

Songbirds

The Arts in Prison Training Manual
South African Edition

by Penny Eames

A PSE Consultancy Publication



Electronic Edition

Arts Access International

Celebrating communities



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Cover photograph: *This wonderful youth band welcomed me to Leeuwkop Prison in 2004. They played and marched in front of my car escorting me to the prison hall for an official welcome. (Like Songbirds)*

Foreword

People who have the responsibility of managing prisons and correctional facilities throughout the world are being asked to manage costs and rising incarceration rates while at the same time improve outcomes for society and for prisoners.

This manual is designed to encourage prison authorities to set up arts programmes. I know that the arts are powerful tools that have been proven in giving inmates skills to enable them to peacefully reintegrate into society. Hopefully these skills will also encourage inmates to stay away from crime when they leave prison or are sentenced to community services.

This training manual is based on Penny Eames' experiences mainly through working in the corrections and justice systems with inmates and the staff of prisons in New Zealand, but also internationally. I have seen that work and have been inspired. It is now time for us to draw on that experience and create more programmes for art against crime throughout the world and at the same time share our New Zealand experiences with the world.

This manual is called Songbirds and refers to the beauty that singing brings to the South African prisons. Inmates are often called "jail birds" – hence the metaphor.

It is my belief that almost all people, regardless of where they come from, have the need and potential to be creative. What we have to do is find the medium of expression that is most appropriate and draws out the potential of all within the justice sector. It may be music, painting, carving or drama.

About fifteen years ago Penny Eames took me into Auckland Prison West Division to visit the Art programme. Since then I have visited that art programme many times. I have been to exhibitions; I have launched books on prison art I have visited the arts class and I have been inspired by the energy and quality of the art and the passion of the teachers and inmates having access to the arts in prison environments.

I have been enormously impressed by the teaching style of Robyn Hughes, the main tutor at Auckland West Prison, and I have also been inspired by the way prison officers and education staff draw out the skills and culture of the inmates in their care.

In commending this book to you and all staff and artists associated with prison art programmes, I endorse the belief that the arts work in giving people real self-esteem and new ways to express themselves. For people who are more accustomed to communicating with violence than with a paint brush it may be life-changing.

If you are an artist, I encourage you to use your creativity to inspire people in prisons and to give people associated with the prison system avenues to communicate.

Billy, an inmate in Auckland prison, once told me that before he learnt to speak through his art, he used to speak with his fists.

I hope this manual will give other inmates the same opportunity as they work towards reintegration into society, find ways to earn a living as well as learning ways to communicate successfully with families and the community.

Hon Judith Tizard
Associate Minister of Arts, Culture and Heritage
New Zealand



One of the Auckland Hospital corridors decorated with arts from Auckland Prison West Division art work.



This work is part of a collection donated to the Auckland City Hospital by the An Koroa of Auckland Prison, Paremone.

The above sign is found alongside all the works to identify where the works had been created.



The art works on this page were produced by artist at Auckland Prison West Division. Many were made on disused table tops. Some were done by individual artists, but many were collaborative works. A ceremony on 5th March 2007 celebrated the works which are now displayed on the newly completed Hospital walls and corridors.

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Introduction

Prisons these days are usually called “correctional facilities.” They are places where people who have been convicted of a crime or who are waiting on remand for a trial are held in custody.

They are places where people are “put away” to keep us safe, in society, and places where inmates should be learning the skills to enable them to return to society rehabilitated.

Prisons are called “correctional facilities” because they are meant to “correct” behaviours. This manual is about providing tools to enable you to supply inmates with those skills so that at the end of their sentences they can work with the community in a positive way, maybe finding a job or earning an income legally.

Of equal importance is the aim of giving inmates the desire and skills to stay out of prison.

The art works described in this manual come mostly from your own South African prisons, but there are some from Australia and a few from New Zealand.

These art works are in the manual to inspire you to set up processes that produce more programmes, and to a higher standard.

You will also note in the publication that the words Art and Culture are defined.

Once you understand these words, it may be easier for you to understand the cultural environment in which you work.

It will then be easier to design options and different programmes that fit that environment. There is an infinite variety of arts and cultural expression to choose from. Think beyond your own experiences.

Think about the inmates you are working with and you will find the dominant ways they use for viewing and expressing themselves. Too often assumptions are made that the expression is words, but this is not the case.

If the dominant expression is music, dance, feeling, seeing, then needing to communicate with words may have been the element that limited engagement in a society where words are so important.

Some inmates who have had a difficulty with communication throughout their lives are more likely to survive when they leave prison if they are given a different means of expression. Lack of words has been the barrier to their social relationships.

They may have had a hearing disability or have had a speech problem. For some, no-one actually talked to them.

For these individuals we have found that music, dance and visual arts open doors that have been closed and provide the means to enable that communication.

When that happens we see a transformation. It is quite incredible.

What is more, we have found in many of the prison programmes that when the inmate starts communicating through dance, music or visual arts, that this seems to unlock verbal communication.

I remember a prison officer noting that one inmate had learnt to carve stone and thus communicate his spirituality through the carving. He started to talk about it. This inmate had hardly spoken since coming to prison three years earlier. The officer also noted that once he started speaking they couldn't keep him quiet!

In this manual we also list a range of other outcomes that can be derived from setting up arts and cultural programmes.

While it is important to set the outcome desired, it is also important to note that when working with the arts and creativity there are often innovative side journeys that are worth taking. There will be some unexpected outcomes that will thrill you and sometimes these will provide fun, joy, happiness and self esteem for all your inmate artists.

Some of your inmates may not have learnt how to play, how to have fun or how to laugh. Some will only have had these experiences associated with drugs or alcohol. Teaching inmates to have fun and gain satisfaction through a positive activity should also be considered important. Happiness is part of well-being and when people are happy they are easier to manage and are certainly easier to reintegrate into society.

The wonder of the arts is creativity. The wonder of creativity is expression. Creativity expands imagination and opens new possibilities. Being flexible in your arts programmes will enable that creativity to develop and grow.

If you are reading this manual as a tutor or prison staff person, then what you will set for a personal goal is finding some of that wonderful talent and drawing it out.

If this inspires you to give support and confidence to your new artists there will certainly be positive outcomes.

Don't forget your own communication and creativity. By being part of the arts programme you too should experiment with the arts. As you work with the inmates create your own art. Your example is important and you will be seen as a mentor. You don't have to be good. You just have to try your best.

Finally in this introduction remember the prison environment. Ugly, cramped and violent conditions cause ugly, angry behaviour. If at all possible work with the inmates to paint, plant and brighten up the physical environment of the prisons.



Outside of Pollsmoor Prison - a razor wire environment communicates violence

Chapter 1 – The Arts and Culture

In this book we are using some definitions that will enable you to understand the scope of the Art in Prison programme.

1.1 The Arts.

We define the arts as *all forms of creative and interpretive expression*.

This gives the scope to stretch the imagination. We are talking about visual arts, craft, music, dance, rituals that celebrate specific cultures, theatre and singing. In Chapter 8 we look at the range of art forms, but the medium used for expression is the arts. In that we include gardening and sometimes even sport.

1.2 Culture

In this publication and in our work generally (www.pseconsultancy.com 2006), we use the UNESCO definition of culture adopted in the 2001 Declaration on Cultural Diversity: (Stockholm, 1998).

...culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and...it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs. (UNESCO 2001: p2)

For further information about culture you might like to refer to the publication by Penny Eames (Eames 2006), Cultural Well-being and Cultural Capital. The most common use of the term “culture” describes the sum of human behaviours: myths, histories, ideologies and values as expressed through the rituals and activities of any group.

Culture may also indicate human groupings, including business cultures, ethnic cultures, and popular or youth cultures. It can also refer to a prevalent attitude, such as a culture of war, ignorance or indifference (Eames 2006)

So we are referring to “culture” as a way we do things as a group of people. For the art and prison programme, these groups include inmates, staff, volunteers, artist tutors and management.



Kroonstad Prison mural outside a prison unit

For our Art in Prison philosophy, we should be conscious that cultures are the way we share behaviours and support each other.

Therefore, in the prisons, culture is extremely important. Here, culture defines the inmates and it is their behaviours and rules that govern how they behave and relate to others. The challenge is getting their rules and behaviours to reflect those defined by the prison service, and when they leave prison, those behaviours set and acceptable to society as a whole to ensure social cohesion.

Within the prison art system it is really important that the tutors and organisers of the programmes, analyse the various cultures in their prison and draw on these when choosing arts programmes. By acknowledging cultures it is possible to get better outcomes. It might mean the music is hip-hop; or the dance is from tribal groups; the visual arts, paint and craft, even matchstick models.

Chapter 2 - Art and Culture in the Justice Sector

When we work with any group, whether it is in a prison or in the community, it is useful to understand the cultures in **that** community.

This analysis ensures that the *same language*¹ spoken and unspoken is being used or at least understood, and that we have done something to ensure that there is a minimum amount of misunderstanding.

As suggested in Chapter 1, culture involves the myths and histories, the values, ideologies, behaviours and rituals of groups of people. Having a different culture is acceptable and you are not expected to change. What is useful is to understand your own culture objectively and not impose it on the other culture.

Most prisons have a significant number of institutional cultures, as well as ethnic and community cultures.

The largest ones, (and this is a generalised picture), are the inmate culture, the prison unit manager culture, and the culture of prison management.

These cultures co-exist and within established guidelines, until there is trouble, and then each culture retrenches and becomes rigid and inflexible. It is this rigid inflexibility that makes dialogue and co-operation almost impossible.

For instance: In some prison units there is still a cultural belief that prisons are about punishment, (this is an historical value) rather than the belief that prisons are for rehabilitation.

If the art programme is run in a rigid inflexible environment, particularly one dominated by a belief in prisons for punishment and control, it is less likely to succeed. In these circumstances we have observed the prison staff members who take the inmates through the art programme can sabotage the programme. We observe inmate artists being limited access to the art course, week after week, by officers who think up charges to limit the artists ability to move to the art class block.

These behaviours will continue to happen if prison staff remain inflexible in their belief in a punitive and attitude and see the arts programme as a privilege that inmates do not have, or that the inmates are having fun when they should be, being punished.

Changing prison staff cultures has been a challenge in our country. I was conscious that the same conflict was present in several of the South African prisons I visited in 2004 and 2005.

Twenty years of experience working with prison art programmes has shown that there is often a gulf between the senior management culture and the officer on the front line.

This gulf can only be bridged through positive communication and understanding. When there is a miss-match of cultural perspectives, then the positive outcomes associated with art programmes can be limited by a staff member, intentionally or unintentionally.

The same applies within the inmate cultures. Inmate cultures have behaviours and “pecking orders”. If you are setting up the programme it is worth being conscious of these. It is worth having inmate artists involved in some of the decision making with regards to venues, times for classes, and choice of art form to enable that the programme fits with these behaviours.

¹ By language we don't mean only ethnic languages. We mean understanding expressed through word. Language is more than a set of words; it is the communication of messages and ideas.

It is worth remembering that all your inmates do have a right to express themselves and to be creative. This is a basic human right set by the United Nations. We can note that in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights included a right of all to enjoy the arts (United Nations 1948).

