

# creativity

A ONE DAY CONFERENCE ON INSPIRING  
CREATIVITY IN CHILDREN 0-12 YEARS

## conference handbook

FRIDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2008  
NAN TIEN TEMPLE, BERKELEY, WOLLONGONG



Illawarra  
Children's Services



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# **program - friday 7 november 2008**

**9am-9.15am - Registration**

**9.15am-9.30am - Welcome to Country by Uncle Gerald Brown  
Welcome to the Nan Tien Temple by Reverend You**

**9.30am-10.30am - Keynote address**

1. Auditorium - Jan Deans  
'Giving form to feeling: the earth, the heart and the arts'  
Showcasing artistic literacy as a unique form of thinking and knowing

**10.30am - 11.00am - Morning Tea**

**11am - 12pm - Morning session**

2. Auditorium - Simon Spain  
'Working with artists in learning and play environments to foster cultural citizenship'

**12pm - 1pm - Lunch and performance by Heidi Hillier  
'Heidi Hodeo Rodeo Show'**

**1pm - 2pm - Concurrent sessions 1**

3. Conference Room - Jan Deans  
'Antarctica - the land of icy secrets'  
Deep thinking, questioning, creating and expressing through project based learning.

4. Auditorium - Dr. Julie Dunn  
'Making meaning, making media'  
Digital technologies to make meaning. Includes sample films made by young children.

**2pm - 3pm - Concurrent sessions 2**

5. Conference Room - Sue Elliot  
'Creating natural outdoor play spaces'  
Why play in natural spaces is critical for young children.
6. Auditorium - Janet Andrews and Anne Lehmann  
'Children with autism laugh and play'  
The importance of music, humour and creativity in developing self confidence and social awareness.

**3.00pm - 3.30pm - Afternoon Tea + Information session for primary teachers on Bundanon Trust Education Programs including sponsored visits (Conference Room)**

**3.30pm - 4.30pm - Afternoon session**

7. Auditorium - Dr. Julie Dunn  
'Playing around with drama and picture books'  
Exploring the outcomes that can be achieved when connections are made between drama and picture books.

**4.30pm - 5.00pm - Performance by actor and writer Tyler Coppin  
'An Ode to Theatre, Imagination and Fantasy'**

# program - sessions

## 1. **Giving Form to Feeling - the earth, the heart and the arts**

Jan Deans - Keynote address

(Auditorium)

This presentation showcases artistic literacy as a unique form of thinking and knowing that stimulates the creative process and engages individuals in literal and expressive ways of symbolizing ideas, thoughts and emotions in relation to the world we live in.

## 2. **ArtPlay - working with artists in the learning and play environment to foster cultural citizenship**

Simon Spain - Morning session

(Auditorium)

In this session, Simon Spain illustrates the value of artists (including musicians, dancers, actors) and young children 'creating' and 'making' together and how to get the best from everyone involved.

Artists, children, parents and teachers play and create together in the open studio of ArtPlay. Collaboration is central to this shared creativity and creating the right conditions for a successful outcome is vital. Simon uses pictures of successful programs to illustrate the factors for success and provides tips on how to engage the local community, connect with artists and broaden the creative experiences of children.

### **3. Antarctica - the land of icy secrets**

Jan Deans - Concurrent session 1

(Conference room)

Deep thinking, questioning, creating and expressing through project based learning.

To celebrate the Year of Polar Research 2007-2008 children and teachers from the University of Melbourne's Early Learning Centre undertook an in-depth enquiry that included question and answer, pictorial and personal referencing, multi-modal representation, internet searches and artistic, poetic and philosophical explorations.

This multi-media presentation will examine the co-learning process and focus on the quests and questioning that made this project so special and the recipient of the Regio Lazio award from the L'Eta Verde Association, Rome, Italy.

### **4. Making Meaning, Making Media**

Dr. Julie Dunn - Concurrent session 1

(Auditorium)

Although many adults lack confidence in the manipulation of digital texts, young children have no such concerns, eagerly engaging with a medium which has always been a part of their lives. In addition, while much emphasis is placed on children as consumers of media products, few opportunities are provided within formal schooling for young children to share their understanding of the world by becoming media creators.

This presentation outlines the findings of two projects where children were empowered

to become text creators. In these projects, young children were provided with opportunities to be playful in the making of media, with exciting outcomes. This presentation reports on these projects, highlighting along the way the importance of providing children (even very young ones) with access to child friendly software and hardware tools as well as time, support and skills. In other words, allowing young children the opportunity to use digital technologies to make meaning for themselves and others.

In both projects the children made rapid progress in relation to the artistic aspects of their films, with skill development, time, audience and playfulness noted as the most critical aspects required for successful outcomes.

