



President's Report TATA 2015 -2016

A great deal has been accomplished by TATA during the past 12 months, including facilitation of sharing in/for professional learning, social/professional networking, successful lobbying resulting in policy revision, and opportunities for art teachers to exhibit their art. This report outlines the accomplishments and services that TATA has provided to its membership over the past 12 months (2015-2016).

2015 – 2016

- **TATA Professional Learning**

- *Open Classrooms*

Since last October, TATA has supported a number of teachers from around the state to host their own Open Classroom. The Open Classrooms provide an opportunity for informal and relaxed sharing of resources, challenges and learning for art teachers. A key feature of the Open Classrooms is the reciprocal benefits, where the host teacher obtains feedback from their peers in relation to the learning sequence and associated learning resources/students work samples they share with participants, and participating teachers have the opportunity to explore different art departments, gaining insight into how particular learning experiences are delivered. So far, Riverside High School (Kathryn Kahl and Caz Saunders), Launceston Church Grammar School (Alicen Kaye) and Elizabeth College (Jane Giblin) have hosted Open Classrooms, and we warmly invite TATA members to take up this opportunity for reciprocal learning and host an Open Classroom. TATA provides guidance and support in the form of helping host teachers decide what it is they want to share and how to best realise the outcomes they wish to achieve. TATA also promotes the opportunities across the TATA network. So far, the events have been very well received by hosts and participants alike. On behalf of TATA, thank you to those schools and teachers who have hosted and contributed to these events.

- *Aboriginal Art in your classroom: A Tasmanian perspective*

Last December, Bill Baker (with contribution from Theresa Sainty and Abbey MacDonald) organised and led an excellent PL session at the University of Tasmania. The session sought to begin a conversation aimed at assisting teachers to build their confidence to teach culturally sensitive curriculum content and support students in their learning. The session was attended by 15 art teachers from the North of the state.

Thank you to Bill Baker and Theresa Sainty for your efforts in developing and delivering this professional learning opportunity.

- **TATA Banner**

We have now invested in a large pull down banner to display at TATA functions. Thank you to Scott Cunningham for his design and organization of the TATA banner.



- **TATA in the press**

TATA has enjoyed a range of different press coverage over the past 12 months, most of which is centred around our exhibition of teacher artworks. Two articles have been published in the Examiner; one in August last year for *Beyond the Classroom*, and the other in March this year for *Out of Control*. *Beyond the Classroom* also drew the attention of Southern Cross, who ran a three minute segment on Southern Cross News.

Further to the publicity obtained through our teacher exhibitions, I was contacted and interviewed by the *Australian Teacher Magazine*, who had come across our Open Classroom activities via the TATA Facebook news feed. They printed a review of the TATA Open Classroom concept in their May edition.

- **TATA Lobbying and Advocacy**

- *Life drawing in Tasmanian Schools*

After persistent lobbying for more than 12 months, TATA has achieved the revision of the DoE policy, which insisted life drawing models be partially clad for life drawing sessions in schools. Until recently, and for the past 18 months, a change was made to the DoE's policy regarding nude models that meant DoE students were disadvantaged by not being able to engage in authentic life drawing, which has been successfully offered and facilitated in Tasmanian Colleges for many years. Due to our persistence and advocacy, that revision has now been amended to ensure equal opportunity for all Tasmanian college aged students to engage in authentic life drawing experiences.

This process involved collection of petition signatures from Heads of Art Departments and art teachers from around the state, several researched letters to both the Deputy Secretary of the DoE, our Education Minister, Jeremy Rockliff, and the Shadow Education minister, Michelle O'Byrne. The TCoTA also lent their support in providing letters of objection and accompanying signatures.

As a result of persisting with our well researched and compelling argument, we were able to achieve a revision to the policy, which now enable DoE students access to the same authentic learning experience their Independent and Catholic schools counterparts have access to. TATA have achieved a positive outcome for life drawing in Tasmanian DoE schools. Thank you to those councillors who contributed their patience, expertise and tenacity to achieve this advocacy win.

- *Proposed changes to the national curriculum*

In August last year, Bill Baker and Abbey MacDonald penned a joint letter from TATA and TASME outlining our concern regarding the propose changes to the Australian Curriculum: The Arts to communicate our rejection of the notion that dance, drama and media art become electives within the Arts strand. Letters were sent to Christopher Pyne and Jeremy Rockliff, and a reply was received from Jeremy Rockliff, noting and thanking us for raising our concerns.



➤ *Lowering of school starting age*

A letter was crafted outlining the importance of Arts-based play for cultivating imagination, creativity and problem-solving in early childhood, and concerns that lowering the starting age for school would negatively implicate upon these important experiences for Tasmanian children. This letter was sent to our Education Minister, Jeremy Rockliff.

- **TATA social networking at MONA**

In February this year, Miriam Berkery (TATA Secretary) organised a very enjoyable social event for TATA members at the Gilbert and George retrospective, MONA. MONA curators and their Front of House shared with attendees some interesting insights into how the retrospective came together. The event was well attended (30+ teachers from around the state) and enjoyed by those who attended. It was noted that this (or a comparable) event presented an excellent opportunity to provide further PL, where TATA could organise an additional guest speaker to present to attendees. This will allow us to maximise the opportunity of drawing together a large contingent of art teachers from around the state.