Being connected to the society around us provides positive interaction and the community itself sets up the values it wishes its members to follow. When these communities are positive, these positive values are transmitted to the members through this interaction. When the interaction is negative then those negative values are transmitted with much more of a serious impact. We see this too often with the violence of some socially deprived young people.

This right to communication is paralleled with a right to earn a living.

When working with the justice sector we are conscious that poverty is often, though not always, the underlying reason for violence and anti-social behaviours.

If we can give individuals and families positive ways to make money, then this will provide those families with choices, and with these choices will come interaction and positive engagement with others.

The arts can be a really good way to find even a minimal amount of income that can make a significant difference.



Visual arts work in Pollsmoor prison Cape Town

Chapter 3 -Art and Culture in Prisons

3.1 Communication

In this chapter we will look at the philosophy behind using the arts in prison and in the prison environment.

The most important reason for prison art programmes will always be to give your inmates new ways to express themselves and communicate positively. Art gives people a voice where previously they have been voiceless.

This is particularly important for people who have had difficulty with words but also for people who find it easier to communicate through their music, paint brushes, dance and movement.

An inmate at a New Zealand prison once said that until he started to paint in the visual arts programme, he “*spoke with his fists – now he speaks with his brush and his paint.*”

We know that many inmates have extremely poor literacy skills, particularly men and young people. With limited literacy and numeracy skills there is potential for failure and there is an even greater risk of being misunderstood or not reading signposts, instructions or rules. In our book on *Expressions of Freedom and Fantasy Art in Justice* (Eames and Lineham 2001) we talk about the nocturnal children.

The *nocturnal children* are the children of several generations of unemployed people whose sleep patterns are those of their parents. These children failed at school, often failing to attend to classes or even wake up in time. From the beginning of their lives their family patterns meant they didn't concentrate in their first experiences at school and then continued to fail throughout primary school. Many of these youngsters continued to be failures as teenagers and the cycle sometimes ends up in prison.

They didn't read or write and communicate except with the peer groups. Most of these children had no experiences of preschool either and started with a disadvantage even before they were 5 years old.

During the art and prison research commissioned during our employment with the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, the Victoria University of Wellington Institute of Criminology (Currie 1982) we noted that one of the findings was that people who took part in the arts programmes started wanting to learn to read.

The arts provide a non threatening way to learn.

The artist tutors were not like school teachers. The artist tutors broke through a barrier that some inmates had built up against school teachers and a mental barrier that had been built up against learning generally. The most successful programme for breaking down these barriers was the song writing programme.

This tutor showed a simple way to write songs using words written on whiteboards with sounds. The words were also given musical notes. The young people involved, who were until that time considered illiterate, started to read the notes and then the words. Many then made a decision to learn to read.

Other tutors use the words in rap and hip-hop² in the classroom with significant success. Using the words of the young people in music to communicate and teach English skills.

² Annette Stock provides English and literacy programmes through hip-hop and rap in Rotorua Schools in New Zealand.

Having watched and kept in touch with artists after they leave prison we have found so many times that this is true. The form of expression can be music or dance as well as visual arts. The wonderful effect of giving this alternative form of communication is that the inmate slowly learns to communicate with language as well.

The methodology is to find the best way to encourage rehabilitation and reintegration into society that works and is positive.

Giving people who see themselves as failures a way to succeed – often for the first time – opens up new hopes.

3.2 Changing the physical environment

The second distinctive feature of art programmes in prison is its potential to change the prison environment itself. The physical environment of the prison communicates either positive or negative messages.

There is now considerable research emphasising that where the environment is negative, dirty and ugly, then that environment attracts negative violent behaviours. And when those same environments are made to be positive, adding light, bright colour, with sculptures and murals, then the behaviours in those environments also change (NZ Design Protocol 2005).

In this manual we have dedicated Chapter 5 to this physical environment, but here we note that any art in prison policy should have within it programmes to use some of the art, and particularly gardening. These will also change the physical environment from negative to positive.



Art work by inmate at Auckland West Prison now stands on the wall of the New Zealand Department of Corrections Head Office

Chapter 4 -Understanding and Analysing Cultures

Throughout this manual the importance of understanding and analysing the cultures around us is stressed.

By putting ourselves in the position of the person with whom we wish to work we can approach the project from their point of view. We don't have to agree with that culture - all we have to do is try to understand it.

Our culture gives form to every bit of communication we have with others and how we are recognised by others, and how we see ourselves. To analyse we need to watch and listen.

To understand a culture, as well as our own, we need to watch the way we greet each other, the way we use language and gestures.

We need to observe socialisation, see how fun and humour are expressed, and pay attention to when words or gesture are the source of misunderstandings or annoyance.

Art forms have to be based on good observation and thoughtful analysis. This is because they are sensitive, expressive and based on the cultures we carry with us.

Music and dance for example can bind us together when we share the songs, sounds or movements. Theatre and writing can tell our stories and express feelings, social patterns, values and traditions. Painting and sculpture demonstrate what we see as ugly or beautiful.

As we have emphasised already in this training manual, prison communities are made up of many cultures, some ethnic, some youth, gang, officer, management, volunteers and education cultures.

Thinking about the myths, histories, ideologies, values, arts and rituals of your own culture means that you are more likely to be able to recognise and read the cultures around you.

People who lack confidence in their own culture are sometimes distrusting and less tolerant of others because they expect others to be like them. The inmate culture and management culture will never be the same, but they can share stories, values, sometimes even ideologies, and certainly they can share their art.

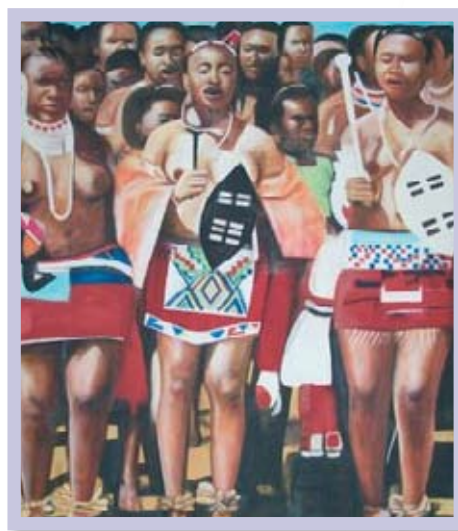
If you are trying to set up an arts programme that is the expression and communication of the inmate cultures, then being responsive to how that culture works will help. While you might not approve of, or be part of it, you can understand and identify which art, rituals and performances will give those cultures a voice. It will enable them to fit in and interact with their world when they leave prison and have to join the more dominant cultures of society and leave the prison inmate culture behind.

A checklist might be useful.

What is the history of these inmates? What are their values? What are their ideologies and spiritual belief systems? How do they communicate these to their peer groups or others in their culture? There could well be elders and artists who are able to supply these needs.

The answers can be the starting points. Successful art programmes often start with the histories or stories of the inmates, their experiences on the outside. They can then reflect positive values, love, and happiness, the beauty of the forest, parks or family relationships.

There, within their art, we see spiritual messages. These may be from their family tribal backgrounds or they may be from the streets and popular culture. Using their music, their dance and their images in their art as the starting point gives room to expand and communicate,



Visual art work Leeuwkop Prison

Chapter 5 - Physical Environment of Prisons

Several times in this publication there has been mention of the physical environment of the prison.

Changing this is a challenge in South African prisons. The overcrowded cell blocks are an unhealthy environment which contributes to violent behaviour.

However there is room for improvement in the grounds, on the outsides of the cells and on some walls.

It is amazing what can happen if you use colour on the walls. It is neither difficult nor expensive to paint murals and spend time planting trees and setting up gardens, especially if the work is done by inmates – the cost cheaper than inmates continuing to come back to prison.

There is a lot of work being done on the relationship between crime and vandalised areas. Those ugly, dirty and uncomfortable places creating violent and antisocial behaviours.

A search on the internet will bring examples. Start by looking at what is called the “Broken Window Syndrome”. While the articles tend to be negative and set up systems of control, the basic belief is that one broken window leads to lots of broken windows and soon leads to graffiti or vandalism. The work done on replacing graffiti with arts programmes and murals has been cheaper and more successful.

The same can be said about introducing more light. The environment becomes less threatening.

Again emphasis is placed on the importance of gardens. Planting gardens, even around the sports areas will improve the behaviours of the people who use them.

You may not be able to think of a way to stop the overcrowding, but you can certainly improve the physical environment to make areas more comfortable, natural and less tense.

There is now considerable research showing just how much physical environment influences the behaviour of people in those environments. While much of this is based on behaviours in hospitals, there is some work being done by John Zeisel that indicates that it is worth spending time thinking about prison physical environment.

He particularly notes the importance of personal space, fresh air, windows, access to outside activities, time to oneself and time to socialise. This is an integral part of brain functioning.

The design of physical environment in prisons can either support the abilities, skills, and brain of inmates or it can rob them of hope, dull their brains, and make them less able to eventually become productive members of society. Unfortunately most prisons do the latter. (Zeisel 2006)

Arranging some of these would be challenging in South African prisons, but organising some would be possible, particularly if planting of trees and improving courtyards was a priority in the art in prison policy.

In New Zealand, urban designers are working with the arts community and local users of a space to ensure that open spaces are inviting and encourage participation.

Community participation creates ownership and ownership means that the community itself acts as a protector and guardian.

A particularly good example has been the involvement of taggers in mural projects. Murals created by legal art programmes are seldom tagged again as the mural artists operate within a code of ‘graf honour’.

The process of creating safe physical environments begins in the early planning stages. The community, particularly the community that uses a space, is engaged at the early design stages of the project design. This need not take long, but is essential to create ownership. The designs are then drawn out in consultation with the youth cultures, store owners and people who use an area.

The final result is often stunning. Areas that have previously been littered with unsightly graffiti, become covered in murals reflecting the style of youth culture or the unique characteristics of a region or area.

These programmes have been particularly successful where the “graf” artists have been mentored, forming partnerships with established artists. They are also successful if they incorporate ideas, and sometimes objects, from the community themselves.

The same applies to prisons. Discussions will the inmates ownership of the spaces and show them what resources are available for making them more appealing. With art and gardens the spaces become more positive.

The Arts Access Aotearoa “alternatives to graffiti programmes” in New Zealand worked with communities as they employed the taggers to do murals, instead of the ugly tagging. The Christchurch City Council Legal art programme called “Project Legit” was particularly successful in using the skills for young vandals to produce. www.artsaccess.org.nz (Eames, P and Lineham R. 2001)



Choirs involve team work – this choir at Pollsmoor Prison – Cape Town

Chapter 6 – Desired Outcomes

6.1 Desired Outcomes for Programme

a) Positive reintegration into society

One of the realities of the prison system is that most inmates, however bad, do eventually return to the community.

It is therefore important that the prison service is used to ensure that inmates are prepared to live in that community and to interact positively rather than negatively.

Therefore the task is that of rehabilitation and “correction”, hence the name “correctional services”.

There are things that need to happen to make that reintegration possible and they include being able to communicate and being able to make a living.

