Escape artists: Prison art, de-stigmatisation and the promise of redemption

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AbO	Art by Offenders
AbP	Art by Prisoners
AFC	Adelaide Festival Centre
DCS	The South Australian Department for Correctional Services
EE	Emotional energy
IR	Interaction rituals
OD	Offender Development
ODD	The Offender Development Directorate
SA	South Australia
UK	United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

This thesis is about the production of art in prison, the public exhibition of that art across three annual exhibitions from 2012-2014, and the interactions, reactions and feedback loops between prisoners and members of the public that occurred as a result. This initiative was called Art by Prisoners and it was inspired by and based on an annual exhibition and awards program called Art by Offenders run across the United Kingdom by The Koestler Trust. This thesis is presented in three parts. The first part, On the Walls examines the historical and institutional contexts within which art objects are produced, discussed and exhibited. The production of prison art can be both a risk to the order of the prison and the public image of the departments that manage prison systems. But it can also complement the prison regime by occupying prisoners' time in ways that develops prisoners technically, creatively and socially. This thesis demonstrates that prisoners produce art as a way of adapting and coping to life within prison. But it also opens up possibilities to push back against one's master status and the stigma of being a 'prisoner' both within the prison institution and beyond it. A key concern for prisoners who participated in the Art by Prisoners initiative was to be visible and participate in the community in ways that challenged their criminal stigma and challenge and change public perceptions of prisoners. A key concern for the Department for Correctional Services was to manage the risk around prisoner involvement in such a high profile public event, and to make sure it sent the 'right message'. Many prisoners though produce work that explored and expressed the suffering and pain associated with punishment. Thus the exhibitions produced acceptable signs that made the link between crime, punishment, pain, and reform.

Drawing on labelling theory and theories of desistance, this thesis argues that public exhibitions of prison art are ritual events that are managed in ways that allow for prisoners to be active participants in a de-labelling and re-labelled process based on strengths and achievement. Such events allowed the public to unite not for the purpose of retribution, condemnation and expulsion of the offender, but rather the opposite. They allowed for prisoners to come to the community with an offering. The exhibitions were contexts through which the public were willing to accept these offerings while offering encouragement, support and gratitude. At a cultural level, such moments can act as a circuit breaker to the constant angry, fearful and sometimes vengeful public discourse around crime and those who commit it. At an individual level, such moments offer much needed hope as well as important interactions that can facilitate positive identity changes consistent with the concepts of redemption and desistance.

DECLARATION

I, Jeremy Ryder, certify that this thesis:

1. Does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and

2. to the best of my knowledge and belief, does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed

Jeremy Ryder

Date: 8 August 2018

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INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Within this thesis, I will tell the story of three temporary public exhibitions of art produced by prisoners in the South Australian prison system. The exhibitions took place annually over a three-year period from 2012 to 2014. They were inspired by and based upon the model developed by the Koestler Trust, a London-based prison charity. Since 1962, the Koestler Trust has run an annual awards and exhibition program called Art by Offenders (AbO), which is the most successful and enduring of its kind anywhere in the world. Each year, the AbO exhibitions showcase hundreds of art objects made by prisoners and secure detainees across the UK to thousands of people in London's Southbank Centre. In recent years, the Trust has expanded its exhibition program to include locations outside London.

The AbO exhibitions are special and significant because they are cultural events that temporarily suspend and upend the nature of the relationship between the convicted criminal and society. Modern punishment rituals condemn, reject and confine criminals, excluding them from the community until such time as they are released. A temporary exhibition of art objects produced by sentenced criminals, however, is a modern ritual that runs in direct contradiction to these ideas. The AbO exhibitions are events that can allow prisoners to return to society with an offering, and through that offering, be welcomed back into society.

The Koestler Trust does not just exhibit art made in prison. The Trust has developed a model for using art objects produced in prison to create multiple points of interaction between sentenced prisoners, secure patients and detainees, and members of the public. This includes members of the established art world, musicians, broadcasters, criminal justice stakeholders (such as victims of crime and magistrates) and the general public. What makes these points of contact unique is that

they are accepting, encouraging and supportive of prisoners' work. Public reaction and responses to deviance are, especially in recent times, usually condemnatory, retributive, fearful and angry. These are often natural emotional responses to hearing or reading about specific criminals and the harm their crimes have caused to victims and society generally. These responses form part of a negative feedback loop that we hope, at some level, will work as a general deterrent. This idea is expressed most tangibly when we remove offenders from the community and place them in prison. This response may serve as a specific disincentive to those who have committed crime from doing so in the future.

The Koestler Trust uses the art objects produced in prison to create positive feedback loops in response to prisoners' creative and artistic behaviour. The Trust engages prominent artists to hand out awards. Prisoners get certificates and some win cash prizes. Also, many participants receive constructive feedback on their art entries. Thus, the Trust aims to help offenders 'lead more positive lives by motivating them to participate and achieve in the arts' (Koestler Trust 2018).

The Koestler Trust's AbO exhibitions are an annual fixture on the visual arts calendar. They attract huge audience numbers, and they bring together multiple stakeholders, all of whom contribute to the success of the events. While there is substantial and diverse literature on the production of art within prison, far less is known about what impact, if any, public exhibitions of prison art have on those who produce the work, those who consume the work (visually and financially) and the broader community.

Public exhibitions of prison art can shift the spotlight momentarily away from prisoners' crimes, deviance, risks and deficits. Instead, the spotlight is shone upon prisoners' artistic and creative strengths and talents, as well as the stories that the art is allowed to tell. In doing so, the public is able to imagine prisoners as people other than prisoners. The temporary art exhibition can be managed in such a way that enables the criminal to *re*present themselves to the public by adopting the role of 'artist'. These events short-circuit the condemnation, retribution and outrage

scripts that inform society's attitudes and stereotypes about prisoners and open up new ways to think about prisoners, interact with them and talk about them.

This thesis, then, is about art and the interactions it enables prisoners and the public to have with themselves and with each other. The production of art in prison is a way for prisoners to interact with materials and tools with which they can create objects and reshape the material world. In reshaping the material world, one can also develop or transform the self technically and creatively, but also socially. For art production facilitates interactions with the self and with others as a medium for expression and communication. This thesis is about how, and under what conditions, the artwork produced in prison is able to temporarily escape or be released into the community. It is also about people's reactions and responses and consequences of being part of a temporary art exhibition, both as audience members and as creators, for both are integral parts of this cultural ritual. The title of this thesis has is *Escape Artists: Prison art and the promise of redemption.*

Ethics

I received research ethics approval from the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (approval number 5337) and approval from the Department for Correctional Services Research Management Committee.

Research Design

Ferguson (1996, p. 178) notes that 'the actual work that goes into exhibitions and the work that exhibitions themselves do, on and through audiences, remain somewhat unremarked.' The purpose of this thesis, then, is to examine the work that goes into public exhibitions of prison art and the ways these exhibitions worked 'on and through audiences' but also the ways they worked on and through the creators of the work—the prisoners.

Following a volunteer placement at the Koestler Trust, I initiated and produced annual exhibitions of art from South Australian prisons in 2012, 2013 and 2014. This initiative was called Art by

Prisoners (as a tribute to the Koestler Trust's *Art by Offenders*). These three annual events and the work they did 'on and through' the members of the community and the prisoners who interacted with each other is the subject of this thesis.

This thesis focuses on three main points of participation and interaction which these exhibitions made possible between prisoners and members of the public. Firstly, it explores the reasons prisoners make art objects in prison and why they wanted to enter these into the Art by Prisoners (AbP) awards and exhibition initiative. Secondly, it explores the public responses to prisoners' art objects when presented through the medium of the temporary art exhibition. Thirdly, it explores the prisoner reactions to those public responses.

I collected and used both qualitative and quantitative data throughout this thesis from multiple sources. I designed a survey instrument through which I obtained information from prisoners about their involvement in the AbP initiative. A survey instrument was the most practical and efficient way of getting responses from participating prisoners, who I surveyed twice each year in 2012, 2013 and 2014. As there were relatively low levels of participation each year from prisoners who were spread out across a large geographical area, it would have been too costly, impractical and difficult, for example, to arrange face-to-face interviews. However, I distributed surveys easily via email to the correctional officers who assisted with prisoner participation in both the exhibitions and the data collection process.

I distributed two different surveys to prisoners via prison officers at significant moments of the AbP initiative to capture contemporaneous responses from prisoners. There were a pre-exhibition survey and a post-exhibition survey. While I modified and simplified the survey questions over the three years, the themes that each survey explored remained consistent. I designed the pre-exhibition survey for prisoners to complete at or near the time that their artwork was submitted. I asked prisoners in the pre-exhibition survey to reflect on the reasons they chose to make art in prison and also why they wanted to participate in a public exhibition through the following questions:

1. Why do you do art in prison?
2. What does creating art in prison mean to you?
3. Why did you decide to participate in Art by Prisoners?
4. Your art may be included in a public exhibition. Is this important to you?

In 2012, every prisoner who participated completed a pre-exhibition survey (N = 21). In 2013, participant numbers fell slightly to 19, of whom 14 completed a survey (N = 14). Of those 14, six were new participants and eight had previously submitted art in 2012. In 2014, 42 prisoners entered artwork, 31 of whom returned a survey. Of those 31, four survey respondents had participated previously and 27 were new participants. Across the three years there were a total number of 56 unique pre-exhibition survey participants and a total of 66 (including repeat) participants. The following table sets out this information:

Table 1: Pre-exhibition survey responses 2012-2014

Year	Total no. of participants	Total no. of surveys received	Surveys from new participants	Surveys from repeat participants
2012	21	21	21	0
2013	19	14	8	6
2014	42	31	27	4
Total	**82**	**66**	**56**	**10**

The content of the art and any accompanying texts were an important source of data. Prisoners created a wide variety of art objects from different media. Each object revealed aspects of its creator, from the content or subject matter of the image, the technical skill on display or the accompanying textual messages on the panels beside the artwork. While it is not possible to speak to every item that was exhibited, I have included a selection of works, along with pictures of the exhibition events.

Public responses to the exhibitions were recorded on slips of paper which I distributed at the opening events. I also placed a comments book at each exhibition to record visitors' responses. The opening events were important moments, during which large groups of people gathered to experience the exhibitions collectively and be part of the ceremonial openings. In 2012, the total number of comments left at the exhibition was 124, 57 of which were recorded at the opening event. In 2013, 54 comments were left, 46 of which were recorded at the opening event. In 2014, 48 comments were left at the opening event, with a further 13 recorded in the comments book. Across the three years, I received a total of 239 responses from members of the public. While

many hundreds more would have seen the exhibitions, far fewer chose to leave a written response. While the 239 responses provided a substantial variety of feedback, that number is quite small considering greater Adelaide has a population of around 1 million. Although many visitors referenced individual works in their comments, the public were invited to leave comments about the exhibition as a whole rather than about specific works of art (as is common practice for many temporary art exhibitions).

When each exhibition concluded, I returned artwork to prisoners except where it was sold. I also sent feedback to all prisoners. Feedback included samples of public comments recorded at the exhibitions and certificates of award. I sent this positive feedback to prisoners to acknowledge their efforts but also to create positive feedback loops and interactions between members of the public and prisoners. Sending public comments to prisoners was a way of including them in the exhibitions by letting prisoners know the different ways that people reacted and the thoughts and emotions that their artwork and the exhibitions provoked. Along with the public comments and certificate, I also sent prisoners the post-exhibition survey to capture information related to the experience of participating in the event and receiving feedback through the following questions:

1. What did it mean to you to receive a certificate for your artwork?
2. What did it mean to you to have your work included in a public art exhibition?
3. Was it important to you to receive some public feedback on the exhibition?
4. What are your thoughts on reading the samples of public comments?

Prison officers co-ordinated the return of the pre-exhibition survey and the artwork. However, it was difficult to co-ordinate this support for the post-exhibition survey. This was one of the reasons why far fewer prisoners chose to complete and return the post-exhibition survey. In 2012, I received responses from 14 of the 21 participants. In 2013, I received responses from 12 of the 19 participants, and in 2014, I received 11. Across the three years, I received a total of 37 post-exhibition surveys.

Prisoner surveys were numbered according to the prisoner, the specific question and the year. Prisoner quotes from their survey responses are presented in this thesis accordingly. In the example below, '5' means question number 5, '21' means participant (or survey) number 21, and '2014' refers to the year:

> Don't do art as can't have paints and brushes. (Q5.P21.2014)

All art entries were numbered. Where a quote is from a prisoner who provided a story or explanation on the entry form, then this data is coded by the entry number and the year of entry (e.g., '1209/2012' means entry number 1209 of 2012).

Public comments were numbered according to the comment number and year of exhibition. A capital 'O' means the comment was received at an opening night, for example:

> Outstanding. Ex. Quality work. A good hang in a difficult space, thanx. 3/2012 O

For this thesis I also reference notes that I took as a volunteer at the Koestler Trust, along with notes I recorded at meetings with the Department for Correctional Services (DCS) while negotiating the terms and conditions of the AbP exhibition initiative. Along with the prisoner surveys and the public comments, I also examine mainstream media coverage of AbP, which occurred on a few occasions as another type of public response. I also use letters from prisoners who wrote to me after having read those media articles.

The AbP exhibitions were events through which prisoners communicated, or broadcast, information to the public, and through which the public sent messages to prisoners in response. But the exhibitions were events that enabled the public to have conversations with each other in person at the events but also through media coverage, including social media. Further, as many prisoners consume news media, an article that was published in *The Advertiser* sparked conversations between prisoners and between me and prisoners. The reactions to the exhibitions rippled out and made connections between various stakeholders. Exhibitions, writes Ferguson

(1996, p. 179), leave "discursive traces" across the academic and journalistic spheres, through art critics, collectors, art bureaucrats and the vocal public.

The main sources of data were written texts and visual images collected from prisoners through a pre and post-exhibition survey, public comments left at opening nights and through the duration of the exhibitions,, the visual art entries and the texts that accompanied those entries. I also attempted to track as much as possible the more high-profile discursive traces in the form of reactions and responses that I recorded or found in response to the AbP exhibitions. Undoubtedly, much was spoken and went unrecorded. In this thesis, I have used '[a]nything that may shed light on the question under study' (Corbin & Strauss 1990, p. 5).

My modes of data analyses follow the procedures for grounded theory data collection as outlined by Corbin and Strauss (1990). Data collection occurred over a three-year period to maximise the size of the sample. The very low numbers of repeat participants, the time in between each event and the fact that every year prisoners created new and different work, meant that I did not separate data from those who submitted art objects and surveys more than once across the three years. I collected and transcribed data into Word documents. I took an inductive approach to identify certain 'themes' and sub-themes that emerged through a process of open coding (Ryan & Bernard 2003). Photographs were taken of the exhibitions and of all art objects that were entered (whether or not they subsequently featured in the exhibitions). Thus, I identified themes both in the texts prisoners and members of the public wrote but also in themes that emerged from 'expressions found in images … and objects' (Ryan & Bernard 2003, p. 87). I identified themes in the written texts through a process of reading and re-reading collected data, by comparing data from year to year and looking at the data sets taken from each year as a whole. I used highlighters as a visual aid to colour-code common concepts, themes and sub-themes expressed through words and whole sentences that were repeatedly present across the three years. On the whole, both prisoner and public responses were brief. While there were some longer paragraphs, most were short, with many answers limited to one or two sentences. These were then 'cut' and

'sorted' into piles of concepts that went together (Ryan & Bernard 2003, p. 94). The surveys and public responses were then split to maximise the differences and develop more nuanced themes. The images in the exhibition were lumped into broader, more overarching 'metathemes' (Ryan & Bernard 2003, pp 94-96). While it was important to identify certain concepts expressed in the art objects, the focus of this study was on what the participating prisoners wanted their artwork to say to the public, and expressions from the public about what the artwork said to them.

I overlayed this with a critical discourse analysis of the array of texts including those mentioned previously, the visual art entries, explanatory texts that accompanied entries, newspaper articles, and prisoner correspondence that resulted from the AbP initiative. I examined how the Art by Prisoners exhibitions created new ways for prisoners to represent themselves in public. The exhibitions were a context through which the public could see, think, speak and write about prisoners in opposition to the dominant (negative) ways in which the public produce and consume discourse about crime and criminals (Fairclough 2001). Exposing prisoners to these alternative (affirming, positive, encouraging) public comments gave prisoners new ways to think and write about themselves. Following Fairclough's (2001, p. 125) analytical framework I focussed on a social problem. In this case, the lack of positive relationships and opportunities for inclusion that prisoners have with the community. There are many obstacles to this idea such as the prison institution itself as a physical barrier, but also the general discourse around prisoners, such as the damage they have done, the harm they have caused and the dangers and risks they pose. Art exhibitions are cultural events through which texts, in the form of visual images and written words, can emerge from the prison and be accepted by the community. Art exhibitions thus offer prisoners and the community a way past the usual obstacles specifically designed to prevent these sorts of interactions from happening. I then consider and reflect on the significance of these interactions for both prisoners and the general public.

All data collection has its limitations and these limitations are often more challenging when collecting data from people contained within closed institutions because there are often

difficulties with access. The only realistic way to capture responses from as many participants as possible across a large geographical area was via a written survey instrument that I emailed to prison officers. I relied on officers to print and distribute surveys to participants. I arranged with officers for the pre-exhibition survey to be packaged and delivered along with submissions of art entries. There was less officer collaboration when it came to the post-exhibition survey. I distributed these with other materials as part of a post-exhibition feedback pack in which I included a stamped return envelope. I am unsure of the conditions under which prisoner participants completed the pre and post surveys. I made it clear to both officers and prisoners that there was no obligation for prisoners to complete surveys just as there was no obligation for prisoners to participate in the AbP initiative. I can only assume that prisoners who responded did so out of their own free will. I acknowledge that to this day I know little as to the conditions under which prisoners completed the surveys. However, I did not receive any written or verbal feedback from prisoners that they were coerced into participating in the exhibitions or into completing surveys. If anything, it was the opposite. Prisoners contacted me because they wanted to participate but could not due to lack of resources and/or support from prison staff.

I collected the survey data over a three-year period as the exhibitions were staged annually. Thus I was able to loosely triangulate survey data from different prisons across different years. Survey response rates were consistent across those three years as was the content of those responses. I am cognisant though that the voluntary nature of participation in the AbP events and survey completion would have appealed most to those who were actively producing art objects either in their spare time, as hobby, recreation or through more formal educational contexts. The nature of this project was to create opportunities for positive achievement and for moments, however significant or insignificant, of success and celebration. I acknowledge that there was a selection bias in that only those who participated in this event were surveyed. I did not survey a control group of prisoners who did not produce art. Nor did I survey prisoners who produced art, who knew about Art by Prisoners but chose not to take part. One of the main focuses of this study was

the nature and content of textual interactions that art objects could facilitate between prisoners and the public. A lot of work went into creating the context in which this could happen.

Each year a small number of works were excluded from the exhibition for reasons discussed later in this thesis. Exclusion from the public exhibition did not mean work was excluded from receiving an award from a panel of judges. Those whose works were excluded were not informed. The decision not to inform prisoners was partly practical and partly strategic. As the sole producer I had a lot of work to manage, but as a fledgling event I was did not want to dis-incentivise future participation from what turned out to be a relatively small pool of participants. I was cautioned that word of mouth spreads quickly through prison. I was aware too, that without knowing the prisoners circumstances or mental state, news of exclusion (a form of rejection) might be difficult to take. Participants were then insulated from experiences that might have been considered negative. Unsurprisingly then, survey data from prisoners was overwhelmingly positive. I believe this is mainly due to the spirit and nature of the exhibition events and the fact there was no obligation to participate so motivated prisoners self-selected. That said the modes of analyses went far deeper as to whether this event was simply positive or negative, though this was important. Further each year responses did differ in that most were positive, some were negative and a number fell in between that spectrum in that some participants did not seem to care too much at all.

Similarly with regard to the public feedback there may be a selection bias toward those who were more likely to support the exhibitions. Firstly no one was obliged to attend the opening nights or come to view the galleries. Usually people decide to go because they want to. Even if some might be reluctant partners or colleagues. When producing an exhibition and hosting opening nights artists, producers, gallery owners, or curators invite people they want to be there and who they know will come. They draw on networks of support and this is what makes these events positive and celebratory. The purpose is to create a bit of a buzz. So while there were many people I knew and had invited to the exhibition, so too there were many I didn't know. The events were

publicised through the Venue. Staff at the Adelaide Festival Centre invited people through their visual arts mailing list which numbered in the thousands. At the opening events there were as many unfamiliar faces as there were familiar. Further there were no clear difference in content or tone to the comments from the opening nights when compared to those left in the booklet at other times during exhibitions.

I was acutely aware of the importance of balancing my role both as a detached and objective researcher and as the producer of the very events that were the focus of this research. As the person at the centre I was the public face of both the exhibition events and the research. This was a unique journey and project in this respect. I discussed and worked with my supervisors to ensure I minimised overt bias in my research. One important way I minimised any bias was to use tried and tested methodological techniques to collect and analyse data. All data collected from the public was anonymous. Comments were not handed to me, but were put in a box. Written comments were transcribed into Word documents and analysed after each event, but then as a whole at the conclusion of all three events. In the process of transcribing prisoner surveys the data was de-identified. But it is important to note too that this event was much larger than any one person. I worked with multiple prison sites, officers and prisoners. I worked with members of the arts community, with the venue, with DCS staff in head office, and with members of the public. When the exhibitions were up, when there were people walking around, looking at the art, reading prisoners' visual and written texts, and responding to them, the events took on a life and momentum of their own.

Participant Profile

Over the three years and across the three exhibitions, a total of 82 prisoners entered artwork. Many entered more than one artwork each, so the number of individual artworks was far higher. A small number of participants entered work in two of the three exhibitions, and only three prisoners participated in all three. The surveys also captured other information about participants, such as their age, sentence length and whether or not they identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait

Islander. Participation was open to all prisoners and, as a result, participants varied greatly in age and sentence length. Not all prisoners answered every question; hence, there may be disparities between the total number of participants and the figures below. Over one third (36%, n = 30) of participants identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Age

Of the participants, 16 were aged between 20 and 29, 31 were aged between 30 and 39, and 22 were aged between 40 and 49. Five were aged between 50 and 60, and six were over 60 years of age. The youngest participant was 18 years old.

Sentence Length

The sentence length of participants also varied greatly, but the data indicated that this initiative appealed most to those with shorter sentences of between 1 and 5 years (N = 25) and those at the higher end, with sentences over 10 years (N = 24). Four participants were serving sentences of less than a year, and 10 participants were serving mid-range sentences of between 5 to 10 years.

Gender

Female prisoners from the Adelaide Women's Prison (AWP) participated in 2014 only. The participation of 13 women from AWP is largely responsible for a spike in participation numbers for that year. Across the three exhibitions then, 69 participants were male and 13 were female.

Structure

This thesis will be presented as a triptych and is structured chronologically around the order of events that must occur in order to produce an art exhibition. The first section is 'Behind the Walls', the second is 'On the Walls', and the third and final section is 'Beyond the Walls'.

Behind the Walls

In Behind the Walls I provide some cultural and historical context around the production of art in prison. I provide some more specific information about producing art within the South Australian prison system and the risks involved in exhibiting that art publicly. I also explore in more detail why some prisoners choose to produce art and what they wanted that artwork to say to people in the community.

Historically, the art and craft produced in prison was used to confirm prisoners' social and biological inferiority. Today, art making in prison and the public exhibition of that art are more carefully managed and staged events. Public exhibitions of prison art disseminate information about crime and punishment consistent with public expectations around punishment, suffering but also of reform and rehabilitation. But nowadays, these events are more likely to challenge negative public perceptions.

Art making happens in certain locations, times and contexts. In South Australia, art making is facilitated by prison staff mainly in educational and recreational areas. No doubt much happens as cell hobby. The production of art in prison presents certain management challenges and risks to prison staff related to the use of materials and implements (and the tools needed to maintain those implements). On the other hand, as an activity that occupies prisoners' time, art making can also make life in prison easier for both inmates and staff.

The public exhibition of prison art also presents risks to correctional departments that come with allowing prisoners to step beyond the prison walls and participate in community life. Much of the work that went on behind the scenes to produce the AbP exhibitions involved managing these risks. While there had been exhibitions of prison art previously, for the duration of this thesis, there was no such event of this type in South Australia. Starting one required negotiations with DCS and other important stakeholders (namely, those who advocate on behalf of victims of crime). Producing a public exhibition of prison art is about working around the conditions that both

enable and constrain prisoners to produce the art, as well as managing the risks around the messages that this art broadcast to the public.

For participating prisoners, producing art, was a way to mitigate the pains of imprisonment. Prisoners also valued the opportunity to share their art with the community. Many were motivated to participate in the AbP initiative for the chance to produce and broadcast humanising and de-stigmatising knowledge about themselves.

On the Walls

In On the Walls I describe and examine the three AbP exhibitions which consisted of images and texts that were exhibited 'on the walls'. The images and texts I exhibited allowed relatively small numbers of prisoners speak and communicate with the public. The exhibitions themselves were made up of numerous art objects created by multiple contributors and were placed together to make up the overall text of the exhibition. As part of managing risks that come with allowing prisoners to communicate to the public, DCS Staff made sure the texts and images within the exhibitions disseminated messages that did not offend the public and were consistent with public understandings or assumptions about punishment.

These exhibitions were the events and locations where prisoners and DCS communicated information to members of the community, and where members of the community communicated with prisoners. The art exhibitions were communication devices, whereby prisoners produced art for the public to see, read and respond to. The artworks were awarded by a panel of artists, and the public were invited to leave comments at the exhibition. Samples of public feedback and certificates were forwarded to the prisoners at the conclusion of each exhibition. This meant that prisoners read for themselves what people thought and how they reacted to the work. The public responded in an overwhelmingly positive manner. Many left comments of praise and gratitude for having seen the work. For prisoners, reading these positive

comments and receiving awards was an emotionally uplifting experience that charged them with positive emotional energy and motivation.

Importantly for prisoners, these exhibitions were opportunities to become visible to the community in ways that were both connected and disconnected from their criminal identities and lives. Just to be noticed and included was significant. But the exhibitions also made prisoners visible in ways that broadcast new information about different aspects of their lives. For some, the messages were about the difficulties and challenges of prison life, as well as how creating art helped prisoners to cope with and adapt to those challenges. The medium of art was significant too because prisoners became visible in the context of their (developing) artistic skills and talents and their desires to still be part of society and to contribute to it in positive ways.

The exhibitions enabled the public to see prisoners in new and, for some, unexpected ways. For the public, as well as prisoners, there were moral messages embedded within the exhibitions that came from the idea that producing art is 'good' and that, therefore, there was something in the prisoners who made them that was, or could be, 'good' too. Producing art was a visible form of 'rightdoing' by a segment of the population excluded for their 'wrongdoing'. The exhibitions were also events that made important social issues visible, such as Indigenous over-representation in the prison system.

