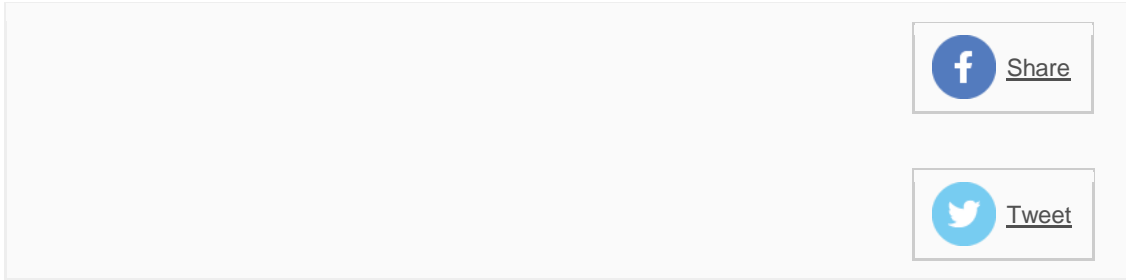


CHASS Newsletter January 2019

In this issue: Thank you for your support in 2018 • HASS Your Say: *Exploring patient experiences by embedding contemporary arts practice in medical environments* by Vic McEwan • HASS Your Say: *Rethinking imprisonment* by Michele Jarldorn • Renewing your CHASS membership

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Welcome to the first CHASS newsletter of 2019

We hope you have had a great start to 2019 and we wish you a year filled with personal and professional accomplishments.

We want to thank you and those who supported us in 2018 - our members, sponsors, friends from industry organisations, and stakeholders.

Thank you for supporting our [2018 Australia Prizes](#), our annual endeavour to acknowledge and celebrate distinguished achievements in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) in Australia. We received over 290 nominations across the four categories last year, our highest total so far. We recognise the dedication of our jury members and thank them for their time and hard work. We also thank our sponsors and those who joined us for the [2018 CHASS Australia Prizes Dinner](#) in Melbourne.

Thank you to those who came along to our other events in 2018. We were in Adelaide (March 2018) and [Perth](#) (May 2018) to facilitate our dedicated series for Early Career Researchers in HASS. We co-organised Australia's inaugural [Social Sciences Week](#) in September 2018 and our '[Social Sciences Stars](#)' series in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne that week. More information about our events is [available here](#).

We met some of you at your own as well as sector events, thank you for the meaningful chats and continued support.

We want to acknowledge our members who attended our 15th Annual General Meeting (AGM) in October 2018. The President's annual report for FY 2017-18 can be [downloaded here](#).

Our members'-only daily media update service picked up quite a few subscribers in 2018. Our [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) families continue to grow - we regularly share member and sector updates and present carefully curated content and opportunities that may be of interest to you, so please join us there and participate in the conversations. We want to celebrate your work and invite you to contribute to our 'HASS Your Say' section in this newsletter; please [contact us](#) for more information.

We are very excited about our plans in the coming months - nominations for the 2019 Australia Prizes will be opening soon, and the first event in our 2019 Early Career Researchers' series will be held in April in Brisbane. Keep an eye on our [Twitter/Facebook](#) or watch this space for updates. And save the date - [Social Sciences Week 2019](#) will be held from 9-15 September.

We are committed to serving the needs of our members and look forward to your continued support in 2019.

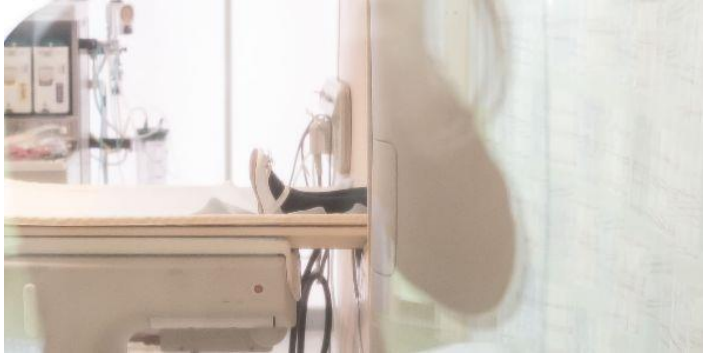


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HASS Your Say: **Exploring patient experiences by embedding contemporary arts practice in medical environments**

Vic McEwan is the Artistic Director of the Cad Factory, whose *The Harmonic Oscillator* project was the winner of the 2018 CHASS Australia Distinctive Work Prize

Image: MRI – Photo by Vic McEwan, exploring the emotional impact of MRI Scans



I will remember that there is art to medicine as well as science, and that warmth, sympathy, and understanding may outweigh the surgeon's knife or the chemist's drug ([MedicineNet, 2018](#)).

Most hospitals throughout the world fail to meet the World Health Organisation's recommendations for sound levels within hospital wards, an issue which is exacerbated by the large body of medical research revealing these excessive sound levels are having negative effects on patients, resulting in increased length of hospital stays, increases in medication, disturbed sleep and increased stress.

Between 2014-18 [The Harmonic Oscillator](#) was a project which asked what contribution a contemporary artist might make towards addressing these issues. This unprecedented access into hospital spaces resulted in artist-led contributions being made towards both medical care and contemporary art, and towards the lives of patients, families and staff.