Here again we can concentrate on the arts and on arts programmes. The arts certainly can give skills for communication and some of the arts can provide income generation.

Therefore if the primary outcome required by any programme in the prison is reintegration into society then the choice of art form is important.

If the primary outcome required is income generation, then the choice is important but the final product is also important and that product needs to be excellent and innovative. There has to be a market for what they produce. The inmate would also need to learn alongside the art, marketing and distribution skills.

b) Inmates with Skills and Discipline for Living

One of the things that the arts teach is self discipline. You need to plan and think if you are to create an impressive artwork. You are taught to think about colour, shape and style. You need to have patience. Work needs to dry, has stages and needs to be thought out. The artist needs to be disciplined in the use of colour, needs to be aware of at his own weaknesses and strengths and needs to respect intellectual property of others. He or she needs to have an objective in mind for a finished product.

These skills are as important in the performing arts as in writing and visual arts.

The other thing that this discipline teaches is that you have to make mistakes and that the mistakes teach you how to do a better job next time. The arts can be very wasteful in the learning stage and trials and experiments are part of this. Practising, making trial models, mixing paint, trying out drawing, and with performing arts rehearsals. This is all an incredibly difficult thing to do if you have never planned or learnt to be patient. A lot of young people are absolutely “now” people and rapidly become frustrated at having to wait, learn new skills and make plans. The arts are the perfect tool to learn these skills that are so important for living with others in the community and when working in any job that involves completing a task.

c) Team Work in Prisons

This discipline also involves working in a team – each person is allocated a job, particularly important in choirs or theatre. Your part might be large or small, but the team, choir or theatre group is relying on you to contribute your best to be there on time, to share the boring tasks. Again, these team experiences can be new and threatening for an inmate – but once learnt will certainly be transferable to their life in the community.

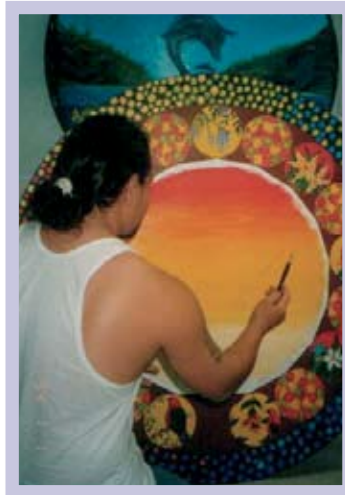


Photo by Robyn Hughes

Inmate at Auckland West Prison works on art works for Auckland's New Hospital

d) Changes in Prison Culture

As we have already discussed, change in the physical environment will result in changed behaviours.

Making murals is a good way to do this, but can also be effective if you involve the inmates in crafting sculptures and in gardening. Well-placed trees need not be a security risk.

Gardening is certainly an art form and one that can be used for that environmental change and it can also provide extra food, extra income, and add beauty. One of the things that has impressed us in some of the South African Prisons has been the gardens. There is certainly room for lots more.

Nelson Mandela (Mandela 1994) had his gardens and you only need to read his descriptions of them to understand their importance.

Yet gardening is as much hard work as the other arts and you have to have equipment, ample water, tuition and patience. The gardening outcomes can primarily be to change the environment, and the other outcomes of skills for rehabilitation are bonuses. As Nelson Mandela discovered, there is heart break when the plants die and the outcome of gaining success will be lost for those who have been unsuccessful all their lives.

During our visits to South African Prisons we saw courtyards that could be made positive through planting trees and setting up gardens. This will be covered further during the section on partnerships, but when the gardens are seen as changing negative environments to positive, then you will start to see significant changes in the behaviours of inmates who use those courtyards, especially if they have planned and developed the gardens themselves.

e) Positive Employment of Time

A prison sentence is often called “serving time” that is because for many inmates there is little to do. Prisons try to think up jobs, some set up industries, but there are always whole prison units where people are under employed or unemployed.

This unemployment has been the cause of riots, violence and depression. It is not hard to set up programmes in the arts to fill these spaces. You know from the choirs how much time and practice their preparation takes. The same applies to the other art forms.

Later in this publication we will talk about the development of art rooms or creative spaces. If these spaces are available as much as possible – certainly seven or eight hours a day, then inmates will learn how to use their time constructively. Some will even take control.

At Auckland Prison West Division there is a famous arts programme, well known for its wonderful efforts. The inmates have formed their own arts committee responsible for the programme. They work with the education and arts team planning and organising the courses. It is extremely successful. The inmates set the rules (these are far harsher than the institution's rules). They ration the art materials and they plan the art projects. They are also responsible for tidying up and cleaning up the art room space.

This group always starts and finishes with prayers and the committee are in charge of this whole process and timetable – great skills for returning to the community for people who may never have had any responsibility before serving their prison sentence. The prayers have deep cultural significance.

6.2 Outcomes for Inmates

a) Resiliency

Resiliency is a fascinating concept and really important to us as we think about the outcomes of inmates, particularly young inmates, as a result of taking part in arts programmes.

It is now being acknowledged that young people will survive even the toughest conditions if they are resilient. So what is this concept and why link it to the arts?

Well, resiliency is the ability to bounce back from a difficult situation. It is an engineering term used particularly in association with metal, bridges and buildings. The concept is about being able to bend in the wind, sway with the earthquake or withstand fire or water. So when used to describe a person it means being able to withstand external pressures, being strong enough to walk away from peer pressures, to be flexible and spring back.

There is research showing that that young people sometimes do not have the skills to cope with stress. They are ill equipped to withstand peer group pressures.

This research (Blum R. 1998) also found that young people who were resilient adapted and survived and didn't end up in prison or in correctional facilities, were the ones less likely to commit suicide and were able to walk away from criminal behaviour.

A popular model for creating resilience in young people showed that the young person needed:

People – who cared about the young person and could be mentors;

Places – that are safe to congregate in;

Activities – that develop a sense of belonging to a group;

Contributions – to their wider community in order to engage them. (Eames P. and Lineham R. 2001)

Therefore an outcome wanted from the arts programme is the ability for the inmate to become resilient. This will mean finding mentors, both in prison and when they leave.

Especially when living in crowded conditions, it is important to have a place in the prison where they can feel safe. We suggest the art room be kept open as much of the day and night as possible and accessible to all in the unit.

Finally, it is necessary to have a way in which these inmates, whether younger or older can contribute to the prison society. This is through having to take responsibility for some aspect of the arts programme and arts room. This creates a sense of personal ownership of the processes and its achievements.

b) Self-Esteem

The next important outcome for the inmates is to somehow regain their self-esteem. This is often lost during the process of being caught and convicted. The punishment strips away self-esteem and this needs to be re-established before the inmate can hold his or her head up high when he /she leaves. Giving them that self esteem is vital if they are going to stay out of prison.

Encouraging the inmate to craft something beautiful; to contribute to a performance; or choir that produces a good show or concert, especially if family or friends are audience. It also helps if it involves clothing or costumes that make them feel unique and special.

In prison we strip away any dignity and wonder why it is so hard for the inmates to find it again when they get out.

Sharing a large room with 60 beds may destroy individuality, but if that space has room for art and music, and outside the garden has been nurtured by the inmates themselves, they have a chance to have something worthwhile that is “theirs.” The self esteem is essential for making a positive contribution to any community which is sometimes called in policy documentations “social connectedness”.

c) Transferable Skills

Skills for living include: thinking skills, creation skills, listening skills, communication skills and the ability to connect with other people.

We know that these skills are often lacking in inmates, particularly young inmates. So the outcomes we wish for the inmates to re-establish themselves in the community are these skills.

So often for our criminal population, the relationship with school or institutions of learning was flawed in some way. They didn't attend, their relationships were negative or they were just so disruptive that they were not encouraged to attend, or if they did attend they were punished.

So we need to think of a positive way to reintroduce the inmate to these skills in ways that they can enjoy and which will engage them and then give skills. They may, during this learning, think they are having fun or becoming involved in an activity just for pleasure or involvement in the process.

Both the arts and sport provide these skills in this way. Again, looking at some of the prison units in South Africa I wished there were a few rugby balls. I was convinced that there were people who could take on the All Blacks and that they were potential Springboks who could bring energy and drive to the back line or run the try past our New Zealand heroes.

Again it is a thinking pattern. The skills are gained through activities that on the surface appear to be time fillers, rewards or recreation. What is really happening is team work, listening skills, thinking skills, planning, communication and connecting with other people.

d) Communication

The development of communication skills deserves more emphasis than the other outcomes. Having spent hundreds, maybe thousands of hours with inmates in prison units and cells over twenty years I am convinced that even the most inarticulate inmate can talk about his or her art work.

Officers have asked about the content of the discussion that have taken place in the cells. These have to be confidential but do include stories about families, life experiences and often about spiritual experiences.

Only through their art are the inmates telling these stories.

There is a huge mural at Wanganui Prison in New Zealand. A picture of it can be found in several of my publications: The back inside cover of *Arts Solution and Social Inclusion* (Eames 2004) has the full mural and it is in the middle of *Expressions of Freedom and Fantasy* (Eames 2001). Both books can be purchased from Arts Access Aotearoa www.artsaccess.org.nz

The mural is the story of how to survive in prison. It is beautiful. It is in a series of panels and it extends the width of a football field.

The first panel talks of reality. It is the prison mostly in darkness, with a tombstone and the prison guard. The second panel is a huge door. This is the door between reality and fantasy and you have to climb through and over that door and a waterfall to reach a place where you can survive the prison environment. The next panel is the fantasy of the body. Sex, a cloud representing orgasm, a beautiful mermaid and a wonderful valley are in this panel. These are the fantasies of the body. The next panel is guarded by the bird of paradise and is the fantasy of the heart. The forest, trees, beach and island are in this panel. Tane is the Maori god of the forest and he guards this panel.



Part of Wanganui Prison Mural – Fantasy of the Head

The last panel includes the fantasies of the head- knight on horse back, Peter Pan's Captain Hook ship, the moon and the Grim Reaper. All are surrounded with mist and the inmate's fingers grabbing at this fantasy just to survive.

It is an extremely beautiful mural communicating the reality of life in prison. In the picture the prison bars are obvious, yet you don't really see them. This is a magnificent piece of communication by the inmates.

Doing this mural involved the artist sitting for weeks with the inmates while they talked about what it was like in prison. They then drew pictures on pieces of paper and then they put them together for this huge mural. Then they all painted the panels with the artist encouraging the finishing techniques and the striving for excellence.

The work must now be about 15 years old and has never attracted graffiti or any marks. Because the artist worked with the inmates on preparing the walls well and used top quality primers and art material it hasn't faded. It still communicates to new inmates the same message of survival.

e) Anger Management, Alcohol and Drug Dependence

Most prison programmes these days work with individual inmates to find the reasons for their offending. These case management systems are designed to address these reasons.

Finding those reasons is not always easy, finding a solution even harder. Yet we have found that when communication avenues are opened up discussing the reasons for offending becomes easier. Therefore finding a different way to express oneself through the arts may help. Also if the arts give a way of expression that is satisfying and rewarding, becoming absorbed in art may take away the need for alcohol or drugs and enable the inmate to express anger in a positive way.