Beyond the Walls

In Beyond the Walls, I explore the significance of three Art by Prisoners exhibitions and the interactions that took place as a result. I then situate the production of art in prison and the exhibition of that art in the literature of ritual and the importance of ritual for the elevation or reclaiming of a person's status as 'human' or 'citizen' in the context of incarceration. I then link this to the process of desistance, one of the elusive aims both of individual prisoners and (ideally) correctional services. Rituals and rites of passage are transformative and are used with great effect in the criminal justice system to create criminal identities. These transformations, however, too

often entrench negative criminal identities. Further, there are very few restorative rituals that undo this damage to a prisoner's status and identity. An important part of desistance is creating a coherent personal narrative that make sense of the past, explain the present, and gives hope for the future. The ability to construct a redemptive narrative is important for prisoners actively desisting from criminal lifestyles (or wanting to). But in order to do this, (ex-)offenders need hope, they need others to believe in them. They also need opportunities to contribute to society in positive ways because that is how they can build that hope and belief. The process of giving back and making amends is important here (Maruna 2001).

Participating in an exhibition is a form of ritualised inclusion in society that can generate powerful emotional energy around the feeling of inclusion and belonging and also around the feeling that people have done something valuable and therefore that they themselves are valuable. Desistance literature emphasises the importance of these sorts of moments in which someone can imagine themselves as something other than a 'useless prisoner'. While it is certainly not the easiest of paths (and indeed, perhaps there are no easy paths to desistance), there are a number of examples whereby prisoners have managed to write redemptive scripts for themselves through their artwork, which served as evidence of their changed behaviour and identity as artists. The 'becoming artist' script is certainly not an easy one to access, yet it stands out as one of the few available activities that prisoners can do to demonstrate and make visible to themselves, prison staff and even the community, the sorts of inner changes consistent with reform. Sharing that art with the community is a way to contribute positively to the lives of others; hence, art making is a way that prisoners can begin to give back, which is essential to the process of redemption. It is through producing art and sharing that art with the community that prisoners can (begin to) create pro-social identities that can be taken with them into the community. The process of non-criminal identity formation from within prison, combined with elements of ritual inclusion and status elevation from beyond the prison, serves as a model for desistance-informed policy and practice and the need to highlight, identify and make known, other pathways back into the community. Public exhibitions of prison art also generate positive stories about the prison,

prisoners and what they can do within and for the community. This is in contrast to the overwhelmingly negative stories about crime and those who commit it. Building good will and support within the community is important for creating the conditions for a society more willing to accept released prisoners. If correctional services take seriously the desistance process, then more needs to be done to open up opportunities for prisoners to form and maintain non-criminal identities within prison in order to inspire and encourage desistance.

CHAPTER 1: BEHIND THE EXHIBITION WALLS

Art worlds, according to Becker (1982), are made possible through co-operation, involving networks of collective activity that make the production and consumption of art possible. Putting aside any judgments as to what does or does not constitute 'art', Becker's statement is true for the art worlds of the prison. The terms *art* or *the arts* refer to a wide range of objects and behaviour, such as photography, drama, music, literature and visual art. For this thesis I will focus exclusively on visual art (paintings, drawings, ceramics, textiles and mixed media art) produced in the South Australian prison system, along with the consumption of that art through a series of public exhibitions held annually in 2012, 2013 and 2014. I will explore the way the public responded to prison art, as well as how prisoners responded to being part of a public exhibition.

The model and inspiration for the three Art by Prisoners exhibitions came from the UK's Koestler Trust. In this chapter, I will provide a brief overview of the Koestler Trust, its origins and the incredible work it does each year for prisoners and for society more broadly. I will contextualise the Trust's work by providing a brief history of prison art. This history charts the trajectory of prison art from something that initially held very little cultural or economic value to something created, exhibited, sold and celebrated annually through public art exhibitions. Historically, prison art was of interest to few people beyond its creators and a couple of academics. These days, the Koestler Trust uses prison art as a vital link between the prison and the community. Prison art has become a medium through which to engage a diverse section of the community with the prisoner community to create a powerful cultural event that celebrates the creativity and skill of prisoners and provides a context for more nuanced cultural reflection on incarceration.

The Koestler Trust

I produced three exhibitions of prison art exhibitions for this thesis based on the work of the Koestler Trust, a prison charity based in west London. The Trust has been producing exhibitions of prison art since 1962, and it is a key part of this story. It is necessary, therefore, to outline what it

is the Trust does and why it does it. In 2011, I spent two months on a volunteer placement at the Koestler Trust, helping to prepare for the 2011 Art by Offenders (AbO) exhibition that took place at Royal Festival Hall in London's Southbank Centre.

The Koestler Trust was founded by the well-known author and journalist, Arthur Koestler. Koestler himself had served time as a political prisoner in Spain and France and then in immigration detention in London's Pentonville Prison during World War II. Koestler was also an active campaigner in criminal justice reform. Having been part of the successful campaign to abolish capital punishment in the UK, Koestler then set up what would be called the Koestler Trust to provide awards for creative work in literature, arts or sciences by those physically confined. Koestler's own experiences of imprisonment inspired him to create the awards and exhibitions that the Trust would oversee (Scammell 2009, as cited in Bankes 2012). His intention was to introduce 'an imaginative and exciting way to stimulate as far as possible and in as many cases as possible the mind and spirit of the prisoner' (Koestler Trust 2014). These awards, Koestler hoped, would give prisoners something to do and perhaps unearth hidden talents, but importantly, help prisoners acquire something that would aid their return to society (Scammell 2009, as cited in Bankes 2012). For Koestler, motivating prisoners to do something positive and constructive with their time, as well as keeping hope alive, was an important part of making prison life more bearable. Writing from his own experiences, Koestler explained as follows (Scammel 2009, as cited in Bankes 2012, p. 6):

> Being in prison leaves its imprint on you for the rest of your life. This trauma can turn you into a neurotic but it can also act as a stimulant with positive effects. The prisoner's worst enemy is boredom, depression, the slow death of thought.

The genesis of the Koestler Trust was the idea that art making or other intellectually stimulating activities were things that prisoners could do to occupy their time more productively. This might assist prisoners by helping them to cope, mitigating the negative psychological impacts of imprisonment, while providing a sense of hope, by opening up new possibilities for the self that

creative action can inspire. The Koestler Trust's exhibitions and awards program for prisoners are also about the possibilities for personal transformation, reform and reintegration.

More than 50 years on, the Koestler Trust is a well-established and well-supported organisation. In 2011, its staff numbered around 15 and included volunteers, ex-offenders and current offenders on day-release work placements. The Trust itself has supported former and current offenders through employment and placement opportunities. It is best known to the public for its popular annual exhibitions of prison art, which attract thousands of visitors each year. In prison, the Koestler Trust is known for the awards and feedback it provides to participating offenders.

Each year, the Koestler Trust invites people in UK prisons to enter artworks into the Koestler Awards program. In 2011, prison staff across the UK sent or delivered over 6000 works of art (across almost 50 categories) to its offices in the old governor's house outside HMP Wormwood Scrubs. After receiving the entries, the Trust then engages prominent arts professionals to give awards to participants; these awards, in the form of certificates, are posted to the participating prisoners. Each participant receives an award, even if simply a participation award, to acknowledge their effort and achievement. Artwork judged to be at a higher standard can be awarded platinum, gold, silver or bronze awards. In 1962, the idea that prisoners might be awarded for their art by professional artists was unprecedented (Koestler Trust 2014), and to this day, this remains one of the most progressive, innovative and defining elements of the Trust's work. The Koestler Awards bring together well-known artists, including Turner Prize–winners Grayson Perry and Jeremy Deller, exposing them to the art that people do in prison and giving the prison community exposure to and feedback from the professional arts world. The Koestler Trust also endeavours to provide written feedback to each participant on their artwork, which for prisoners is often more important than receiving an award. Judges, staff and volunteers with a visual arts background usually provide the written feedback.

The Trust also annually invites an individual or small group to curate a selection of works that will form the AbO exhibition. The public can view a great many works of art at each exhibition, but this

is just the tip of the iceberg. In 2011, around 200 artworks were selected for display from the pool of over 6000. Those not publicly exhibited were stored and displayed throughout the Koestler Trust's offices, and so were seen by the many visitors, guests, judges, supporters and sponsors who passed through. Turner Prize–winning artist and Koestler judge Grayson Perry described as a powerful experience entering the Koestler Trust's headquarters outside Wormwood Scrubs and wandering round the rooms bursting with art (Meadows 2010, pp. 8–9). Previous curators include a group of female prisoners (2009); victims of crime (2010); magistrates (2011); Young British Artist Sarah Lucas (2012); and award-winning rap artist Speech Debelle (2013). Since 2008 (at the time of writing in 2017), the Koestler Trust has held its exhibitions at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, a prestigious arts and cultural venue in central London.

At the exhibitions, thousands of people engage with prisoners by looking at the art and reading the explanations and messages that often accompany the artworks. The public are invited to vote for and comment on their favourite work(s) and many hundreds, if not thousands, do so. The comments are sent to the artists, and the work that receives most votes receives the 'Visitor Award'. The public can purchase artwork from the exhibition, with many of the works offered up for sale by the prisoners. The opening events are very well-attended by the public, particularly those who work in the arts and the criminal justice industries. The Koestler Trust also ran a pop-up art shop during the AbO exhibitions, where the public could buy artworks that were submitted to the Koestler Awards but not selected for the exhibition. The money from sales of artwork from exhibitions and the pop-up shop is split between the prisoner (50%), victims of crime (25%) and the Koestler Trust (25%). The Koestler Trust also hosts a day at the venue for prisoners whose work features in the exhibition, along with family members, friends and relatives whom the prisoners invited. In some cases, the Koestler Trust can cover transport costs, provide food and arrange for a photographer to take photos of family and/or friends alongside the artwork. After each exhibition, artworks that either did not sell or were not for sale are returned to prisoners, along with the award certificates, written feedback and comments left on the voting slips at the exhibition.

Governments go to great effort and expense to keep prisoners segregated from the outside community, yet the Koestler Trust has been able to bring together these two worlds through prison art in ways that are mutually beneficial, meaningful and culturally enriching. The first Koestler exhibition took place in a book shop in 1962 (Koestler Trust 2017). Since its humble beginnings, the Trust's annual exhibitions have become important and significant cultural events. The Koestler Trust has developed innovative ways to use prison art to maximise the opportunities for connection between people in prison and people in the community. The art object and the temporary exhibition are a medium and a context through which members of the public can have safe and positive contact and dialogue with the criminal 'other'. The AbO exhibitions are an opportunity for prisoners to actively contribute to the artistic, economic, political and cultural life beyond the prison walls in ways that avoid rejection, condemnation and retribution. It is possible in these moments for the public to offer support, encouragement and acceptance to the lives of prisoners.

An important aspect of the Koestler Trust's work has been to create the political and cultural space in which art created by prisoners can be accepted by the community and exhibited in culturally significant spaces. Exhibiting prison art in culturally prestigious spaces and involving members of the arts community helps to give artistic validation to prisoners' artwork, which in turn helps to give it cultural (and modest economic) value [1]. All of this, however, requires anchoring the exhibition in a logic and rationale that runs parallel with the expectations and attitudes that the general public has about crime, criminals and the prison as a site of punishment but, importantly, also reform.

The power of art to help reform and rehabilitate prisoners is perhaps the most important message that prison art can convey. Over the years, the Koestler Trust has used its exhibitions as a platform to promote the benefits of the arts in prison for improving self-esteem and social skills, as well as

[1] In 2011, prices for art at the AbO exhibition were capped at 500 pounds.

linking involvement in the arts (including projects run by the Koestler Trust) with reducing reoffending. By engaging victims of crime, in 2009 the Koestler Trust was able to use the curating project as part of the restorative justice movement. The Trust promotes such ideals on its website and on text panels at its exhibitions. A text panel from the 2010 exhibition read as follows (The Koestler Trust 2010):

> There is growing research evidence of the benefits of arts with offenders. E.g., 79% of young offenders attending a dance program by Dance United returned to education or training as a result. Ex-prisoners actively taking part in a music project by Changing Tunes had a re-offending rate of 75% below the national average.

The Koestler Trust positions the arts as an alternative way to engage with offenders, one that channels energy into positive activities. The Koestler Trust also refers to evidence that involvement with the arts is effective at changing prisoners' lives (Koestler Trust 2017). In doing this, the Trust justifies the AbO exhibitions through the discourse of personal transformation and rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is a key ethical justification for the existence of prisons, as well as being a commonly held public expectation or assumption.

The Trust's exhibitions demonstrate how participation in the arts can work in conjunction with the philosophies and popular opinions that inform prison policies. The Koestler Trust uses prison art to create a cultural and political climate of acceptance and positive engagement between prisoners, the public and even victims of serious crime. By making connections between the arts, positive mental health and a reduction in recidivism, the Koestler Trust provides a publicly acceptable rationale for their awards and exhibition program. This is important because it must be evident why or how the production of prison art and the exhibition of prison art 'does something that needs to be done for people and society' (Becker 1982, p. 4). Convicted murderer Erwin James was awarded first prize by the Koestler judges for creative writing he entered in 1995. Winning this award and receiving a certificate was a significant event for James, who wrote that '[r]eceiving the certificate fired my determination to write my way into a better way of living … As I can attest, in

prison, a little praise goes a long way' (2010). James went on to become a journalist and editor following his release.

Usually, mediated representations of prisoners are negative and involve details of crimes. Often this information is challenging or shocking. Most representations of people in prison, or people about to go to prison, unite public sentiment against those who commit crimes. In recent times, the voices of victims have been amplified, and tough-on-crime political rhetoric has become a standard feature of political campaigning and government policy. These information loops reinforce one another. However, the AbO exhibitions act as a circuit breaker to the constant condemnation and retribution we direct at prisoners. The AbO exhibitions give prisoners opportunities to contribute to alternative representations of themselves and imprisonment. They are able to challenge negative stereotypes about prisoners and the sorts of things they are capable of. Art objects and temporary exhibitions are publicly visible showcases of prisoners' skills, strengths and talents, in which prisoners' own voices and experiences can be communicated directly to the public. AbO is a rare event whereby cultural information (art) is produced within prison and broadcast to an audience beyond prison. Usually, prisoners are the receivers and consumers of mediated cultural information created outside and transmitted into the prison (e.g., television, newspapers and books). Many prisons produce their own internal magazine or newspaper; however, these media usually remain, like their creators, locked within the prison walls. The AbO exhibitions, therefore, become a cultural space in which to have alternative conversations about the people in prison, what they can do and what they could potentially become. The Trust's exhibitions are events that give society the opportunity to reflect on and examine the prison system and its role in society, as well as other issues of social and policy significance. The Koestler Trust has created an annual event that is culturally significant, interesting and complex, but above all, these annual events give the art objects from prison wider visibility and cultural value. By implication, the Koestler Trust's exhibitions allow prisoners themselves to be valued and accepted by the community on an annual basis. This is a remarkable achievement, given the history of prison art and social attitudes to crime and those who commit it.

From Abject to Object: A Brief History of Prison Art

The Koestler Trust's annual AbO exhibitions give artistic, cultural and economic value to the art objects produced in prison. This is one of the Trust's most remarkable achievements, for prison art has historically been considered a culturally inferior product made by a devalued group of people. The academic literature on prison art reveals only two notable early researchers who collected and wrote about it. Cesare Lombroso, writing at the end of the 19th century, and Hans Prinzhorn, writing toward the beginning of the 20th century, were two of the earliest academics to take an interest in art produced in prison. Both speculated and theorised as to why prisoners produced art and craft. Prison was (and still is) a closed institution, which means people are naturally curious about who goes to prison, why, and what happens inside. In the late 1800s, Lombroso's theory of atavism led him to classify criminals as a distinctly different race (Lombroso 1889/2006). For Lombroso, criminals were biologically inferior, as evidenced by unattractive physical features or deformities. Lombroso used examples of prisoners' art and craft to support this theory, but he also valued these creative products because, to him, they revealed psychological truths about these 'different' people.

Lombroso never focused on prisoners' art or craft beyond admiring some examples, dismissing others and using some as evidence to support his now discredited theory of atavism (Lombroso 1889/2006). But what is clear from his collection is that prisoners were innovative and (in some cases) very skilled craftspeople, capable of putting to good use what limited materials they had available to them. For example, Lombroso's collection included a working clock made of fishbone, functioning dioramas, and a deck of playing cards made of bread and paper and painted with blood. What emerges from these examples is that people come to prison with varying degrees of technical, creative and artistic skill. What is also clear is that the prison art and craft that Lombroso collected was evidence of prisoner ingenuity, in an environment characterised by extreme material deprivation. Prisoners had to make do with what materials they could access, even if those materials were sourced from their own bodies (e.g., blood as paint). We can only speculate,

as others have (see Cardinal 1997), on why the prisoners had produced the art and craft Lombroso collected: to pass the time productively; to find pleasure and satisfaction in creating; to make a deck of playing cards with which to play, gamble and hustle; to increase their material wealth; to use as currency to trade for goods or services. These are all reasons that motivate humans to create objects no matter if they are in prison. Many would consider this 'normal' behaviour.

The other notable early collector and scholar on art from closed institutions was Hans Prinzhorn (1886–1933), a pioneer in the exploration of art from the margins of society and human consciousness. Prinzhorn was a German psychiatrist, most famous for his 1922 book, *Bildnerei der Geisteskranken* (*Artistry of the Mentally Ill*), for which he collected and studied some 5000 works from around 450 schizophrenics and inmates of secure psychiatric asylums or hospitals across Europe (Prinzhorn 1922/1972). Prinzhorn studied the art of schizophrenics to explore the validity of theories derived from the psychology of art, developed by art historians, along with the psychology of expression (MacGregor 1989). He sought basic, innate and universal human impulses or urges that either caused or determined the nature of pictorial configurations. Prinzhorn attempted to develop a psychology of art that could be applied to all forms of human expression (MacGregor 1989). He believed that the primary motivations to create concerned both self-expression and communication and that through artistic creation, one externalises the self by actualising the psyche to build a bridge from self to others (MacGregor 1989; Prinzhorn 1922/1972).

Both Lombroso and Prinzhorn valued the artistic expressions of prisoners or the mentally ill (and quite often both: mentally ill prisoners or the criminally insane) because they believed these expressions revealed truths about the psychological state or functioning of the criminal and/or the mentally ill mind. More explicitly, they believed that the pictorial representations were visual manifestations of the mind. Thus, the art and craft objects produced in prison were windows into not just the closed world of the prison but into the criminal psyche. Prinzhorn's study into prison art led to the following insightful observation (Cardinal 1997, p. xviii):

> Prison is imposed rather than chosen so that prisoners feel trapped in a system whose aim largely seems to be to make them vegetate, lose all initiative, and become the submissive creatures of institutional power.

For Prinzhorn, incarceration was an unnatural state in which to exist because it suppressed universal human drives. Prinzhorn believed the suppression of these natural human desires created a tension in prisoners, which resulted in the creation of artwork, which he understood to be a natural human desire to externalise the psyche (Cardinal 1997). The human impulse for creative self-expression is a way for people to reach out, communicate and seek connection with each other. In the context of the prison, art making was a direct artistic/creative response to the physical and psychological impacts of confinement designed to trap, control and disempower (Cardinal 1997). Art produced in these conditions gave insight into the human psyche experiencing state punishment.

While Prinzhorn and Lombroso both collected and wrote about the art and craft of criminals, another opinion they shared was that the objects and images they collected were not worthy of the label 'art'. Neither Lombroso nor Prinzhorn valued the art and craft they collected from prisons for their aesthetic qualities or beauty. Rather, they were items that could be used to obtain insights and knowledge and pass judgments on those who made them. Prinzhorn himself classified prisoner art generally as a 'slightly inferior sub-division of folk art' (Cardinal 1997, p. xviii). At the time, these images and items were distinctly different from what people generally thought of as art. The objects were made from waste products that prisoners could source, such as stale bread or other materials. The art objects they collected were aesthetically inferior because the vast majority of works produced in prison were done so by those untrained in art or aesthetics and under conditions of material deprivation.

Despite this, descriptions of some of the works collected could well be used to disprove Lombroso's ideas. Lombroso's theory of atavism implies that criminals were lacking in intellect and cultural and physical sensitivities, and yet a perfectly working clock fashioned out of fishbone, or a

bust of Garibaldi made of bread crumbs are excellent examples of prisoner intelligence, creativity, skill and ingenuity under conditions of adversity. Though he regarded pictures as primitive forms of communication, Lombroso did make an interesting connection between the art of criminals and the need for personal expression:

> Even literate criminals feel a need to express themselves in the primitive form of a picture and use writing only as a second choice, as if it were less capable of expressing their ideas. Criminals use pictographs, like jargon, to pour out their thoughts rather than to hide them. (2006, pp. 239–240)

Many licit and illicit examples of prison art, both in early collections and present-day entries into the Art by Prisoners (AbP) exhibitions, demonstrate prisoner creativity, ingenuity and innovation in response to the limited materials available. For instance, Aboriginal artist Kevin Gilbert created some of the first lino prints in prison, such as *Christmas Eve in the Land of the Dispossessed* (now owned by the National Museum of Australia). With a sharpened spoon, Gilbert engraved the back of linoleum panels taken from a prison floor (Kleinert 2002). Prisoners sculpt soap and bread (Cardinal 1997), create paint from their own blood (Cardinal 1997), melt down plastic to make tattoo ink (Kornfeld 1997) and carve or draw images into cell walls and beams (Kleinert 2002; Johnson 2008). In 2013, a prisoner who entered a model of a Harley Davidson trike explained (1290/2012):

> I made this trike out of matchsticks and paddle pop sticks which I cut with nail clippers then sanded, painted and varnished. I made holes with a paper clip heated with a lighter, used Coke can bottoms for the back rims and foil off coffee tins for the wheels.

Many of the art objects that Lombroso and Prinzhorn collected confirmed prisoners' low status and their lack of skill, education and taste. For Lombroso, such objects helped to confirm prisoners' inferior sub-human status. If folk art is associated with the uneducated and/or untrained rural or peasant class, then prison art, for Prinzhorn, was classified below a form of art already considered to be 'debased cultural property' (Hauser 1982, p. 569). Prisoners were devalued people who produced devalued cultural goods.

The achievement of the Koestler Trust's exhibitions of prison art must be understood in this historical context. When it comes to the wider public visibility and cultural value of the art and craft produced in prison, arguably no-one has done more in the Anglophone world than Arthur Koestler and the Koestler Trust. Koestler's idea to take art objects produced in prison and award them and exhibit them in public as 'art' put him at the forefront of penal and cultural innovation. This meant creating cultural and artistic value into objects, and by association their creators, where previously there was none, or at least very little. Where previously the art objects were used to confirm prisoners' place at the bottom of the social, cultural and biological hierarchy, the awarding and exhibition of prison art seek to elevate the status of prisoners. It asks the public to see them not as sub-human or inferior but as people and, perhaps in some cases, talented artists. Koestler's idea was to use prison art not as objects of study but for prisoners to communicate with the community, giving prisoners a public presence that would enhance their social status rather than reduce it. In this respect, the Koestler Trust has been successful. One of the more complimentary descriptions of prison art comes from literary critic, John Carey (2006, p. 161), who, having seen and bought work from a Koestler Trust exhibition, commented that 'it would be impossible, walking round, to know that you were not at the annual show of some rather high-grade local art society in a prosperous commuter suburb.'

Changes across the artistic and penal landscapes have contributed to this gradual shift from prison art objects as a phenomenon that few people cared about, to annual exhibitions that attract thousands of visitors. As well as making an early contribution to the study of prison art, Prinzhorn also contributed to the wider appreciation of art produced by untrained artists on the fringes of society. This art would later be termed *Art Brut* (a term later translated to 'Outsider Art' by the art critic Roger Cardinal (1972)) and given wider cultural value by French artist Jean Dubuffet. Both Prinzhorn and Dubuffet created an intellectual and artistic space for the art of schizophrenics, mental patients, prisoners and others on the margins of society. Dubuffet was interested in exploring new aesthetics untouched by the influence of the art world and mainstream visual culture; this directly reflects Prinzhorn's original motivation for seeking out new aesthetic styles in

places such as the asylum or prison. Both Prinzhorn and Dubuffet's interest was always underpinned by the idea that outsider art proceeded from 'truly original mental attitudes' (Cardinal 1972, p. 24). Outsider art encompassed unconventional, unpredictable, original and authentic visual expressions and representations of psychosis and criminality (and often both) and was therefore an insight into the mysterious mental processes and states of the abnormal mind.

It is now widely accepted that prison art belongs to the category of 'outsider art'. But interestingly, prison art was not initially considered outsider art (Cardinal 1972). 'Outsider art' initially referred to the art of the schizophrenic, the insane and the savage (Cardinal 1972). Cardinal acknowledged that it was possible to find good examples of outsider art within the prison. But generally speaking, prison art was not considered as interesting, original or authentic as the art of the asylum. Based largely on Prinzhorn's collection, Cardinal (1972, p. 36) considered most prison art to be 'naïve and desultory.' Naïve painters were not considered true 'outsider artists', for their art is ultimately derivative and aspires to be in the company of art produced by recognised 'artists'. Naïve artists, according to Cardinal (1972), want recognition as 'artists', but they lack the academic training. Rather than having an aesthetic function, naïve art 'has a social function; it hankers for integration' (Cardinal 1972, p. 35). As a result, Cardinal, like others before him, relegates prison art and naïve art to second-class cultural status (Cardinal 1972). Cardinal (1972, p. 36) wrote of prison art:

> One might guess that prison is experienced much more as physical impediment, producing not imaginative escapism but an art that reflects a desire to re-join the society outside, even if this means the 'alternative' society of criminals … That a shared mode of life and a single collective desire – release or escape – may impede the expression of *individual* vision in prisoners…

The Koestler Trust began exhibiting art produced in prison in 1962. By that time, conventional art-making materials were more widely available to prisoners. This was in large part thanks to the art therapy movement and the delivery of prisoner education as a component of the rehabilitative ideal. This meant that more and more, prisoners could access conventional materials, as well as

art teachers and therapists, which resulted in the production of objects that conformed to more conventional ideas about the form that art was supposed to take. From the 1940s onward, the fields of psychology, psychiatry, therapeutic practices and art converged to create art therapy (Vick 2003). The psychoanalytic theories and practices of Freud and Jung heavily influenced the art therapy movement (Cox & Gelsthorpe 2012). Consistent with Prinzhorn's writings, art therapy understood art, or pictorial expression, as a visual manifestation of one's psyche, a symbolic communication of the unconscious. Art therapists, however, took this insight a step further and used these visual psychic disclosures to aid in analysis and treatment of emotional and/or psychological issues (Cox & Gelsthorpe 2012; Vick 2003). Art therapists began to work in prisons, treating criminals in the belief that altering criminals' psychic constitution could help to treat and rehabilitate them. Prisoners, therefore, began to produce art in therapy programs grounded in criminological and psychological theories of rehabilitation (Cardinal 1997; Cox & Gelsthorpe 2012; Vick 2003).

