can explore further the Garden Shop and purchase plants from the Growing Friends Plant Sales at the Nursery. Tours with an Aboriginal guide are available on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Learn all about the Gardens and find a map at [www.rbgsgyd.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rbgsgyd.nsw.gov.au).

**This time last year** we said a farewell to Tripod Café in Abercrombie Street, but in the last few months it has reopened for business as **Eatz**, with a slightly different décor, but the same good food and friendly staff. We wish them and all our other local small businesses the best of luck in these harder times.

**Marrickville Library**

For a number of years now I've been delivering copies of the *South Sydney Herald* to

the old Marrickville Library in the basement of Marrickville Town Hall, and then to the new Library and Pavilion, prior to the Covid-19 lockdown and closures. When the Library reopened, I was informed that the SSH was no longer welcome at the Library, as it was not relevant to the Inner West and its Council area. As you can imagine, I'm very disappointed at such a narrow outlook, as there are now no longer any local papers for library users to take home.

**SSH Instagram Gallery**

Have you caught up with our Instagram Gallery, [www.southsydneyherald.com.au](http://www.southsydneyherald.com.au)?

If you are a keen photographer, or would just love to see your photo(s) in one of our issues, tag your instagram pics #sshphotos with a chance to be included in the best five photos each month. We love local photos here at the SSH.

**Next Volunteers' Meeting  
September 5, from 2pm**

This will be a Zoom meeting, and you can find details of how to access the meeting:  
[www.southsydneyherald.com.au/subscribe](http://www.southsydneyherald.com.au/subscribe).

Until next time, keep safe; wear a mask if you can on public transport and at the shops, and other places where social distancing isn't possible.

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)

**REDWatch**

REDWatch will meet 6pm Thursday September 3 to discuss:  
**The Future of Eveleigh**

Join via **Zoom meeting** – ID: 880 4767 1010 (Passcode: 133341) or join by phone on 8015 6011.

If you want to be involved in this conversation but cannot participate online then contact Adam at [wrcd@counterpointcs.org.au](mailto:wrcd@counterpointcs.org.au) or phone **02 9698 9569**.

The October REDWatch meeting is the Annual General Meeting with a focus on broadening community involvement.

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



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F: 02 9230 3352  
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# Chloe channels success

**SPORT**

STEVE TURNER

**AUSTRALIAN swimmer Chloe McCardel recently crossed the English Channel for the 35th time – surpassing the men’s record for the most crossings from England to northern France. The 35-year-old left Dover about 5am (AEST) before reaching France in 10 hours and 40 minutes.**

Prior to the 35-kilometre swim, McCardel’s tally for Channel crossings was equal to British swimmer Kevin Murphy’s men’s record, which was set in 2006. Her successful attempt means only one swimmer has crossed the channel more times than she has.

McCardel, who has crossed the channel four times in recent weeks, is still eight swims short of equalling Alison Streeter’s women’s record of 43 crossings. The Melbourne-raised Sydneysider already holds multiple world records, including the longest unassisted ocean swim in the Bahamas.

**Tszyu too good for Horn**

Boxer Tim Tszyu and his team are already planning their next move after an emphatic victory over Jeff Horn in Townsville on August 26. Tszyu was dominant from the opening round and it

was clear he had taken giant strides between fights as he toyed with Horn for eight rounds before it was stopped before the ninth.

Looking every inch a world-class fighter in the mould of his legendary father Kostya, the 25-year-old IBF Australasian Super Welterweight and WBO Global Super Welterweight champion has now won 16 consecutive fights.

**Tour alters podium presentation**

The Tour de France is ceasing its tradition of having two hostesses handing out prizes on the podium, opting for a gender-equal ceremony, the race director said in late August.

“You used to see the champion flanked with two hostesses, with five local representatives on one side and five sponsor representatives on the other,” Christian Prudhomme told reporters. “Now, it’s going to be different, with one local representative and one representative of the yellow jersey sponsor, with one host and one hostess for the first time.”

The Tour de France started in Nice on August 29.

**South Sydney makes a statement**

South Sydney has not kept a club scoreless since Round 11 of 2014 against the Sharks, which was the last year the Rabbitohs won the premiership. Rugby league reporter John Lanzky says



Australian swimmer Chloe McCardel crosses the English Channel for the 35th time. Photo: Supplied

Souths’ emphatic 38-0 victory over Parramatta at Bankwest Stadium on August 27 is a sign the team is on track for glory in 2020.

Cody Walker and Adam Reynolds combined brilliantly. Rookies Steven Marsters and Jaxson Paulo created opportunities throughout the

game. Latrell Mitchell caused havoc in the first half before suffering a hamstring injury and spending the remainder of the night on the bench with ice strapped to his leg. Sadly, Mitchell will now miss the rest of the season.

The win was Souths’ first

against a top-four side this season – and a clear statement of intent.

Next up the Rabbitohs face the Storm at ANZ Stadium, the Tigers at Bankwest, then the Bulldogs and Roosters. If the team keeps playing this well, anything can happen – even dancing in the street come late October!

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This project is supported through The City of Sydney's Community Services Grant (Covid-19)