In some countries the individual management systems are called “Integrated Offender Management” (IOM). If the arts are designed as an input in these systems then the inmates can be involved in finding their own solutions to their ongoing offending when they leave prison.



Mural in Education unit Pollsmoor Prison with inmates and staff

6.3 Educational Outcomes

Literacy

As the inmate creates his or her art, he or she wants to find out more. Library books with an abundance of pictures are the starting point and then the inmate wishes to read. The motivation was not there before. The art introduces this motivation.

The visual arts are good, but even better is music. I cannot count the number of times I have been told that an inmate started to read after learning a musical instrument and then, trying to work with sheets of music, started to get the idea of reading.

Don't underestimate the power of the arts to inspire the inmate to move on to further learning. The art engages for the first time. Once engaged, the path to literacy can come. For some this will happen quite quickly. For others the process is much slower. But if handled well and as long as the inmate is drawn into the process without realising what is happening, the results will be positive.

Learning to read after not reading at all is frightening. Within the arts environment it comes in a much easier way.

a) Numeracy

The same applies to numbers. A significant number of people are number illiterate. While these skills are not always the result of engagement in the arts by all inmates, some do begin to try to measure, weigh out materials, count and add. At least this is the beginning, and once that voyage is started the next steps come with a little less fear.

b) Social Interaction

As noted throughout this publication, social interaction is really important. While some art forms require work on one's own, others require work as teams. It is relatively easy to set up group projects in the arts. Making huge paper maché art works well with a team. Large murals, group patchworks and of course, singing in choirs, acting in plays and writing group stories all require social interaction.

c) Team Work

This social interaction also leads to another important educational skill of working as a team. The performing arts are the obvious ones. Others include any group project whether with clay, group writing of songs, craft activities, mural or dance.

If this is the educational outcome you require, then the arts can get you there. Use your imagination or get ideas from Chapter 8 of this training manual.



These inmates at Kroonstad Prison provided an informal concert outside their cells

d) Commitment

Completing a task and being loyal to that task are skills. Inmates have often told me of the thrill of finishing an art work for the first time in their lives. The pride is amazing. To do this they have to be committed to the task and see it through.

This is difficult for anyone who has never been committed to anything positive in their life. The commitment to the task can often come before the commitment to other people.

The prison education team can plan programmes that have an educational goal of providing inmates with activities which encourage commitment to people and to processes. This is a measurable education outcome that requires an element of imagination and creativity, but is certainly possible for many inmates who have a history of failure.

e) Creative Thinking

The last of the educational outcomes that we are going to highlight in this section is the need to teach people how to think. There are prison inmate courses called "straight thinking courses" and their goal is to get the inmate to acknowledge the processes and approach to problems.

(see Motiuk & Serin (2001)).

Straight Thinking is a cognitive skills programme similar in content and delivery to the Canadian "Cognitive Skills Program". It is designed to improve the critical reasoning skills, and change the beliefs and behaviour of offenders. Straight Thinking is delivered to groups of offenders in the community and prison³.

Upon observing many straight thinking courses in New Zealand prisons and watching even more arts programmes, I am convinced the formal sessions of the Straight Thinking course are not as effective as the arts programmes for giving inmates the skills to work things out and think – and not only think, but think practically and creatively.

³ www.corrections.govt.nz/public/research/effectiveness-treatment/straight-thinking.html

Chapter 7 - Setting up Arts Programmes in your Prison

7.1 Preparation

Setting up an arts programme in prison, while similar to other arts programmes, has some significant differences from programmes elsewhere.

The first of these requires careful choice of tutor. This needs far more care than other arts programmes, as the artist tutor must not only be a good artist and able to share his or her skills, but have the personality not to be distressed or influenced too much by the pressures from inmates.

What we have found is that the artist must have a clear understanding of the task – to teach art – otherwise there are some who decide they have a role of reforming the whole system of corrections.

Secondly the artist must have the empathy to gain trust and to be able to stay with the task. Unlike community arts programmes, this programme must be set up in a sustainable way. If the artist is only going to stay a few months, the inmates will be turned off the art. Many of the inmates have been let down all their lives so this programme has to be a stable influence and continue for long enough to ensure it reaches the outcomes identified in Chapter 6.

Stability and commonsense are extremely important in choice of artist. Changing the artist too often certainly disrupts the learning process. This is why we try to get the best artist tutor in the first instance.

There is another thing to note when employing an art tutor. While teachers are great and in many cases make the best tutors, there is a different process when you use artists. Artists work alongside inmates, drawing out the art, rather than teaching. Also some inmates have been turned off from learning by bad experiences of teachers in school. The artist provides a bridge back to learning and breaks down the barriers.

What we have found is that even if it takes longer to choose the tutor, finding the right one, is really important.

As important as the artist tutor is the kind of art. We have found that a discussion between the education officers and the inmates sometimes guides this process. The other issues are what facilities you already have and the outcomes desired. A brainstorming session between case managers, inmates and education staff will often give a surprising result.

The next step is identifying the inmates to take part. We feel strongly that these inmates must have volunteered to attend, yet it is also important to choose carefully, noting all the time which inmates would gain the most.

In this we have favoured inmates who are serving longer sentences – sentences of at least two to three years. While it would be great to have arts programmes for everyone, prioritising must focus on finding the inmates who will benefit most.

It takes several years to become good, and much longer to become good enough to make a living. An art programme once a week with a good tutor will make a significant impact on an inmate over time, but it will not happen immediately.

Then the preparation requires a suitable venue for the art programme to take place. This will vary according to the arts programme. Performing arts need more space. Visual arts should have a space with light and water. Easy access to the visual arts space is a tremendous advantage.

For music practice, location and space are also important.

So when you have covered these factors then advertise and look around and ask for the art tutor. This is essential in every case except if you are using an inmate or staff member as the tutor.

Our experience has been that advertising brings out some really interesting people who you just didn't know existed. This is because the arts and justice sectors do not usually come close together.

Then we find that interviewing and selection needs to be with someone who knows the art world working alongside someone senior in the prison service.

In the interviewing you play "good cop / bad cop" roles with one of the interviewers stressing the importance of security, not doing favours for inmates, sticking to the rules, being professional employees of the prison, and – very important – that they will not be "social workers" or take on a role of trying to change the world. There is certainly a role for social workers in prisons, but that is not the role of the artist tutor.

This is a very important issue, which should be stressed strongly. I have had nearly 20 years employing artists to work in prisons and I have made some significant mistakes. You have to be convinced the artist tutor will abide by the rules but there are many artists who believe they have creative licence to do what ever they like. The good ones are amazing; the bad ones are just as amazing, but in a negative way. Abiding by the prison rules is absolutely paramount and this has to be emphasised over and over again.

But if the right person employed he or she will be with you for years and be a wonderful member of your team.

The other interviewer can concentrate on questioning your short list of candidates about art form knowledge, their ability to share information, technical excellence, and empathy with inmates, ability to be flexible in technique, and their ability to draw out talent and accept people who have never done any art before.

7.2 Excellence

The next step is stressing that the whole programme is committed to excellence. If you want good measurable outcomes then find the best space, the best tutors and do not cut back the initial set-up costs.

Employing the best costs money, but the quality of outcomes will be better. The same applies to art materials. An art work done on cheap material, produces a cheap product. The outcomes you are seeking include self-esteem, income generation and discipline. To get these you must respect the process and strive for excellence.

7.3 Contracting Tutors

Once you have found your tutor then you must set up a formal contract. We have always stressed that the artist / tutor must be employed by the prison or Department of Correctional Services. This is because the prison and correctional services should have control over that employment and the artist should be responsible to the correctional team and the outcomes of rehabilitation in the prison rather than to a normal arts outcome.

Through being employed by the prison the artist is also responsible to someone, usually someone in the education team, and the contract is the same as for any other member of that team. It also means they have a direct line relationship with the prison management or call for resources or support if anything goes wrong.

This doesn't mean that you don't work with outside sponsors or voluntary organisations. If another organisation wishes to pay the salary, then that is to be encouraged, but having a prison contract is still essential. Some prisons do this by directing funds through the prison education accounts, others just have a separate contract with the artist tutor that stresses the prison rules and have a different contract with the non-profit organisation arranging the course.

When employing existing staff members the same applies. Their contract should be extended to include the arts project, and even if they are doing the work voluntarily in their own time, the prison insurances, rules and behaviour codes should be spelt out in a written form.

A contract is also important if you are employing an inmate. This contract stresses the rules for the programme. One of the reasons for this is that you are trying to give the inmate skills for the time when he or she is released from prison and jobs require contracts and professional behaviour. If the inmate doesn't have a contract then they can, and sometimes do, exploit the position or become unreliable.



Traditional dance at Umzinto Correctional Centre - Durban

7.4 Ownership

For the programme to be successful then all participants involved at all levels of the programmes need to have ownership. This ownership needs to come from the conception of the ideas to the running and evaluation of the project.

Cultural ownership is one of the positive keys to success. It allows the participant group to express its culture and ensures it is an intrinsic part of the programmes. It also means that projects or programmes are designed to accommodate participants' skills and orientations.

The project therefore starts with meetings hosted by the prison management with the artist tutors and the inmates. The meetings address questions of art form, the stories the inmates wish to tell. The kind of project – music, visual arts, craft, dance or drama. Also the skills the inmates desire or need, alongside the skills the prison wishes the inmates to have that are in line with reintegration into society.

When these consultations have taken place, one obtains ownership. Then setting up an inmate committee or a committee of inmates and staff and artist tutors ensures ongoing consultation and goals can be met.

Taking ownership also ensures that inmates learn other skills, planning, budgeting, organisation and evaluation skills.

I am convinced that projects that have had inmates on committees and involved in the planning produce higher quality outcomes, both in terms of the art work and the outcomes for reintegration into society.

7.5 Setting up art room

Having the right space is also important. While we have seen a lot of adaptations of spaces for art rooms, there are definitely more suitable spaces. The following should help:

i. Space

Art needs, if at all possible, a dedicated space that is equipped with locked cupboards for art materials, tables, work benches and seating at the right height for the tables. Tables need to be easily cleaned and if the area is used for anything else, adequate paper to cover the table to absorb paint, glues and arts materials.

Art work is messy, so if the room cannot have paint on the floor or on the tables, there needs to be material to cover the tables. The floor covering is also important as paint and art materials will spill on to the floor. That is the reality of art.

ii. Water

If at all possible you need to have access to water. This has been difficult in many of the prison art rooms we have set up, but when it is available the processes are so much more practical. Brushes and art materials do have to be clean. Having a tub and running water, even if it is only cold water, is preferable and should be a goal if possible.

iii. Light

The next thing to look for is adequate and effective natural light. Again for some art rooms this is impossible. We have set up art rooms in a cell for a whole block and it has been dark, but accessible. The inmates do adapt, but the art rooms that are light and bright certainly appear to produce lighter, brighter work.

iv. Access

This is often an impossible dream in many but the most minimum secure prison, but if there can be access to the art room for as long as possible then you will see the art work flourish.

v. Security

Like everything in the prison system, security is an issue. We have found that the artist tutor often works alone with the inmates. Even when we have set up systems to ensure that there is officer control, in the end the artist / tutor is left alone with the inmate artists.