Within this presentation, sample films made by young children are shared, and simple approaches to the capture and editing processes discussed.

## **5. Creating Natural Outdoor Playspaces**

Sue Elliott - Concurrent session 2

(Auditorium)

Creating inviting and challenging natural outdoor playspaces for young children is imperative. This session identifies why play in natural spaces is critical for young children and reaffirms the value of outdoor play, particularly for urban children. The connections between theory and practice that underpin outdoor playspaces are explored with a focus on natural playspaces.

Examples of creative playspaces are shared visually, with the opportunity to envision the natural playspace of the future. In this session, Sue also offers tips and ideas on

how early childhood educators and primary teachers can start to make changes to their educational environments, even with tight budgets.

## **6. Children with Autism Laugh and Play**

Janet Andrews and Ann Lehmann - Concurrent session 2  
(Conference room)

Janet Andrews and Ann Lehmann have just returned from presenting their paper 'Let's Laugh and Play' at the World Congress of Music Therapy in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Their paper describes the findings of a one-year research project studying the response of children with autism to the intentional use of creativity and humour. They discovered that spontaneity, creativity and humour assisted children with autism develop social and communication skills.

The pair from the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music spent the last five years working as music therapists at the South Coast School for Children with Autism and their study focused on 13 children aged between 7 and 11 years. The researchers found that using humorous props and encouraging individual responses within semi-structured activities, allowed the children the freedom to explore their own humour and creativity, while assisting the development of their communication and social awareness skills.

## **7. Playing around with Drama and Picture Books**

Dr. Julie Dunn - Afternoon session

(Auditorium)

This presentation explores the rich outcomes that can be achieved when connections are made between drama and picture books. Approaches are modelled and participants have the chance to experience for themselves the excitement and creativity that is generated when process drama strategies are used to take the learner beyond the original text and into dramatic worlds where they become the authors of their own experiences. Here the children are not 'acting out' stories, but rather, creating new ones as they participate in both adult structured drama experiences and child structured play.

Time is spent introducing participants to key strategies used in building these connections, while approaches to planning are also addressed.



# conference speakers

## **Janet Andrews**

Bachelor of Music Education, Master of Creative Music Therapy, Registered Music Therapist (RMT)

Janet has been teaching in the Wollongong Conservatorium CME (now ChiME) programme for over 26 years. She was coordinator of ChiME for 7 years and has taken up that position again in 2008. Janet has conducted music workshops for early childhood (EC) educators throughout NSW and has tutored primary and EC tertiary students in music education at Wollongong University, Wollongong TAFE and the Sydney Institute of EC Studies.

Janet has worked with students at the South Coast School for Children with Autism for over 10 years and in 2006 completed her Masters in Creative Music Therapy for which she received the Dean's Medal for academic achievement. She is currently working as a music therapist at the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music and for the South Coast School for Children with Autism.

In 2008, Illawarra Children's Services commissioned Janet to put together music sessions which would be taken into their centres as in-service training.

Janet has worked together with Illawarra Children's Services staff to create centre-specific programs for children aged 2-5 years. The program is currently in the evaluation stage, and has already been trialled in two early childhood centres.

## **Jan Deans**

**Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood), Graduate Diploma of Movement and Dance,  
Grad. Diploma of Visual and Performing Art, Master of Education**

Jan Deans is a Senior Lecturer within the Graduate School of Education at the University of Melbourne and Director of the University's research and demonstration Early Learning Centre. During her career Jan has taught in early childhood, primary, tertiary, and special education settings.

Her research interests include Learning through Dance, Story as a Vehicle for Cross-cultural Teaching and Learning, Quality Assurance in Early Childhood and Arts-based Teaching and Learning. She has worked with Indigenous communities in Australia, with children and teachers in China, Singapore and Japan and has extensive experience as an Early Childhood Consultant within the education and government sector.

With Robert Brown, Jan also coordinates Boorai, The Children's Art Gallery. The gallery presents exhibitions that stimulate and challenge audiences to recognize and value the personal, social and cultural comments expressed by young children through arts and language.

Jan is currently enrolled in PhD studies at the University of Melbourne and her research, titled 'Thinking, Feeling and Relating: Young Children Learning Through Dance', is investigating the role of dance in young children's cognitive, social and emotional learning.

**Dr. Julie Dunn**

PhD, Master of Arts (Research), Bachelor of Education, Diploma of Teaching

Julie Dunn has worked in a range of educational contexts, from preschools to universities, but in all of these settings her focus has been on developing opportunities for learners to strengthen the power of their imaginations.