The art therapy movement was important for establishing the therapeutic and rehabilitative benefits of producing art for confined populations. As with the early collectors, Lombroso and Prinzhorn, producing art in a therapeutic context was also about gaining psychological insight and knowledge about prisoners. Though rather than using the art objects simply to classify the objects as inferior cultural products and their creators as inferior people, art therapy was used to treat prisoners. The art therapy movement helped to establish and popularise the idea that creating art was an activity through which you could treat prisoners and make help make them better people.

These ideas have helped give prison art its cultural value and are also frequently touched on by those exposed to prison art. An indication of the public's increasing willingness to not just accept but to celebrate prison art is the 2010 coffee table book produced with funding from the Koestler Trust, called *Insider Art* (Meadows 2010). *Insider Art* contains a forward by British artist Grayson Perry. Perry, a bona fide member of the professional art world and Turner Prize–winning artist, reflected on his own practice as an artist and long-time Koestler supporter and judge. Over the

years, Perry has witnessed enough prison art to identity the themes depicted by the art objects: the brutality and boredom of prison life; landscapes; images of home; strong and predatory animals, such as tigers and eagles; lascivious women; coveted cars and motorcycles (Meadows 2010, pp. 8–9). These are recurring themes in prison art in the UK, USA, Australia and presumably in other countries. Kornfeld (1997) refers to these themes as the canons of prison art. In Australia, the art objects submitted to the AbP exhibitions were filled with similar images and themes.

In his forward, Perry describes prison art as an 'unfiltered outpouring, always authentic, often touching, sometimes disturbing' (Meadows 2010, p. 9). Perry (Meadows 2010, p. 9) also acknowledges that to the trained eye, prisoner art might be thought of as 'mawkish, earnest and kitsch', an indication that to the professional art world, most prison art is still aesthetically and technically inferior. But Perry places a value on art created in the context of the criminal justice system beyond the purely aesthetic. It has value as an activity that can help prisoners with their time and psychological health. Perry also suggests that the uncontrollable urges and temptations that can lead to crime might be redirected into artistic creation. Rather than resulting in criminally harmful or destructive behaviour, such urges can be channelled into positive and creatively productive pursuits. Perry, like many before and after him, puts forward the case that art is essentially a good activity for prisoners because it can assist with personal expression, essential to the project of individual reform and transformation. Aboriginal artist Robert Henderson visits prisons in Queensland as a member of the Brisbane Council of Elders. Henderson (2016) acknowledges the therapeutic benefits of art making in prison:

> Of course, not everybody's an artist – that's so true – however pretty much everyone benefits from exposure to positive self-expression, particularly when the content is driven by harsh, and often destructive, unexpressed emotion, often born of historic trauma.

The prison, since its inception, has always been about the transformation of individuals (Foucault 1979). The prison was, according to Foucault (1980, p. 40) 'meant to be an instrument, comparable with – and no less perfect than – the school, the barracks, or the hospital, acting with

precision upon its individual subjects.' This idea is expressed in the name of the government departments responsible for Australia's prisons: the Department for *Correctional* Services in South Australia; *Corrections* Victoria; *Corrective* Services of New South Wales; Queensland *Corrective* Services; Department of *Corrective* Services in Western Australia. How the production of art through education, therapy or other contexts achieves corrective benefits has been the focus of much criminological literature (Cheliotis 2012; Djurichkovich 2011; Hughes 2005; Tett et al. 2012). According to Carey (2006), the art world has paid very little attention to the ways that active participation in the arts can alter people. The studies and observations of those who practise art in prison, Carey notes, is an exception. Carey (2006), with reference to Hopwood's (2001) Including the Arts: The Route to Basic and Key Skills in Prison, summarises the ways in which arts in prison can alter prisoners for the better. It is an activity that can re-engage prisoners in education, as well as boost self-esteem and confidence. Creating art can be a productive outlet for expressing negative emotions that would otherwise manifest as violence. Violence, writes Graef (as cited in Carey 2006, p. 158), is the visible form of 'an intense longing to make an impact, a need to be noticed.' Art making is an activity through which emotions that might otherwise result in violence can be expressed. Thus, art making can allow people to vent feelings in ways that do not harm others. Emotional energy can instead be channelled in the production of art objects, and this can enhance prisoners' lives rather than damage them. After all, producing a work of art can similarly satisfy the need to make an impact and receive attention and respect from others.

David Gussak has made a major contribution to the study of art making in prison in therapeutic contexts. His studies and others have demonstrated that art therapy can benefit the psychological health of prisoners for a multitude of reasons. The psychological wellbeing of prisoners is a particularly pertinent issue, not least because prisons are increasingly being used to incarcerate those with psychological problems (Cheney 1997; Gussak 1997; Gussak 2012; Hall 1997). The prison environment provides little opportunity for personal growth or change, isolates people from family and friendship support and can create or worsen existing mental health issues for prisoners (Hall 1997). This can damage people who not only have to adjust to the prison

environment but who also suffer from past trauma, abuse and/or drug addiction (Day & Onorato 1997). Art therapy, though, can be particularly useful for managing prisoners with extremely poor psychological health, such as those who are severely socially withdrawn, self-harming and at risk of suicide (Gussak 1997; Hall 1997).

The prison environment can be hostile and threatening, so it is not conducive to verbalising and disclosing personal weaknesses (Gussak 2012). For many, to endure the prison environment, one must develop hard psychological and physical defences to guard against being vulnerable or open to ridicule from both other prisoners and/or prison staff (Gussak 1997, p. 61). In prison, art is a uniquely appropriate medium for therapeutic expression. Artistic talent is culturally acceptable and valued in the prison environment, and it can actually enhance one's social standing in prison by earning respect and friendship (Kornfeld 1997; Gussak 2012). Importantly, though, artistic expression can pierce a prisoner's defences by allowing communication and disclosure of sensitive personal information 'without fear of retaliation from the [prison] environment' (Gussak 1997, p. 61).

Art therapy is beneficial to prisoners, as the process of being productive and creative focuses and engages the prisoner, which provides a momentary psychological escape from the prison (Gussak 1997, 2012). Artistic expression can also channel negative emotions that may otherwise be expressed through anger or violence, while increasing one's self-esteem and decreasing depression (Gussak 2012), giving the opportunity not only for psychological escape but also psychological release. A finished piece can also provide a sense of achievement and satisfaction and can help maintain a sense of individual and social identity within the dehumanising and de-individualising prison environment (Clements 2004; Johnson 2008). Success and achievement in art can also help prisoners achieve, or perhaps just begin to imagine, success in other parts of their lives (Johnson 2008).

Many in prison have low levels of education and limited abilities for verbal expression. For these people, art provides an alternative medium to communicate 'very complex material which would

not be available for communication in any other form' (Gussak 1997, p. 2, quoting Kramer 1958, pp. 12–16). Art therapy thus serves as a bridge from self to other (in Kramer's case, a bridge from patient to therapist).

Art therapy facilitates disclosures, even though prisoners may not feel obliged or even be aware (Gussak 2012). Art then produces insights and knowledge and can be a source of information about the prisoner, who may not even be fully aware of what he or she is disclosing, as Gussak (2012, p. 247) writes:

> Art therapy helps to bypass conscious as well as unconscious defences, including dishonesty. Whereas, for example, in verbal therapy individuals may withhold information or lie to gain sympathy or medication, artwork uncovers true emotions and particular states of mind without exposing the individual to external scrutiny.

Art helps prisoners to cope with prison and mitigates the psychological effects of prison. It can facilitate self-expression, self-exploration, self-reflection and insight, and when those creating the art are actively and productively involved in the process, this results in a creative product that can bring enjoyment and satisfaction (Clements 2004; Johnson 2008).

Prisoner education programs also offer prisoners opportunities to participate in the arts. Research demonstrates the benefits of arts in prison education are consistent with the positive impacts that result from art therapy. General themes that emerge from research into arts and education in prison are that arts projects help improve relationships between prisoners and between prisoners and prison officers; boost prisoners' self-esteem and self-confidence; develop communication and social skills; and enable people to work as a group (McNeill et al. 2011).

Many prisoners have low levels of formal education and verbal communication skills. Therefore, education classes that focus on basic literacy and numeracy can disengage prisoners because they can both reinforce prisoners' own educational weaknesses and remind them of previous negative

experiences in education institutions (Tett et al. 2012). Many prisoners instead learn how to play the prison system without engaging meaningfully in the education process (Djurichkovic 2011).

Art education can be an alternative, or complementary, to education classes focused on literacy and numeracy and can engage prisoners by involving them in the process in a more active participatory role, which uses the hand, eye and mind (Clements 2004). Creative expression gives prisoners a level of freedom and autonomy to explore new ideas, ways of thinking and/or emotions. Positive experiences for prisoners in art education can give them the confidence and courage to pursue education both in prison and after release (Clements 2004; Djurichkovic 2011; Johnson 2008). The nature of art education and creative expression means that art teachers are seen more as guides, assisting and guiding in the creative process, with the prisoner being ultimately in control. This dynamic means that art teachers work *with* prisoners, not *on* prisoners, an important and powerful distinction (McNeill 2006). This also helps develop positive relationships that are not based on authority (Djurichkovic 2011).

Art education can be useful to the dynamic security of the prison, by absorbing and occupying prisoners' time, as well as being an outlet for behaviour that could otherwise manifest itself destructively and violently (Clements 2004; Johnson 2008). By undertaking an activity that facilitates self-reflection, insight and awareness, creative expression can bring about growth and development that are key to inner change, which is consistent with the prison's rehabilitative objectives. Thus, research into art making in prison in therapeutic, educational or even recreational contexts has demonstrated the ways in which it can help mitigate the negative effects of incarceration, improve prisoners' psychological health and thus contribute to the purpose of the prison by aiding in the rehabilitation process. More recently, the production of art and participation in creative programs in prison have been linked to the sorts of inner identity changes necessary to inspire desistance (Tett et al. 2012).

There are three informative literature reviews that summarise research that focuses on arts and offenders (Burrows et al 2013, Djurichkovic 2011 and Hughes 2005). These reviews have identified

a number of weaknesses in available studies in this area. According to Burrows (et al 2013), 'the evidence base in relation to arts projects and offenders is small in size and low in quality' (see also Djurichkovic 2011, p. 15 and Hughes 2005, pp. 22-23) for a similar assessment. Much, but certainly not all, of the evidence is anecdotal (see Anderson et al 2011 for a thorough evaluation if Inspiring Change which ran across five Scottish prisons. See also Cheliotis (ed) 2016). Parkes and Bilby (2010) note that arts activities have been happening in prisons for a long time and have produced plenty of success stories. Examples of such success are easy to find in articles and books, not from academics, but from arts practitioners (see Kornfeld 1997) and prison staff who observe and know first-hand from years of experience the benefits and importance of arts programmes. While they acknowledge that artistic activities in prison may not explicitly set out to address offending behaviour, it is important for coping in prison and developing fundamental skills needed for life outside prison (Aylott 2002, Brown 2002 and Kornfeld 1997). Arts programmes teach prisoners to build trust and work collaboratively in groups, to fulfil responsibilities, develop self-esteem and can be a way to engage with the community and prisoners' families.

What is lacking, according to Parkes and Bilby (2010) is research with sufficient methodological rigour that is able to demonstrate not just the extrinsic and intrinsic values and benefits of the arts to prisoners, but the role it plays in rehabilitation and reducing re-offending. If arts programmes are to be embedded as part of prison education curricula, or perhaps even just more widely accepted activities in the prison context, then research must go beyond the anecdotal and show the link between the impact of the arts and how it relates to the complex process of desistance and rehabilitation.

Prisons these days favour psychological interventions, education and vocational training as these activities are directly related to programming out criminogenic behaviours and desires and assisting prisoners by bettering their job prospects upon release. Parkes and Bilby (2010) make the point that prison programmes or interventions need to be justified by evidence based on reason and science, and it is difficult to provide this when it comes to research on arts, or even spiritual,

activities in prison which may not easily fit within research paradigms or evaluation models acceptable to policy makers. This may be, as Parkes and Bilby (2010, p. 104) suggest, drawing on Matarasso (1997, p. 72) because "people, their creativity and culture, remain elusive, always partly beyond the range of conventional inquiry." But Parkes and Bilby (2010) also highlight other factors that may explain the lack of evidence: traditional tensions between the arts and science, a reluctance of arts practitioners in prison settings to specify aims and objectives, a lack of value-neutral research and research that lacks the appropriate standard of methodological rigour to satisfy policy makers. For example one issue identified by Burrows et al (2013) was that studies in this area generally had small sample sizes. Similarly Djurichkovic (2011, p. 15) observed that most evaluation research has looked at short-term, pilot or experimental art programs with small participation numbers. There is also evidence to suggest that there is often a selection bias toward 'success' for such programs with participants not chosen at random, rather selected by key people within institutions (Djurichkovic 2011, p. 15). This bias for success, as well as the research in this area generally, also reflects just how difficult it can be to run arts programs within prison as well as fund high quality research and evaluation. Especially those that involve weekly sessions over a relatively long period of time, for example 10 weeks or much longer, for example six months (Djurichkovic 2011, p. 20). One of the aspects of the Koestler Trust's Art by Offenders program is that it has been running for so many years. It is now a permanent fixture on the visual arts calendar and it has become embedded within and beyond the prison system.

Studies in this area have used both quantitative and qualitative data collection. This might take the form of a pre and post survey to test depression levels (see Gussak 2007). Other studies collected qualitative data via pre and/or post program interviews (Djurichkovic 2011 pp. 17-21, Cohen 2009 as cited in Anderson et al 2011, p. 18 when discussing participation in a prison choir). Researches usually look for how arts programs have assisted prisoners' psychological state through the process of art making which often involves people coming together and working individually but also collectively in the presence of other participants, prison staff and workshop facilitators.

"To consider the effect of artistic and spiritual endeavour means to theorise these concepts, the practice and the outcomes and to consider their relationships with the traditional forms of intervention in prison aimed at altering offenders' behaviour" (Parkes and Bilby 2010, p. 106). One way Parkes and Bilby suggest we can theorise arts practices is through the concept of 'affect' which they describe as "the feeling which is promoted by worshipping, creating or doing something risky", but it goes beyond a purely emotional reaction as Parkes and Bilby (2010, p. xx) quote from Massumi (2002, p. xx):

> *In affect, we are never alone. That's because affects … are basically ways of connecting, to others and to other situations. They are our angle of participation in processes larger than ourselves. With intensified affect comes a stronger sense of embeddedness in a larger field of life – a heightened sense of belonging, with other people and to other places."*

More recently, research into arts programs in prison has been linked with theories of desistance. It is unlikely that any one program, be it arts based or not, can be credited with reducing reoffending given that there are so many factors, for example housing, addiction and employment challenges, that can influence whether or not people re-offend. There is, however, a growing body of evidence that is linking creative programs with the desistance process. Desistance research implies that a prisoner who feels more valued, respected and connected to society is less likely to re-offend (Farrall 2002, Maruna 2001 and McNeill & Maruna 2007). Anderson (et al 2011) argue that arts programs have the power to inspire the desistance process. Desistance, after all is a process that begins in earnest when one has returned to the community (Maruna 2001). Belief, hope and motivation that one can desist or go straight when released is therefore a fundamental part of this process.

This thesis builds on the evidence base for the production of art within prison and what this means for prisoners mainly in the context of recreation. For this research I collected qualitative and quantitative data over three years around three annual events. This enabled me to triangulate

results from year to year as well as build a solid sample size particularly in relation to prisoner participation.

But this study goes further, it looks at the conditions under which art can emerge from the prison and be publicly exhibited. Few studies have looked at the way art can be used by prisoners to communicate with the outside world (but see for example Wisker 1997). Indeed not just communicate, but art is a medium and an object through which prisoners can connect with the public and be part of an event that is larger than themselves. It is an angle into the community thus it is a medium for inclusion and a sense of belonging. This study examines aspects of art production and exhibition not covered by any literature such as what prisoners want to say through their art, how the public react and how prisoners feel in response to participating in the community and positive community reactions.

Conclusion

The production of art in prison, be it in a therapeutic or an educational context, happens behind the prison walls, and that is where much of it remains. The history of prison art does not centre on public exhibitions of that art. Rather, it reflects a curiosity and fascination that certain people had with the sorts of people who ended up in prison and the sorts of things they did inside. Prison art and prison craft have always been valued for the insights they have provided, for their ability to be windows into the closed world of the prison and, further still, windows into the minds, thoughts and feelings of those who are incarcerated. To this day, that idea is part of the allure of the Koestler exhibitions and prison art exhibitions generally precisely because there is an air of mystery about prisons and the people inside them (see Turner 2016, pp. 183–220). Cohen and Taylor (1992, pp. 32–33), reflecting on their time teaching sociology classes in the maximum-security wing of Durham Prison, wrote that they 'found it difficult not to be fascinated by the criminality, the uniqueness of the men who lived there'. They further commented:

> Our problem was that we were unable to shift away from a concentration upon their crimes. It was their outrageous deviance which distinguished the men from others we knew; the first task was to make sense of that behaviour. (1992, pp. 32–33)

Arthur Koestler recognised the value and transformative power of art and other intellectually stimulating activities for people in prison. Koestler also recognised that an important part of the transformative process was allowing prisoners to link back into the community from which they were separated and to which it is often difficult to return. The Koestler Trust's exhibitions have been instrumental in making prisoner art more widely visible to the public. In so doing, prisoners are given a public presence and a visibility that differ dramatically from the negative ways in which prisoners are made visible to the public through the media or lowly punitive tasks as part of community payback schemes.

Public exhibitions of prison art have, since the early 1960s, stood out as exceptions to the general rule of exclusion and invisibility. Artists in the community enjoy special privileges and status that some use to challenge social, moral and even legal boundaries. Artists in prison might not enjoy the same creative licence as artists on the outside. But many prisoners who produce art enjoy the privilege of sharing their work with the community. Prison artists are able to routinely challenge and break down the prison boundaries through their artwork. Public exhibitions of art made in prison can help re-code prisoners. Through art, prisoners are able to communicate to the public that they are being productive, not idle. But it is also through art that prisoners are able to produce different forms of knowledge about themselves. The exhibitions make prisoners publicly visible in ways that showcase their skills and strengths. This gives the community a context and a ritual to unite, not against prisoners for what they have done—which is usually the case—but in support and celebration of what they can do. One of the major contributions that the Koestler Trust has made to the art world, and more specifically to the prison art world, is that it has created an event through which the prisoner has once again become publicly visible in ways that avoid condemnation, further degradation or stigmatisation. Such events can enhance, rather than

reduce, the way the community thinks of prisoners. It can normalise prisoners when they have been cast out and marked as abnormal and different. They enable a degree of acceptance in the context of rejection, of pride in the context of shame, of elevation in the context of degradation.

Prison art is considered 'outsider art', for while some art produced in prison might be considered outstanding and display excellent technical skill, much of it is considered naïve. But art objects produced in prison have value beyond the technical execution or the pure aesthetic. They provide windows into the closed prison world. They are valued for how they can assist in the technical and moral transformation of the offender. Art objects made in prison can also emit powerful signs. They can be symbolic of prisoners' desire to re-join society and of acceptance of conventional social values. They can be evidence to prisoners and to others of a transformative process that is under way—the sort of transformation the prison was designed to bring about but so often fails to achieve.

CHAPTER 2: BEHIND THE PRISON WALLS

In this chapter I provide an overview of the South Australian Department for Correctional Services (DCS) and the contexts in which prisoners are permitted to produce art while incarcerated. I also explore the sorts of institutional tensions inherent in activities such as art making. In order to produce a work of art, you need an idea, time, resources and support (Becker 1982). In prison, there is usually no shortage of ideas and time; it is resources and support that are critical. Art making can present all sorts of logistical problems for prisoners and correctional staff. Staff must find a safe balance in resourcing prisoners with the tools and supplies needed to produce art, while minimising the chance that such opportunities can potentially create dangerous situations. When it comes to the public exhibition of prison art, officer support and labour are critical. Prisoner participation in the AbP required correctional officers to perform numerous duties in support of the prisoner artists. As such, I adopted certain approaches to maximise the likelihood of officer support. Art and the tools required to produce art can be both a threat and complement to the internal order of the prison. Likewise, the images and public exhibition of art can be both a threat and complement to the public image of the prison and the departments responsible. As such, I managed the AbP exhibitions carefully so as to maximise the likelihood the public, but crucially the media, would be accepting and supportive.

The South Australian Prison System

South Australia has nine adult prisons: the Adelaide Remand Centre, Yatala Labour Prison, Adelaide Women's Prison, Port Lincoln Prison, Port Augusta Prison, Mobilong Prison, Mount Gambier Prison, Cadell Training Centre and the Adelaide Pre-release Centre. Between 2012 and 2014, the average daily population of the SA prison system rose from 2078 to 2409. Like many jurisdictions, South Australia has been experiencing sharp increases in the prison population, putting increasing pressure on prison infrastructure, staff and prisoners. The AbP exhibitions

involved many logistical hurdles, one of which was the transport of artwork from each prison to Flinders University.

Art in South Australian Prisons

'Art' is a very general term, of course, and 'the arts' encompass a broad range of activities, which include visual art, sculpture, design, music, theatre, dance and photography to name but some categories. Similarly, art can encompass a broad range of activities within the prison, both illicit and licit. The focus of this chapter will be on prison-sanctioned art practices that are limited to conventional forms of visual art, model/sculpture making and the production and painting upon slipcast ceramic moulds, such as vases, mugs and plates.

An obvious precondition to the public display of prisoner art was the production of art in South Australia's adult prison system. According to Becker (1982), the production of artwork requires an idea, time, support and the resources to procure materials. In prison, although there are usually ample ideas and time, the two elements of art production that matter most are access to support and resources, including space. Space is becoming increasingly scarce in prisons, as the prison population continues to increase rapidly. Designated art spaces, or flexible spaces that can accommodate groups within the prison, greatly improve the capacity of prisons to facilitate a range of art-making activities. Support can come from a variety of sources, such as fellow prisoners and family on the outside, but by far the most important source of support is the formal support of the institution or even the informal support of correctional officers. It was essential then that prisoners had permission to access the materials and tools necessary to produce artwork. At the commencement of the AbP initiative in 2011, there was little centralised knowledge about where, how and which prisoners produced artwork across the SA prison system. Yet there was little doubt among DCS staff located at central office that some prisoners produced art under the supervision of prison officers. The AbP initiative prompted the Offender Development Directorate (ODD) to find out what, if any, art programs or activities were being facilitated across the state's prisons.

An enquiry into the art practices across the state revealed some important insights into the pockets of support that already existed and the ways those prisons provided and managed access to art materials. Cadell Training Centre is a low-security prison farm with a prisoner capacity of around 210, and it is located 200 kilometres from Adelaide. Cadell has a functioning kiln that some prisoners used to make ceramic objects, but Cadell reported generally little to no arts activity, with the majority of prisoners occupied by agriculture, horticulture and dairy production. Mobilong Prison is a medium- and low-security prison, 75 kilometres east of Adelaide, with a capacity of 368 prisoners. Within its recreational area, which includes a gymnasium, Mobilong has two designated art rooms: one for painting and one with a functioning kiln for ceramics. Prison staff who supervised the recreational area at Mobilong reported facilitating a wide range of creative activities, including painting, drawing and ceramics, with prisoners' artwork being printed in the prison newsletter and exhibited previously in community exhibitions. Mobilong staff occasionally organised art classes in conjunction with the Prison Fellowship, an international Catholic organisation that runs an annual Christian-themed art competition for prisoners world-wide.[2]

Port Augusta Prison houses low-, medium- and high-security prisoners. With a capacity of over 700 prisoners, it is the state's largest prison, located just over 300 kilometres north of Adelaide. Port Augusta Prison has a high Indigenous prisoner population, and in 2007, for reasons unknown, an external education provider stopped delivering a program called Aboriginal Education and Aboriginal Art. Since then, Port Augusta Prison has been running a program called Literacy through Art. This program provides medium-security Aboriginal prisoners with art materials, on the condition that the prisoners attend numeracy and literacy classes.

It was clear from the initial enquiry that there was no centrally funded or co-ordinated prison art program operating across the state's prisons. Rather, art programs or art room access were

[2] Prison Fellowship is a prison support organisation that, among other things, runs an international prison art competition: http://www.prisonfellowship.org.au/home_1_5.html.

facilitated independently at the discretion of staff at each prison. In some cases, this might cater to the specific needs of certain prison cohorts, such as Aboriginal prisoners in Port Augusta. Mobilong, on the other hand, had two art rooms in which prisoners could access a variety of materials to create various forms of art and occasionally have ad hoc access to an art teacher. Art making at Mobilong was an established recreational activity. But that is not to say that every prisoner at Mobilong did art, was able to do art or even wanted to do art for that matter.

Though all prisons share similar characteristics, each one is different. The staff, inmates and architecture are all unique. Each prison has its own history and culture, and each one permits and prohibits a range of activities. Prison art teacher Phyllis Kornfeld (1997) observed this in her book *Cellblock Visions*. Kornfeld taught art in 18 prisons across 6 states in the US, and she described each prison as having a 'different personality' (Kornfeld 1997, pp. 9–24). Each one had lists of contraband items and regulations that controlled access to materials, spaces in which those materials could be used and the subject matter that was not permitted to be explored using those materials (Kornfeld 1997, pp. 9–24). Similarly, as the AbP initiative progressed, the different personalities of each of the SA prisons became apparent. It was necessary to develop relationships with correctional officers at each prison, and over the years, the entries from each prison revealed the different levels of institutional support. Some prisoners had access to acrylic paints, large canvases, ceramic moulds and a kiln, whereas others had access only to pencils and paper. Some prisoners had no access to any art materials.

Over the three years, the art forms entered to the AbP initiative varied considerably. They included painted slipcast ceramics; large-scale acrylic work on art board, wood and canvas; and matchstick and mixed media models. Unsurprisingly, the art forms that required more materials were generally sent from medium- to low-security prisons. In contrast, very few prisoners from Yatala participated. Yatala is a high-security prison with a high number of prisoners on remand. Those from Yatala who did participate only ever entered pencil sketches. The majority of these were done using graphite pencils, but in some cases a few prisoners used colour pencils. Following

the opening of the 2012 exhibition, a letter was received from a female inmate at the Adelaide Women's Prison in response to a newspaper article that had featured a photograph of a large painting done with acrylic on canvas. The woman spoke on behalf of others at Adelaide Women's Prison who were 'not happy'. The article, they felt, gave a misleading impression of what resources were generally available to prisoners. Some prisoners at Adelaide Women's Prison had no access to acrylic paint, canvas or any other art supplies. Seeing a large acrylic painting from one of the men's prisons was, therefore, a cause for frustration. Many prisoners who produced work and submitted those works to AbP clearly had, for a period of time, access to a wide range of materials and resources, yet the lack of resources was still a prominent concern for many who brought up this issue in their survey responses:

> It would be good if we were supplied with more art paints and brushes and canvases. (Q8.P6.2012)
>
> Supply art supplies to prisoners. (Q9.P9.2013)
>
> Don't do art as can't have paints and brushes. (Q5.P21.2014)

This suggests that institutional control of art materials remains a significant barrier to the production of art in prison. Some prisoners were motivated to enter their art into AbP in the hope or expectation that an exhibition of prisoner art would lead to greater exposure, which might, in turn, result in greater access to art supplies:

> So my art can get noticed, also so we can get more art materials (Q4.P4.2012)

Access to certain materials can be easy, difficult or impossible depending on who the prisoner is and which prison they are in. Even access to supplies in a supportive prison such as Mobilong is not an entitlement. Conversations and correspondence with prisoners and prison officers over the years have revealed fragments of information about the sorts of challenges, negotiations and conditions that accompany the sourcing, distribution, supervision and regulation of art supplies in South Australian prisons. During a conversation one year with an officer at Mobilong Prison, to

start promoting the next exhibition, the staff member mentioned that it would be a good opportunity to reopen the art room. Occasionally, there were opportunities to visit prisons to meet with prisoners and officers. During one visit, a conversation was overheard between an inmate and the prison general manager (governor). The general manager was explaining to a prisoner why he was currently excluded from the art room. Staff had received information, and this was the way they managed risk, she explained.

