

## **President's Report TATA 2016 -2017**

The Tasmanian Art Teachers Association (TATA) has gone from strength to strength these past 12 months. Leveraging from the important consolidation work undertaken during 2015-2016 period, we have developed and delivered some fantastic outcomes for our members to support outcomes for art education in Tasmania. The past 12 months has been characterised by a broad range of celebratory and teacher professional learning activities. This report outlines the accomplishments and services that TATA has provided to its membership over the past 12 months (2016-2017), and some recommendations for future directions.

- **TATA Professional Learning**

- *Life Drawing Practice and Pedagogy – State wide PL with Jane Giblin*

With TATA's successful lobbying to effect change to the DoE Life Drawing model policy, TATA has worked hard to encourage and support our teachers to reinvigorate and/or start life drawing programs within their schools (TCE age). Our gratitude must go to Jane Giblin for her initiative, energy and generosity to lead three life drawing professional learning events, in the north, north west and south. These three sessions were very well attended, with glowing feedback received. Further thanks must go to Isabella Foster for her exceptional modelling, and to Peter Jackson for his ancillary support in practice and pedagogy. I encourage TATA to maintain momentum in this space, and work with Jane – and other councillors – to explore directions for further professional learning sessions. These events have been very well received by members and non-members alike, with memberships directly eventuating from engagement in this PL.

- *The Australian Curriculum: The Arts K -10 professional learning partnership with the PLI*

*Having secured a professional learning partnership with the Professional Learning Institute (PLI) late last year, Katie and myself have delivered the 2 day spaced teacher professional learning program. Day one was in March and day 2 early in September. The days were well attended, attracted a range of participant teachers, and contributions from some fine art education specialists and professional learning stakeholders, including Professor Robyn Ewing for day 2. It would be wonderful if TATA could keep building upon the rapport of this relationship, and positive media coverage. Plans are in place to ensure conversations are had with the right people, and soon!*

- **TATA Lobbying, Advocacy and Research**

- *TATA and the Peter Underwood Centre Education Transforms Symposium 2017*

Katie and Abbey presented at ET2017 in June this year in relation to the professional learning collaboration between the Professional Learning Institute (PLI) and TATA. Our presentation, titled 'Cultivating professional learning partnerships in Tasmania: Tom Bentley's 7 key features of collaboration', was attended by approximately 25 education stakeholders and was very well received. The opportunity to network with a range of people with vested interests in teacher

education, professional learning and collaboration for education outcomes has created directions and opportunities for further collaborations that the incoming TATA leadership might like to pursue.

➤ *Entangled: Art and the Tasmanian Primary School – TATA/UTAS Research project*

With the support of a University of Tasmania Teaching Development Grant, Abbey has worked with Dr Malcom Bywaters to curate the *Entangled* exhibition at the Academy Gallery. Abbey obtained HREC ethics to conduct research in relation to the project, which will involve interviews being conducted with participants and mentors before the end of the year. It is anticipated that Abbey and Malcom will write up at least 2 journal articles which will be submitted within the next 6 months, which will look to identify strategies and practices that support and inhibit teacher collaboration in art education contexts. Thank you to Ravenswood Heights, Trevallyn Primary, St Marys District, Launceston Grammar and Scotch Oakburn for contributing to the *Entangled* project.

➤ *Cultivating teacher professional learning partnerships in Tasmania – TATA/UTAS Research project*

Abbey and Katie have secured HREC ethics to conduct post-participation evaluations for the teacher participants who engaged in the 2017 TATA/PLI Australian Curriculum the Arts teacher PL program. Interviews will be conducted before the end of the year, with a report being provided to the PLI and TATA as well as writing up journal articles for scholarly publication.

➤ *Art Education Australia (AEA) support to state/territory art education associations*

In my recently elected role as vice president of AEA, we are discussing and planning how AEA can best support the work of our state/territory arts education organisations. Throughout last year, some strategic discussions were had by TATA councillors in the south (thanks to Miriam, Jane, Peta and others) and promising grounds were made towards securing an appropriate southern exhibition space for ArtRage, only to have these dissipate due to a range of complicating factors. While this has been frustrating, we persist in our enquiries and pursuit of possibilities. I am in the process of drafting a formal letter with Malcom Bywaters (in our roles as VP and Secretary of AEA) in collaboration with the incoming TATA leadership to garner support from TATA, UTAS, QVMAG, BRAG and to approach a prominent TBC'd Hobart exhibition space for ArtRage.