Having a space that can be seen and monitored affords this flexibility. The inmate artists really like and benefit from one to one relationships with the arts tutors without officers present, but when this happens the artist/ tutor does need to be protected.

vi. Practice Spaces for Visual Arts and Craft

Ever since I started working with art in prison there have been issues relating to where the inmate works when not in the art class. Depending on inmate classification, some work might be able to be done on beds in the cell, but where this happens there is a greater risk of work being stolen or damaged. Therefore a room accessible during the day close to the sleeping cells should be considered. Alternatively lockers should be installed and made available, or some way to ensure that work can be done away from the art room in spare time, and remain safe and not stolen.

vii. Finding Space for Dance, Music or Theatre

Dance, music, choirs and theatre all require a large space. You will all have worked out systems to cope with the choirs. The same rules apply to theatre and music. The only difference is that music and dance need extra equipment. Again secure storage of equipment is really important.

We have had trouble with security of musical instruments. With your choirs and singing programmes we're convinced that you will have coped with this better than we have in New Zealand. Security and trust are important.



A sculpture dedicated to non violence in the grounds
Kroonstad Prison

Chapter 8 - What Art?

Strangely one of the most difficult decisions surrounds the choice of art forms to use for your art programme. What often happens is that the prison chooses what is available at the cheapest price or free. This is not necessarily where you should start. As stated in the introduction every person has a dominant form of expression and a variety of art forms cater for this variety.

A reasonable choice ensures programme success. As many of us have a limited experience of the arts, we automatically think painting and drawing and singing, but this section gives you some alternatives. It is really a check-list to expand your thinking. Most art forms provide different outcomes, so work with this list and then talk to your inmates. They will certainly have preferences.

This list of preferences should then be thought about alongside what is possible. Setting up a patchwork course might be easier than a watercolour course and provide an option that can provide some income. Theatre can be expensive, whereas choirs need tutors who may be found within churches or voluntary agencies and are therefore cheaper.

The following are options and a few suggestions under each heading.

It is only a snapshot, and some of the outcomes for one art form can equally be applied to others. Use your imagination and you will discover many more ideas.



Pottery at Pollsmoor prison – a gift to Penny Eames during her visit in 2004

8.1 Craft

We have elected to list craft first for several reasons. You can set up a craft programme easily and efficiently and there are an abundance of people who would be more than happy to share their passion for their craft and their knowledge.

Firstly, it is a wide-ranging area and many of the craft art forms can be made without an intense amount of tuition. Sometimes they can use recycled materials. Some items can be made with ease so, as many inmates have short attention spans this enables people to finish something and experience the feel-good factor.

There is a potential if the work is done well, to sell craft art.

You may wish to note that clay work, particularly pottery can be rather challenging. Making pots on the pottery wheel requires tuition, but slab and coil work with clay is easier.

You will need access to a kiln, but there may be a partnership possible with a local potter. Coil pots are wonderful and can be made easily. The more eccentric, slightly irregular pots are fun and the results increase self-esteem. They can also be quite large.

One of the most successful arts projects I have ever been involved with was one where volunteer patchwork quilters and cushion makers came to the prison every weekend with scraps of material and the female inmates in the prison made wonderful quilts. This programme started with a weekend course and has now been going for about 15 years. The skills transferred are wonderful. The local patchwork quilt club has a contract with the prison. The prison vets the artist tutors who then give their time voluntarily. They share the load and there is a wonderful partnership between both the inmates and the patchwork quilters.

In South Africa, you already have a wonderful tradition of making bead jewellery. This can be extended to the prison, or the existing bead making programmes made available to more inmates. We were impressed with the bead designs that we saw in the South African prisons. There is potential to make an income from jewellery when you leave prison so this is an art form that meets several objectives and outcomes.



Matchstick carvings are a feature of prison art

Carving and Wood-Work. We are conscious that there is also a lot of carving and wood work in the South African prisons we have visited. Working out the outcomes desired and setting up programmes for more inmates should not be difficult. We suspect that there are inmate artists who work with wood who can be used as tutors in this field. Extensions of the wood work are prison art forms like matchstick art, pokerwork, carving and model making. These art forms have been a part of hobbies in prison for a long time.

Fabric art not only covers patchwork, it includes **knitting, tapestry, embroidery, spinning, weaving, felting** and anything that uses fabric. Many prisons already have sewing rooms and machinery. Again, it is an extension of these facilities and a refocusing of goals that can extend fabric art programmes. Men, as well as women do benefit from fabric arts.

Skills gained in making things with material are also survival skills when the inmate leaves prison. Fabric is accessible. New it is expensive, but recycling has opened up avenues. One of our programmes managed to get the community to donate old knitting machines and the men started making wall hangings. There is a lot of room for imagination and innovation here.

8.2 Visual Arts and Sculpture

The visual arts include a wide variety of painting, drawing, printmaking and design topics. Again, it will depend on the spaces you have available and the skills of your tutors. We will cover printmaking under the topic of water arts below, but for this section there are some specific points to make. Your tutors will know a range of different art styles. The initial objective will be to get inmate artists to succeed with their first attempts at art.

Drawing and painting are not easy, and we should avoid putting the inmate into a situation where he or she fails with the first attempt. When the inmate artist starts to finish work and is getting good then you can extend the range of medium to be used.

At the beginning, paintings can use house paint from test pots (water-based are easiest), then poster paints and acrylics, and only when the artist inmate is succeeding is it helpful to attempt drawing, watercolours and oils.

Again, we emphasise, a significant number of inmates will never have had an opportunity to do anything with the visual arts and their first experiences must be positive.

Two other things to observe are:

- i. Copying other peoples work. Inmates love to copy pictures from magazines and books. This is fine as long as you get the inmate to acknowledge the source, even if only on the back of the art work.
- ii. Artist tutors might find that it is easier to draw a picture themselves and then get the inmate artist to colour it in as a first step. This is also acceptable, but make sure the artist is happy with the result when the inmate claims it as their own intellectual property. It is a way to get success in the first stages of learning.

Sculpture can be made with any materials. They can be recycled material, stone, brick, wood or mixtures of everything. Even bottles held together with cement or grouting mixture can make interesting sculptures.



Photograph by Robyn Hughes

Table top art works made by inmates at Auckland Prison
West for the new Auckland hospital walls

8.3 Music

The tradition of music in prisons goes back as long as prisons have existed. The reason for this is the magic of music and the ease with which music can express emotions and can be used as escape from reality. This escape from reality is so important. Telling South African prisons how to set up music programmes is rather difficult. You have far more experience than we will ever have. Our visit to South Africa led us to introduce the whole choir experience into New Zealand prisons. Now many of our prisons have choirs.

In New Zealand, they have not yet set up competitions like yours, but maybe that will happen one day. The New Zealand the new choirs in prison programme is called "Singing with Conviction." These choirs are a marvellous example of cultural means of expression.

The partnerships that have made the choir and singing programme so wonderful in South Africa can be extended, and your experiences transferred to other music programmes. Inmates with instrumental skills can accompany choirs. This is already happening, but could be extended as more choirs and singing groups are set up.

The historic tradition of singing and music, particularly associated with the years of struggle against apartheid, still applies to people who are struggling in prisons.

We leave you to draw from your own experience, and simply add just a few positive personal experiences.



Youth band at Leeuwkop Prison

a) Bands and Orchestras

The bands and orchestras need more equipment and that equipment is expensive. Try partnerships with local bands – advertise for instruments in local papers. We have been conscious that in prisons throughout the world there are staff members who play in bands in their recreational time. Try to encourage them to work with you. The examples seen in South Africa show that you have already started this process.

One of the challenges is getting enough music and enough copies of music. Again, ask for help from local groups. If they have just performed a concert they might be willing to lend you copies. Some musician tutors have computer programmes that print out music and fill in the harmony. If your tutors can do this that is an added bonus.

Some work is still under copyright but other works can be performed and the work can be photocopied in the prison. Check that you know the difference.

It may also be possible to set up small orchestras. Advertising on the local radio station for instruments for both bands and orchestras can sometimes give you some of the instruments you need.

b) Drumming and Percussion Groups

Again, telling anyone in South Africa about drumming seems pointless. You know drumming better than anyone. Our experience is with Pacific Island communities and drumming. This is a wonderful art form and as so many people “have the beat”, success can easily be gained and again we emphasise that succeeding is certainly an important outcome.

Some of our prison drummers have made their instruments themselves. They can either share the expertise from other inmates or have a musical instrument making workshop in the prison.

The workshop leaves you with instruments to make a small percussion band. We did this with a group of children in a Women’s Refuge with wonderful success. The children then started busking in the town square for income. The result was just so rewarding.

c) Gospel and Country Music

Again, there are many of examples of what is possible and we are sure you have explored many of the partnerships that can arise within the prison and within the community. We have found that the music organisations are sometimes as good as the church organisations as partners, but like everything it depends on the individuals.

Finding tutors should not be difficult. Check that the tutors are conscious of having reintegration into the community as the primary goal. We have found that the music communities can also be supportive when the inmate musician leaves prison. The team spirit can be made into a bond on the outside as well as on the inside.



Gumboot dancing at Leeuwkop Prison Youth unit

8.4 Dance

Dance is experiencing such a resurgence these days, but it has always been important in traditional South African culture.

The resurgence has been fuelled by television programmes and excessive media attention. Dance is another art form that has variety and can be done as a team or as individuals.

The photo on this page of the inmate Gumboot Dancers is an example of individual or team performance, and line dancing is also safe for people who do not wish to dance alone. Other dancers require a lot of team work and again the discipline and team work provides skills for reintegration into society. The choices will be dictated by what is available and the cultures of your inmates and officers.

a) Traditional Cultural

The dance expression of any ethnic culture reinforces the traditions of that culture. In New Zealand, the Haka is important and you will have seen it when our sports teams play rugby against your teams in test matches. Pacific Island dance is also important to our Fijian, Rarotongan and Samoan communities.

What is really important with the dance programmes, and other programmes such as carving, is that the artists are taught traditional tribal values and the myths and stories of their people.

A significant number of the Maori and Pacific Island inmates have grown up in the cities and away from their tribal roots. Their tutors are respected elders and the programmes link them back to their histories and traditions. The outcome is again enhanced self esteem.

b) Hip-hop and Rap

Again, we emphasise that you find the art forms by looking to the cultures of the people within the prison. Hip hop is one of the current music styles. The young people in your prisons will be the experts. Let them share their skills. They will also be experts in break dance – giving them space will be the key. They will know exactly what music they require.

Programmes that develop literacy skills through break-dance, hip-hop, rap music and dance are being used in New Zealand schools with considerable success. Young people writing their own music and songs and then performing.



© Photograph by Alistair Eames

Young people dancing at the Dowse Art Museum in New Zealand. This was part of the Respect Festival where the art and dance of young people was celebrated.

8.5 Literature

Throughout this publication, discussion has emphasised that expression through dance, music and visual arts provides some people with stimulus that enables them to get back to learning. For many, these alternative approaches are particularly important.