Art as Threat to Prison Order

Resourcing prisoners with materials, be it for educational, industrial or recreational purposes, introduces risks that every prison must manage. In an environment of material deprivation, art supplies materially enrich prisoners and can be highly valuable and sought-after for illicit arts practices such as tattooing. The black paint that Kornfeld (1997) took into prison for her art classes was repeatedly stolen to be sold and/or used for the tattoo industry. There are all sorts of illicit uses for paints and pastels, as well as the tools required to apply them to surfaces. Tools can be transformed into weapons, drug paraphernalia and tattoo machines. Paints can be used as tattoo ink and to vandalise prison property, while erasers can be used to jam locks or create a mould of a key (Kornfeld 1997).

The restrictions around materials, such as those needed to produce art, are highly controlled and regulated in prison because security, control and the maintenance of internal order is of paramount concern (Kornfeld 1997; Sykes 1958). According to Sykes (1958), after the prevention of escapes, maintenance of internal order within prison is the main priority for staff. But the structure and nature of prison make this difficult. As Haney (2006, p. 162) points out, 'there are only so many ways to repressively and involuntarily confine large numbers of people in a relatively small space for prolonged periods of time'. Management of inmates is dictated less by philosophies such as rehabilitation and more by the practical demands and challenges of the task. Depriving prisoners of material goods and services is part of the punishment that prison inflicts on

criminals, but it is also a practical requirement to maintain staff and inmate safety and internal order and prevent escapes.

Security measures, therefore, dictate decisions to distribute or make available certain material goods to prisoners, for access to even the most basic materials can cause problems. For example, the materials needed to produce a drawing, sketch or poem can be as simple as a pencil and paper. Yet the micro-logistics of how prisoners can possess and maintain pencils as functioning tools presents a challenge to both the inmate-officer dynamic and inmate and officer safety. In Kornfeld's (1997, p. 17) experience, '[g]etting one's pencil sharpened is likely to be challenging and perhaps unpleasant when an inmate must depend on the good will and availability of an officer to sharpen her pencil.' The challenges and risks in maintaining pencils were also an issue at the Adelaide Remand Centre. For pencils to function, they need to be sharpened, but officers may be unwilling to respond to (the possibly constant) requests to sharpen pencils. Access to materials in this case requires co-operation between inmates and correctional officers and can, in subtle ways, subvert the power dynamics that exist between them. In an environment where officers are in control of inmates, a request to sharpen a pencil can mean prisoners are, in fact, controlling the actions of officers. To get around this issue, inmates at Adelaide Remand Centre had been issued with pencil sharpeners. However, staff had to recover the sharpeners because some had been discovered with the razor blades removed. Razor blades from pencil sharpeners can, of course, be repurposed and used to create weapons that compromise the safety and security of other prisoners and staff and can be used for self-harm or even to attempt escape. As Halsey and Deegan (2017, p. 72) note, activities such as art making were 'envisaged in terms of their capacity to generate dangerous situations, and, thereby, threaten the good order of the prison', with one officer conflicted as to whether the benefits of such a pursuit could outweigh the risks:

> If you want a prisoner to paint you've got to give him paints and you've got to give him paintbrushes. And what do they do with the paintbrushes? They put them in a pencil sharpener and then you have a weapon … A lethal weapon … So the first thing is the security issue … Do I think [painting's] a good idea? Of course I think it's a good idea. But how far do you take a good idea?

These are the sorts of seemingly trivial practicalities that those beyond the prison walls take for granted. Yet these issues can have a dramatic impact on the willingness and ability of prison officers to be forthcoming with necessary resources and support that enable prisoners to draw or write with rudimentary instruments such as pencils. There is also the risk that prisoners may use art materials and their artistic skills to escape from prison. Artistic skills and access to art supplies played a crucial role in creating the life-like effigies that enabled one of the most famous escapes from Alcatraz, in which Frank Morris used soap, toilet paper and other materials to fashion models of human heads, which were painted in flesh tones with prison art kits and decorated with human hair from the prison barber (Alcatraz History).

Criminologist and early prison art collector Cesare Lombroso wrote about the connection between material enrichment, creativity and escape in his book *Criminal Man* (first published in 1876). In the chapter entitled 'Art and Industry among Criminals', Lombroso addressed the topic of 'Escape', along with 'Aesthetics' and 'Love of Crafts' (Lombroso 1889/2006, pp. 244–246). For a criminal to plan and execute an escape, they often require materials. A piece of wood and a spoon, for example, might be used to create a wood block print, but it could just as easily be a weapon useful to threaten or injure someone or to attempt escape. Lombroso wrote about a prison tailor who, for six months, collected pieces of cloth to create a 3 m cord that he had planned to use to escape. Escapes and escape attempts or the fabrication of weapons, like the production of art and craft, involve a measure of risk, creativity and ingenuity and often require materials and/or tools. In 2010, an inmate at Mobilong Prison was charged with making what was described as a 'highly realistic' 13 cm replica pistol, which was made from matchsticks and painted black (Rivett 2010). Matchstick and popsicle stick craft is a long-standing prison tradition. The design of the gun included a rubber band, so it could appear as if it were being cocked. The tip of the replica was made from the metal taken from the eraser casings from the ends of some pencils. This, according to the then Minister for Correctional Services, would feel like a gun if pressed to someone's neck or body (Rivett 2010). The actual intention of the inmate who made the replica was never explored, but DCS feared the replica could have been used to threaten staff and/or other inmates

or be used to attempt escape (Rivett 2010). As Kornfeld (1997) observed, often the sorts of materials and activities that are permitted within certain institutions depend on the institutional history (e.g., instances of vandalism) or the sorts of objects that were created. After dangerous or potentially dangerous events, prison security is tightened to prevent future risks. For example, following the discovery of the replica pistol at Mobilong, a ceramics teacher who visited Mobilong reported that solid mouldable clay was prohibited and that only liquid clay, which can be poured into moulds, was allowed.

Art as Complement to Prison Order

Giving prisoners access to art supplies and permitting prisoners to create art carry with it risks that the prison institution must manage in relation to internal order and the integrity of the prison perimeter. For this reason, prison staff will only allow or facilitate arts activities if they complement the security of the prison and improve the safety of staff and other prisoners. Staff at prisons and other total institutions have a long history of facilitating inmate art. Allowing inmates to draw or paint can have institutional benefits, but this can also align with other institutional goals such as rehabilitation. Another institutional context in which inmates are provided materials and opportunities to make art is in therapy. The arts therapy movement in the mid-twentieth century is helped make art materials and art teachers accessible to prisoners.

Research by art therapist David Gussak indicates that art therapy decreases depression levels in prisoners and that withdrawn inmates become more sociable, interact more with staff and (crucially) become more compliant to the prison regime (see Gussak 2009). Rehabilitation is commonly understood to be a core philosophy that justifies imprisonment. While art therapy courses can be delivered and justified under the banner of 'rehabilitation', Gussak's observation that prisoners who do art in therapy courses are more compliant to the prison regime means that one could argue these effects are just as much, if not more, to do with the core issues of regime compliance, security and internal order of the prison than prisoner rehabilitation.

Internal order in prison, though, is not simply achieved through the deprivation of liberty and material goods or the delivery of therapeutic programs. Nor is it achieved through violence, which is an unsustainable and inefficient way to control prisoners (Sykes 1958). Prison staff maintain internal order through a system of privileges, rewards and punishments (Goffman 1961; Sykes 1958). Goffman (1961, pp. 52–53) observed the following:

> The building of a world around these minor privileges is perhaps the most important feature of inmate culture and yet it is something that cannot easily be appreciated by an outsider, even one who has previously lived through the experience himself.

Though this system of control was recognised by Sykes and Goffman in the mid-twentieth century, it was given more official status in England and Wales with the introduction of the Incentives and Earned Privileges system in HM Prison Service in 1997 (Liebling 2008). This system incentivises and rewards prisoners who comply with the prison regime and punishes those who try to challenge or disrupt it. As mentioned above, art and craft activities are often classified as recreational activities. While educational or therapeutic courses might be compulsory for some prisoners, recreational activities are not. By keeping art and craft as recreational pursuits, opportunities to access art materials and art-making spaces and produce art and craft become a reward or privilege, conditional on prisoner compliance with the prison regime. At Port Augusta Prison, Aboriginal prisoners were provided with art materials on the condition that these opportunities led to formal educational outcomes. Deprivation of and access to materials are used in this context to incentivise and encourage prisoner compliance with institutional aims, such as the education of Indigenous prisoners. Similarly, at Mobilong, not everyone has access to the art rooms and, in fact, the art rooms were shut down on at least one occasion that I was aware. Kornfeld (1997) also acknowledged the link between behavioural compliance and the ability to produce art in certain institutions when she wrote the following:

> A few institutions, because the wardens believe it will help, do whatever they can to promote artistic activities and provide studios and shops where inmates, **if they have demonstrated good behaviour**, can spend daytime hours between counts and meals. (p. 18, emphasis added)

Again, this observation around the conditional access to art supplies confirms that, for many prison staff and administrators, art making is a privilege, perhaps even a 'luxury' that is granted to compliant prisoners and taken away from those who are not.

The material deprivation imposed upon prisoners creates the conditions that make access to art supplies so important for some. But it also creates the conditions in which withdrawal of materials can have a terrible significance (Goffman1961). The threat of withdrawal and actual withdrawal of art materials were not widely brought up in survey responses, yet a few comments revealed the discretionary power of the prison to give and take away. One prisoner suggested how the AbP exhibition initiative could be improved:

> By being able to access canvas now that the prison has taken canvas away. (Q9.P6.2013)

In another example, an inmate offers the following plea:

> I'll tell you I've been in and out of jail most of my life and art is the one thing us black fella's love is painting without art we would have nothing so that's what ART means to me and so many other Black fellas it is everything to us so please don't take this away from us … (Q5.P6a.2012)

These comments make it clear that there are some materials, such as canvas, that prisoners simply cannot access without the permission and co-operation of the institution, and that the threat of withdrawal was never far away. The general deprivation of material goods faced by prisoners can pose serious challenges for those who want to produce art, where access to those materials is a reward or privilege for institutional compliance and withdrawal of access is a disciplinary technique deployed as a risk management strategy to procure behavioural compliance.

Recruiting Officers, Recruiting Prisoners: Promoting Art by Prisoners

Given the amount of power and influence that officers have over prisoners' lives, officers play a key role in prisoner participation in the AbP exhibitions. Promoting AbP through direct contact with prisoners was impractical. In order to recruit prisoners to participate in AbP, I needed to recruit correctional officers. For prisoners to know about and participate in AbP, correctional staff also had to know about it. Information had to flow down from the top of the DCS hierarchy to the prisoners at the very bottom. Once DCS staff at the executive and managerial level had been informed of the initiative, promotion to each prison began with an email broadcast from central office to prison general managers and managers of offender development at each prison. The email contained documents necessary to promote, inform and administer this initiative. The documents were an entry form, a flyer and an information brochure, all modelled on those used by the Koestler Trust. The flyer was a simple A4 poster design that could be printed and posted in areas interested prisoners were likely to see it, such as art rooms and recreation areas of the prison. The information brochure contained information about the awards, the exhibition, approximate timelines and some rules and regulations around the size and quantity of artworks that could be entered. Each entry also had to be accompanied by an entry form.

Correctional officers are key gatekeepers, who control access to spaces and materials, as well as the flow of information to prisoners. Correctional officers interact with prisoners on a daily basis and know them. The officers are also in charge of recreation areas and budgets and make decisions about whether or not, or to what extent, they resource art rooms with materials and tools and when access might be granted or withdrawn. Sometimes, correctional officers can have little regard for prisoner property, including artwork. Prisoners often get moved around from cell to cell and from prison to prison. Sometimes, this can happen at very short notice and, as Kornfeld (1997, p. 17) writes, 'it is anybody's guess whether or not their materials and artwork will survive the move.' Similarly, an entrant in the 2013 AbP exhibition revealed he had lost over 50 illustrations, which he suspects correctional officers threw out. Relationships between prisoners

and correctional officers are complex and can vary from friendly to hostile, so depending on who the correctional officer is in any given prison, officers can either be supportive or make it difficult or even impossible to produce artwork. In Kornfeld's (1997, p. 23) experience, officer attitudes varied greatly. Some hated the idea of convicts receiving free art classes, whereas others bought or bartered for prisoners' artwork, with some even receiving tattoos from a prisoner.

The AbP initiative was co-ordinated with the support of the Offender Development Directorate (ODD), which was in charge of delivering therapeutic programs and offender rehabilitation. This was strategic, as officers working in offender development were more likely than others to be working in roles supportive to prisoners (e.g., in education units, recreational supervision and social work support). Correctional officers working in supportive roles towards prisoners were more likely to see value in the AbP initiative and less likely to oppose the idea of a public exhibition of prisoner art. After all, prison officer support for AbP was ultimately to give prisoners the opportunity to have their art exhibited in a prestigious public building. This opportunity is unavailable to many members of the public, including practising artists. It is also an opportunity for prisoners to receive positive public visibility and recognition that goes beyond that commonly received by prison officers.

In some cases, offender development staff were already actively involved in supporting individuals and groups of prisoners who were producing art. These were the staff members it was crucial to develop good relationships with. They were more likely to know which prisoners were producing art and more likely to inform and recruit prisoners to participate. Developing good relationships with prison officers is essential for prison research. As Liebling (1999) and Jewkes (2012) point out, research that focuses solely on prisoners' opinions and/or welfare means that prison staff can feel neglected, overlooked or not as important as the prisoners in their custody. This idea seemed particularly pertinent to the AbP initiative. Prisoner participation in AbP did not simply involve the production of art but the logistical labour around the release of art from prison and its entry into AbP for the purposes of exhibiting that artwork to the public. To support prisoner participation in

AbP, correctional officers needed to see this initiative as important and worthwhile or at the very least not be against the idea and willing to put in some work. Thus, I adopted a number of approaches I felt would maximise the likelihood of prison officer support.

One approach was to ensure that prisoner participation would be of minimal administrative and logistical burden on officers to reduce the risk that involvement in AbP could be seen as unwanted additional work or responsibility. Any additional work duties given to correctional officers were also a sensitive political issue from the perspective of the prison officers' union. The production of prisoner artwork and participation in AbP required prison officers to undertake various tasks. Art exhibitions are the result of co-operation and support from a large number of people (Becker 1982). In the case of the AbP exhibitions, after the prisoners themselves, correctional officers were the most important source of support and co-operation. Becker (1982) acknowledges the thankless background labour that happens ultimately for the benefit of the artist and the celebration of their artistic creations. He writes about the support personnel around the artist, who make and/or deliver coffee or sweep and prepare the stage. To promote AbP, correctional officers needed to inform prisoners verbally, print and post up flyers and print and distribute the information brochure. Correctional officers needed to print and sign an entry form for each artwork submitted. Entries needed to be packed safely so that prisoner officers could either send entries by post or co-ordinate transport to Flinders University. Correctional officers also facilitated prisoner participation in the research survey for data collection, which added an extra layer of administration. In some cases, artwork arrived with internal DCS paperwork, according to internal procedures that governed the movement of items out of prison, a further layer of administration. In all of this, correctional officers were cast as support personnel (Becker 1982) to the prisoner artists. Prison officer labour was essential to produce an event designed to celebrate the artistic achievements of prisoners, and by default, the prisoners themselves.

Relationships were established with offender development managers at each prison by telephoning them and emailing them individually, and they were generally very helpful and

supportive. In many cases, they recommended further direct contact with the most relevant correctional officers who worked as supervisors in education or recreation areas. It was clear that AbP was supported and promoted by staff at each prison, but the variation in entrant numbers might indicate that some officers promoted the initiative more widely than others. From some prisons, there were as few as two or three participants from a population of over 200.

Women housed in the Adelaide Women's Prison did not take part in AbP in 2012 and 2013. In those years, the Adelaide Women's Prison did send some entries; however, staff did so at the last minute and after pressure from central office, but the works submitted were not entered by inmates self-selecting to participate. Rather, they were dolls and other items in possession of prison staff. I subsequently put more attention and focus on developing relationships with staff at the Adelaide Women's Prison in the hope that prisoners would want to participate in 2014. This involved a visit to the prison and a meeting that took place in the textile shed with the textiles officer, where it was clear that many prisoners created all sorts of artwork from a variety of media. That year, the Adelaide Women's Prison entered around 15 pieces, ranging from textile art, acrylic on board or canvas to mixed media and fabric artwork, and two Adelaide Women's Prison correctional officers attended the opening. In response to this exhibition, one female prisoner wrote on her survey: '[R]emember there is no art or craft and what was presented was by the efforts of A.A. (textiles officer)'. This highlights the important role that correctional officers have in prisoners' lives in relaying information and making certain opportunities available or not. Yet lack of participation may not indicate an unwillingness to support these sorts of initiatives. It may be that the prison lacks infrastructure, staffing and policies to support certain activities in the first place. In the case of the Adelaide Women's Prison, the effort of just one correctional officer was instrumental in not only the production of art, which she made possible in the textile shed, but in the public exhibition of that art too.

For the most part, the correctional officers I dealt with supported AbP, some more enthusiastically than others. The staff at Mobilong Prison, for example, submitted the highest number of entries

each year. Recreational supervisors at Mobilong who managed and supervised the art rooms came to exhibition openings and were available and happy to take part in radio and television appearances. Many prisons are located in regional centres far from Adelaide, making this level of support difficult for the majority of prison officers. DCS has a volunteer unit who were brought in to assist with transporting artwork from prisons to Flinders University. But where distances were too large, there were always staff from central office willing to collect artwork on their regular trips to the regional prisons. One correctional officer who travelled to Adelaide for medical treatment brought with him all the entries from Port Augusta Prison in the boot of his car. In general, an overwhelming number of supportive correctional staff members were willing to go beyond their usual duties to help make prisoner participation in AbP possible. The decision for some prisoners to participate rested not simply on the production of an artwork but came down to the active encouragement from some prison officers:

> A few officers mentioned to me that my art is good so I decided to enter the competition and I thought it would be good experience. (Q6.P1.2014)
>
> Officers ask me to but I wasn't going to enter. But was told to enter because my art is different to the rest and that I might do alright and get recognition. (Q6.P4.2014)
>
> [I was] encouraged by textile officers. (Q6.P26.2014)
>
> Staff said I should enter so I did. (Q6.P28.2014)

A valuable lesson learnt from the Koestler Trust was that prison officers also take a certain amount of pride in the artistic achievements of the prisoners in their custody. After all, prisoner art is the culmination of both prisoner and prison officer labour, and it is evidence of a level of co-operation between these two often opposing sides of the prison. Prisoners who enter work into the Koestler Awards each year are eligible to receive awards, and these awards are a way of acknowledging not only the efforts of the prisoner but also the efforts of the prison staff who supervise, administer and essentially make possible the creation and submission of art to the Koestler Trust. To

acknowledge this, offender development managers and other prison officers were kept informed on the progress of the AbP initiative. As much as possible, they were included in the event through sending them photos of the panel viewing the art, inviting them and other prison staff to the exhibition openings, sending them photos of the exhibition opening and forwarding them media articles about the exhibition. They were regularly thanked in correspondence for all the thankless tasks officers had to do to make the event possible, in the hope that they would feel adequately acknowledged, that they saw AbP as a worthwhile endeavour and that they too could share in the event's success.

Art as Threat and Complement to the Prison Image

Any insight or event that opens up a closed world or unknown subculture naturally draws attention and curiosity from the public and often the media, especially an event that affords prisoners such a high-profile public presence. This is unusual, as prisons are places of punishment, de-communication and marginalisation (Gallo & Ruggiero 1991). An important aspect of this project was working with DCS to mitigate the risks related to public perception of prisoners and the department. A temporary exhibition of prisoner art contains multiple artworks by many different individual prisoners. This results in the transmission of a variety of visual and textual messages from specific prisoners to members of the public. However, the exhibition in its entirety would also function as a message to the public. A key concern to DCS staff was managing risk around allowing prisoners to participate in the community and to communicate to the public. Negotiations with DCS involved agreeing on certain conditions so that the exhibitions would communicate, what one senior executive stated, was the 'right message'. It helped that the Koestler Trust had developed a robust model and an event that attracted mainly positive media coverage and public responses. Mitigating the risks involved in allowing prisoners to participate in the community through an art exhibition involved the condition of anonymity, the veto of inappropriate images and the proviso that any money raised through sales be used entirely to

benefit victims of crime. It also involved securing the political support of key stakeholders, particularly the Commissioner for Victims' Rights.

The media has a significant and influential role to play when it comes to public perceptions of what is culturally and emotionally acceptable for prisoners to do, both within prison and beyond. In South Australia, the print media landscape is dominated by the Murdoch tabloid, *The Advertiser* and its Sunday edition, *The Sunday Mail*. How the public and, in particular, the popular media might react to a public exhibition of prisoner art was a major concern for DCS. Correctional services worldwide are vulnerable to controversy and scandal. More often than not, such controversy is generated in response to information published by the mass media about the prison or prisoners that is inconsistent with expectations the public has about the function and purpose of the prison.

In my initial meeting about the initiative, a senior DCS executive referred to an incident in which art created in prison was central to a media scandal involving one of South Australia's most notorious criminals. In 2006, there was public outrage when *The Advertiser* and *The Sunday Mail* revealed that convicted murderer Bevan Spencer von Einem had been selling hand-painted pictures and greeting cards to prison officers and also trading them for home-cooked meals. In an article entitled 'Revealed: von Einem prison treats', Hunt (2006) reported that for years, a prison officer had provided von Einem with a Sunday breakfast of bacon and eggs and also supplied him with art supplies such as parchment paper. Hunt further reported that von Einem was able to use another officer's telephone, that he had been prescribed a drug for erectile dysfunction and that he had been trading his hand-painted cards for cash and tobacco. This was evidence that von Einem was being given a 'cushy ride' by correctional officers. This prompted an angry response from the South Australian Commissioner for Victims' Rights (CVR), Michael O'Connell, who stated that he felt 'dismayed by the suggestion correctional officers ha[d] been complicit in his profiteering.' O'Connell continued (Hunt 2006):

> [P]erhaps one of the reasons many people demand harsher sentences is that they feel that prison life is not as harsh as it should be … Offenders, even murderers, should have opportunities to mend their ways. I am not opposed to von Einem painting if it helps rehabilitate him. However, if he is truly remorseful for his heinous crime then he could use his art to raise money to help crime victims, rather than himself.

This information broadcast by the media meant that the public took offence to von Einem not using his artwork as part of a rehabilitative process but as currency to make his life in prison more comfortable and pleasurable. This was inconsistent with public expectations of the prison as a place where people are sent as punishment and reform. Prison should not, however, be a place where infamous murderers can use their artistic skills and their notoriety to manipulate and control their environment to access unacceptable levels of pleasure, power, privilege and preferential treatment. This incident led to a number of reforms in the SA prison system, but it also put a cloud over opportunities for prisoners in the state's prisons to create art. Comments from the CVR emphasise the power of victims of crime advocates in these scenarios to govern conceptions of what is culturally and emotionally acceptable when it comes to conditions in prison. Von Einem's artwork contributed to the feeling that his prison life was not consistent with the notion of punishment, and that such activities can only be justified in the context of rehabilitation.

In another example of a scandal involving a leaked image and information from prison, in 2007, *The Sunday Mail* published on its front page a photo of a prison manager with a group of prisoners in fancy dress for an end-of-year fundraiser at which alcohol was served (James 2007). In the photo, four prisoners were in fancy dress that resembled the members of the Village People in their hit song YMCA. One of the prisoners photographed was Kevin Riley, who was imprisoned for his part in the abduction, sexual assault and murder of a young boy in 1988. As with the von Einem scandal, this incident was controversial because the public was presented with information that contradicted expectations about prisoners such as Riley and what they should and should not (be allowed to) do in prison. Riley is a convicted child rapist and murderer, and the image of him and

other prisoners dressed up at a party in prison was culturally and emotionally unacceptable to the media and the public.

Senior DCS staff raised the incident involving von Einem but did not raise the one involving Riley. I raise them both because they are good examples of how correctional systems are vulnerable to scandal through information leaks. They are also lessons in how the public responds to images and stories that reveal fragments of prisoners' lives. These incidents also highlight that the world behind the prison walls is largely closed to public view. The public, for the most part, do not know, and perhaps do not care to know, about people in prison, the correctional staff that manage them, and the challenges, pressures and compromises that each of these groups face as they live out their daily lives. For this reason, there are a certain mystery and public curiosity about life behind bars. While the public generally expect that prison conditions not be too harsh or degrading, the public also expect prison regimes to reflect the idea that prison is a place of punishment. Above all, these two examples reveal that acceptable depictions of the prison and what prisoners do means acceptable *to the general public* (see Pratt 2002). To the public, prison should not be a place where criminals get preferential treatment, where child rapists and murderers can participate in a party, and where officers should form close, friendly relationships with prisoners. These examples all involve the necessary ingredients to trigger collective outrage: a measure of infamy or high notoriety as the result of a particularly serious and offensive crime, combined with unacceptable levels of power and pleasure, revelry and joy in the context of incarceration. This idea is continually reinforced by media representations of prisoners and those who speak on behalf of victims of crime. In November 2016, another article in *The Advertiser,* titled 'Complaints against SA Correctional Services: Inmates' demands for a cushier life behind bars' covered complaints made by '[h]undreds of whingeing crooks' to the state's ombudsman about life in prison. Complaints about a lack of freedom and privacy, and requests ranging from a 'more appetising breakfast menu to extra playtime' again drew condemnatory comments from the CVR, who was quoted as saying the following about jail:

> [It] is not meant to be a place of pleasure – rather a place of both punishment and rehabilitation. Many of the victims of some of these offenders have been left distressed and sometimes their lives shattered so they would be appalled to know if those responsible were making such trivial grievances. (Jones 2016)

It would seem, then, that the sorts of things that prisoners are able to do—or to be seen to be doing—must involve an obvious and direct link to the idea of punishment or rehabilitation in order to be culturally and emotionally acceptable.