• **TATA social events and networking**

➤ *TATA at MONA*

In February this year, Miriam Berkery (TATA Secretary) organised an excellent social event for TATA members at the *MONA On the Origins of Art* exhibition. The event was opened with a powerful interpretation from Dr Sarah Jane Moore. MONA curator Pip Mott and their Front of House shared with attendees some interesting insights into how the exhibition came together. While fewer numbers than the previous year, the event was still well attended (18 teachers from around the state) and enjoyed from all accounts.

Thanks to Miriam Berkery for your efforts vested in organising this event for our members.

➤ *TATA on Facebook and online*

TATA has continued to build and maintain a strong social media presence with our Facebook page, which has 430 followers; a growth from <100 in 2015, which compared to other states and territories relative/comparable size is an outstanding level of engagement. Service of the TATA Facebook page has been lead by the president with support from the vice president, and the incoming leadership will need to assume or delegate management of the Facebook space.

The webpage has been up and running for almost 12 months, and has been skilfully managed by TATA councillor Alicen Kaye, who has done an excellent job in servicing the space, and particularly in the development of online gallery spaces to accompany our 'real time' gallery initiatives. Thanks very much to Alicen for her initiative and ongoing contributions in this space.

- **TATA collaborations with Professional Arts organisations and events**

- *TATA and The Hadley's Orient Art Prize*

Abbey was approached by Dr Amy Jacket, curator for the Hadley's art prize to provide feedback on an education resources that she developed to accompany the exhibition. Dr Jacket has recently contacted me to seek further feedback/development in alignment with the Australian Curriculum and has invited TATA to collaborate with her to refine/expand the teaching resources to be suitable for broader contexts (primary, secondary and snr secondary). This will be an opportunity that can be followed up with the incoming TATA President.

- *TATA and Dr Jane Deeth*

Throughout the year, the president has liased with Dr Jane Deeth in relation to helping her promote gallery based teacher professional learning activities via the TATA communication networks. This is a relationship that I encourage the incoming leadership to continue cultivating, and I will support this interaction in my IPP role over the next 12 months.

- *School of Creative Arts (formerly TCoTA)*

I continue to liase with Dr Karen Hall (SOCA 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 encourage the incoming leadership to continue to liase 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 on their behalf. Malcom has been a key contributor to the work that TATA has been able to deliver these past 12 months in providing the Academy Gallery space for the Entangled exhibition and accompanying art forum. While the Entangled exhibition saw excellent numbers at the opening and moving through the show to interact with the work throughout the exhibition (approx. 800 people), attendance at the accompanying Arts forum to take the opportunity to obtain teaching/learning resources was very small.

- *University of Tasmania CALE (College of Arts, Law and Education)*

This year, the School of Education amalgamated into the College of Arts, Law and Education. In my role as immediate past president (IPP), and ongoing role in the Faculty of Education, I will be very happy to explore and leverage from opportunities for UTas to collaborate with TATA. UTas continues

to be an excellent supporter of TATA's work, in the provision of professional learning and meeting spaces and exhibition sites.

➤ *Professional Learning Institute*

Abbey and Katie are in the process of exploring future/ongoing opportunities for collaboration between TATA and the PLI to build upon the professional learning rapport that has been established this past year. Plans are being made for Katie and Abbey to meet with the DoE Deputy Secretary of Teaching and Learning Jenny Burgess to explore possibilities.

➤ *Monthly meeting with state/territory art education association leadership*

Instigated by AEA president Steve Marks, the leaders of the state/territory art education associations (including TATA) have been getting together once a month to share resources, successes, challenges and identify ways in which state/territories can better support each other in our work. I will continue to contribute to these conversations via my role in AEA, and I will introduce the incoming president at the next state/territory video link up.

➤ *Tasmanian Young Artist Awards – Deloraine Craft Fair*

I have been working with the Director of the Deloraine Craft Fair Tim Biggs to support their development/delivery of the Tasmanian Young Artist Awards. I will be opening the awards on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November in Deloraine, and am putting together a short essay for their catalogue. Thank you to those art teachers who have supported students to produce and submit work for the prize, and also to those TATA councillors who helped promote the prize across your networks.