Unique opportunities have since arisen for me to expand on this work, including being accepted into a PhD at the University of Sydney as an artist enrolled in the Faculty of Health Sciences. During my PhD candidature, I will be positioned as an experimental contemporary artist within active clinical spaces, engaging with processes of diagnosis, treatment and recovery. I will be working in two main areas, firstly with the [Sydney Facial Nerve Clinic at the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse](#) with patients experiencing facial nerve paralysis as a result of various diagnoses such as head and neck cancer, Bell's palsy, Ramsay Hunt Syndrome and congenital disorders. In this clinic, I will be collaborating to explore the emotional navigation of disfiguring illness. I will also be working within three mental health facilities, directly with patients and staff, and in collaboration with Alison Howard at Country Arts SA, exploring the sonic nature of the institutional space; all to understand something of the potential role that the arts can contribute to institutionalised medical thinking.

My PhD Supervisory Panel at the University of Sydney will consist of Dr Susan Coulson from Health Sciences, Paul Dwyer from Performance Studies and Dr Claire Hooker from Medical Health Ethics. In addition, I will have two Auxiliary supervisors - Dr Clive Parkinson from Manchester Institute for Arts, Health and Social Change at Manchester Metropolitan University and Professor Gabrielle Ivinson from the Education and Social Research Institute at Manchester Metropolitan University, making this an international project.

The journey through illness, treatment, recovery or decline can be a challenging and frightening experience, delivered in a time-sensitive, high-pressure environment where a focus on practical outcomes may leave little room for issues relating to agency and effect. When the artist's studio, a traditionally creative working space, is re-located into a health-care setting, we allow arts practice to bear witness to, respond to and contribute to the performativity and poetics of the process of care.

Through this project, I intend to develop new ways of thinking about contemporary arts practice in terms of both aesthetics and ethics, and new ways to think about medical care in terms of affect, empathy and emotion.

HASS Your Say: **Rethinking imprisonment**

2018 CHASS Australia Student Prize finalist Dr Michele Jarldorn used the arts-based research method, Photovoice to learn from former prisoners about their experiences of imprisonment and release

Image: 'Me and my family': 'Kate'



I started my PhD in 2013. In my first week, I headed to the ABS website and found that the prison population in Australia had just topped 30,000. Every time the ABS released updated figures during my candidature, the numbers went up, never down. On the day I submitted in 2018, more than 41,000 people were behind bars. Despite one of the Closing the Gap priority areas being reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in custody, they are still significantly over-represented in Australian prisons. During those five years, [61 Indigenous people](#) died while in custody. One of them was Wayne Fella Morrison. He died in hospital after being violently restrained by more than a dozen prison officers. It was Wayne's first time in custody, he did not have a criminal record. I say his name here out of respect for his family and community who [continue to fight for justice](#) for Wayne. Their distress is difficult to watch. I can hardly begin to imagine how much it hurts.

Twelve former prisoners participated in my research. They were each given a camera and were tasked with responding to the question - if you had 15 minutes with a policy maker or a politician, what would you tell them about your experiences? Each of them expressed themselves creatively; some said participating was a small step towards self-healing, a way to 'speak back' to the system. Read collectively, their data shows their first-hand experiences of multiple breaches of their rights while witnessing systemic failures of Australia's prison system, including the notion that prisons prepare people for release. My participants were unique, most having successfully stayed out of prison throughout the research. However, they still described their release as fraught and a scramble for survival. They did not do this alone, with most

speaking of the people in their lives who went above and beyond to support them (see the picture above for example).

Let's not sugar coat it. Statistically, prisons don't work; they are not a substitute for social housing, not rehab centres, nor are they domestic violence shelters or education providers. Imprisoning people does not resolve social problems, and, at approximately [\\$100,000 per year](#) to keep a person locked up, they are an expensive, ineffective and socially unjust response to social stratification and oppression. It's time to do things differently.

You can learn more about my research and [contact me](#) here.

Renewing your CHASS membership FY 2018-19

As a CHASS member, your organisation is part of an essential network for communication and collaboration across the diverse disciplines and institutions operating in HASS.

We collaborate with our members to organise **local and interstate events**, make **policy submissions**, and for **advocacy**. Members have access to various services such as the **daily media monitoring update**, **event listings** on our website and newsletter, **profiling opportunities** in our newsletter, and **social media support** and promotion. Only current financial members can nominate representatives to **join our Board** and vote at the Annual General Meeting. Members get **discounted tickets** to attend the annual CHASS Australia Prizes Dinner and other events. For more information, [contact us](#) today.

We sent out membership renewal letters and invoices to you in July 2018. If you haven't done so already, please take the time to renew your annual membership and remain a part of our community.

A unified voice is of increased significance in the face of new challenges, and your continued support is crucial for helping the sector pave its way confidently into the future. You make up the lifeblood of CHASS, and we greatly value your involvement and contribution. We look forward to continuing our association with you and seeing you at the next CHASS event.

If you haven't received your invoice or your organisation's staff/billing details have changed, please contact us. You can pay your subscription via EFT/cheque/credit card (Visa and MasterCard only, merchant fees apply).

[Renew your membership now](#)

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what makes us human.



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- ✓ Access to our extensive network of leading academics, practitioners & policy makers
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- ✓ Promotion opportunities in the monthly e-newsletter
- ✓ Social media + website support for national conferences/events
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