Like all government departments and organisations, DCS must engage in good public relations to instil and maintain public confidence in order for the department to perform competently to public satisfaction. Scandals and controversy such as the two above were public relations disasters for DCS. To avoid this, DCS must successfully contain prisoners and must contain and control information about what happens inside prison. This is especially true for high-notoriety prisoners. The media is more likely to publish stories on prisoners such as von Einem and Riley due to the severity of their crimes, their infamy and, therefore, their power to 'seize and then revile the public imagination' (Jewkes 2012, p. 20). When incidents such as those involving von Einem and Riley occur, the 'bureaucratic veil' tightens around the prison. Regulations get brought in to make it even more difficult to transmit information in and out of prison. Incidents such as these also illustrate that correctional systems are now, more than ever, accountable to public mood and sentiment, which are currently perceived to be particularly punitive towards people in prison (see Pratt 2002). For DCS, the AbP presented a clear risk to the flow of information out of prison and the sorts of collective emotional reactions this might trigger in the public. One straightforward way to minimise the risk of scandal and negative public reaction, therefore, was to exclude high-notoriety prisoners from participating in this initiative. In 2015, a journalist working for a mainstream television news program explicitly enquired as to whether any work by high-notoriety offenders was included in the AbP exhibition. Excluding people in this category significantly reduces the likelihood of a media controversy or scandal.

The other important ways that risk of scandal or negative public reaction were managed were the conditions that all prisoners remain anonymous, that DCS had the power to veto any image deemed inappropriate and that any money raised through artwork sales be donated entirely to benefit victims of crime. The anonymity of prisoners was an important part of presenting prisoners' artworks to the public sensitively and diplomatically. In the context of arrest, court and imprisonment, it is necessary and acceptable to publicly identify people for the purpose of condemnation and segregation, a process which creates criminal identities. These ceremonies of degradation (Garfinkel 1956) stigmatise and degrade individual identity. According to Goffman (1963), a criminal conviction and imprisonment 'expose something unusual and bad about the moral status of the signifier' (p. 11), as do many conditions associated with crime and prison, such as mental disorder, addiction and unemployment. One of the effects of stigmatisation is that many in society come to think of people who carry stigma as 'not quite human' (p. 15). Once society has this attitude, according to Goffman, either 'acceptance' or 'rejection' becomes a central feature in the life of the stigmatised individual. This has the power to change the way people convicted of crime perceive themselves, with shame a central possibility (Goffman 1963, p. 19). Acceptance is the key issue for a public exhibition of prisoner art because a criminal conviction lowers our estimation of someone or a group of people, and achievement in art and inclusion in a public art exhibition raises our estimation. An art exhibition is not simply acceptance, but it is an acceptance of an alternative version or depiction of prisoners. An exhibition of prisoner art asks the public not to condemn but to listen, support, praise and accept into the community, through their art, people convicted of crime.

Prisoner anonymity almost eliminates the likelihood that the exhibitions would cause further harm to victims. Managing prisoner identities is also something the Koestler Trust takes seriously. While the Koestler Trust allows some prisoners to put their name to their work, it is not before each identity satisfies a 'Google test' to see what information is available to the public. Most members of the public have the power to use internet search engines, making it potentially very easy for the

public to connect an offender's name to their crimes if the name was reported in the media or another source of information available on the internet.

Prisoners are excluded from participating in economic life beyond prison. For the public, imprisonment throws into disorder the normal rules around labour, the production of goods, remuneration and private property. The issue of prisoners making art and selling it to the public raises questions as to whether it is right for prisoners to receive any portion of the money and, if not, who then should rightfully receive that money. In some cases, participants in the Koestler Trust's exhibitions earn hundreds of pounds through the sale of artwork. The Koestler Trust justifies this to the public, explaining that any money is not a regular payment; it is an annual payment. Sales were also justified because they are an incentive to participate; they are market validation; they are a much needed (albeit modest) source of funds for people in tough social contexts; and the public can consume the artwork and thus raise awareness and bring attention to prison art and contribute to victims of crime and the work of the Koestler Trust (Koestler Trust 2014). I had initially proposed the same split as the Koestler Trust, where 50% of the sale is returned to the prisoner, 25% is donated in support of victims of crime, and the remaining 25% contributes to the costs of the exhibition. DCS initially supported this proposal, but as the roll-out of the initiative drew closer, DCS staff thought a better message to communicate to the community was that 75% of a sale should be donated in support of victims, with the remaining 25% to go towards exhibition costs, with no money at all to be returned directly to prisoners.

For DCS, an important message to send to the community was one that privileged victims of crime over those who had harmed them. Distributing sale proceeds to victims of crime over perpetrators of crime was an explicit way to publicly acknowledge the harm prisoners have done to victims and therefore society. It also sends a message that prisoners participating in the exhibition are using the opportunity to make good on their past wrongs, which helps frame the exhibition in a redemptive rationale. Expressing sensitivity to victims of crime was a critical aspect of this exhibition because it is a way to express sensitivity to the general public. Victims of crime are the

people most affected by crime, and their voices and experiences of crime are seen as authentic narratives through which the public come to experience and know about crime, particularly its impact (Pratt 2002). Victims' voices are particularly powerful in the context of serious crimes. For example, a follow-up article published about Kevin Riley, the child murderer pictured in fancy dress, was entitled 'Why is my Son's Killer Partying?' (*The Sunday Mail* 2007). Gary Phillips, the victim's father, was reported as feeling 'disappointed' and 'astonished' that his son's killer had taken part in this event. He did not have a problem with these events being held in prison, as long as they did not involve 'people like Riley' (*The Sunday Mail* 2007). This example illustrates how the debate over prisoners and what they should and should not (be allowed to) is often framed through the symbiotic relationship between revelations relating to a high-notoriety offender, the mass media, victims of crime and public opinion.

Public support for the exhibition was paramount, and one way to win over the public, and even the media, was to consult, acknowledge and get approval from victims of crime advocates. In South Australia, the two main sources of support and advocacy for victims are an organisation called Victims' Support Services (VSS) and the CVR. I consulted with staff at VSS and the CVR at the planning stages for this pilot initiative and invited them to share any feedback or concerns. I informed them that the invitation to participate in the AbP would not be open to high-notoriety prisoners, that prisoners would participate anonymously and that money raised from sales would be donated in support of victims. The CVR gave his support for the initiative and, importantly, he permitted me to publicise his support in media releases and at the exhibition. This was an essential part of creating the necessary safe political and cultural space to permit the public, and possibly even the media, to accept and react positively to the exhibitions. The Koestler Trust also manages its exhibitions in a way that is sensitive to victims of crime. As mentioned, the Koestler Trust gives victims of crime 25% of all sales of artwork, and it also manages the identities of offenders carefully to reduce the likelihood that victims will be identified. Perhaps most significantly, in 2010, a group of victims of crime, including the family member of a murder victim, curated the AbO exhibition.

Prisons and the departments responsible for them are vulnerable to scandal. It is important to take note of history and scandals, as these leave marks on the public consciousness and inform attitudes. The conditions put around the AbP exhibitions were done so in order to procure public acceptance and to create an event from which all could benefit. This involved carefully managing criminal identities; placing restrictions on who could and could not participate; monitoring what those included could say; and monitoring how money from sales was to be distributed.

Conclusion

The production of art in prison for the scale and quality needed for a curated exhibition program, such as the Koestler Trust's AbO exhibition, must at some level be supported by the prison institution. Without institutional support and resources, public exhibitions of prison art could not happen. Initiatives such as AbP emphasise the power that prison officers have over the lives of prisoners in deciding what prisoners can and cannot do and what opportunities officers decide to open or close off. All activities are assessed for their potential to create dangerous situations, and art making is no exception. As a result, the prison environment can make it extraordinarily difficult for prisoners to produce art. Art making can empower prisoners, but it can also give them access to materials and tools that might be converted into (replica) weapons. It has the potential, therefore, to threaten the maintenance of internal order, as well officer and prisoner safety. Yet art making can also complement the maintenance of internal order because access or withdrawal forms part of the suite of privileges and punishments the prison uses to maintain order. Those prisoners who value such opportunities are more likely to be compliant. Public exhibitions of prison art add a different dimension though. The production of art in prison requires officer labour to manage spaces and materials. The public exhibition of that art requires further support work from the officers, for prisoners to ultimately emerge, through their art objects, as 'artists'. Temporary art exhibitions are events where artists are celebrated, encouraged and supported, while those who labour in the background remain invisible. A public exhibition of prison art casts officers as support roles to prisoner artists. Generally speaking, officers were happy to provide

that support. But where that support was not forthcoming, prisoners were denied the option to participate. Developing and maintaining good relationships with officers is crucial for these sorts of events to succeed.

Once in the public, artworks can be both a threat and complement to the public image of the prison and correctional departments, depending on the sorts of messages, images and signs the exhibitions broadcast. To mitigate the risk of scandal, prison art must be exhibited sensitively with respect to victims of crime, so as not to cause further harm and distress. Prohibiting notorious prisoners from participating is a very straightforward way of managing this risk. Public exhibitions of prison art must also communicate images and messages that make sense to the public about the role and function of the prison. Public exhibitions usually communicate messages that deal with pain and suffering. But so to can public exhibitions communicate messages of transformation. These messages are consistent with the two key tasks of the prison; those of punishment and rehabilitation.

CHAPTER 3: BEHIND THE WALLS

Introduction

Prison is an institution that dramatically changes the way people experience the temporal, spatial, social and emotional dimensions of life (Cohen & Taylor 1972; Crewe 2012; Goffman 1961; Liebling 2004; Sykes 1958). One salient feature of prison life is that it is unpleasant and painful (Sykes 1958; Liebling & Maruna 2005), and once inside, prisoners must find ways to adapt and cope (Crewe 2007; Sykes 1958; Toch 1992). Liebling's (2004) research illustrates that each prison is unique, some perform better than others (and thus may be less difficult or painful to live in), and different people have different levels of coping ability. Nevertheless, the vast amount of literature on what it is like to live, or survive, in prison paints a rather bleak picture.

This chapter looks at the role of art making in the context of incarceration. Between 2012 and 2014, the South Australian prison system offered very few formal art courses to prisoners. The only courses that were occasionally mentioned by DCS staff were run by a volunteer art teacher through a Christian organisation, along with some workshops run by a professional ceramicist. Both programs took place in Mobilong Prison. For most participants, art making was a recreational activity or cell hobby that (some) prisoners could choose to do. This chapter is informed by prisoners' answers to survey questions around why they chose to make art and what it meant to them. The responses varied considerably in length and detail. But overwhelmingly, the answers revealed that art making was an activity valued by prisoners primarily because it passed the time and provided moments where prisoners could psychologically escape or tune out from the prison environment. Art making was part of the daily, or perhaps weekly, routine for prisoners. Yet such activities took on a heightened significance for prisoners due to the challenges of the prison environment. To get by in prison, one must learn to adapt and cope. Art making helped prisoners do this by mitigating the negative effects of incarceration and the pains of imprisonment. But it could also lead to the sorts of inner transformations consistent with desistance and 'rehabilitation' so desired by prison administrators, policy makers, politicians and even the public.

Throughout this chapter I draw primarily on research produced in the United Kingdom and the USA. I am cognisant that the cultural differences between prisons, between state prison systems and between different countries is well-documented (for example Kornfeld 1997, Pratt 2008, Simon 2001). I am also cognisant that the prison experience is unique and different for individuals and cultural groups, particularly for Aboriginal people in South Australia who are over-represented in the prison system. This study took place in South Australia which has been, ever since British colonisation of Australia in the late 1700s, a culture predominantly structured around Anglo-based social and bureaucratic cultural structures. Within those differences there appears to be universal commonalities in the prison experience around the pains caused by incarceration, the separation from family and country, the cultural traditions and methods of coping that develop as a result, and problems adjusting to society afterwards (Crewe 2011, Goffman 1961, Haney 2006, Midford 1988, Reisig 2001, Sykes 1958, Simon 2000, Toch 1992).

Punishment and Pain

The answers participants provided to the survey questions in the AbP initiative need to be contextualised by the literature into what it is like to be labelled a criminal, cast out from society and living in a prison environment. Punishment has always involved the infliction of pain upon offenders. This is significant, as these pains have consequences for the prisoners who must endure them and the officers who must manage those prisoners. The idea that punishment is unpleasant and painful is what makes prison a deterrent. There has been much research into the negative effects of imprisonment (Cohen & Taylor 1972; Goffman 1961; Haney 2006; Liebling & Maruna 2005; Sykes 1958; Toch 1992). The best-known study concerning the effects of imprisonment is Sykes's *The Society of Captives* (1958), a study of a maximum-security prison in Trenton, New Jersey. Sykes demonstrates that prison inflicts pain upon prisoners through a series of deprivations, as outlined below:

1. The deprivation of liberty—this involves confinement, removal from the community, loss of emotional relationships and connection with one's family and friends, social rejection, loss of citizenship and civilian status, loneliness and boredom.
2. The deprivation of autonomy—this involves conformity to the prison regime, repetition of routine and activities, forced submission to arbitrary rules and regulations, and lack of meaningful decision-making over one's life.
3. The deprivation of security—this refers to forced co-habitation and association with other prisoners, which causes stress, anxiety and fear for personal safety and material possessions.
4. The deprivation of goods and services—this refers to the loss of material possessions.
5. The deprivation of heterosexual relationships—this refers to the sexual frustration caused by involuntary castration by the state, plus the formation of identity around prison masculinity.

Goffman (1961), in his study of asylums and other 'total institutions', describes the cumulative effects of imprisonment—the dispossession of property, forced institutional dress, continued deference to authority, exposure to various contaminations—as a mortification of the self. The term *mortification* refers to shame and embarrassment, but its root word, *mort*, is the Latin word for 'death'. The pathway into prison is a process whereby people undergo a form of death and rebirth. People who go to prison suffer the loss or 'death' of their status and identities as citizens as these identities are replaced with their new criminal identities. This transition is symbolised by the deprivations that the prison imposes upon those within its walls.

The pains of imprisonment that Sykes describes are still relevant today (see Liebling & Maruna 2005; Reisig 2001), for little has changed since the publication of his study in 1958. In fact, since that time, imprisonment has become even more psychologically intense (Crewe 2011; Liebling 2011). Crewe's (2011) research adds to Sykes's deprivations the stress, anxiety and frustration about the future, caused by indeterminate sentences and the pains of 'psychological assessment'

and 'self-government'. Crewe uses the language of 'depth', 'weight' and 'tightness' to argue that while the modern prison may be materially more comfortable, it has become more psychologically invasive. It is a deeper, heavier and more constricting place in which 'there are few zones of autonomy, either spatial or psychological, where the reach of power can be escaped' (2011, p. 522). Sykes (1958, p. 4) observes the following:

> The society of prisoners, however, is not only physically compressed; it is psychologically compressed as well, since prisoners live in an enforced intimacy where each man's behaviour is subject both to the constant scrutiny of his fellow captives and the surveillance of the custodians. It is not solitude that plagues the prisoner but life *en masse*.

The studies that have explored the physical, social, emotional and psychological conditions of life in prisons are important because they describe and communicate what life is like for those who live out their daily lives within prison, as well as how they adapt and cope (see Crewe 2011; Goffman 1961; Liebling 2005; Sykes 1958; Toch 1992; Zamble & Porporino 1988). These studies also provide important insights into the way that prisons make people feel about themselves and their place in the world. The deprivations of prison constitute a set of threats to one's sense of identity and individual wellbeing. Prisons are institutions of shame and institutions in which people feel shamed. The cumulative impact of these deprivations causes prisoners to feel negatively towards themselves. Sykes (1958, pp. 78–79) explains in relation to this:

> [H]owever painful these frustrations or deprivations may be in the immediate terms of thwarted goals, discomfort, boredom, and loneliness, they carry a more profound hurt as a set of threats or attacks which are directed against the very foundations of the prisoner's being. The individual's picture of himself as a person of value … begins to waver and grow dim.

To summarise briefly, the prison institution inflicts harm upon prisoners. It can necessitate drastic changes in personal identity and cause negative self-perceptions and loss of self-esteem. For many, the 'pains of imprisonment' are a daily feature of prison life and must be managed carefully to minimise them. Many of the reasons why prisoners in AbP made art have a direct correlation to

the deprivations and pains of imprisonment. As it turns out, art making is a unique activity that helps prisoners cope with the prison environment in a number of important ways. At a basic level, art making can allow prisoners a psychological escape. This is important because the pains of imprisonment are intensely psychological. Rejection does not feel good. The pain is in how prison makes prisoners think and feel about themselves and their relationship to others and society. At a deeper level, though, art making allows prisoners to be productive, develop themselves, feel good and carve out spaces and times—both physical and psychological—where they can resist, push back or maybe even break out of their institutional identities.

The Pains of Prison Time

Cohen and Taylor (1992) studied a group of prisoners in Durham Prison in the late 1960s and recalled when they began to realise how challenging it was for prisoners to manage their day-to-day lives. They observed the following around the struggles prisoners had in living within a regime that allowed little room to either move or to distance themselves from their institutional identities:

> We began to realise that the whole business of actually getting through each day, let alone each month, or year, or decade of their sentence, was a far more precarious and problematic journey than we had ever taken it to be. The central question was about how to accommodate to prison life. In what ways should one resist or yield to its demands in order to make life bearable, in order to preserve some sense of identity? (Cohen & Taylor 1992, p. 34)

The management of daily life can be challenging for many prisoners. Matters often taken for granted on the outside (e.g., time, friendship and privacy) are suddenly upended in prison. The management of time (particularly, making it pass) was also problematic (Cohen & Taylor 1992). For the AbP participants, making art was a way to help manage prison time. This was abundantly clear due to the number of temporal references in the survey responses. Activities that help manage prison time are important to prisoners for the way the latter must adapt to and cope with 'prison time'.

One factor that can exacerbate feelings of distress and anxiety is that many prisoners have an abundance of time and often very little to do. Consequently, prisoners must also deal with boredom caused by repetition, routine and the general monotony and eventlessness of prison life (Bengtsson 2012; Scarce 2002; Steinmetz et al. 2016; Toch 1992). Indeed, the prison environment is one in which 'redundancy and routine can be extreme' (Toch 1992, p. 28). Toch (1992, p. 27) notes that *under*stimulation caused by eventlessness and boredom is a source of stress and a threat to human wellbeing.

While Sykes (1958) does not identify the deprivation of time as a specific source of pain, it could very well be. Time is a finite resource in one's life, and time spent in total institutions such as the prison is, as Goffman writes, 'time wasted, destroyed or taken from one's life' (1961, p. 68). Imprisonment alters the concept of time; it ceases to be an asset in one's life and instead becomes a burden that has to be 'done', 'marked', 'put in' or 'pulled' (Goffman 1961, p. 68). Prison is an environment where prisoners must find ways to endure ongoing psychological and emotional pain (Haney 2006; Sykes 1958; Toch 1992). Furthermore, time passes more slowly and consciously when we experience such pain. This is made worse when there are limited avenues for distractions or external stimuli that could minimise negative emotional states and generate positive ones. Even those prisoners who are kept busy with work placements during the week reported that the weekends could drag because of the limited activities available (Toch 1992, p. 30). Circumstances such as these mean that prisoners experience the passing of time as a conscious event. Consequently, time passes by slowly (Cohen & Taylor 1992; Cope 2003; Goffman 1961). The slow passing of time can itself be the cause of much stress and frustration, especially when one is conscious that the entirety of one's prison sentence will pass by one slow hour, day and week after the other. Therefore, finding ways to avoid 'hard time'—the slow, conscious passing of time—is an important adaptation that inmates must make to life in prison (see Cope 2003; Medlicott 1999).

Filling Time

One important way to manage and cope with 'doing' time is to find activities to occupy one's time (Crawley & Sparks 2005; Irwin 1970; Toch 1992; Zamble & Porporino 1989). Activities can be vital for prisoners' abilities to adapt to and cope with life in prison because (at the very least) activities provide prisoners with something to do (Irwin 1970; Toch 1992). This was precisely why art making was important to most participants in the AbP initiative. Many prisoners wrote brief statements to this effect:

> … it gives you something to do and it helps you to pass your prison time. (Q5.P6.2012)
>
> To pass the time and be creative. (Q5.P31.2014)
>
> … to break up time. (Q5.P10.2014)

Activities can help prisoners pass time because they are something to do that draws attention to a task, which means that time can, momentarily at least, pass by unconsciously. Toch (1992, p. 30) states in relation to this:

> Activity not only compensates for external stimulus deprivation; it also interferes with internal stimuli by demanding attention for the immediate business at hand, the content of which may be optional, immaterial, or irrelevant.

Some activities, though, are more effective at making time pass than others. Laws and Crewe make an important distinction between activities that simply fill time and those activities through which prisoners can experience 'deep immersion or psychological 'flow'' (2016, p. 9). The prisoners in Cohen and Taylor's (1992, p. 36) study worked in order to make time pass, but they also worked to try to immerse themselves in tasks to suspend self-consciousness. Goffman (1961, p. 67) refers to these as 'removal activities', which he describes as follows:

> voluntary unserious pursuits which are sufficiently engrossing and exciting to lift the participant out of himself, making him oblivious for the time being to his actual situation.

Art making was one such activity that could absorb prisoners psychologically and occupy them physically. Art making helped pass the time because it could alter the way prisoners experienced time. By removing themselves from their reality momentarily, prisoners were able to avoid hard time by 'kill[ing] time' (Q6.P4.2013) or by keeping it 'out of the way' (Q5.P2.2014) by accelerating its passing. As one prisoner wrote (the underlining emphasis is in the original comment):

> Passes the time – any means that helps time pass by quicker, working or some hobby is positive. Also producing work for fellow inmates makes them happy and gives me satisfaction. Also some of the pieces I am asked to draw are a challenge – portraits / motorbikes / vehicles / sci-fi / etc. (Q5.P9.2012)

Liberated Artists

Killing time or making time flow are ways for prisoners to escape not just 'prison time' but the prison itself and can therefore help minimise the pains associated with the deprivation of liberty. These pains relate to the separation from friends and family, as many prisoners' relationships with those on the outside weaken and deteriorate (Sykes 1958). Another profound hurt resulting from confinement is that the latter symbolises the deliberate moral rejection of the criminal by the free community. According to Sykes (1958, p. 65), the loss that hurts the most is related to the loss of status, 'which defines the individual as someone to be trusted or as morally acceptable.' Thus, the prison environment—the sounds, the colours, but particularly the prison wall—serves as a constant daily reminder of this loss of status and is therefore a 'constant threat to the prisoner's self-conception' (Sykes 1958, p. 67). Sykes (1958, p. 67) argues that to endure psychologically in this environment, prisoners must somehow find ways of warding off this rejection and degradation, and one such way is to reject one's rejectors. Another way that prisoners can endure or cope within prison is to find ways to escape psychologically so as to relieve themselves of the constant psychological burden of incarceration.

Many prisoners who participated in AbP either referred to art making explicitly as an 'escape' or they used language associated with the concept of escape, such as 'freedom', 'liberty' or

'liberating' and 'release'. Whilst the prisoners' bodies remained confined, art making was an activity through which prisoners could escape through their minds, as articulated by the following responses:

> creating art in prison is my freedom. (Q6.P13.2013)

> It gives me some "time out" from prison life, my mind is elsewhere whilst I paint. (Q6.P7.2013)

Psychological escapes were moments where prisoners could put aside the burden of prison time by forgetting it all together or by making it go faster. These were moments where time could be pushed into the background of consciousness, where it could be experienced as it is for most people on the outside. For one participant, making art drew comparisons to life on the outside. He made art in prison for the following reason:

> Because it allows one to feel normal for a brief period of time. (Q7.P5.2013)

The idea that art was an escape and akin to 'freedom' also had a clear expressive and therefore emotional dimension to it. Art making was not just an effective 'removal activity', but one through which emotions could be felt and expressed. To touch on Prinzhorn's conclusions again, the creation of art concerns both self-expression and communication. It is through artistic creation that one externalises the self by actualising the psyche to build a bridge from self to others (MacGregor 1989; Prinzhorn 1922/1972). Art making was not just an activity that provided moments of freedom from certain thoughts and feelings; it also gave prisoners the freedom to think and feel.

Activities in prison that allow for emotional expression can be significant, given the emotionally constricting nature of the prison environment. Keeping busy through activity is one way that can help prisoners deal with negative and depressing thoughts (Toch 1992) and therefore negative and depressing psychological states. Prisons are places where open displays of aggressive emotion such as anger, or vulnerable emotions, such as fear or sadness, are hazardous (Crewe et al. 2014;

Gussak 2012; Jewkes 2005; Laws & Crewe 2016). Anger can lead to violence and loss of privileges, whereas fear or sadness can leave one open to ridicule or exploitation (Laws & Crewe 2016). Expressing anger and aggression towards others or through smashing up one's cell can be problematic; however, it is culturally acceptable and is a way of openly venting emotions in prison. In contrast, crying, or even thinking about crying, is a physical response to emotions that are hidden away by prisoners, done in isolation in more private 'intermediate zones' such as one's cells and only around close and trusted friends (Crewe et al. 2014).

Through making art, prisoners can express emotions or disclose personal vulnerability and weakness in a way that is culturally acceptable in prison and may actually earn respect and enhance prisoners' social standing (Gussak 2012; Kornfeld 1997). Art can be a suitable medium for disclosing personal vulnerabilities and weaknesses because these are not always obvious, even to the creator. According to Gussak (1997), even prisoners are not aware of the emotional disclosures they make through their artwork in art therapy sessions.

The process of art making can provide prisoners with an emotional outlet to express both positive and challenging negative emotions that are frequently felt and yet cannot be expressed in the prison environment; this outlet is beneficial for psychological health. Prisoners in AbP also linked the opportunity for emotional expression with their own emotional wellbeing, as the following comments illustrate:

> It helps me emotionally and keeps my mind occupied, I can express myself. (Q5.P28.2014)

> I found it liberating to be able to express myself via a painting, as in prison expressing yourself and your opinions is somewhat limited … (Q10.P2.2013)

The deprivation of liberty disconnects prisoners from their friends, family and significant lands or locations on the outside. Art making can help mitigate these pains if prisoners are able to paint scenes or objects that remind them of life on the outside. Paintings of one's home or iconic land

formations can serve as visual reminders, which helped some prisoners reconnect with buildings or lands from which they were separated, as the following prisoners expressed:

> It connects me back to my homeland, my grandmother, aunties and uncles (Q6.P12.2013)

> This painting is of my country, Devil's Marble and the Spiritual trees and rocks of my country it's the land of my dreams and my family the land which I love and grew up on it's the landscape of my life it comes from the heart and my spiritual dreams. (1623/2014)

A completed painting or drawing can also help satisfy prisoners' need to psychologically escape. A completed work of art is a tangible physical object that can help a prisoner connect to real or imagined worlds beyond prison as a visual representation of landscape scenes or other significant objects (e.g., a car). Creating such images allows prisoners to bring elements of the outside world within the prison walls. This is important, for the prison environment can be visually monotonous. For Sykes (1958, pp. 7–8), the most striking feature of the prison was its drabness, and the impression prison gave was of a 'grinding dullness'. The visual reminders of prison can be difficult to escape, and the physical environment can be stark, bland and depressing. If artwork can be placed around the prison or in one's cell, this can help make the prison walls more colourful and positive, which can help prisoners feel better. Artwork can be portals into which prisoners can look and psychologically escape from prison, either into fantasy scenes or to other real—but nevertheless imagined—scenes that enable connections to significant places and people (see Hanes 2005).