● **TATA Art Exhibitions**

➤ *Body of Work*

Body of Work showcased the artworks of 11 teachers and artists from all around the state currently working within Tasmanian Independent and Government school contexts. The Arts and our art teachers have an integral role to play here, as it is in Arts learning contexts that imaginations can be opened up to new perspectives to identify alternatives to dominant discourses. Thank you to Dr Sarah Jane Moore for her moving opening performance. Thank you to Angela Casey for her technical support in installing the exhibition, and to Paul Snell and the Poimena Gallery at Launceston Grammar for the opportunity to put this exhibition of Tasmanian art teachers work together.

➤ *Entangled: Art and the Tasmanian Primary School*

The Entangled exhibition at the Academy Gallery, Inveresk, was one deliverable of *Entangled: Art and the Tasmanian Primary School – Research project*, which is exploring a need identified within national research and from the Tasmanian Art Teachers Association (TATA) to better support primary teachers to enact The Australian Curriculum: The Arts. Within this project, Tasmanian primary teachers and their students were mentored by a specialist art teacher to undertake an art inquiry for exhibition. The art inquiries showcase the explorations of community based topics and issues of concern undertaken in alignment with the existing primary school learning programs. Formative and summative evaluations of the mentors' and teachers' experiences will enable

identification of challenges Tasmanian primary teachers encounter in enacting curriculum change, and articulate the implications these challenges pose for pedagogical transformation and student learning in visual art. The artworks shown in *Entangled* derive from a pilot investigation that has sought to establish how primary teachers can be best supported to enact curriculum change and deliver authentic visual art learning experiences in Tasmania. Thanks to the wonderful participating students, teachers and their mentors (including TATA councillors Caz, Kim and Alicen), and to Malcom Bywaters for his support in co-curating this exhibition with TATA.

➤ *Drawn Together*

The *Drawn Together* exhibition was hosted recently at the Hobart College Little Space Gallery. The life drawing works exhibited from Tasmanian teachers and TCE students emerged from a space of pedagogical learning and practice that recognises and pays respect to the complex nature of bodies and our relationship with bodies, as situated within the historic artistic discipline of life drawing. The art education landscape, and indeed, the education landscape more broadly, finds itself navigating complex challenges inside and outside of our classrooms. The Tasmanian Art Teachers Association recognises how these challenges can fuel anxiety for education administration, which in turn triggers reactive responses that can lead to constraint or avoidance. A big thank you to councillor Jane Giblin for her initiative and preparedness to deliver on this identified need and celebrate the hard fought win which was the DoE policy amendment to enable all Tasmanian college aged students to participate in authentic life drawing experiences should they wish to. Thanks also to Dr Megan Walch who gave her support in our 2015/2016 lobbying and for opening the exhibition.

- **TATA other activities, outputs, developments and acknowledgments**

➤ *TATA PowerPoint and exhibition invite design*

Thank you to Scott Cunningham for his design and organization of a TATA PowerPoint template (at short notice) that we can use for TATA presentations. Katie and I used the TATA PPT template for our Education Transforms 2017 presentation (further details below). Scott's preparedness to pitch in and provide support and outcomes at short notice with quick turnarounds has been appreciated.

➤ *TATA in the press*

TATA has enjoyed a range of different press coverage over the past 12 month, centred around our exhibition of teacher artworks and professional learning offerings. Two articles have been published in the Examiner in September; one for *Entangled: Art in the Tasmanian primary school*, and another for the TATA/PLI *The Australian Curriculum: The Arts K-10 professional learning program*.

➤ *Administrative developments*

Over the past 12 months, we have settled our updated Constitution, as well as update and ratify our Executive/Council position descriptions. The position descriptions and professional learning offerings delivered these past 12 months align with the Key Drivers of TATA's Strategic Plan, and have been used to inform development of professional learning offerings and collaborative ventures.

➤ *Areas of priority against TATA Strategic Plan objectives*

TATA has delivered a substantial number of professional learning and networking activities over the past 12 months. Some significant investments have been made, the largest being redevelopment of our webpage, followed by the MONA networking event, and then our Life Drawing practice and pedagogy workshops. From all accounts, the feedback I have received has indicated these developments and events have been entirely worthwhile and valued by those art teachers who participated. In looking at our strategic plan, an area of priority needs to be investment from our art teachers and schools in the form of membership. Many professional learning offerings and events have been offered at low or no cost to members and non-members alike in order to cultivate engagement and increase TATA's visibility. Jane's life drawing workshops directly resulted in several new memberships around the state. We have seen an increase in our secondary and senior secondary sector membership, as well as our pre-service teacher context.

