

All My Love – Project description & Timetable

This project is aimed at women and men from the general community who are over 60 and come from a diverse range of cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds.

All My Love is to be an investigation into the love stories of these men and women, by means of individual interviews and group workshops, which will be photographed, recorded on video and result in generating material for a script. We will present our discoveries as a work in progress to be shared with other elderly communities, family, friends and the wider community.

Shakespeare's Romeo and Julie will be used as an archetypal base for this inquiry in order to provide questions, stimulate memory of experiences and generate discussion and sharing. The evocative images of love and relationship contained in the play, juxtaposed with those of the elderly, will serve as the catalyst when we begin to workshop and chronicle people's own love stories. Aboriginal Elders and women and men from diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences will be encouraged to share and work with the love stories from their own cultures in order to inspire their personal stories. As the arts workers of All My Love, it is our aim to always be interactive with our communities during this process, sharing from our lives, exposing our own vulnerabilities and dilemmas, listening and looking for ways to create an environment of intimacy and trust.

We will explore the various faces and states of love (forbidden love, true love, love at first sight, unrequited love, romantic love, the love of friends) and ask questions. Why Romeo and Juliet? What does this have to do with old people? What does getting old mean? what happens to love – for ourselves and each other? what about our sexuality and those butterflies in our tummy, do we still get the collywobblers? What were the do's and don'ts of love whilst growing up and how has social custom and religious protocol changed over the years to influence our behavior, as individuals and as a collective? What happens when we love our life partner? Does their love sustain us when they are gone?

The workshops will be a forum for deeper exploration of these questions and themes. Participants will be guided through this process while being given the opportunity to enjoy self-expression by way of: gentle movement, vocal play, singing, games, improvisation and story telling. Through witnessing each other's stories and in being recognised for their own, each man and woman will be empowered to trust themselves, each other and the workshop process. Our documentation of material explored, revealed and recorded on video and 35mm photographs, in addition to other personal material gathered from our participants, will provide the basis for a script.

August:

Jeremy begins networking. He will introduce himself to each group, share and discuss ideas for the project and be advised by workers from these communities on suggested ways to create an environment conducive to facilitating workshops with the elderly, according to their specific indigenous, ethnic and cultural needs and their physical and emotional capabilities.

He will follow up the initial contact with all individuals and groups who showed interested and maintain guidance through the process, eventually connecting them to each other and to the arts workers involved in All My Love. The steering committee and artistic team will meet fortnightly, or as necessary to refine their aims and objectives, as the project evolves in accordance with the needs of the participants. Jeremy will begin individual discussions/interviews with interested women and men. Bruno will record these on video. Jeremy and Bruno will create a website informing the wider community about all aspects of All My Love.

September/October:

Informed by the interview process, Jeremy and Nadja will design and conduct weekly workshops, which will, in accordance with the availability of space at each center, be held at the community headquarters of the men and women who have chosen to participate. Individuals met during the networking who wish to take part in workshops at other's centers will be encouraged to do so, with permission from the relevant workers and host communities. One special focus in workshops under Nadja's guidance will be vocal expression through emotional and inchoate sounds, image based soundscapes and singing, especially working with songs specific to ethnicity and culture.

Jeremy and Bruno will continue the individual interviews with all participants during this time, out-reaching to those who are unable to participate in workshops.

Jeremy will transcribe from the video footage and together with Nadja will begin noting material which is interrelating and intersecting, and that which is contradicting and conflicting, to form the rudiments of a script and to inform the direction of workshops.

November:

Workshops and interviews will continue. Bruno and Jeremy will make a photographic record of the process, using 35mm colour and black and white, print and slide film. Jeremy and Nadja will write the script based, based on sounds, words and gestures recorded, interwoven with selected text from Romeo and Julie and with personal writing, photographs and memorabilia contributed by our participating elderly people. Raimondo will edit the script.

December:

The script will be collated in such a way that it may be shared by reading, to oneself or aloud in groups, or looked through, much like an album or photo reportage. The video footage will be edited. We will share this script with each group and with those individuals who are unable to travel. In consultation with our elderly people, based on their capacity and willingness to participate, the artistic team will create a presentation of the material we have been exploring. This may be a showing, for an invited audience, of edited video material, together with live sharing of personal stories and readings of selected segments from script. Rehearsal time will be allowed for any live aspect of performance. The audience will be encouraged to leaf through the script-as-album and give feedback on this work in progress.