A completed work of art can also be sent from the prison to friends or relatives in the community. This is yet another way in which art making enables an 'escape'. Here, prisoners can symbolically escape the prison through their artworks and maintain a presence in the lives of their significant others by gifting their creations. For some prisoners, art making can have multiple and simultaneous effects. It is an expressive activity, a psychological escape, a medium for prisoners to

express their care and concern for others, as well as being a gift or offering, thus connecting prisoners to significant others in the community:

> I find it a way to express myself. I find it very relaxing and it makes the time go so much quicker. It keeps my mind occupied, active and helps me shutdown to an extent from what's going on in the outside world and problems at hand. I am able to get great satisfaction out of a well finished piece and pass it on as a gift of mine from the heart to family friends and loved ones in my life. (Q5.P12.2014)

Autonomous Artists

The deprivation of autonomy was also identified by Sykes (1958) as a source of pain in prisoners' lives. The prison regime can severely restrict prisoners' abilities to make their own choices. Prison rules can be enforced arbitrarily and inconsistently, and often things happen without any explanation. Prisoners, who have no choice but to submit to the prison rules, are thus reduced to the 'weak, helpless, dependent status of childhood' (Sykes 1958, p. 75). They are infantilised within a system that denies people the ability to live self-determining lives. This represents a serious threat to a prisoner's self-image, and prisoners must find ways to cope with this aspect of prison life (Sykes 1958). In this context, activities that enable prisoners to exercise autonomy, no matter how small, over their lives and their environment can be significant.

Art making can help prisoners exercise autonomy over the material, physical and emotional aspects of their lives. Prisoners, however, do not have complete artistic freedom. For security reasons, some prison regulations stipulate that artwork cannot depict the prison buildings (Kornfeld 1997). Regulations may also forbid the creation and possession of artwork that depicts gang symbols, violence or nudity. Those restrictions aside, art making is an activity which the prisoner has creative control over. Prisoners may make decisions about the medium, the pencil or the brush and decide on colours, composition and content. Prisoners also control what the artwork means and what it communicates. The importance of having moments and activities where prisoners can be in control was expressed by one participant as follows:

> I paint and draw because it is the only thing that I have left in this world that I can truly call my own. (Q5.P8.2012)

The deprivation of autonomy and material goods means that a prisoner's abiliy to modify his or her physical environment is severely restricted. Through art making, prisoners can exercise control over their material environment. Art making increases prisoners' access to material items: firstly, through access to the supplies and tools needed to create art; and, secondly, through the finished product itself. When a prisoner completes a work of art, a tangible, physical object exists, and if allowed, this can be used to decorate a prisoner's cell. Even small modifications to a prisoner's environment, such as the decision to leave the cell door open, can be important actual and symbolic exercises in autonomy over the physical environment (Laws & Crewe 2016). A participant in Laws and Crewe's (2016) study, Frank, customised the interior of his cell by putting his artwork on the walls. Frank did this to 'replicate and extend the feelings of relaxation and positivity which he associated with the art classrooms' (Laws & Crewe 2016, p. 8).

One area of criminological research that has recently been explored is the emotional lives of prisoners (Laws & Crewe 2016). This is an important aspect of life in prison and one that is particularly relevant to expressive activities such as art making, as it relates to prisoners' abilities to manage and thus have control over their emotions. The prison allows prisoners very little autonomy over their physical and social environment. Yet the ability to choose and modify one's physical and social environment is important for emotional management and control (Laws & Crewe 2016).

Emotion management in prison can be difficult and complex due to the ways in which the prison environment dictates how prisoners must behave and the sorts of emotional expressions that are acceptable. The prison also deprives prisoners of personal security (Sykes 1958). It is an environment where predation, violence or the threat of violence is a daily reality for many prisoners (Crewe 2012). One way male prisoners deal with the tense atmosphere of prison is to put on 'fronts' or 'masks' (Jewkes 2005). 'Fronting' involves the projection of a tough, aggressive

persona, while 'masking' is a defensive strategy that involves suppressing fear, weakness and vulnerability (Crewe et al. 2014). Both fronting and masking are strategies that inmates use to avoid being exploited, ridiculed and victimised (Laws & Crewe 2016). Crewe et al. (2014, p. 64) argue that the necessity to front and mask means that prisoners live emotionally constricted and 'inauthentic' lives.

Prisoners face a number of the stresses and frustrations caused by the general pains of imprisonment (Sykes 1958). Other sources of stress can include conflicts with other inmates, troubling thoughts about the past, and concerns for one's future. To adapt to and cope with incarceration, many prisoners must learn how to deal with and manage invasive negative thoughts and the challenging emotions they produce, such as fear, anger, frustration, loneliness or regret (Toch 1992; Zamble & Porporino 1988). Unsurprisingly, the prison is an institution in which many prisoners suffer from poor mental health and depression (Zamble & Porporino 1988). As a general rule, prisoners avoid burdening other prisoners with their emotional difficulties, knowing that everyone in prison faces similar challenges. Suppressing negative thoughts and emotions serves as a method of collective coping. But at the other end of the emotional spectrum, prisoners must also suppress more positive feelings (e.g., excitement at an imminent release) to minimise disappointment if things do not go to plan. Crewe et al. (2014, p. 65) conclude in relation to this:

> [I]mprisonment dulled and narrowed the positive end of the affective spectrum, as well as amplifying its negative frequencies. It forced prisoners both to be more emotionally toughened and less emotionally generous than they felt themselves to be.

Prison is an environment that calls for the suppression of felt emotions and the amplification and display of emotions that are not genuinely felt.

Certain activities, such as art making, can help prisoners regulate their emotions. According to Toch (1992, p. 31) activities can also 'become the valve for self-release, self-stabilisation and self-control' for challenging emotions such as resentment, anger and frustration (see also Gussak 1997;

Gussak 2012). Art making is an activity that enables prisoners to exercise a measure of emotional control in various ways. It allows prisoners to express, and thus deal with, challenging emotions in an environment that can be extremely emotionally constrictive. This was also related to the idea and feeling of 'escape', as the following response indicates:

> [Art making is] an escape from these tormenting walls, painting onto canvas feels like you are free from chains, you're not restricted, allowing expression to flow through the tip of your brush. (Q6.P5.2013)

The inability to manage one's emotions can have violent and destructive consequences. This can be exacerbated in prison, where boredom is a common feature. In fact, part of the stress of incarceration is that prisoners are required to keep their distress under control (Gallo & Ruggiero 1991). Toch (1992, p. 28) notes that a lack of constructive activities, such as work or other program involvement, can lead to antisocial behaviour; hence, his observation that '[p]rogramming can be more effective in achieving prison security than a proliferation of guards and behaviour rules.' For many participants in the AbP initiative, art making was an alternative activity that helped prisoners to stay calm and keep from getting into trouble. Despite the lack of control over their lives, prisoners can and do make decisions every day about what they do and how they interact with their social and physical environment. Art making was one such choice that some prisoners could make. It was a choice that helped prisoners manage their behaviour more positively, as the following comments indicate:

> Creating art in prison is my way of relaxing and staying out of trouble. (Q6.P6.2013)

> To pass my time and to stay out of trouble. (Q5.P5.2014)

Activities that allow prisoners to psychologically escape from the prison also contributed to prisoners' abilities to relax and manage their stress, which are important for prisoners' emotional regulation and control:

> Painting in prison for me it stops me from stressing out plus also it keeps me relaxed and puts my mind in another place other than prison. (Q5.P4.2012)

As well as being an activity through which to avoid, express or process negative emotions, art making also helped prisoners feel positive emotions. Many participants in AbP wrote about making art as a positive, productive and (self-administered) therapeutic activity. One participant described art making as '[t]herapy, positive planning for future' (Q5.P3.2012). Another said he entered AbP 'as I find painting very therapeutic and great feeling once I complete my piece' (Q5.P11.2013). Prisoners wrote that painting for others to view was 'rewarding' (Q5.P15.2012), whereas for another, art making brought about 'feelings of accomplishment' (Q5.P1.2012), enjoyment and a 'sense of satisfaction' (Q6.P11.2013).

Art making also gave prisoners a sense of control over their time. As a constructive and productive activity, it meant prisoners felt as though they were using their time well. Studies of prisoners' lives have shown that prisoners feel time spent in prison is wasted or meaningless (Goffman 1961; Halsey 2007). Art making, though, helped AbP participants do something constructive with their time and contributed to their own self-development. One prisoner wrote that creating art was 'something new to learn' (Q5.P20.2014). Another made art as a challenge, due to having 'so much free time' (Q6.P14.2014). Time spent constructively, whereby prisoners could learn and develop new creative and technical skills, was a way for prisoners to turn wasted time into time that was 'well used' (Q5.P20.2012). Time, as well as labour, is also embedded within completed artworks. Pieces of art could become enduring products that represented productive, well-spent time, as well as being a record of developing skill levels, as one prisoner wrote:

> I like to knit as it's relaxing and creative as I could not knit 6 months ago. It shows what I could learn. (Q5.P25.2014)

Art making is an activity that can help prisoners adapt to and cope with the psychological pains associated with the deprivation of autonomy. Though prisoners may not have control over when or how often they are allowed to make art, art making gives prisoners control over what they do

and how they do it. The process of creating art helps prisoners to minimise the pains of imprisonment by giving prisoners the power to transform challenging, difficult and painful emotional states into more positive ones. In doing so, art making can help prisoners regulate and control their emotional wellbeing. Prisoners in AbP made art in order to relax and minimise feelings of stress. Art making also made prisoners feel more positive about themselves and their time. Further, a finished work of art can increase a prisoner's material resources and provide the prisoner with an object to modify (thus, exercise control over) his or her environment.

Caring Artists

The deprivation of heterosexual relationships is not exclusively linked to the lack of physical intimacy with the opposite sex that prisoners must endure. Yet as Sykes (1958, p. 70) observes, prisoners are 'figuratively castrated by [their] involuntary celibacy.' This is yet another deprivation that causes its own pent-up energies and frustrations. The deprivation of heterosexual relationships also refers to the lack of emotional relationships with the opposite sex and the social consequences, particularly for men, of living in a hyper-masculine environment. For male prisoners, the lack of gender diversity means that the prison can magnify those aspects of personality recognised and appreciated by other men, which in prison usually means that tough masculine characteristics dominate inmate social relations (fronting). Emotional and physical intimacy are largely absent from prison life, and as a result, there are few opportunities to display more nurturing qualities in prison, such as care, concern and even love to oneself and others both within and beyond prison (Crewe et al. 2014; Halsey & Harris 2011). Crewe et al (2014, pp. 67-69) identify education and art classrooms as highly valued 'intermediate spaces' or 'niches' because they are spaces in which it is safe to be more supportive and nurturing toward each other (see also Crewe et al. 2014, p. 69). The supportive social dynamic around making art and showing it to others is evident in the following responses:

> It helps pass the time … its impact make you feel good and mature from others comments. (Q5.P11.2012)

> It gives positive influences on ourselves and other inmates. (Q5.P19.2012)

In South Australia, not all prisons have designated art and/or education spaces. While many prisoners produced artwork in the Mobilong art room and women's prison textile shed, an equal number created art in their cells and, in one case, the prison laundry. The lack of opportunity to behave and therefore express nurturing emotions such as care, concern, affection and love is a form of emotional suppression, but it also denies prisoners that aspect of their personality and character. One participant in Crewe et al.'s study could not 'show love' and, therefore, these more caring and nurturing emotions were simply 'not in use' (2014, p. 65). Art is a culturally acceptable medium for the expression of a range of negative and positive emotions, which meant that for some AbP participants, art making enabled the open expression of care, support or love. Creating a work of art is something prisoners can do to support each other:

> This entry was drawn for another prisoner who had fond memories of the [Flinders Street] station and surrounding area. A gift to someone who was troubled. (1294/2012)

It can also be something that prisoners do for friends and family in the community. Artwork can embody feelings of love, care and concern. If allowed, the artwork and the attached emotional sentiment can be sent beyond the prison walls:

> I am able to get great satisfaction out of a well-finished piece and pass it on as a gift of mine from the heart to family friends and loved ones in my life. (Q5.P12.2014)

Some prisoners, however, expressed their frustrations, as sending artwork beyond the prison walls was not necessarily straightforward:

> We should be able to send out any art work regardless of value, it's only going to our family members anyways. Less problems when you want your family to pick your art up or send it out. (Q10.P3.2014)

One prisoner, who entered (but would otherwise have traded) a series of envelopes decorated predominantly with flowers and love hearts, explained how art helps communicate messages of care and love in ways that did not leave prisoners vulnerable. In fact, it could enhance their status:

> The drawings on my envelopes and letters are my way of expressing my feelings of love for my partner, my family, and my children because as a prisoner we are isolated from them all to the highest degree and are unable to express ourselves in the way we feel in front of other inmates as generally it is considered a form of weakness to open up emotionally or physically, and is more often than not preyed upon by other prisoners and that sort of information about yourself and your loved ones tends to be used against you, which affects your social standing whilst in prison - the most coveted possession a man or woman has whilst incarcerated it defines everything on how your life inside is ultimately to be. To do this sort of art and still be respected for who and what you are is a badge of honour in prison and the respect earned is beyond price. (1703/2014)

Art making is an expressive medium through which male prisoners can express and demonstrate care, concern, support and love for themselves, other prisoners and family and friends on the outside. Art making is an expressive activity that can allow prisoners to activate those feelings and emotions that are largely absent in the prison, and it lets prisoners share those feelings with others both within and beyond prison without compromising prisoners' masculinity or masculine status. In particular, art objects can be significant items that can help prisoners maintain emotional connections with significant others in the community. Art making for some was emotionally and spiritually nourishing:

> Without art who knows what kind of trouble I'd get myself into? It's good for my heart, mind, body and soul. (Q6.P9.2013)

Material Artists

Prisoners are largely deprived of goods within prison. Material consumption in modern western culture reflects people's tastes, economic status and, ultimately, people's identities. To be stripped of the ability to express and assert one's identity through material goods is to be

'attacked at the deepest layers of … personality' (Sykes 1958, p. 69). Art making can help mitigate the pains associated with the deprivation of goods by giving prisoners access to tools, equipment and supplies needed to make art objects. Some art supplies are highly sought after and valuable to inmates, such as the black paint that went missing from Kornfeld's art class (Kornfeld 1997). Art supplies can be traded within the inmate economy. A completed work of art can also be a valuable commodity for prisoners. One prisoner who did art explained that artworks can be material objects that can be gifted to family on the outside:

> To keep busy and for presents for family. (Q5.P17.2014)

Art objects can be traded with other inmates and even with prison officers. As mentioned earlier, art objects can be used to modify a prisoner's cell or other areas of the prison environment. Art making can materially enrich prisoners' lives in various ways. Material wealth, or the ability to generate material wealth in the prison, is power, and it can help prisoners gain a sense of autonomy and control over their lives.

Self-respecting Artists

Art making can also help mitigate the pains of imprisonment by helping prisoners feel more positively about themselves, who they are and the sorts of things they are able to do. According to Toch (1992), activities can serve the higher needs of prisoners when activities are a source of pride and self-esteem. Such activities are important for the psychological wellbeing of prisoners, given that prisons are institutions that represent a significant threat to the psychological integrity of the individual.

The deprivations of imprisonment cause prisoners to feel complex and simultaneous layers of shame, pain and frustration. This includes feelings of humiliation, degradation and infantilisation, which are built into the structure of the prison, such that many prisoners suffer psychologically with the stigma and loss of status that accompany incarceration (Goffman 1961; Goffman 1963; Sykes 1958). The need to distract oneself or escape from such feelings or manage mental health

problems, which can be intensified by (prolonged) boredom, can be so great that some prisoners who are unable to psychologically cope in prison resort to self-harm, such as banging their heads against walls (Bengtsson 2012) and, in extreme cases, suiciding (Cope 2003; Liebling 1999). In such cases, the physical sensation of pain, or even death, is a welcome distraction from the protracted psychological and emotional pain of (prison) life. For some prisoners, art making could help them manage their psychological health. Focusing attention on a task can be an effective escape or freedom *from* negative thoughts and emotions, a sentiment expressed by a number of prisoners but nicely encapsulated by one participant, who wrote that making art 'keeps me busy and stops me from think[ing] the worst. It is my freedom' (Q5.P12.12).

Feeling pride over completing artwork was a way that art making was able to boost prisoner self-esteem. Art objects embody prisoners' skills, talents and individual expression. Indigenous prisoners in particular reported that creating art was a way to feel good about themselves, to feel pride at who they are and where they are from. Many of the artworks done by prisoners who identified as Indigenous were expressions of their Indigeneity, and this was evident through using well-known Indigenous styles of painting that employed, for example, dots and x-ray images. This is also important, as many Indigenous prisoners use opportunities to express themselves through art to express not just the pain and frustration of imprisonment, but the pains and frustrations of colonisation (Kleinert 2002). For Indigenous prisoners in the AbP, painting was a way to connect with their Indigeneity, and a completed artwork became an enduring cultural product and contribution to Indigenous culture, which helped to express and therefore maintain individual and collective cultural identity:

> It keeps me occupied, it shows that my culture is still strong and lets my story and culture be recognised as well as making me feel good for who I am. (Q5.P13.2014)

> I'm 32 years of age and I have been in and out of jail most of my life so I know what people need and art is something that us black fellas need. It helps us in so many ways ok. Art in prison means a lot to me because it helps you with your jail time in a way it makes it easier and it gives you something to

> do. What art means to me is everything. My Father is an artist … and doing art to me is like keeping my culture going because to me Aboriginal art is beautiful and when you do a painting it makes you feel so proud of yourself and plus it gives us black fellas something to do and it keeps us out of trouble as well as making us happy with by something we love doing. I'll tell you I've been in and out of jail most of my life and art is the one thing us black fellas love is painting without art we would have nothing. So that's what ART means to me and so many other black fellas, it is everything to us so please don't take this away from us … (Q5.P6a.2012)

Becoming Artists

So far, this discussion has focused on the ways in which art making can be effective for helping prisoners temporarily mitigate, neutralise or escape the pains of imprisonment. For this reason alone, art making is a significant and valuable activity for inmates and the challenges they face in adapting to and coping with prison life. Apart death (or release), there is no permanent exit or escape from the pains of imprisonment. Yet prisoners must manage these pains daily. Even though escapes through art making are only momentary, there is another way that art making can help prisoners cope with the pains of imprisonment, and that is at the level of identity. Living in contemporary society involves managing day-to-day 'reality work', but it also involves 'identity work', and that necessitates carving out spaces for expressing difference and individuality (Cohen & Taylor 1992, pp. 40–41). People in the community have access to goods in the marketplace, which provides a massive amount of symbolic resources we use to construct our identities. Clothes, books, electronics, cars, shoes, bags and phones are all examples of goods that provide 'markers' and 'symbols' of status, belonging and identity (Cohen & Taylor 1992, pp. 40–41). For prisoners, this can be more difficult and problematic. To repeat Sykes's (1958, p. 69) observation mentioned above, to be stripped of material goods is to be attacked at the level of one's identity. The deprivations imposed upon prisoners and the pains of imprisonment are intrinsically linked to the loss of status as a citizen and the imposition of a new 'criminal' identity. Prisoners cannot escape the constant reminders, the 'markers' and 'symbols' of their identity in prison, such as the institutional clothing, cells, officers, walls and the regime itself. The deprivation

of goods means that prisoners lack access to symbolic resources with which to assert their individuality. Prisoners also lack access to resources not just to badge themselves differently but to become someone other than a 'criminal'. Cohen and Taylor (1992, p. 41) observed that for those incarcerated, 'there was also the continual problem … of resisting the sense that they were only prisoners'. It is very difficult for prisoners to create an alternative identity outside of their institutionalised identity. For the prisoners in Cohen and Taylor's (1992, pp. 40–41) study, finding ways to construct reality that were compatible with 'identity work' involved access to 'small subjective spaces which were relatively uncontaminated by the institutional reality – they then had sites upon which identity work might be mounted'.

Art making is an activity through which prisoners can carve out such spaces for themselves. Liebling (2004, p. 315) also articulates this idea:

> Activities were a catalyst for change; they gave prisoners a sense of purpose, built confidence, and developed talent. They often had a therapeutic value, especially in art-related subjects. Much of prisoners' sense of self-development arose from their individual interests, 'cell hobbies', study, reading and religious activities, and the role of helping others. These activities were not necessarily provided within the prison regime.

Art making is an activity where prisoners can access those subjective spaces in which they can feel 'normal', where they can express themselves, where they are liberated both from certain thoughts and are free to think of other things. In describing moments in which they are free, prisoners talk of moments that are 'relatively uncontaminated by the institutional reality' (Cohen & Taylor 1992, pp. 40–41). Survey responses reflected this idea, with prisoners stating that art making was not simply an activity that allowed some people to do something, but it was an activity that allowed prisoners to be, or become, someone other than a prisoner. Art making for some prisoners was an opportunity to keep busy and facilitate self-development, self-discovery and personal change, and thus the idea that one could become something or someone other can begin to emerge:

> It helps pass the time, it shows you another side to yourself you may have never experienced, its impact make you feel good and mature from others comments. (Q5.P11.2012)

> I have only been drawing while in custody and it helps me feel good about my ability and myself. Without this program people don't change. (Q2.P11.2012)

For some, this someone 'other' had crystallised into something more concrete:

> I felt [entering AbP] was the right thing to do as an artist. (Q2.P1.2012)

> [I] thought [entering AbP] was a good way to show that there are good artists in the prison system. (Q6.P8.2014)

These comments reflect a strong theme within the survey responses about how, through art making, prisoners can (start to) see and narrate themselves as artists. In doing so, they are transcending the idea that they are 'only prisoners'.

Conclusion

Very rarely did prisoners give just one reason as to why they did art, or to explain what doing art in prison meant to them. Typically, choosing to create art had multiple and simultaneous effects that could help prisoners mitigate, or temporarily escape, the pains of imprisonment. Finding ways to mitigate or escape those pains was important to prisoners, for it helped them manage and cope in prison. Art making is a unique activity, though, because as well as helping prisoners to make time flow, it was particularly effective at helping them deal simultaneously with the different 'pains of imprisonment' identified by Sykes (1958). Art making could help prisoners address the pressing needs to find something to do to distract themselves from the reality of their situation. Also, art making could serve prisoners' higher needs by helping them boost their self-esteem. For Goffman (1961, p. 68), removal activities appeared like 'little islands of vivid, encapturing activity' within an institutional dead sea. Such activities, Goffman observes (1961, p. 68), could help incarcerated individuals 'withstand the psychological stress usually engendered by assaults upon the self.'

That art making can help mitigate the pains of imprisonment is significant for the idea that prison is about the transformation and rehabilitation of the individual. Sykes (1958, p. 12) observes in relation to this:

> Whether approaching reform from a psychiatric, psychological or sociological perspective both factions … are apt to agree that the punishing features of imprisonment should be reduced or eliminated if efforts at rehabilitation are to be effective.

Artwork could connect prisoners to the outside world in numerous ways. Prisoners could create visual reminders of lands and objects from which they were separated, or the places they would rather be. Art objects could materially enrich prisoners, who could create items for trading or gifting. But so too could they be sent beyond the prison walls to significant others, enabling prisoners to symbolically escape. Art making could give prisoners a sense of autonomy and control over their lives materially but also emotionally. Art making was a medium for prisoners to express a wider range of emotional states than they would otherwise be unable to express verbally or physically. These could be painful, negative emotions, as well as other more nurturing ones. Art making could thus give prisoners some control and autonomy over their thoughts and feelings. Art making was something that could boost prisoners' self-esteem and help them to feel proud in the context of shame and rejection. Activities that make people feel good about themselves can help prisoners find meaning in an environment where meaninglessness and alienation is all too present (Liebling 2004). Lack of meaning is linked to powerlessness, and people feel powerless when they are 'an object controlled and manipulated by other persons or by an impersonal system' (Liebling 2004, p. 365). Feelings of alienation and meaninglessness have negative consequences for human wellbeing and are associated with mental and emotional pain, and suicide. Prisoners can find meaning and purpose in art making. One prisoner did art because it was 'a reason to keep on going on' (Q6.P8.2013). At the opposite end is freedom, control and a sense of meaning and purpose in life (Liebling 2004). Toch (1992, p. 28) writes that activities can not only ameliorate redundancy, they can:

> be a release for feelings, can distract attention from pain, or can keep the mind from being concerned with unpleasant thoughts or memories. Transcending survival needs, activity can provide goals, fulfillment, or scope for creativity.

Art making was seen as a positive and productive activity that could contribute to prisoners' emotional wellbeing and technical and creative development. Thus, it could turn 'wasted' or 'dead' time into time that was well-used. But also of significance is the potential that art making had for individual identity. Art making could help prisoners foster or discover creativity and talent, and this, in turn, could help prisoners resist their institutional identities and even create new ones: that of the artist or becoming artist.

CHAPTER 4: ON THE WALLS

Part 1: Introduction

Prisoners are removed from the community and confined to total institutions (Goffman 1961) as punishment. A consequence of their removal from the community is the public are no longer able to see or hear them. As a result, prisoners are silenced and invisible, unable to participate or communicate beyond the more restricted mediated contact permitted to prisoners, such as phone calls, letters and visits. Public exhibitions of prison art run counter to the idea of the prison as a site of exclusion, disconnection, isolation and therefore punishment. Art objects produced in prison and displayed in temporary exhibitions in the community challenge and complicate the prison boundary (see Turner 2016).

The AbP exhibitions provided opportunities for prisoners to participate in society through the medium of art. These events enabled the images, objects and (in many instances) written texts created by prisoners to emerge from the prison and become visible and readable to the public. This visibility meant that the art objects were, as previously noted, windows, not just into the prison but into the minds of prisoners as expressions of their ideas, thoughts, desires and emotions. Thus, art was a medium for prisoners to be revealed and seen in a different light, not only to the public but also to themselves. Importantly, these events allowed prisoners to produce alternative knowledge about themselves. The messages that one can read from the content of the art object or the accompanying text panel can speak to prisoners' gender, beliefs, cultural background, elements of their biography, and the roles in society they previously had and still try to maintain. The medium of art is relevant too, for art is a powerful symbolic medium that can communicate all sorts of messages about the creative talent, skills, aesthetic knowledge, and desires of its creator, along with the desires of the institutions that censored and curated these exhibitions. Art can also transmit powerful symbolic messages about the moral status of prisoners. Artwork can be offered as proof that prisoners are not sitting around idle but are developing

themselves and labouring in pursuit of something useful. Art making is widely considered to be a good, worthwhile and valuable activity and so it is a way prisoners can be seen to do good.