Thanks to Miriam Berkery for your efforts vested in organising this event for our members, and to Tim Frost for collecting monies and distributing receipts on the day.

- **TATA Constitution Update**

The TATA Constitution document has not been updated since 2009, and it was decided that it was timely for the document to be revisited to ensure it best reflected the evolving objectives and goals of the association. Earlier in the year, TATA council was invited to review the document and provide feedback as to what could be amended/removed/improved to best reflect our objectives and purposes. The feedback was been further reviewed by a small group of councillors. The suggestions will be considered and changes will be actioned by myself, who will then hand over to Vice President Katie Wightman for final review. Thank you to those councillors who have contributed their feedback/suggestions for amendments for the TATA constitution – It will result in a sound guiding document to reflect TATA's vision as an evolving organisation over the coming years. It is anticipated that the revised Constitution will be ready for endorsement for our next council meeting in December 2016.

- **TATA Regional Planning Days**

It was noted at the 2015 AGM that our members sought opportunities to informally meet with TATA council to share ideas for TATA activities, and to learn more about how they might contribute to the work we can do as a volunteer organisation. Two sessions were held; one in Hobart and one in Launceston, from which we collected a number of excellent ideas from our larger membership body. Our Open Classrooms eventuated as a direct result of discussions from these events, and so too did the need for a Strategic Planning day to enable TATA to review its' present directions and articulate new pathways for future directions.

- **Strategic Plan 2017-2022**

Approximately 12 councillors met at Traveller's Rest for a facilitated discussion (lead by Brian Wightman) to explore TATA's intended goals and objectives, and formulate a 5 year strategic plan to guide TATA as an organization. From the notes made at this meeting, Katie Wightman crafted a draft strategic plan to steer us as an organization. The draft plan was then circulated amongst council to obtain feedback. I then compiled all of the feedback offered into a document for Katie, who has continued to develop the plan to reflect the insights/expertise/perspectives of our council. Katie has amended where required based on this feedback, in readiness for ratification. Thank you to those councillors who provided feedback in relation to the draft Strategic Plan. I would like to again acknowledge the excellent work undertaken by Katie in developing this document, and also to those councillors who contributed their time and thoughts in the form to providing feedback.

- **TATA collaborations with Professional Arts Organisations**

- *TATA and TIVAF @ Sawtooth*

Kate Camm (TATA councillor) liaised with Ashley Bird at Sawtooth ARI to devise student/teacher educative resources to accompany the Tasmanian International Video Art Festival (Sept 2 -24, 2016). Thank you to Kate for your initiative in developing the associated resources, and for efforts invested to create this opportunity.

- *TATA and Contemporary Art Tasmania*

During the past 12 months, TATA councillors Jane Giblin, Peta Collins and Miriam Berkery, alongside art teacher Helen Foster, have liaised with Contemporary Art Tasmania to advise in the development of CAT's professional learning opportunities and resources for art educators. Informed by the expertise of TATA council, CAT has developed a contextualised calendar of exhibitions and activities to illustrate how the themes, concepts and practices inherent to their exhibition program might be used/explored in education contexts. Thank you to Jane, Peta and Miram for your ongoing interactions with CAT.

- *ArtShed Moonah*

Thank you to TATA councillor Kim O'Brien for initially making contact with ArtShed Moonah, and discussing possibilities for deals and benefits that TATA members may be able to obtain from ArtShed. I followed up Kim's initial conversation to secure a discount for TATA members for ArtShed Moonah, which was circulated via email to our membership in July. Thank you to Kim for instigating this connection.

- *TCoTA*

I have met with Dr Karen Hall (TCoTA co-ordinator of art theory, Inveresk) to enquire as to professional learning (formal and informal) that may be of interest of Tasmanian art teachers. This extends upon the fruitful rapport already established between TATA and Malcom Bywaters. I continue to liaise with Karen and Malcom regarding learning opportunities that may be of interest to art teachers in Tasmania, and disseminate information via the TATA mailing list and Facebook newsfeed.



- **TATA Art Exhibitions**

- *Beyond the Classroom* (29th Aug – 9th Oct)

Beyond the Classroom was shown at the Academy Gallery, Inveresk, and Makers Workshop, Burnie. 30 + art teachers from around the state exhibited their work across these two exhibitions. Diverse and positive media interest and publicity ensued from the show, which resulted in great exposure for TATA. Thanks to Scott Cunningham and Malcom Bywaters for their efforts in delivering these opportunities.

- *Reflections* (23rd Oct – 22nd Nov 2015)

Under the leadership and organisation of Kim O'Brien, art teachers working across the north west coast of the state exhibited their art works in the Burnie Regional Gallery in October last year. Thank you to Kim O'Brien for your enthusiasm and efforts to encourage engagement and instigate creative opportunities for art teachers in the north west regions.

- *Out of Control* (18th March – 24th April)

Out of Control was hosted at the Poimena Gallery, and was curated by Jane Giblin and myself. We had 27 art teacher/artists from around the state/variety of sectors show their work. A letter was forwarded to Poimena Gallery to thank them for the opportunity to host this exhibition in their beautiful space (at no cost). TATA is very interested to source out and create further opportunities for TATA exhibitions around the state.

Kind regards,

Dr Abbey MacDonald

President

Tasmanian Art Teachers Association