



| n a t h a n |
| s t o n e h a m |

l e t t e r t o m e n t o r s & p e e r s

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Underground, Metro Arts Independents Program, produced by Motherboard productions. Photo by Fen Lan

| i am sending you much love |

At a sea-side church with ten Tongan actors,
Amongst sunflowers atop Mount Taebaek,
Sipping sake in a Shinjuku shrine,
And riding a rickshaw to London's Club Heaven,
I wonder who is carrying me.

With little in my pockets,
What can I offer,
For all that is being offered?



Knowing Ways closes with action featuring kites made in human rights workshop.

This project has received financial assistance from the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland and from The Copyright Agency Limited's Cultural Fund.



| knowing ways; critical learning in arts practice |

I was a delegate at the Knowing Ways; Critical Learning in Arts Practice conference (Knowing ways) from September 8th-10th at the North Edinburgh Arts Centre, Scotland.

Knowing Ways introduced me to world leaders in the field of art activism and community development who are producing risky art and facilitating transformational projects. Through formal presentations and casual peer-to-peer learning, I witnessed and contributed to dialogues about processes that use the arts to develop health, human rights, critical learning and positive social change.

I connected with a network of artists, activists and academics at the conference and plan to keep in touch with these contacts.

Personal Highlights of Knowing Ways:

- Speaking with art activist Karolina Bregula (Poland) about her public work *Let Them See Us* and discussing the commonalities in our arts practice and the similar challenges we face.
- Chrissie Orr's (USA) presentation on *El Otro Lado* - a project she is facilitating with young people in New Mexico. The project... *engage(s) the creative process to explore our human connection to land, our sense of home and belonging, and our sense of boundaries and cultural divides*
- Seeing how Adverb Productions (USA) are promoting health and LGBTQ issues via in-school performances
- Participation in process drama, *Valsinki* with Pilvi Kallio, Riku Laakkonen, Jani Tihinen and Jenni Bergius (Finland). These artists combined theatricality with dramatic conventions to stimulate discussion around politics, city government and privatization.
- Meeting contributors and editors of the Arts and Communities journal, including conference director, Stephanie Knight (Scotland).

Thanks Sandra Gattenhof for letting me know about this!



| amnesty international's human rights conference |

Amnesty's Human Rights conference was an emotional three days for me. Learning more about injustices in Australia and beyond was deflating and disappointing. At times I was saddened by stories of suffering, at other times I was frustrated by the lack of media and political attention these issues receive, and at times I was inspired to act. I was regularly disappointed by my own ignorance. I began questioning my own constructs about how we define what is right and wrong - a thought process that I dealt with a lot while living in Tonga. Do I have a fundamental framework through which to view different circumstances in order to identify if there is a problem, if something should be changed, who is responsible for advocating for this change, and is it appropriate for me (with my limited skills and knowledge) to be involved?

I wrote notes on power, women's rights, Indigenous rights, refugees, asylum seekers and more, which you can read on Offset Art's blog at offsetart.com.au/blog/

Thanks to Amnesty International for offering me a scholarship to attend the conference.

Learn about Amnesty International's campaigns at www.amnesty.org.au

| look |

In November I had the pleasure of working with Thom Browning and Verena Curr on Imaginary Theatre's creative development of *Look* - a new work for young children. The showing was received well by young and old, and I look forward to sharing more about this production in 2012.

...it blurs the distinctions between love, gender and friendship, and does this with a gentle exuberance that builds through moments of heartbreak to a pounding anthem celebrating individual freedom

the courier mail



Photo by Fen Lan

| underground |

Underground happened, and it is all a colourful blur to me. Friends from Korea and Australia came together not only to understand and present characters that don't fit easily into the boxes of gender and culture – but also to create a space for the actors and the audience to feel safe with these characters. The chosen force to achieve this was love... Unconditional, ever present, courageous love.

I think the roughness of our storytelling achieved the honesty we were after. The care we have for each other created a strong ensemble. The space was transformed. The music was strong. There was beer and soju and attractive people.

Thank you to all who contributed to and/or supported this show - your presence was truly felt and appreciated. I am forever grateful to Roger Rynd, my friend, who set this entire thing up.



!Metro Arts



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| next issue i will |

- Reflect on the weekly training sessions I've been attending with Tak Hoyoung
- Share my plan to transform an old shed at Mount Mee into Offset Art's home with rehearsal studio, office and artist residence.

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