Yet for others, traditional word skills are their forms of expression and finding the right words to express feelings and emotions will always have a special place. Inmates in prisons have been writing for as long as prisons have been around and your art in prison programme will need to encourage this form of expression as well.

Think broadly and explore the possibilities, the provision of paper, pens and pencils and if at all possible for some inmates, access to a computer with a word processing function.

Like the other art forms, there is so much variety.

a) Poetry

Always popular, it also teaches simple writing techniques. Poetry courses in prisons in New Zealand are well attended. Expression using a few words is magic and gives success easily and quickly.

b) Song Writing

We have found this most rewarding. The teaching technique of throwing words onto a white board mentioned on page 9 provides the words. Each word has a sound – clap the word anger and then clap the word loneliness and you will hear the different sounds. Some of these sounds and words are then put into rap tunes, others sung as blues, country or any other music form the inmates choose.

It is the words they want to use and these are precious to them and when a group put the words together there is the magic of group ownership.

Finding a partnership with a local radio station may get the works performed and broadcast. While the inmates themselves may not hear this, their families might and that will change perspectives.

c) Story book Dads or Mums

Storybook Dads is a programme set up in Dartmoor Prison in England. www.storybookdads.co.uk It has been particularly successful in linking dads in prison with their families. Visit the website. This is a wonderful programme and if you are working in prisons then certainly the experiences and ideas on this website will inspire you.

d) Short Stories

Short story writing sessions are a popular, and effective ways to tell stories about oneself as well as your experiences. These stories often start with true stories and then move to fantasy. Eventually they will move to having a structured beginning, middle, theme development and surprise endings, but this may not be achieved by all.

For many prison writers there is an episode in their lives they want to record and this is a good medium.

Some of the short stories can be published in a small book. This process of publication again rewards self-esteem and pride to the authors.

Check that the inmate artists want to put their names to the stories. We have found a large number of them wish to remain anonymous.

e) Novels

There will always be inmates with stories that are worth publishing as books. This may be where the prisons develop a partnership with a publishing house.

There are some inmate stories that, if edited and published, are certainly worth a wider audience. There are others where just offering to print the novel will provoke huge pride.

8.6 Singing

This manual for South African prisons just notes that you do this brilliantly. Most of you know the outcomes. We have heard the amazing voices.

Encourage more partnerships and do more of this for all cell blocks. The voices we have heard are just phenomenal, and the concerts are pure joy.



One of the choirs at Umzinto Correctional Centre

8.7 Theatre

In South Africa, you already have an excellent prison theatre organisation. They are experienced and know how to work in your prisons. They are called “Dramatists against Crime.” They are already working in South African Prisons successfully.

Working with a group with experience is one of the keys to success.

There are challenges with theatre and that revolve around the issue of sustainability. If it is possible to have a performance in place when the programme is complete, or to set up an informal group that carries on throughout the year, this should be a goal.

Theatre can be an addictive behaviour and there can be tensions when for some reason programme can not continue.

Some theatre that is highly successful in prisons draws on the stories of the inmates. The engagement in the stories of your fellow inmates can be a great experience and can give empathy and self-knowledge.

Some of these theatre experiences are called “playback” or “action theatre.” For some people these experiences are traumatic, it may help to have a social worker around or available, just in case the process, uncovers some emotions that have not surfaced before.

It is important that the artist tutors are regarded as just that – artists. That is why they are good at what they do.

It is equally important that if they uncover emotions that the inmate has somewhere to go to cope with those emotions, if they are too uncomfortable.

This is particularly true with women in prison who start telling stories of abuse. Sometimes they have not told anyone these stories before. Such is the power of theatre.

8.8 Water Arts

Having a whole section on what we refer to as water arts is deliberate. These are the art forms that have a basis in using water and touching, moulding and working with water and clay, paper or prints.

They are amazing as art forms as they appear to have the power to calm people who are expected to be “hyper-active”. They have the power to heal. They have the power to develop excellence with little skill and they are relatively easy to set up.

There is something in the processes that really works with inmates.

Tubs, rollers, pens, inks and paper are the equipment needed. It is also one of the cheaper art forms.

a) Paper making

Get an expert to help set this up. Use recycled material from the prison. You can use an old washing machine with an agitator in the middle to mix the paper and you can add almost anything from bits of old sheets to weeds to give extra texture.

When you are finished you can have something to sell, write on or give away.

b) Print making

Again, this is an art form that can prove successful for people who have a history of failure. The simplest printing methods are often the most effective.

Try simple printing using a roller with ink over torn newspaper, grasses and printing with patterns made from vegetables as printers.

A number of prints can be made to give some away as gifts to people at home, put on the wall of cells or in the art room.

It is worth employing someone who is a printmaker or has taught printmaking. But if you can find an artist for print making a preschool teacher could be the answer as they teach print making at preschools.

There is an infinite variety of things you can do.

Screen printing is also great and brings success. The screens can be made in prison joinery or wood work rooms. Inks, squeegees and rollers are not too expensive.

c) Ceramics

As we have already noted. Playing with clay, or even dough, for some reason calms people down. There is something about making something out of the soil that connects some people to their own roots and to the land. It is therapeutic.

Ask local pottery groups if you can use their kilns or else try to buy some electronic kilns. Making small things first with slabs or coils is successful. Once you add the glazes, then you have something special to give away.

Working with a pottery wheel can be difficult, but like all art, skill can be mastered.

In some prisons management is rightly cautious about clay and its potential to be used to make molds to cut keys and cause security risks.

This may be an art form for the lower security prisons.

d) Marbling

Something that is quite special and can be done really well with a bit of equipment and a few lessons. This activity goes well with paper making if a tutor gives guidance about the preparation of the paper to hold the marbling oils.



Print Making by inmates at Auckland Prison -
West Division - tutor Jean Clarkson

Chapter 9 - Presentation of the art

There is often discussion in the community arts sector about whether the process of creating art is more important than the production at the end.

Well, both are important. Finishing a task for the first time is great, but seeing that work on display and even seeing it sold is just as wonderful.

Hence in this manual we discuss both.

Professional art presentation does take special skills. We would suggest that you develop a partnership with outside galleries or people who know about presentation. The better the presentation the more self-esteem will come to the inmate artist.

If you are having an exhibition, whether putting on a performance, publishing a book or setting up a selling event – strive for excellence. It can be seen as a public relations exercise for the prison. Key people are usually invited and come.



Exhibition in a prison shows drawings, cards and paintings

9.1 Exhibitions

Having visual art work framed is almost essential – with slight exception of work done on canvas.

Buying a whole set of picture frames and matts from a discount department store is one way to do this for a reasonable cost.

The frames can be re-used. The difference in presentation is striking. The cost of the frame can be added to the price charged for the work.

9.2 Performances

Try to establish partnerships that afford you assistance. It is worth having someone who knows about lighting and sound. As one of the objectives is success then presentation needs to be successful.

Sometimes one wrong detail spoils everything else. In theatre, choreographing the singers, dancers and actors creates consistency and a sense of good style.

9.3 Publications

There are many ways to get publishing done that are not too expensive. It does require a fair amount of work, and a person to type up the documents, but it is certainly worth the effort.

What is expensive is the printing of a book, but books can now be cut on CD's. It is even better if you set them out in a PDF format, and format them to be visually appealing.

Photocopies are acceptable, but binding in a folder can look even better.

Typing out the work certainly does help to make it more professional, but in some cases hand writing is also sometimes acceptable.

Surrounding a poem with a frame and maybe adding a picture can set the poem up to good effect, but it is the words that matter which should and will speak for themselves.

Publications that have a contribution from a large number of inmates bring a rewarding sense of pride and self esteem. One of the best examples could be a cookery book.

9.4 Markets and Festivals

Selling work is important for some inmates. Learning how to sell is important if the art is to be a means of providing income when the artist leaves prison.

These skills need to be taught. Always take a commission for the sale of work. The commission should be consistent with the amount that would be charged if someone sells the work for the inmate when he or she leaves prison.

Inmates who expect to have the full retail market price of their work sometimes struggle to understand why a gallery will expect up to 50% in commission when they are out of prison.

Sometimes agents sell for the artists outside the prison. It is worth encouraging the sale of work, yet care is necessary as to what happens to the money at the end.

There is a growing market for what is called Outsider Art (Shepherd, S 2006). A lot of prison art falls into this broad category. If you are thinking of selling work by your inmate artists, a "google search" for outsider arts or self-taught art will bring up some interesting and useful websites. New York has a vast outsider art fair each year that sells work from throughout the world.



Market in Pretoria selling beads and necklaces

Chapter 10 - Partnerships

10.1 Community

Most successful prison arts programmes, whether they are performing arts, visual arts or writing are enhanced by a partnership with a group or groups of people on the outside.

Voluntary organisations like NICRO are particularly important, but there are others supporting inmates and their families that have a role to play. These organisations often set up exhibitions, performances and make sure any proceeds from the sale of work go to the families of the inmate.

The strength of these partnerships is that the community's perspective of inmates that is positive rather than negative.

Community partnership may also be with churches. Churches, like NICRO also provide support when the artists leave prison.

10.2 Arts Community and Artists

Some of the most successful arts partnerships with prisons and inmate artists have been with arts organisations. This is particularly true of the voluntary organisations. Some of these include local theatre groups, local craft groups, but also professional potters, quilt makers and writers.

If they cannot help they will certainly suggest someone who can.

In most cases the arts community will need to be paid. When the arts are their livelihood then this payment is necessary.

If you are working with artists on mural projects then you will find this a cheaper alternative to painting out graffiti and vandalism in prisons.

10.3 Prison Staff

It is always fascinating how many prison staff have a hidden talent in the arts.

Within your own prison staff there will be people who write, people who play instruments and people who make things with clay, wood, visual arts materials, wire, cans and stone.

Use them if you can. When we first started using prison staff as art tutors we were worried about conflicts in job role. The projects and engagement by the staff artist tutors was so successful we no longer had cause for concern.

The prison staff gave their time in most cases. Occasionally work was done during regular working hours.

Whatever you do, the prison staff person should be praised and thanked. Using existing staff can be extremely rewarding and can create bridges between the prison officer culture and the inmate culture.



Staff at Pollsmoor dance with the inmate choir

10.4 Inmates

Some of our New Zealand prison art programmes have been going for 15 years. In one instance in a maximum secure prison, there are artists who have been in the project for up to seven of those years.

These inmates are becoming extremely good artists and tutors. Using them is a good idea. We suggest you draw up a contract between the inmate and the prison so that the boundaries are clear.

The same applies to artists who come to prison on sentences. They can teach existing inmates their skills.

These partnerships are successful if clear lines are drawn and contracts are signed in a professional way to ensure that confidentiality, ownership of work and lines of responsibility are established at the beginning of the contract.