In terms of balanced attention for our PL offerings and activities, primary and ECE contexts require ongoing attention. For the first time in my time working with TATA from 2015 – 2017, we have delivered professional learning and opportunities for primary teachers through the *PLI/TATA The Arts professional learning program* and the *Entangled project*. The PLI badged event and Jane's Life Drawing workshops garnered participation by teachers from wide metropolitan areas (Launceston, Burnie, Devonport, Hobart) as well as rural/regional areas, including Triabunna, St Marys, New Norfolk and Scottsdale. These events translated to some direct increase in memberships in the secondary/senior secondary context. While these activities have furthered our interaction with and support for our primary teacher audience, these translated to a minimal increase in primary teacher/school memberships. Some councillors have been very active in this promotive space to retain existing/recruit new membership, while other areas in various parts of the state remain quiet.

Looking ahead, TATA is well positioned to leverage from the increased visibility and prominence our association is experiencing to further cultivate our membership, which in turn will provide us with the financial means to deliver more. Areas TATA has identified that require ongoing action are offered as recommendations as follows:

- **Development of the TATA webpage members space**, and teaching/learning materials that must populate that area should be a priority so that there is clear advantage for teachers that sign up to our association. This section needs high quality planning, teaching and learning resources that align powerfully and clearly with the Australian Curriculum and TASC syllabus, and are contextualised within a Tasmanian perspective. In alignment with our association aims and Strategic Plan, we require resources from all art education contexts (ECE through to snr secondary).
- There is scope for **increased promotion of membership** by all members of the council/Executive in their respective areas, particularly in the north-west coast region. The northwest remains an area requiring further action by council to facilitate professional learning opportunities and networking events to match the level of opportunities being lead by council and offered in the north and south.
- Further action is required by **council to instigate, conceptualise and deliver primary centric professional learning events around the state**. As per the leadership and professional learning initiatives actioned by councillors in the secondary and senior secondary professional learning contexts, our incoming primary specialist councillors and/or the councillors within the relevant defined council roles need to step up deliver similar initiatives. These events then need to be promoted widely to the primary audience.

- The recently adopted **TATA position descriptions** have been developed assist councillors to adopt clearly delineated roles and responsibilities that will help guide them in their individual and shared approaches to service in the TATA space. These of course are indicative and should be used in a flexible and productive way to guide action.
- Further to face to face professional learning opportunities, **offer virtual professional development opportunities** (i.e participatory webinars)– this is consistent with national practice adopted by other state/territory arts education associations, which have been immensely successful, particularly for connecting with educators and cultivating relationships in rural/remote areas.
- Continue to nurture and further **expand the professional learning education stakeholder partnerships** that have been forged this past year (PLI; DoE Curriculum Team Leader – The Arts; Galleries, UTAS), and leverage from these to deliver on TATA’s objectives.

➤ *Acknowledgments*

I want to acknowledge the TATA 2016/2017 Executive and council, consisting of Katie Wightman (VP), Miriam Berkery (Secretary), Brooke Van Ruiswyk (Treasurer), Sarah Astell, Kate Camm, Peta Collins, Scott Cunningham, Jane Giblin, Tim Frost, Alicen Kaye, Trevor Leonard, Kim O’Brien and Caz Saunders. Thank you for your ideas, actions, initiative, generosity, kindness and collegiality this past year. The success of any professional association relies upon the preparedness of its volunteers to move beyond the rhetoric of fixated talk on problems, and into the space of action to address identified needs. TATA has benefited significantly from the preparedness of our volunteers who have acted to address identified needs.

As the outgoing President of TATA, I want to extend my thanks and gratitude to the Executive, council and general membership for the many opportunities you have created for me to serve art education in Tasmania. I acknowledge and am deeply thankful for the goodwill and trust that has been invested in my leadership. You have provided me with opportunities to grow into this role, and I stand here now as a product of your support, belief and encouragement. I will be pleased to throw all of my support behind and enthusiasm into the incoming TATA leadership in my forthcoming role as Immediate Past President, which I will remain in for at least one year to facilitate leadership handover and consolidate stakeholder relationship building.

Thank you all for your kindness in allowing me to learn the ropes of what it means to lead a professional association, which was something I had never experienced before assuming this position. I acknowledge that I still have much to learn, and am thankful for the further opportunities ahead to refine and skills in this space. I have relished my time working with many art educators, schools and education stakeholders around the state, and I look forward to building an enduring relationship between TATA and Art Education Australia, through my role as AEA Vice President.

**Dr Abbey MacDonald**

**President 2015-2017**

**Tasmanian Art Teachers Association**