



NEWSLETTER 007 · APRIL 2010

## ACT OUT NEWS

- **CREATIVITY WORKSHOPS @ Victoria Park Centre for the Arts – Kent Street, Victoria Park**  
1 day workshop @ \$98.00!! (\$50 to NSAA and WNA members)  
Dates: Sunday 9 and Sunday 16 May  
10am to 2:30pm  
Call 9470 5520 or 0406 758 062  
**BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL – quickly filling up!!**
- **WIN A FREE CREATIVITY COACHING SESSION!**  
The first **10** people to contact me with the reason they want this gift will get a **free 1 hour coaching session**. **CALL ME! 0406 758 062**
- **CANWA theatre workshops have begun in Narrogin**  
[www.canwa.com.au](http://www.canwa.com.au)



## Theatre techniques for fostering innovators in business

The **Harvard Business Review (HBR)**, Dec 2009, had a wonderful article exploring 5 qualities displayed by innovators; qualities that can be nurtured to promote innovative thinking.

**1. Associating** – this is when what appear to be unrelated ideas or problems from different disciplines are brought together to create something totally new. For example, eBay, the idea for which was the result of associating the wish to establish more efficient internet markets with the wish to get hold of rare Pez dispensers with the failure of classified ads in helping find them. The magic of connecting sure paid off!

**2. Questioning** – constantly asking questions that challenge the status quo. Did you know that the idea behind Dell computers came when Michael Dell asked himself ‘why does a computer cost five times more than all its parts?’ He clearly asked the right question!

**3. Observing** – watching closely what people (potential customers) are doing; how they are behaving and what they are struggling with. The Nano, at \$2,500 the world’s cheapest car, was developed in India from regularly observing the difficulty a family of four was having riding on a scooter!

**4. Experimenting** – trying out new paths without the fear of failure or reprimand. Amazon.com has made experimenting part of its working ethos so that employees are expected to experiment. That is how Amazon.com has gone from selling books, to selling equipment to becoming an electronics manufacturer!

**5. Networking** – getting out there and listening to other people in other industries with different ideas and ways of working. Did you know that both the idea for the Blackberry and for JetBlue (satellite TV in every seat on planes) came to the creators while attending conference on totally different themes? Attending had great returns!

I read the HBR article excitedly as I realized how useful theatre techniques and activities we use at ACT OUT are in stimulating exactly all these qualities!

**Associating** is about getting the brain to reach into its stores of experiences and knowledge and connect what it has not yet connected. This happens in so many of the non-linear, creativity activities used in theatre. **Questioning** happens all the time when a particular theatrical image is constructed and deconstructed. It is how alternatives are rehearsed as they are put forward by participants. Similarly, **observing** other participants closely, mirroring and mimicking exercises train specifically for this skill. And using theatre in organisational development is **experimenting** at many levels, especially when it is a form not common to those participating. Finally, when a workshop is conducted with participants from different departments, companies and organisations the result is some serious **networking** in very safe settings.

In this talk MOMA (NY) curator Paola Antonelli beautifully explains the concept of associating and how connecting leads to some very creative results!!  
[www.ted.com/talks/paola\\_antonelli\\_preview\\_design\\_and\\_the\\_elastic\\_mind.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/paola_antonelli_preview_design_and_the_elastic_mind.html)

## FORUM THEATRE TRAINING WITH CARDBOARD CITIZENS

From 7 to 11 April a group of theatre practitioners from around Australia came together for an invigorating, instructive and truly enjoyable Forum Theatre workshop in Melbourne.

Cardboard Citizen's facilitator/Joker, **Terry O'Leary**, worked with this diverse group of theatre practitioners to create some exciting Forum.



**Front to back - left to right:** Debra Redley (Qld), Jeff Simmons (Impro Now, SA), Terry O'Leary (Cardboard Citizens, UK), Xris Reardon (Third Way Theatre, Vic), Clare Tucker (Vic), Nicky McCoy (Vic), Eleanor Hadley (Vic), David Adair (Tas), Maurie Barlin (Milk Crate Theatre, NSW), Anna Weeks (NT), Pru Gell (NT), Robin Laurie (Vic), Erika Jacobson (Act Out, WA), Ravenna Gregory (NSW), Robin Davidson (ACT) and Edwin Kemp Attrill (Act Now, SA). Not in picture Helen Charmichael

Forum Theatre is the creation and performance of a play dealing with particular issues pertinent to the audience and its community. The play does not have a conclusion; instead, scenes portray the various struggles faced by the protagonist. The play is performed once right through; then it is performed again, this time 'spect-actors' from the audience can stop a scene if they think they could offer the protagonist alternatives that would have better results. The spect-actor is then invited on stage to perform their suggestion.

We were skilfully guided into creating three short plays which we then performed to an audience. The experience, along with the practical insights brought by Terry, gave us a useful reminder of what it is like to be at the participating end of a theatre workshop.

Cardboard Citizens have mastered the creation of Forum plays in one week working with non-actors. Their work centres on changing the lives of homeless and displaced people in London's inner city and has had great success. Have a look – it is impressive! [www.cardboardcitizens.org.au](http://www.cardboardcitizens.org.au)

The form is used in community engagement and development projects around the world and has enormous potential in organisational development.



Third Way Theatre's Xris Reardon (second from the front) is working with Terry O'Leary and other practitioners around Australia and Asia to bring us all together in an Australian conference in 2013. Watch this space or [www.thirdwaytheatre.org](http://www.thirdwaytheatre.org)

### CATHERINE SIMMONDS - BRUNSWICK WOMEN'S THEATRE



I am thrilled to share that BWT creative director and my good friend and mentor **Catherine Simmonds** is coming to Narrogin to work together on the CAN WA community theatre project in May and in June this year.



Act Out – Theatre for Transformation

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