A passionate advocate for the importance of arts education, Julie's book, *Pretending to Learn* (co-authored with John O'Toole) was winner of a 2003 Excellence in Educational Publishing Award. *Pretending to Learn* has become a major resource for primary and early years drama teachers across Australia. Translations into Mandarin and Danish have widened its impact to the international arena.

In recent years Julie has begun working in the area of early childhood media education and has just completed a federally funded project in this area. Julie is a senior lecturer at Griffith University, Brisbane where she works with undergraduate and post-graduate education and applied theatre students. Julie was the winner of the American Alliance for Theatre and Education Distinguished Dissertation Award in 2005.

## **Sue Elliott**

**Diploma KTC, Master of Science, Bachelor of Science (Honours)**

Sue Elliott has worked in a variety of early childhood settings and lectured at the tertiary level in early childhood training courses. She has a commitment to education for sustainability and, in particular, natural outdoor playspaces. Sue is co-author of several books including *Just Discover: Connecting Young Children with the Natural World* and *Early Childhood Environmental Education: Making It Mainstream*.

Sue has recently edited a new publication, *The Outdoor Playspace: Naturally*, and is convenor of the Australian Association for Environmental Education Early Childhood Special Interest Group. Sue currently lectures at RMIT University, is a committee member of the Playground and Recreation Association and is undertaking doctoral studies about outdoor playspaces at the University of New England.

## **Ann Lehmann**

**Master of Creative Music Therapy, Bachelor of Creative Arts, Associate Diploma in Music, Australia (AMusA), Registered Music Therapist (RMT)**

**Ann is an accomplished musician and registered music therapist with a passion for creativity and connecting through music. Over the last six years, Ann has been working with children with autism using music, creativity and humour to develop communication, social interaction and expression. Ann is the National Secretary of the Australian Music Therapy Association and guest lecturer in music therapy at UWS and UTS. She plays guitar and bouzouki with several groups based in Wollongong and has taught Classical Guitar at the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music for fifteen years. Ann is the artistic director of KidsFest Shellharbour and director of the Illawarra Folk Festival Summer School.**

## **Simon Spain**

Creative Producer, ArtPlay

Simon Spain is a visual artist born in the UK. He has worked with/on creative arts programming with children for over 25 years and has worked on a range of arts programs in schools in the UK, USA, Europe, Ireland and Australia.

Simon established Kids' Own Publishing Partnership in 1999 to publish work by children, was artist in residence six times and ran a new technologies outreach program for The Ark in Dublin. He is now Creative Producer for ArtPlay and Youth programs with the City of Melbourne.

Widely recognised as a unique and successful arts program for young people, ArtPlay, located in Birrarung Marr Park in the centre of Melbourne has, since its inception in 2004, involved over 40,000 participants, employed over 100 national and international artists and, in 2006 alone, conducted 295 workshops, performances and events for children (3–13 years) and families.



# performances

## **An Ode to Theatre, Imagination and Fantasy**

A special half hour performance by acclaimed writer and performer, Tyler Coppin.

Tyler will perform excerpts from his solo show, *LyreBird (Tales of Helpmann)* - a stage biography of sorts, and an ode to theatre, imagination and fantasy.

“If we transpose the setting of *Billy Elliot* to an even more remote part of the world, to South Eastern South Australia for instance; and if we set the story four decades further back, when times were even more stiflingly conservative; and if we inflate the little boy’s hopes and dreams to beyond what is rational, and top it off by having him achieve every single thing that he set out to do plus more, then we have the true life story of our country’s own Sir Robert Murray Helpmann.”

Actor/Playwright, Tyler Coppin produces, directs, writes and co-writes plays and performance works. As an actor, he has appeared in plays, operas and musicals for most of the major companies in Australia, as well as acting in film, television, and as a voice artist.

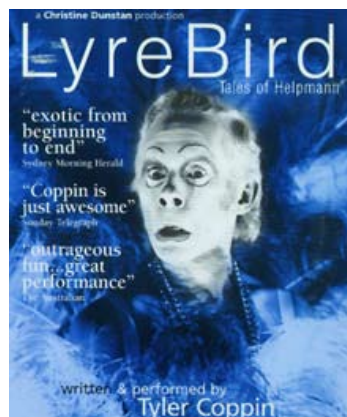
His self-made highlights to date include *Buzz* (co-writer and director) for Company B Belvoir, and the solo-shows *The Minutiae of Inertia* and *LyreBird (Tales of Helpmann)*. *LyreBird*’s extensive performance history includes the Adelaide Festival of the Arts, Australian capital cities and regional tour, Wellington NZ, twice to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival (winner of a Fringe First Award), the City of London Festival, UK regional tour, eight weeks at the Sydney Opera House for the Sydney Theatre Company, and, most recently, a seventeen town tour of small centres around southern NSW and Northern Victoria. In 2009 *LyreBird* will be presented in the United States.