I focus the first part of this chapter on why prisoners wanted to participate in the AbP initiative and the sorts of messages that prisoners wanted to communicate to the public. The exhibitions were a chance for prisoners to speak. In this section I explore what it was they wanted to say. Many prisoners who submitted artwork to the AbP initiative wished to present a different side of themselves to the public, but also to the institution, in a medium capable of challenging the stigma and negative stereotypes of prisoners. In the second part of this chapter I provide examples of the images and texts that were presented to the public. Artwork often communicated messages of pain and despair yet also messages of hope and strength. Some artwork referred to life in prison and its challenges, while others referred to aspects of life unconnected to the prison. The exhibitions were events through which prisoners successfully challenged people's perceptions of prisoners and the sorts of things prisoners are capable of doing.

Visibility

Publicly exhibiting prisoners' artwork in the Adelaide Festival Centre (AFC) meant prisoners became visible to people beyond the prison in spaces the prisoners were unable to be physically. The AFC is a cultural institution not usually associated with state punishment and is a forum in which people do not usually encounter prisoners or their stories. For a prison population that is largely unheard and invisible, visibility itself was a significant motivating factor to participate. Some prisoners wrote that they wanted their art 'out there' (Q2.P6.2012), to get 'exposure' (Q10.P1.2014) or be 'noticed' (Q4.92.2012) and 'recognised' (Q6.P31.2014) by people in the community.

A number of prisoners decided to take part '[t]o have my art seen by the public and DCS management (Q2.P2.2012)'. Public visibility did not matter so much to some prisoners as visibility

to the upper echelons of power within the institutions that held them. These people were seemingly just as out of reach as the public:

> It proves to DCS management and staff that prisoners do have talent and in general DCS management and staff see prisoners when we have done wrong in jail. Very rarely do prisoners have much to do with DCS management outside of the prison we are housed at. (Q3.P12.2012)

Crucially, though, it was the kind of visibility. Participating in a public art exhibition enabled some prisoners to present themselves differently to the public and to DCS management in ways that challenged negative stereotypes and attitudes toward prisoners. Art was a medium through which prisoners communicated important messages that they hoped would make the public think differently about prisoners, the sorts of people prisoners can be and the sorts of things prisoners are able to do.

Notable Visibility

Visibility through art and through temporary exhibitions allowed prisoners public visibility in the context of their creative talents and skills. As a result, pride was an important motivating factor for some to exhibit artwork for others to see, as one entrant wrote:

> I thought my project was one of a kind and I'm proud of how it looks. (Q2.P12.2012)

One entrant used his time in prison to develop his artistic skills, which he hoped he could use to make his family on the outside feel pride in his ability and achievements. His art object was exhibited in the 2012 exhibition, and he gave this reason as a motivator to participate:

> Because I have always loved art. As a young boy I wanted to do art, study art at school, but my parents wouldn't allow me to [so] I never had the chance to study. Now that I'm in prison I use this opportunity to do what I love to do and to make my wife and children proud of me. (Q2.P10.2012)

This entrant went on to comment that his participation in the 2012 AbP exhibition could be the 'first step' (Q4.P10.2012) in fulfilling the promise he made to his daughter that he would make her proud of him.

Prisoners' skills, talents and artistic creative vision were embodied within the art. Taking part in a public exhibition was a way that prisoners, particularly those who identified as artists, could demonstrate to the public that people in prison have skill and talents:

> Thought it was a good way to show that there are good artists in the prison system. (Q6.P8.2014)

> So people can see the art work that prisoners do and how much talent they have. (Q5.P4.2013)

For many prisoners, success and achievement through their artwork were closely linked to the notion of personal development. A completed artwork became an object for some prisoners to demonstrate skills that they had developed and acquired while in prison. Artwork can 'show … progress' (Q6.P11.2014) and was a way for some prisoners to 'learn a new hobby', to 'challenge' (Q6.P14.2014) and 'advance' themselves (Q2.P18.2012). It was a way to demonstrate to others that some prisoners chose to spend their time in prison productively:

> So the public are aware that we spend our time creatively and learn new skills. (Q7.P14.2013)

> I think that it would be good so that people can see what we do and to show that we do learn things in prison. (Q7.P5.2014)

> It might help me get recognised as a painter and it shows that there are creative people in the system, not just bums. (Q7.P7.2013)

For some prisoners, the opportunity to showcase their skills and talent was a way to present themselves differently to the institution, in ways that some hoped would counter more negative institutional attitudes:

> So they can see some of us are not useless prisoners. (Q3.P10.2012)

Humanising Visibility

For some, exhibiting their art objects publicly was a way for prisoners to communicate their artistic talents and skills, and in displaying these skills, some prisoners were aware that this could challenge popular negative stereotypes about people in prison (e.g., that they are unskilled, talentless and uneducated, but also that they are lazy, idle or 'bad' people). Thus, art objects had the power to humanise prisoners:

> I feel it is important because you are deemed a no hoper when coming to prison and to let people be aware that there is talented and good people who are in prison and may have an impact on others. (Q4.P11.2012)

> As I got good feedback about if from fellow inmates and felt a degree of satisfaction at the end product within myself when I look at it. I thought others might enjoy looking at it also. To make a point to the general public that all prisoners are not violent brain dead uneducated no gooders in life and that we can all strive to search within ourselves to better ourselves for the future that lays ahead of all of us. (Q6.P12.2014)

Similarly, James Crosbie (as cited in Bankes 2012, pp. 12–18), a former Koestler award winner, recalled the time he was in prison with a man named John, who won first prize in the playwriting category. John's win gave the prisoners a lift and there was a collective feeling of pride, for 'John had shown the public that we weren't all just a pack of low-life, uneducated criminals'.

These comments speak to prisoners' own awareness of the stigma they carry as convicted criminals and their awareness at negative attitudes that many people harbour towards prisoners. Such attitudes include assuming that prisoners are dangerous, uneducated and bad. As a result, those stigmatised are perceived as less than human (Goffman 1963). However, the chance to take part in an exhibition was important for some prisoners to try and displace these misconceptions. Communicating through art was an opportunity, for some, not just to communicate but to demonstrate that despite being criminals, they were still 'good':

> To show that we do have a creative side and we're not all bad people. (Q7.P25.2014)

> To expose my art more and for people to see the side of prison for the good and to be recognised by others for my talents. (Q7.P1.2014)

The AbP exhibitions enabled prisoners to humanise themselves in the eyes of the public and hence to transform themselves from the sub-human 'prisoner' or 'criminal' to 'human'. Prisoners' art objects were not just proof of talent and skill but symbolic of the desire to contribute positively to society and, as one participant wrote, to give back:

> It shows the public that we are still people like them with something to contribute. (Q7.P8.2013)

Some prisoners' artistic talent, coupled with their participation in the exhibitions, was also a source of hope for the future. Participation was a step in a more positive direction, as well as a demonstration of future aspirations, such as 'getting a shop' (Q4.P3.2012), 'running a business' (Q4.P16.2012), 'learn[ing] how to exhibit … work' (Q4.P8.2012) or 'attending TAFE or art school' (Q4.P13.2012). These were all plans prisoners were looking forward to realising once released. Success and achievement in art opened the way for prisoners to project and imagine positive futures for themselves.

Invisible Visibility

The paradox of such prominent visibility was the condition of anonymity, which meant that prisoners also remained, individually at least, invisible. For the vast majority of prisoners, though, the condition of anonymity was not seen as a barrier to broadcasting their messages. Survey responses more often than not referred to the prisoners' collective talents or their skills in the 'prison system'. The absence of prisoners' names meant that individual prisoners could challenge the concept of the 'criminal' but not his or her specific criminal identity. For one respondent, the condition of anonymity was unhelpful in this respect:

> The art remains anon[ymous]. So if it was included there would be no feedback to me personally and therefore would not help in any way when I leave to resume my acrylic work … (Q4.P9.2012)

The messages that prisoners wanted to send to the public through their art and through the exhibitions were primarily associated with their desire to challenge their identities and status as prisoners. According to Ferguson (1996, p. 179) '[t]he will to influence is at the core of any exhibition.' Participants in the AbP initiative wanted to resist and counter the stigma of their criminal status and negative public perceptions of prisoners. Prisoners wanted to demonstrate that they were still people, some of whom wanted something more from their lives. Some wanted to demonstrate that they were still good, talented, capable people who were willing to contribute to society in positive ways. Participating in a public art exhibition was one way prisoners could do this. Visibility in the context of a public exhibition allowed prisoners to demonstrate and display their skills and talents to the community. It enabled them to demonstrate a capacity and motivation to do good, and thus be good. All art objects produce information and knowledge. The knowledge that prisoners produced and broadcast through the exhibitions could both speak to and fracture their identities and status as prisoners. As a result they challenged the way some members of the public thought about prisoners.

Exhibitions and Art Objects

In this next section I present a sample of art objects and texts that prisoners entered and which were exhibited in the AbP exhibitions in 2012, 2013 and 2014. The images that some prisoners entered were not included in the exhibitions as they were censored by DCS. I also present and discuss these art objects and the reasons they were excluded. The images are photographs taken in the Flinders University Art Museum as a record of the artwork entered each year. These are accompanied by photographs of some of those works hanging on the walls of the AFC in the exhibitions. It would be too much to reproduce every piece of artwork for the three exhibitions. I have selected samples that I believe represent some of the recurring and unique themes explored by the participants. Also, the samples reflect the differing levels of artistic skills that were on show.

Many of the artworks were accompanied by texts written by the prisoners and presented alongside the artworks on text panels. Some artworks were more detailed and more explicit than others, some artworks were more accomplished than others and some participants gave detailed explanations as to what their art objects meant, while others gave none. Each art object that was exhibited communicated or revealed something about its author; hence, each artwork and the exhibitions in their totality were about the production of knowledge. These were events through which prisoners were able to raise awareness first and foremost about their existence and then about other aspects of their lives within and beyond prison.

The Exhibition Space

The exhibitions were held at the AFC, which is located in central Adelaide and is a prestigious, publicly funded arts and cultural centre, with a primary focus on performing arts. The AFC stages high-profile local, national and international performing artists. Built in the early 1970s, the AFC is an iconic building, thanks to its distinctive geometrical architecture. It is a large complex consisting of two main connected buildings that house three performing arts theatres. These theatres are surrounded by large, open foyer areas containing bars and spaces for drinking and socialising. The AFC has a restaurant, two cafés and a host of other smaller rooms used for meetings and functions. It also has an art gallery called the Artspace, where staff run an annual temporary exhibition program. As well as exhibiting art in the Artspace Gallery, the AFC displays artworks from its permanent collection, as well as permanent and temporary art exhibitions or installations within the surrounding foyer areas. The Artspace Gallery also has outdoor areas, which feature both permanent and temporary wall murals and numerous sculptures.

The three AbP exhibitions took place in the Space Theatre Foyer. The Space Theatre is the smallest of the AFC's venues, and its foyer is a small and discreet space, somewhat tucked away in comparison to its two larger venues. It adjoins the foyer area of the Dunstan Playhouse, the AFC's second biggest stage venue, and there are bar facilities nearby. While the Space Theatre Foyer is accessible to the public during the day, it is often quiet and receives few visitors when there are no

performances programmed in the connecting theatres. This area is exposed to large numbers of the public, who pass through it, sit, drink and socialise during intervals and before and after performances in both the Space Theatre and the Dunstan Playhouse. While the AFC is a prestigious cultural venue, the location of the Space Theatre Foyer was relatively low in the hierarchy of space for a visual arts exhibition. The exhibition space was outside the smallest venue in one of the furthest corners from the entrance to the building.

In 2012, the exhibition ran from 10–31 May (22 days) and featured 31 artworks (of the 40 entered) by 22 prisoners. The 2013 exhibition ran from 10 April–17 May (38 days) and again, featured around 30 artworks by 19 prisoners. The largest exhibition was in 2014, featuring around 60 artworks by 43 prisoners, and it ran from 23 April–25 May (33 days). Over the three years, approximately 121 artworks by around 60 prisoners went on display to the public for a total number of 93 days.

Exhibition Statistics

Table 2: Art by Prisoners exhibition duration and participation

Year	Date	Duration (days)	No. of artworks	No. of participating artists
2012	10–31 May	22	31	22

2013	10 Apr–17 May	38	30	19
2014	23 Apr–25 May	33	60	43

The exhibition space comprised two walls that met at a corner, and a locked, glass display cabinet that sat opposite, against the wall of the theatre. There was a wall that people would naturally encounter first upon entering the foyer area. A text panel signified the beginning of the exhibition. On the panel, the title of the exhibition was written, followed by two to three brief paragraphs about the AbP exhibition and awards initiative.

The text that introduces a temporary exhibition is important information that forms part of the overall 'text' of the exhibition. It informs viewers of what they are about to see and why it is they are about to see it. Often, the introductory text justifies the decision to exhibit the specific artworks on display to the public by explaining the meaning, and therefore the importance, of the work, as well as information about the artist(s). The text panels at the AbP exhibitions varied from year to year, but to distil the main points briefly, the panels consistently informed the public about the following:

- The art objects had been produced in prison.
- The artworks had been viewed and awarded by representatives of South Australia's top arts institutions.
- The awards and exhibition were based on the work of the Koestler Trust prison charity, aimed at motivating and recognising the artistic achievements of people in prison.
- Money raised from sales would support prisoner art supplies and victims of crime.

- The exhibition and the community responses to the exhibition were part of a university study into the impacts of prisoner art within and beyond prison.

In response to public feedback and prisoner feedback in 2012, more information about the SA prison system was included in the subsequent exhibitions. This related to the dramatic rise in incarceration rates, the over-representation of Indigenous prisoners and, in 2013, the number of prisoners represented in the exhibition being roughly between 1–2% of the prison population. In front of the exhibition text panel was a plinth upon which a comments book was placed for members of the public to leave comments. The comments booklet informed the public that their comments would be collected as part of the study.

Each artwork was exhibited with an accompanying label with the title of the work, an identifying number, the award (if received) from the panel and a brief description or the story of the work (if provided by the entrant). The plinth that the comments book was placed upon doubled as a voting box. The public were invited to vote for their favourite work of art. Those prisoners whose art objects received the most votes were issued with gold, silver or bronze 'People's Choice' award certificates. The voting slips allowed space for the public to leave a comment about why they chose a particular work.

Photograph 1: AbP Opening 1

Invited guests socialise and comment on the exhibition, following the opening formalities of the AbP Exhibition in 2012.

Photograph 2: AbP Opening 2

Invited guests look at the artwork during the AbP Exhibition opening night in 2013. The exhibition text panel on the far left indicates the start of the exhibition.

Photograph 3: AbP Opening 3

Invited guests gather prior to the formalities at the AbP Exhibition opening night in 2013.

Photograph 4: AbP installation

Work is hung in preparation for the opening of the AbP Exhibition in 2014.

The Artwork

I would like for people to see what goes on in some prisoners' lives. (Q4.P17.2012)

Communicating with the public through the medium of art and the temporary exhibitions enabled prisoners to produce information, or knowledge, and broadcast that information to a public audience. Prisoners often do not get such an opportunity. The artwork that went on display broadcast varied information about prisoners across a range of media, including supporting

written texts. The exhibitions told stories of individual, collective and cultural identity, as well as institutional identity. They told stories of pain and trauma and of strength and hope. They revealed the differing levels of artistic skill and talent. The art objects in each exhibition could be split into two broad categories: those art objects that directly refer to living and coping with the challenges of incarceration, and those art objects that do not. I have also singled out artwork produced by Indigenous prisoners for special mention. Indigenous prisoners are vastly over-represented in the criminal justice system. Indigenous prisoners made significant contributions to each AbP exhibition, producing at least one third of works that featured in the exhibitions. While Indigenous artwork overwhelmingly made visual reference to landscapes and significant animals, Indigenous texts revealed challenges of incarceration, and the significance and importance of the prisoners' relationships to country. Regardless of the themes and the ethnic or racial identities of the prisoners, an art object is a significant and highly symbolic medium for communicating with the public. It not only contains messages and stories, but prisoners' (developing) talents and skills are also embedded and expressed through the art objects.

Depictions of the Pains of Imprisonment

Many of the art objects displayed in the exhibitions explored feelings of regret, the psychological struggles caused by the separation from families and communities, and the daily or moment-to-moment struggles to simply get through each day. Individual suffering was evident in the art objects that either explicitly or implicitly explored these themes, which communicated not all but many of what Sykes (1958) listed as the 'pains of imprisonment'. One such work was called *Doin Time* (2012):

Artwork 1: Doin Time (2012)

Commended Award

Text Panel: This is what doing years in prison will do to someone dealing with many issues on the outside such as relationships and not being able to help in anyway from behind prison walls. Being in such a position really does create the feeling of ripping into one's self for making poor decisions and wishing time could be reversed to make better choices.

Doin Time is a somewhat frightening depiction of the author's psyche—a graphic illustration of the nightmare of prison. The prisoner's hands and long fingernails claw away at the skin of the face

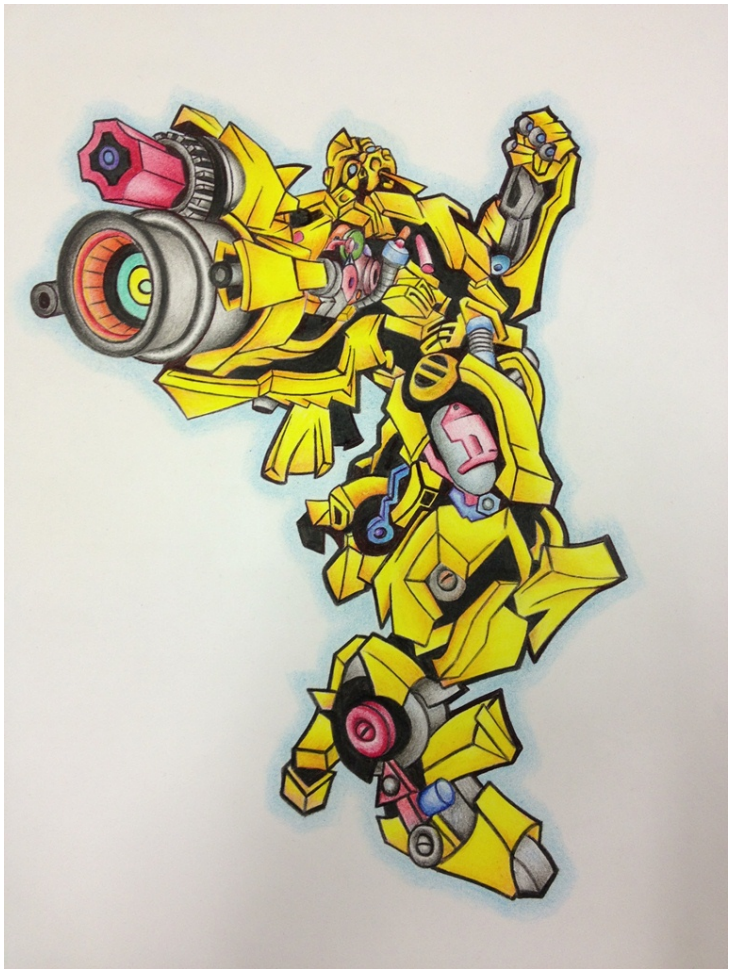
and head to expose flesh and the brain; the head has no body but merges and transforms into prison bars. The long tongue extends from the mouth, which is wide open as if the face is screaming a silent scream. The arms are shackled, and the composition swirls into itself like a whirlpool that drags everything down. The image and text put across a number of emotions, such as regret, frustration, shame and anger, much of which, perhaps all, is directed at the artist himself for making 'poor decisions'. His incarceration renders him helpless and powerless to offer support or help significant others in the community. This illustration is a graphic and surreal representation and expression of the psychological turmoil that the prisoner artist was suffering, or perhaps periodically suffers, in prison. This illustration is able to convey these emotions to the viewer, as well as the idea that through art, this prisoner can express these complex and challenging emotions, which must somehow be dealt with and managed.

The isolation and disconnection from significant relationships 'on the outside', specifically from children, were expressed in the following two works, *Cross of Hope* and *Bumblebee*:

Artwork 2: Cross of Hope (2012)

Commended Award

Text Panel: On a cold Christmas night a lonely sad young boy who has not seen his father in years is wondering where and why his father left him. His only hope is on that cross he's drawing on a cold foggy window wishing the Lord could help bring his father back home.



Artwork 3: Bumblebee (2013)

Commended Award

Text Panel: I spend some of my time in my cell doing drawings of Transformers for my two sons aged 7 and 9. In return, they send me pictures. It's a great way of letting my sons know that they are in my thoughts. They are young and it is hard to get them to sit still long enough for other family members to read my letters to them, and they can be hard to keep on the phone. But bring up Transformers and they'll talk talk talk. It is the best way to communicate with them. I only ever draw for my sons. They have EVERY painting and drawing that I've ever done since they've been born.

Both these drawings explore and express the theme of isolation from family and loved ones. One of the consequences of crime and incarceration is that parents are separated from their children. In *Cross of Hope*, the psychological pain caused by the separation of father and son is expressed from the son's point of view, not the father's. This image communicates the suffering not just of the prisoner separated from his family but also of the imagined suffering of the prisoner's family and child(ren) and the negative emotions this causes, such as loneliness, sadness and confusion. The image communicates then an awareness of and empathy about the effects of their incarceration on others.

The text that accompanied *Bumblebee* explains that it is an illustration of a Transformer that the prisoner drew for his son. The text also communicates the difficulties the prisoner artist has in connecting with his children, given the limited methods of communication available to him. He can write letters for which his children cannot sit still, and he can phone them, but it is hard to keep them on the phone for any length of time. Both illustrations clearly convey that for parents, their children, and their absence from their children's lives are is an issue that plays on their minds. It is also a challenge for prisoners to remain present and maintain relationships with their children. Making art is a way to express the pain of being separated from children, but art objects can also enable prisoners to try and overcome these challenges.

That the prison is a difficult environment to live in because of the isolation people feel from their community and from their families was also expressed in *Flowers of Destiny* (2013) and *Essence of Being* (2014).

Artwork 4: Flowers of Destiny (2013)

Participation Certificate

Text Panel: Even in times of sadness the flowers will grow. In the background you see flames of fire, yet the flowers still grow tall and strong! If you do wrong you will get caught, but you can change your ways. If you say no to wrong doings you receive a chance for happiness, great success, a beautiful life and the chance to be with people and family who love you.

Flowers of Destiny is a painting of four flowers of different heights in full bloom, while a fire rages in the background. This painting and the explanation refer to life lived under difficult and dangerous circumstances. They are also a reminder that while crime does not pay, hope is not all lost for a happier future. The artist skill displayed by this piece is not as honed as in the previous examples. This prisoner does not identify as Indigenous, yet interestingly, he has incorporated the dot-painting style, which is visible around the border of the image, the silver sun (or moon) and the petals of the flowers.

Artwork 5: Essence of Being (2014)

Highly Commended Award

Inspired by *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle and 5 amazing women incarcerated alongside of me. I am from New Zealand of Maori and English descent. I have no family support here so I depend on my inner source of being to get me through moment to moment, day by day. This piece represents the Essence of Being and the realm of Oneness which enlightens the deep peace I have within. The beauty of nature and the animals I am experiencing here is a continuous learning for me that Universal Energy blows through me and is the life force of all things. Creating this piece "Essence of Being" has brought so much joy to my life.

Essence of Being was a large, mixed-media artwork stitched out of fabric and other materials. A large tree, created with real bark, forms the central element of this landscape. It contains animals, wild and free. Birds fly in the sky. One is perched in the tree, while other animals roam around. The composition is split into thirds, with the bottom third a green forest floor with leaves, other plants and animals. The middle third is the prison fence that meets the sky, while the top third is the blue sky that has a few clouds and a bright burning sun sitting above a mountain range in the top left corner. This is an idyllic and tranquil representation of the natural world, one which incorporates elements of that natural world. However, in contrast to the creatures who roam free and the tree oblivious to such things, metal rings (a clear reference to a prison fence) run the full width of the piece, where the prison wall meets the sky. This sense of enclosure and suffocation is also felt in the way the artist has constructed the tree out of actual bark, which is encased and stitched into clear plastic. This mixed-media piece is incredibly detailed and displays creativity and ingenuity on the part of the creator. It also reveals an aesthetic awareness in that the piece is divided into thirds, a well-known rule artists follow to create a sense of balance in the composition. The text panel reveals further, specific aspects of the creator's biography, such as her ethnicity as Maori/English and the challenges she faces, being from New Zealand and having no family support nearby. She has an interest in Eckhart Tolle and a need to find a more peaceful, contented psychological and emotional state, or 'inner peace'. The text panel, though, also

highlights her resilience and ability to focus on what is beautiful around her despite being in prison. Perhaps most importantly, the creator's comment conveys the significance of creating *Essence of Being* and the 'joy' it has brought her.

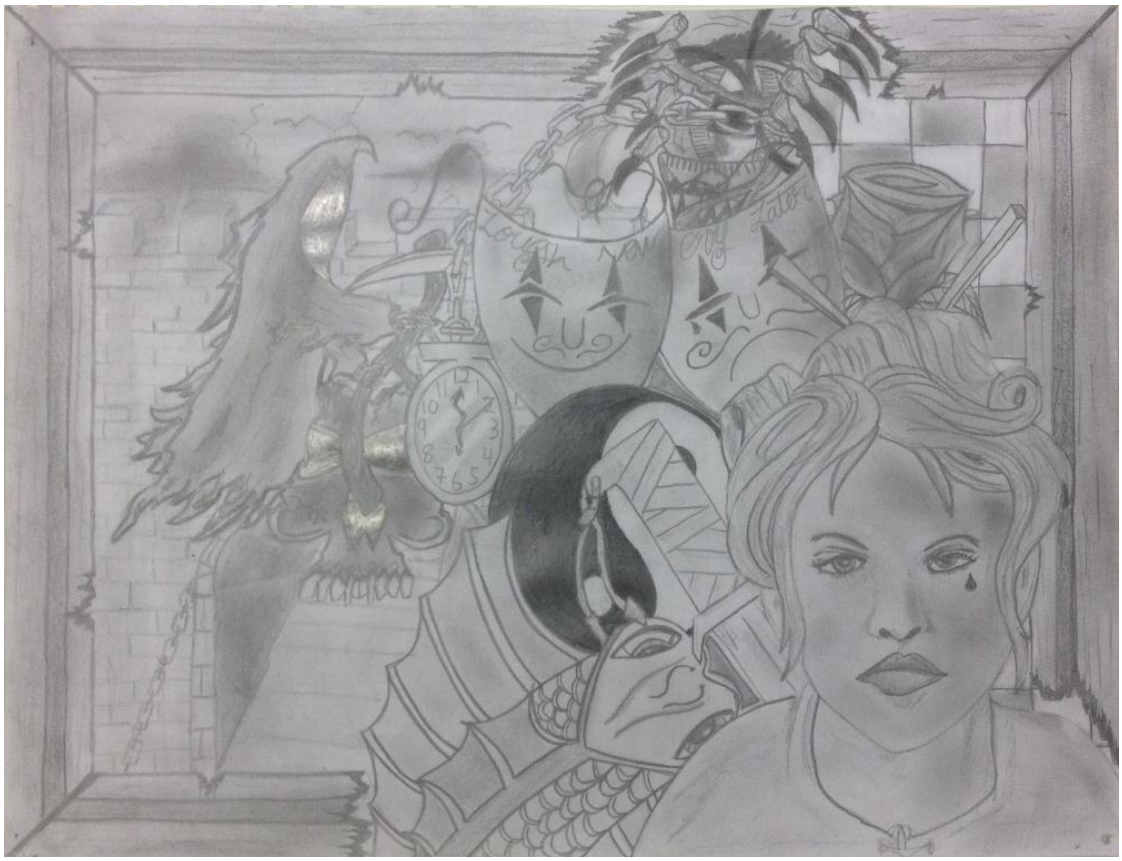
Artwork 6: Athena Goddess (2012)

Commended Award

Text Panel: I paint and draw because it is the only thing I have left in this world that I can truly call my own. It helps me take my mind off the more negative aspects of prison…it allows me to experience a small sense of achievement.