Chapter 11 - Special Groups

In this section we include comments about why the arts works particularly well with special groups. Some of this is repetition. Here we can see that the arts are for everyone and have outcomes for different groups. Most requirements apply for all groups, but for some, the outcomes are more important or more focussed.

a) Longterm Inmates

The artist who is in prison for a long time has time to learn an art form really well. If the security rating is particularly high then they might need help from books and the art work chosen with care, but the result when they are leaving prison could be fantastic. Our experience with several long term inmates who have now left prison is that their art has helped them stay straight and live in the community.

b) Young People

All the words we have been using throughout the book apply, such as, finishing tasks, learning literacy and numeracy skills, gaining self-esteem and resiliency, finding a way to make a living.

c) Inmates with Intellectual Disabilities

Intellectual disability does not mean creative disability. Art programmes for people with disabilities can be calming, can be successful and can produce good products for sale when the artist leaves prison.

d) Inmates with Attention Deficit Syndrome or Hyper-Activity

Water arts are wonderful for this group of inmates. I have seen inmates who are “uncontrollable” or so the guards said, being absorbed in doing visual arts and paper making for hours on end.

e) Inmates Suffering from Mental Illness

Again as noted above – giving a way to express oneself that isn’t in the form of words can help. Providing paper and paints is wonderful – or pencils, pens and paper to write.

f) Women Inmates

Their needs are similar to all inmates, but women inmates often do not have the same literacy problems. Don’t assume that women will prefer fabric arts and crafts. Women can be really great at theatre, dance and music.

g) Inmates on Remand

Working with inmates on remand is a challenge in every prison in the world. They are not yet convicted of a crime, or are presumed innocent until the court case comes up.

Employing time constructively is important. Sometimes gardening has been provided successfully. There are different outcomes looked for, but the arts certainly provide options for the employment of time.



Finalist in the Australian Prison Fellowship national prison art competition

Chapter 12 - Income Generation

For this section one needs to start by having realistic expectations. Income does not necessarily come easily and making money from the arts is often a challenge.

The objective for the art in prison philosophy is to provide transferable skills.

Resource identification, business skills, creative thinking, basic marketing theory are just some of the areas of skill that need to be gained before artists can become self-employed selling their art. Introducing some self employment courses for some inmates if they have the potential to make income from their art is really important.

With a goal of positive reintegration into society, knowing how to create art will not be enough. They will need equipment on the outside, good partnerships, marketing ability and support.

Some basic marketing theory would also be useful. These can just be the basic “P’s” of marketing, P’s of marketing include product, processes, price, promotion and position in the market.

One other important rule is not to raise expectations too high. Selling art is not going to be easy, but given support and the ability to create something special as the first steps.

External support will certainly be essential. Before the inmate leaves prison they should have met the people who will help them sell their product or find a team of artists that want work with them.

Failure when they first leave prison will crush all the good work that was achieved in prison. Thinking past the prison to the selling goals will make it possible to sell without stress at the critical stages.

The other factor that should be noted is that it is expensive to first set up an art studio. Maybe this is where the partnerships with other organisations come in to play. Some sort of starter pack for good artists would certainly make it easier to get started positively on the outside.



Prison Geometric cushions sewn by Fine Cell Work learners in English and Scottish prisons. Every one of these “Prison Geometric” cushions is a complete original. This is an amazing project and worth visiting their website at: www.finecellwork.co.uk

Chapter 13 - Innovation and Excellence

One other area that really needs to be emphasised is the importance of striving for innovation and excellence.

The emphasis put on this will surprise you, but will result in outcomes that are positive.

Innovation is thinking up different ways to do tasks. Being progressive in how you run the programme, will in turn give innovative results.

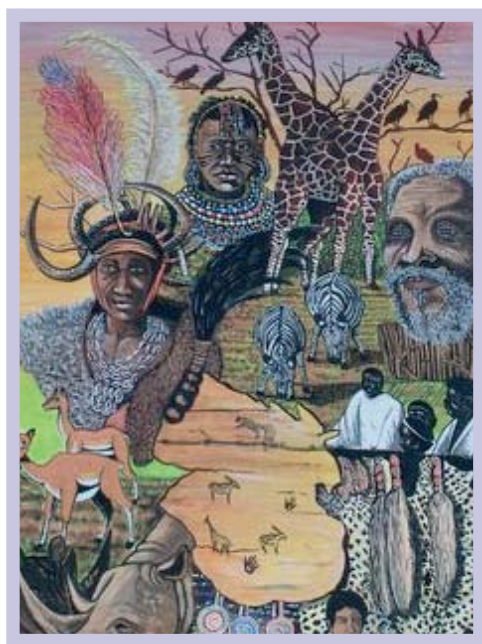
Of equal importance is striving for the best possible product and process. Inmates have often had the worst of everything. They failed in their growing up and they often had settled for second best.

Using newsprint paper and cheap paints produces cheap art and the self esteem goal is seriously limited.

Often educational equipment suppliers have material that if bought in bulk is cheaper as well as of an adequate quality.

Watching the prison programmes in New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, we were conscious that when excellence is aimed for and professional processes were in place, the product was better. The programme had respect and the performances excelled.

Costumes, painting presentation, the inks, paints and papers you use - if they use the best or nearly the best the best product is more likely to be created.



Art work at Umzinto Correctional Centre

Chapter 14 - Financial Considerations

A good art programme is not cheap. Equipment needs to be accessed, space created and tutors hired.

Yet the cost of having inmates return to prison in the all too familiar revolving door pattern of inmates coming back and back prison, is even more expensive. Working out the cost should be set assist the opportunity cost of more crime. They include the cost of the court system, reprocessing the inmate and the cost to the community of not rehabilitating the inmate.



Cooking can be an art form – learning skills for reintegration into society at Umzinto Correctional Centre

14.1 Budget

Always work out a realistic budget before you start. There is nothing worse than getting the project started and running out of funds.

Budgets should also have time-lines to make sure employments of artists are for the length of time necessary to get the job done.

Budgets should include equipment, artist wages, supervision if necessary, making space suitable and the consumable expenses of paint, paper, clay, tools or whatever is being used in the art works.

Performing art projects also need to include the cost of costumes, lighting, sound equipment and musical instruments.

14.2 Opportunity Costs

When working out the budget and making the case for funding it is also worth working out the cost of not doing the project. This cost is called in economic theory the opportunity costs. So think about alternatives to reaching the goal. Longer time in prison, the cost of teaching literacy through education rather than the arts, the cost of the inmates not being able to reintegrate into society and spending the rest of their life in and out of prison.

These are your arguments for funding.

14.3 Professional Salaries

It is really important that if at all possible you pay the professional salaries the tutor requires, and these include preparation time and travel to the prison.

There are exceptions, but if the artists are employed professionally, they are more likely to behave professionally.

There are times when volunteers from amateur arts organisations can be employed, but using volunteers may mean you need to employ several people to support each other to get back-up. Nor should unskilled volunteers be preferred as a cheap option. It is not easy to recover from failures and the long-term sustainability of the programme will be put at risk.

14.4 Who should pay?

There is considerable discussion in the community about prisons being soft options and that prisons should be places that punish.

During our last visit to South Africa there was considerable discussion on law and order on the talk back radios.

These discussions and people calling in would be just as ready to say that the state shouldn't pay for inmates doing art. You have to handle this public opinion.

We never made public statements about the art programmes and we wrote into artists contracts that they must never talk to the press.

The outcomes of reintegration into society are the goals of the programme and also the goal of the Correctional Service. The cost of providing positive education and arts programmes in prison must be set aside the cost of not doing those art and education programmes.

If you want to see a change in the lives of your inmates this is certainly one of the cheapest ways to do it.



Dancing and theatre by Dramatists against Crime at the launch of the Art against Crime and the Art in Prison policy at Kroonstad

Chapter 15 – When things go wrong

While the arts might sound like the perfect tool for the prison to meet its goals, there are times when the art programme is sabotaged, destroyed or goes wrong.

There are, as with any programme, many things that can go wrong and the following are noted to enable the organisers, artists and prison to watch and be aware.

The arts are so often seen as a privilege and that only the best behaved should have access to them. This is a mistake as we have found the inmates who have been the most violent, most aggressive and the most undisciplined are often the ones that benefit the most.

Having said this, they are also the ones that can cause the most trouble, and they are the ones that tend to have the toughest guards and maximum prison sentences.

So in this chapter we suggest a few things that sometimes occur and suggest you watch out for them, particularly if you have an art programme in a maximum secure part of the prison.

a) Art for Favours and Privileges

Some art works have the potential to be valuable, and in prison anything that is tradable is open to abuse.

Art works are traded in prisons and not only for cigarettes and alcohol. The trading can be for privileges from the guards, sex or money. What we tend to do is encourage the inmate committees to monitor this. If the work is to be sold at an exhibition, the proceeds should go through inmate trust accounts or sent home to families, and then monitoring what happens is easier.

The staff themselves have not been successful in this monitoring process as they are often the first to barter for cheap art works, craft and sculpture.

b) Conflict Over Work in Cell Blocks

One needs to be conscious that art work can become a bargaining tool and is a valuable commodity for some inmates.

It is just worth having in place some mechanism for recording who the artist is and which works belong to which artists.

Some prisons do not let work out of an art room unless it is being sent home. Others number all the works and have them sold only at exhibitions. Being aware of a potential problem means you will work out a way to protect the work so the benefit goes to the artist and any income from the sale goes to that artist or his or her family.

c) Artists /tutor who think they can change the world (or the prison)

Sometimes you might employ an artist and that person is not good at keeping the rules. They think for some reason they are above the rules or that the rules are for someone else.

We have noticed these individuals present really well at interviews, but when employed are easily convinced to bring contraband into the prison and take letters or information out of the prison, against the rules. While the misdemeanours are usually not too serious they tell the inmates that this person will break the rules.

The best way to ensure this doesn't happen is communicating with the artist tutors well in advance of the rules and what results are the of breaking them, and getting them to sign a contract.

d) Mistakes and Damage to Equipment

Art equipment is valuable and needs to be protected. We have found the best way to protect art equipment and supplies is to have inmates with this responsibility. Having an inmate committee associated with each art programme works wonders as they are the prefects and the protectors.

We have also found that giving this responsibility helps build teams and self esteem. Occasionally these committees are voted by the other inmates. Occasionally they are appointed by the artist tutor in consultation with the senior prison staff.

Even when there is an inmate committee things do get broken and mistakes do happen. These mistakes are distressing for everyone including the person who made the mistake.

A lot of damage can be done by over-reacting. If you have built up trust in the art programme and something goes wrong, then the damage done by closing it, blaming the wrong person or over-reacting defeats the efforts of building trust over the period of the class.

Communication is the key and this takes time and patience.

If the problem is that some equipment has been stolen in the prison by an inmate or occasionally a staff member, make sure you discuss it with the whole art class. If they are really appreciative and are getting the benefits from the programme they will find out what happened, while not letting them take it out on the offender – give them the opportunity to find the equipment and get it returned. It is amazing how effective this is in the long run.

e) Abuse of Responsibility

Sometimes it is easy in the art class to forget that the artists are inmates. In the environment of the arts even they sometimes forget.

When the privileges are abused and the responsibilities taken advantage of, remember that these are inmates and they have in some cases a life time of abusing responsibility. However, it is important that they need to be commended when things do go right.

Chapter 16 - Confidentiality and Copyright

One of the most difficult tasks to cope with in the art and prison environment is the areas of confidentiality, copyright and informed consent.

