

STRAIT ON SHORE

March 2006 – March 2007



Project Description

A community arts project exploring the settlement of King Island including many shipwrecks. The resulting art-work was an installation in a shop front, as part of Ten Days on the Island. This project generated many important conversations around belonging, identity and place.

Host Organisation

King Island Council

Funding sources

Festivals Australia

Outcomes

Installation, Soundscape & Catalogue.

Highlights

Having everyone flocking to the Centre and working away; all the important conversations this generated. Raising the tent.

Project workers

Sally Marsden (Cultural Development Officer) & Julie Gough

Keywords

Installation, King Island, General Population

Project Contact

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In the process of setting up the island's Cultural Centre, community members expressed an interest in being involved with Ten Days on the Island. Julie Gough was approached and, having had a connection to the island with a previous project, she readily agreed. Funding was sort to do a community project looking at the island's history of shipwrecks.

With funding secured, a consultation process was undertaken with community members, followed by a period of research. The idea for a tent made of clothing was closely associated with skin, and also how important shelter is on a wild island.

Old clothing was provided to make the tent. Wool and acrylic yarn was crocheted into lengths and used to stitch in the names of past and present residents. An evocative soundscape was also produced; the names of past and present residents being called out. This project was truly intergenerational – the youngest participant was 7, while the oldest was 94.

Over 100 community members actively participated in the project, while over 600 visitors came to view the installation. The soundscape was played at the airport, as both a greeting and farewell to all visitors.

Sally points out that:

'the process of engaging with the community was incredibly important in shaping a sense of identity. So too, that the process of putting the tent together generated many more conversations and built a sense of unity between all participants.'

The community embraced this project at every stage. They felt an enormous sense of pride at being represented in Ten Days, as this was a significant event for such a remote Tasmanian community. So too, the opportunity to work with an accomplished artist was seen as a great achievement. This community came together in a new and exciting way to celebrate their unique heritage and culture, with both the process and the outcome exceeding their expectations.



Images: Strait on Shore Installation
Photographer: Sally Marsden