Tyler's other stage appearances include Einstein in Steve Martin's Picasso at the Lapin Agile (original workshop and Australian tour), Freud in Emma's Nose, Greg in The Real Live Brady Bunch, Puck in Baz Luhrmann's acclaimed production of A Midsummer Night's Dream for Opera Australia (four seasons at the Sydney Opera House, Edinburgh International Festival), Miss Texas in Pageant, and Vice Principal Panch in The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (MTC, STC) for which he also wrote comedy and won a Helpmann Award.

In 1989, the author Patrick White chose Tyler to play the autobiographical role of the Young Man in Neil Armfield's commemorative production of White's The Ham Funeral for the Sydney Theatre Company.

Film and television credits include The Tender Hook, Mad Max 2, Come in Spinner, Emulsion, Nightmares and Dreamscapes, and as a contributing writer of the Academy Award winning movie Happy Feet.

Tyler is a NIDA graduate and proud member of Media and Entertainment Arts Alliance. For more information on LyreBird, visit [www.lyrebirdtalesofhelpmann.com](http://www.lyrebirdtalesofhelpmann.com).



# performances

## **Heidi Hodeo - The One Woman Rodeo**

Trick Ropin' Trick Ridin', Spinnin' Silver Rings 'n' Wild Good Times!

Its time to hoot and holler and call “YEEHAR!” when you meet Miss Heidi Hodeo, Australia’s favorite One Woman Rodeo.

Saddle up your pony and come on an imaginative journey to meet all Heidi Hodeo’s rodeo friends.

She’s got cows to catch with her lasso, dancing horses to ride, and Rodeo Rings to spin. Watch in Awe as Miss Hodeo Rodeo attempts to spin ALL 20 Rodeo Rings while riding a wild bucking pony! You may never see anything like it again.

Heidi Hodeo’s Rodeo is a hilarious and highly imaginative physical theatre show using audience interaction, music, movement, circus skills, and hula hoops.

Its the story of a girl who loves animals so much she’s created her own rodeo! She’s the cowgirl sweetheart of the 2008 Tamworth Country Music Festival, KidsFest and Viva La Gong. When she’s not on the road, Heidi teaches circus skills at Circus Monoxide’s, Half High Youth Circus and Circus WOW.



# about the nan tien temple

The Fo Guang Shan Nan Tien Temple is the biggest Buddhist temple in the southern hemisphere.

The Nan Tien Temple is a working temple and devotees and visitors will be using the temple throughout the conference.

Conference delegates and other guests are asked to be mindful of appropriate etiquette.

- Please wear appropriate attire and be suitably covered (no bare midriffs or singlets)
- Please remove shoes and hats before entering the shrines.
- Please supervise children at all times when in the Temple grounds.
- No meat, alcohol, or illicit drugs to be brought to the Temple grounds.
- No food, drink or chewing gum in the shrines.
- No smoking in the Temple grounds - please go to one of the exits.
- No photography or filming allowed inside the shrines and museum without prior consent.

Conference delegates are invited to explore the Temple grounds and facilities, including the Lotus Pond and Gardens, the Meditation Room, the Museum and the Dew Drop Inn Tea House, where light refreshments are available throughout the day.

For more information about the Nan Tien Temple, please visit the website at [www.nantien.org.au](http://www.nantien.org.au).



# creativity at illawarra children's services

Creative learning enhances every child's ability to build their emotional intelligence, while developing confidence and important foundation skills in literacy and numeracy.

That's why we strive to make the creative difference, through our Young Mentors Program, community arts partnerships, creative development activities for staff and more.

Our message to educators and artswriters is simple... never underestimate a child's innate creativity. Be a role model - jump on board and enjoy the ride!

With 26 early learning and school-aged centres, we celebrate creativity every day with every child.

For more information about Illawarra Children's Services, go to [www.ics.org.au](http://www.ics.org.au).

To learn more about our creative arts consultancy, go to [www.ics.org.au/corporate/consultancy.html](http://www.ics.org.au/corporate/consultancy.html) or contact Jennine Primmer MA (Vis Arts), Development Manager on 02 4283 9913.



# map of the nan tien temple



## Getting to the Nan Tien Temple:

- Travelling SOUTH along the Southern Freeway (F6): Take the Five Islands Road exit (8kms south of Wollongong CBD). At the traffic lights, turn left onto Five Islands Road.
- Travelling NORTH along the Southern Freeway (F6). Take the Five Islands Road exit. Turn right at the traffic lights onto Five Islands Road.

At the roundabout, turn right into Gladstonbury Avenue. Continue along Berkeley Road. At the roundabout, turn right into the main gates of the Nan Tien Temple.