16.1 Confidentiality

Whatever happens in the prison and in the art room or theatre performance space must be confidential. Inmates do open up and tell stories. If they think these stories will be told to the authorities then this will restrict the trust in the artist tutor.

Art is about expression and sometimes what is said is for effect or even the truth that hasn't been told in the courts or in the parole system. These stories must stay confidential to the artist tutor and the art process.

Equally important is to have clauses in the artist tutors' contracts to ensure they do not talk about the experiences. We cannot emphasise this enough. So many artists are egotists. That is one of qualities that makes them good at performing on stage or producing written or visual art works. It must be emphasised that what they hear or see in the prison must stay in the prison.

Our advice to artist tutors is that when they leave the prison to have a shower, it is not to get them clean, but to wash away the secret things they have heard.

Some of what they see and hear can make good "party" stories, this must be avoided. If what the artists hear and see become stories then the art programme can be sabotaged through exaggeration, grand standing or breaking of confidential information.

Equally important is the insistence that artist tutors never talk about individual artists they have met in the prison. There is a temptation especially if the inmate is famous.

16.2 Copyright

Inmates copy work, from books and from each other. When they start drawing and painting most of the work is copies from books.

While this is alright, the original artist must be acknowledged. Even if the acknowledgment is only on the back of the art work, but preferably on the front of the work a line that says "in the style of Picasso", "influenced by the work of Monet". Teaching the inmate to respect the source of the art is part of the process of learning to value art, and paying homage to the artist.

When the work becomes their own original work then they begin to understand.

The same applies to the performing arts. They must respect the authors of the works and acknowledge them at the performances on the programmes and make sure the inmate performers know who wrote the work.

16.3 Informed Consent

Use the idea of and importance of respect. Ask first if you are taking a photo of the work, and check that the person doing the work actually did it before giving credit. Also if you are quoting an artist's poetry or short stories, check that is acceptable.

For some inmate artists it will be necessary to get them to sign permission for you to publish or print their pictures. For others, simply asking will be enough.

Some inmates may need to be anonymous when they leave the prison, or wish to set up a new life. That cannot happen if others know they have spent time in prison. It is therefore important that their names and images should only be shown with their consent.

Asking them is usually enough, but always check, and where possible get the consent in writing.



Skills development for women at Kroonstad Prison

Chapter 17 - Support for Inmate Artists after Prison

This final section is about what happens when the inmate leaves the prison.

This is our least successful area. We have tried to set up processes of support and they do not always work.

There are some things that we have tried to implement to ease the path to reintegration into society still using the art skills.

We have become conscious that a few do make their livings from their art, but they are the exceptions and the art from is usually carving – particularly with New Zealand jade, wood or bone; or with design if they get a job in a design firm.

So here are the suggestions.

a) Creative Spaces

Start setting up or finding the art spaces in the community. These art spaces can provide art materials and support for inmates when they leave prison.

These art spaces are like large preschools for adults with art work choices. In New Zealand there are now about 90 such spaces.

Creative spaces are places where art is created. They are places where people find achievement, fulfilment and a sense of self-esteem, and where they can develop meaningful relationships through creative self expression (Arts Access Aotearoa 2003 p3).

They enable people, who have disabilities, those just out of prison young people or refugees, to have access to the means to express themselves.

Many have small kilns. All have visual art equipment. Some have small galleries and most have room to dance or sing.

They are places that would give inmates who have just left prison a place to go. We did try to set up Creative Spaces just for inmates, but this didn't work. The police had trouble with parole rules and association rules when people leave prison.

It is better anyway that they quickly connect with the community in a positive way and not with the people who were in prison.

See the book *Creative Spaces (2003)* available from Arts Access Aotearoa www.artsaccess.org.nz

b) Equipment

Giving inmate artists a “starter pack” to take with them when they leave prison could bridge the gap and enable peaceful reintegration into society. If a visual artist, then some help with the medium they have been using.

If a carver then some carving tools.

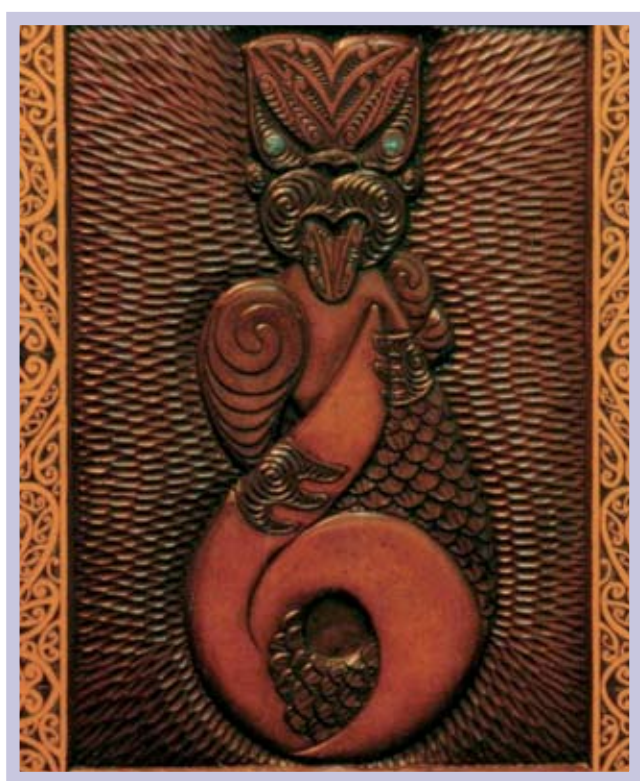
c) Performance and Practice Space

Introduce the inmate artist, performer to a community group in the area where they are to live. If this is written into the parole conditions it is more likely to happen.

If they are good actors or singers they will find support within local groups. Groups like Dramatists against Crime do occasionally employ artists who have worked with them in the prison system.

More likely is that an amateur group may support the artist following a recreational hobby activity.

The support of other artists is really important for sustaining the art after the inmate has left prison.



Carving made on Custom board by a New Zealand inmate

Conclusion

Working and living in the prison environment will never be easy. It is not easy for inmates. It is not easy for the staff of prisons and it is certainly not easy for artists and teachers.

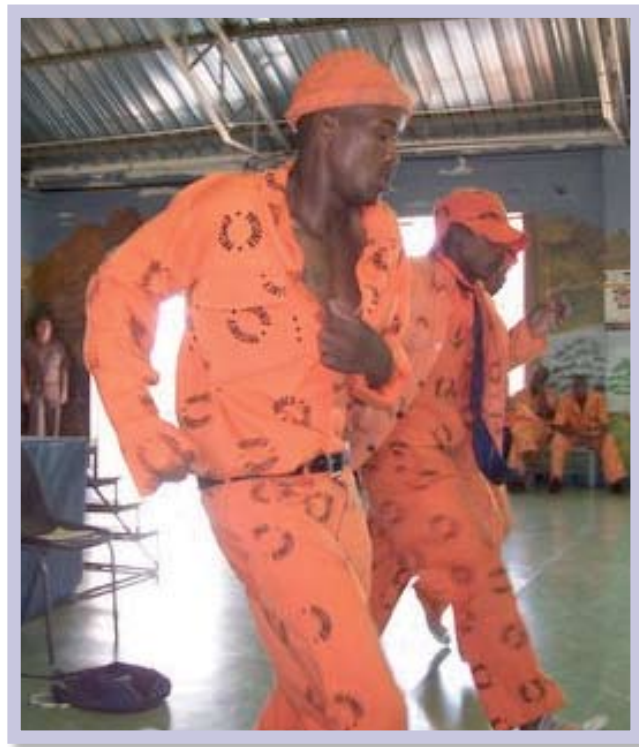
What makes it really worth while is when lives are changed and inmates come out of prison ready to face the world positively?

This manual suggests ways in which you can make a difference. The workshop should have inspired you and others you have met there to set up the programmes that use your imagination.

There are two sides of this policy that you should remember. Firstly providing the means of expressions for inmates, and secondly changing the physical environment to provide well-being. Together they will enable the inmate to return to the community in a positive way.

Finally, the words creation and creativity are closely linked. The act of creating is often thought of as a spiritual act.

So let us hope this manual and the workshops on art in prison in South Africa will create a more hopeful environment for staff and inmates for the future.



Modern Dance routines at Kroonstad Prison

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Author's Profile



Penny Eames, JP, MA (Applied) has been involved in setting up programmes in the arts and education, particularly for people on the margins of society, for nearly thirty years.

Currently she is Managing Director of PSE Consultancy and Managing Director of Arts Access International. She was the founder and Executive Director of Arts Access Aotearoa for nine years, until October 2004, before that a Programme Manager for the Arts Council of New Zealand, Director of New Zealand Workers Educational Association and a freelance writer.

Her specialist skill has been her ability to work with diverse communities, in hospitals, prisons, with territorial local authorities and government departments as they plan programmes that celebrate cultural diversity and encourage social inclusion, particularly for those on the margins of society.

In writing this training manual she is drawing on extensive experience setting up arts in prison and arts against crime programmes throughout New Zealand and through art forms as diverse as theatre, visual arts, craft, papermaking, murals, computer design and singing.

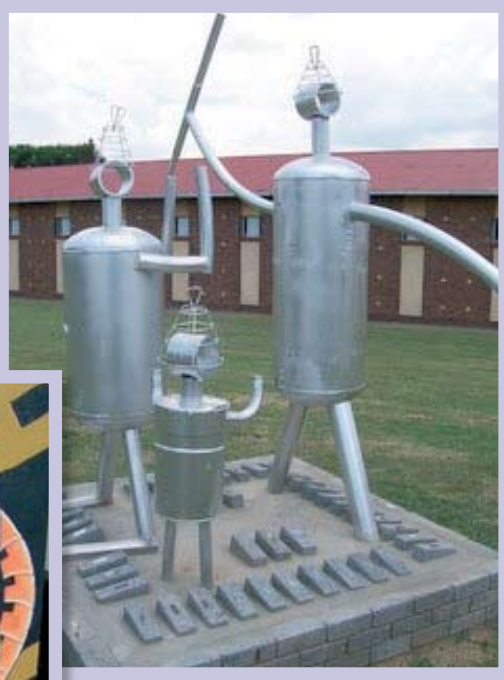
Her work associated with arts against crime has included:

- setting up a major research project in 1989 in partnership with New Zealand's Institute of Criminology to examine the role of the arts for inmates;
- running workshops for prison staff, artists and inmates associated with the philosophy and processes necessary for running sustainable programmes in prisons;
- running workshops for safer community councils in art against crime strategies;
- running workshops on inmate case management using the arts for integration;
- provided a support system for artists working in prisons and inmate artists as they left prison;
- designing policies with the New Zealand Department of Corrections to establish the role of the arts, recreation, case management and the development of arts industry in prisons.

Her publishing record includes "*Crying out for freedom – art in prisons*" and "*Expressions of Freedom and Fantasy: art in prisons and in the justice sector*", but her publications also extend to a wide range of other community subjects including: *Cultural Well-being and Cultural Capital: Creative Solutions and Social Inclusion – Culture and the Community: Arts Solutions for Social Problems*; *The Art and Health Partnerships* and several books on fund raising and community resource management.



Sculpture at Prison Fellowship Australia national final exhibition



Songbirds

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