Athena is the Greek god of wisdom, courage, art, law and justice amongst other things. This is a painting of Athena's head, depicted as a statue, which a number of cracks run through. From her left eye down to her cheek runs a tear of blood. The text reveals how making art can be an important source of autonomy in an environment where everything else has been taken away. As

well as an important distraction, art making also opens up opportunities for prisoners to experience more positive emotions such as joy or a sense of achievement, however small.



Artwork 7: Behind the Face (2014)

Participation Certificate

Text Panel: This is about a girl with a lot of pain and torment in her life. She is trying to break free from a past full of death and lies. But her time is running out and just when she thinks she's free her monsters from her past come ripping back into her life. This girl has now pushed all the dark things in her life behind her including her medieval heritage as she tries to push on.

This sophisticated illustration was submitted by a teenage boy. In his illustration, a girl is at the forefront of the composition, with a sword sheathed behind her back. Behind her are all sorts of (popular tattoo) symbols set within the walls of a castle: a yin yang circle; a happy mask upon which is written 'laugh now'; a sad mask upon which is written 'cry later'; a clock chained to a ceiling; a skull; and the scales of a dragon. The accompanying text makes explicit reference to the 'pain and torment' in the life of the drawing's subject. It was the opinion of the social worker who helped to enter this work that it is autobiographical and that the emotions the girl in the picture are dealing with are in fact those of the young boy who drew it.

Pain, Despair, Hope and Strength

Art is a vehicle that prisoners used to express biographical themes of their own embodied lives, existential predicaments and experiences as criminals in the process of being punished (see Williams & Bendelow 1998). The images and texts in the AbP exhibitions convey expressions of regret, loneliness, isolation, helplessness and loss. These psychologically painful states or emotions are directly related to one of the 'pains of imprisonment' identified by Sykes (1958, pp. 63–82) as the deprivation of liberty. The pains associated with the deprivation of liberty do not refer so much to confinement and the restriction of access and movement but to forced disconnection from friends, family and loved ones. Many people in prison find their connections to people on the outside weaken and deteriorate as time goes on (Cohen & Taylor 1972; Sykes 1958).

The production of art in prison and the public exhibition of that art in the AbP exhibitions enabled prisoners to express their psychological pain and communicate their suffering to the public. The expression of pain is not unique to prisoners, and pain and suffering have long been expressed by some of the world's most celebrated artists, such as Edvard Munch and Frida Kahlo (Williams & Bendelow 1998). But prison pain is usually invisible because it is hidden behind the prison walls. It is rarely expressed publicly, as prisoners do not often get to 'speak' beyond the prison walls. Also, a convicted criminal's status is not a platform for complaining about such matters. A general perception is that prisoners' pain and suffering are deserved. Art provided a medium for

participants in the AbP exhibitions to express their pain in ways that did not attract outrage or criticism.

The public were confronted with messages and images that conveyed the pain and suffering of others. However, some of the texts—and importantly, the medium of art itself—represented personal strength, pride and hope. This meant that the public were not burdened by such suffering. Criminologist Roger Graef (as quoted in Bankes 2012, pp. 49–50) articulated this sentiment when he wrote about a painting called *Despair*, which he had bought from a Koestler Trust exhibition:

> The painting Despair is obviously a self-portrait. It is beautifully painted, and so expressive it almost hurts to look at it. But the skill and painterliness overcomes the pain of the sitter/painter. We own many pictures by established artists as well as other Koestler contributors. This is among the most moving.

The prisoner artist who drew *Bumblebee* had young children. It was difficult for him to interact with his children through letters and phone calls. *Bumblebee*, though, was an example of how one prisoner was able to use his art to create more meaningful contact with his children. By drawing pictures that his children would like, such as characters from *Transformers*, he was able to get his children to 'talk talk talk'. For this prisoner, art was the link between him and his sons. Through his art, this prisoner artist was able to lessen his deprivation of liberty and isolation from his sons and maintain a bright and visible presence in their lives.

Similarly, all other images referred to above contained messages of hope. The boy in *Cross of Hope* was sad and lonely, yet he had hope and faith his father would return. The flowers in *Flowers of Destiny* were symbols of hope and strength, as they grew 'tall and strong' despite the surrounding fires that threaten to engulf them. Furthermore, the text makes an explicit statement about a more positive future, one in which its author can make better decisions, be reunited with family and find happiness. *Essence of Being* and *Behind the Face* present narratives about personal strength and triumph over the struggles that its authors face(d). Troubles and 'dark things' have

been put behind as the girl 'tries to push on' in *Behind the Face*. In *Essence of Being*, the prisoner artist speaks of a power or energy within her, her 'inner source of being', which helps her get from 'moment to moment, day by day', but importantly, she states in her text that creating *Essence of Being* brought so much joy to her life. The prisoner artists were able to simultaneously communicate the pain and suffering of prison, together with messages of strength and hope. In creating artworks, prisoners expressed the hardships and negative emotions caused by their incarceration. They could also feel a sense of achievement and express and experience joy—not unbridled levels of joy but joy in the context of the harsh realities of prison life. Thus, the art objects in the exhibitions had significant value, beyond the aesthetic, for the psychological wellbeing of their creators, as important outlets for expressing challenging emotions, as well as being symbols and narratives of hope. Prisoners could, through such work, demonstrate to the public how important art making was to them, and the role it played in their lives to mitigate the effects of imprisonment. It was an activity that prisoners did in order to cope, adapt and survive. It was a source of strength and hope and a medium to express negative emotions and create more positive states of mind and orientations towards the self.

Cars, Boats and Other Hobbies

The works that express the pains and suffering of incarceration can be emotionally taxing to read, look at and imagine what their creators are feeling, even though the medium itself helps to mitigate this burden. Not all works, however, expressed pain and suffering. Other works were far lighter to experience, for they made no explicit reference to emotional pain or trauma. These works too, expressed biographical themes, such as hobbies, objects prisoners owned or references to characters they liked from television shows. The work was touching, surprising and even funny.

In 2012, a prisoner artist entered the following pencil sketch of a car:

Artwork 8: 1977 HZ Holden Premier (2012)

Highly Commended Award

Text Panel: My grandfather worked at the Woodville Holden plant for more than 25 years and I now own the 1972 HQ Premier which he bought as a second vehicle. I used to play in it when I was young and keep it clean for my grandfather when he got old. I have all the original paperwork and even the receipt for 92 cents for the first two gallons of petrol.

In 2013, a prisoner artist entered a model of Davros, the Doctor Who villain:

Artwork 9: Davros (2013)

Highly Commended Award

Text Panel: I love model making and I've always loved sci-fi. Doctor Who is at the top of the list; I've watched it since 1973.

In 2014, a prisoner artist entered two model boats:

Artwork 10: Marine Craft 1 (2014)

Highly Commended Award

Text Panel: MSR 68 - this is a representation of my son-in-law's craft. Late 1970s vintage, ideal for fishing calmer waters.

Artwork 11: Marine Craft 2 (2014)

Commended Award

Text Panel: This is a model of an ideal fishing boat for South Australian offshore waters, ideal to catch big snapper

Neither the content of these art objects nor their accompanying texts refer to the challenges of living in prison. These art objects are references to the prisoners' worlds beyond the prison. From these art objects, we know that the man who made *Davros* is an avid Doctor Who fan, the man who built the model boats is a father, his daughter is married, and her husband has a vintage boat. One also might assume he is an enthusiastic and knowledgeable fisherman and boater. The man who drew *1977 HZ Holden Premier* reveals that this image of this specific model of car refers to his grandfather, who worked at the Holden plant building cars; his memories of the car as a child; his care for the car; and now his role as custodian of his grandfather's legacy.

These objects become windows into prisoners' biographies, family histories, hobbies and the things they liked to do on the outside, such as fishing, and taking care of old cars. They also reveal fragments of people's identities, such as father, grandson, or passionate Doctor Who fan. But so too do they display the patience, skill, creativity and ingenuity it takes to build models and produce detailed sketches.

Indigenous Art

Numerous art objects that featured in the three AbP exhibitions were done by Indigenous prisoners. Many of these works were also distinctly identifiable as having been created by Indigenous prisoners because they featured dot or x-ray style painting techniques. Such art objects depicted or represented aspects of Indigenous culture such as ceremony, male and female traditions, hunting places, animals, animal totems and landscapes. Again, the images and texts created by Indigenous prisoners expressed biographical themes of their lives as Indigenous people and, for some, as prisoners too. They told stories of Indigenous identity and Indigenous pride at who they were and where they were from.

For several reasons, I have singled out Indigenous art objects as a category for discussion on their own. Firstly, Indigenous prisoners are over-represented in the South Australian prison system. Indigenous Australians comprise around 2% of the general South Australian population, yet between 2012 and 2014, Indigenous prisoners comprised 23–25% of the South Australian prison system (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017). Indigenous prisoners contributed a large number of artworks to the three AbP exhibitions. The prominence of Indigenous art was made even more notable because they were some of the largest and most impressive works on display. In 2012, the AbP exhibition featured 34 artworks, 10 of which were identifiable as Indigenous works through the distinctive dot painting style and the subject matter (e.g., landscapes that featured lizards and other animals, and Indigenous tools, technology and symbols, such as boomerangs and spears). There were also around four other landscape paintings (one featuring Uluru), which the public might reasonably have assumed were by Indigenous artists. In 2013, 9 of the 19 prisoners who

entered work were Indigenous, and around 13 of the 39 art objects that were exhibited in 2013 were either Indigenous or could be attributed as such, through the use of dot painting style and imagery of outback landscapes, accompanying text that referenced Dreaming stories, and the medium itself, including painted and etched emu eggs.

Artwork 12: Mulloo Dreaming (2012)

Highly Commended Award

Text Panel: Doing art to me is like me keeping my culture going. Aboriginal art is beautiful and when you do a painting it makes you feel so proud of yourself. This painting is the Mulloo Dreaming which means Kangaroo Dreaming.

Mulloo Dreaming features boomerangs, shields, spears and kangaroos set amongst a dot-patterned background. The dots frame a central landscape image featuring three trees and other fauna, some rocky land formations at the horizon and a kangaroo. The title explicitly references Indigenous Dreaming culture and storytelling.

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Artwork 13: Untitled (2013)

Highly commended Award

Text Panel: A long time ago there was a man who went hunting but there were no kangaroos or other animals like emus and birds. The man never knew that in this place lived a serpent snake. The serpent snake came down from the clouds, looking at him and trying to eat him but the man hid behind the tree. Luckily he had a spears to kill the serpent snake. Pitjantjatjara, this is our story.

Artwork 14: Centre Piece Meeting Grounds (2014)

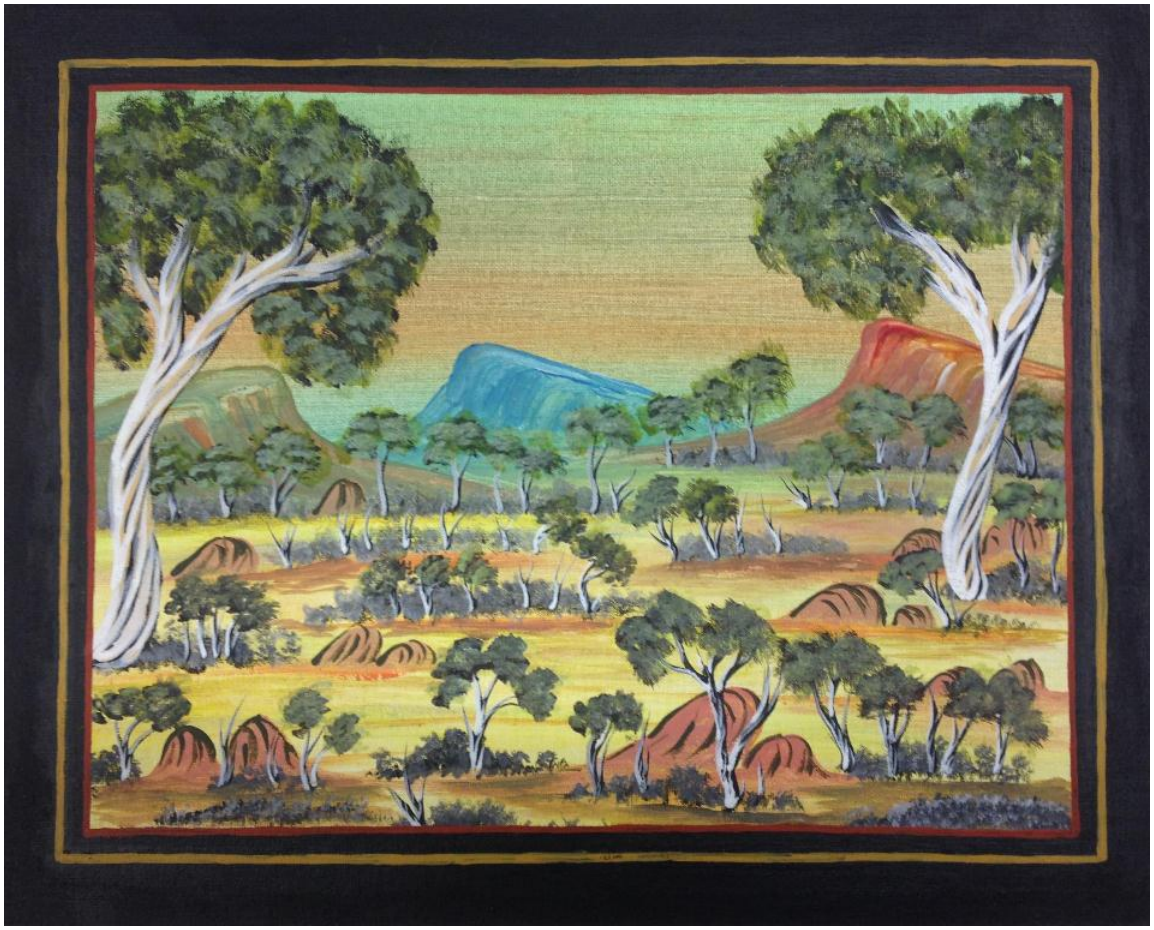
Participation Certificate

Text Panel: This painting represents the centre meeting grounds for trade and hunting places.

Artwork 15: The Bloodline of Two Tribes - My Background - Ngarrindjeri – Nurrunga (2014)

Highly Commended Award

Text Panel: My culture and my two tribes displayed with the landscape of precious mother earth. This painting represents my two bloodlines from two tribes, Point Pearce and Raukkan. The Tiger represents Point Pearce, the birds represent Raukkan and the two grey spirits represent my ancestors from the two tribes, living on and cruisin' through mother earth looking over their native culture and precious land.



Artwork 16: My Home Where I Come From (Devil's Marbles) (2014)

Commended Award

Text Panel: This painting is of my country, Devil's Marbles and the Spiritual trees and rocks of my country. It's the land of my dreams and my family the land which I love and grew up on, it's the landscape of my life it comes from the heart and my spiritual

Artwork 17: Frill Necked Lizard (2014)

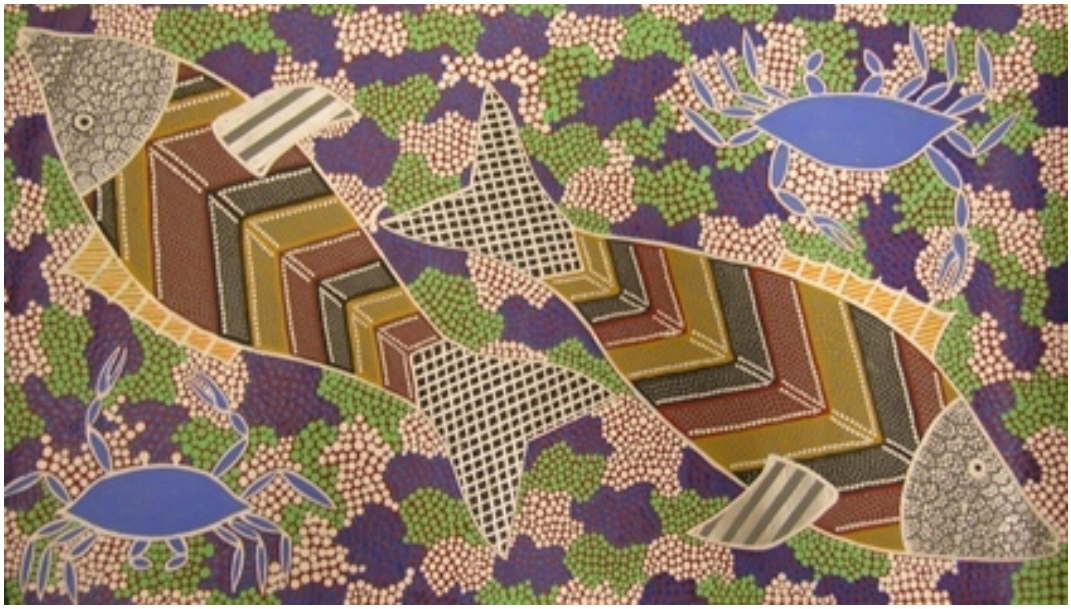
Participation Certificate

Artwork 18: Snake Man, the Spirit of Three Women (2013)

Highly Commended Award

People's Choice Awards

Each year members of the public were invited to vote for their favourite piece. The creators of the art objects that received the most votes received the first, second and third People's Choice award. Artworks created by Indigenous prisoners were also some of the most popular with members of the public. Indigenous prisoners won the First People's Choice awards each year. Indigenous prisoners also won the Second People's Choice in 2012 and 2014, as well as the Third in 2013. The following works were the winners of the First People's Choice awards:



Artwork 19: My Home (2012)

Highly Commended Award

First People's Choice Award

Text Panel: I am 32 years old and I've been in and out of jail for most of my life so I know that art is something us black fellas need. It helps us in so many ways. This painting shows people that I am from a tribe that lived by the sea and lived off the sea, Ceduna, my home.

Artwork 20: Life's Ripples of Decisions (2013)

Highly Commended Award

First People's Choice Award

Text Panel: Our wrong decisions affect more than ourselves. The ripple effect can envelope everyone around us, the ripples expanding.

One of the few Indigenous works that did not directly reference significant flora or fauna was *Life's Ripples of Decisions*. This Indigenous prisoner used the distinctive dot style to paint a series of expanding circular shapes that start at the centre and work their way outwards. The text accompanying this image explains that our wrong (criminal) decisions have a ripple effect that 'envelope everyone around'. The text, in particular, presents the prisoner artist as a reflective prisoner, who is aware of harm he has caused the community. This painting enables this prisoner

to present himself as the ideal reflective, perhaps remorseful, carceral subject, a message that clearly resonated with the public.

Artwork 21: Heart's Journey (2014)

Highly Commended Award

First People's Choice Award

Expressions of Indigeneity

The art objects in the AbP exhibitions created by Indigenous prisoners communicated many different messages to the public, but above all, each was an expression of overt Indigeneity

(Kleinert 2002). Almost all of these art objects refer to specific aspects of Indigenous culture. Some paintings, such as *Untitled,* told Indigenous stories, whereas others were representations of significant sites for trade and hunting (*Centre Piece Meeting Grounds*). Indigenous connection to land was a strong theme. Many paintings depicted or represented landscapes and/or animals but also care and love for the land they were disconnected from. The man who painted *My Home Where I Come From (Devil's Marbles)* wrote, 'It's the land of my dreams and my family the land which I love and grew up on.' The man who painted *The Bloodline of Two Tribes - My Background - Ngarrindjeri – Nurrunga* wrote of his family history. He references two important locations for many Indigenous South Australians. His two tribes are from Point Pearce and Raukkan. As well as being important geographical locations for the Ngarrindjeri and Nurrunga people, these were also locations where Indigenous missions were established. This painting is about his ancestors 'looking over their native culture and precious land.' The connection to land, one's people or 'tribe [sic]', and one's home was also expressed in *My Home*. These images and texts convey to members of the public not only fragments of individual Indigenous biography, history, culture and heritage but also the importance that access to art supplies has for maintaining a connection with Indigenous culture. Incarceration means Indigenous people are removed from their land, houses, environments, families and homes. The man who painted *Mulloo Dreaming* explained the following:

> Doing art to me is like me keeping my culture going. Aboriginal art is beautiful and when you do a painting it makes you feel so proud of yourself. This painting is the Mulloo Dreaming which means Kangaroo Dreaming.

This prisoner artist tells viewers very explicitly the way painting connects him to his culture and how this connection and his ability to paint can bring forth positive feelings of pride in himself and his culture. Indigenous painting in this sense went deeper than helping to maintain a connection. It was also a way for Indigenous prisoners to offer something, to contribute to their culture and keep it going. The man who painted *My Home* writes of the importance that art plays in the life of Indigenous men. The text also highlights the issue of repeat incarceration, as the prisoner artist

explains that he has been in and out of prison for most of his life. He is someone who speaks from experience, and therefore with authority, about his own life and the lives of other 'black fellas' in prison. Messages from Indigenous prisoners also emphasised the importance of producing art in prison. The creator of *My Home* writes that art is something that incarcerated Indigenous men 'need. It helps us in so many ways'.

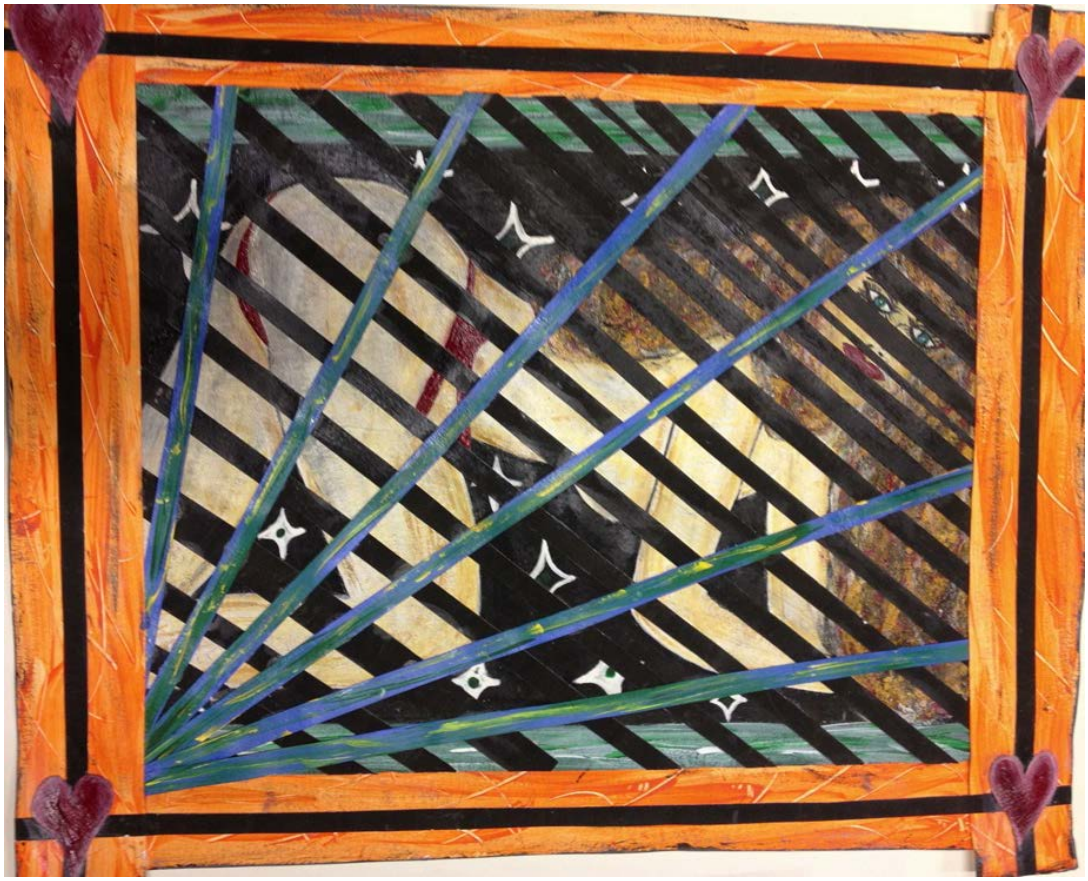
Almost all of the Indigenous art entries made use of the dot style of painting that emerged from the Central Desert area in the Northern Territory in the 1970s. While questions of authenticity often surround dot paintings by artists who are not from that area, Kleinert (2002) argues that prisoners who use the dot style do so as an act to affirm and express collective Indigenous identity.

The AbP exhibitions provided a platform through which incarcerated Indigenous men (and women in 2014) were able to speak to the public through the art objects and written texts. Like non-Indigenous prisoners, Indigenous prisoners used art to explore biographical themes. Indigenous art objects were expressions of Indigeneity, culture, collective and individual biography and history. Indigenous prisoners expressed their Indigeneity by using well-known and distinctive painting styles developed by Indigenous people. Indigenous prisoners also communicated the importance to their incarcerated lives of having access to materials and opportunities to create art in prison. Art making can be a way of maintaining one's links to culture, country and people, but they are also cultural offerings or contributions. Furthermore, they are an important source of positive emotions, such as feeling pride and feeling good about who you are and where you come from.

Censored Art Objects: Offensive Content, Offensive Identities

Each year, DCS staff exercised their power to exclude artworks from the exhibitions. The exclusion of images was an important part of managing public responses to the exhibitions, to prisoners, but ultimately also, to DCS and the hosting venue. I did not have any choice but to abide by the

decisions of DCS staff to exclude some work from public view. In some instances I agreed with DCS which often reflected opinions of AFC staff, particularly in regard to male depictions of women. I did not advocate for any works to be excluded and I was usually informed without much information as to why. Often I gently challenged decisions out of curiosity and in a bid to know more about the decision process. While I felt at times that DCS was overly cautious I fully understood that any significant negative reaction would jeopardise any future exhibitions. I also understood this was a method of protecting the intended positive functions of the exhibitions. This clearly did not prevent the production of images later considered to be unsuitable for public display. It did not prevent prisoners from submitting these entries into the AbP initiative, nor did it prevent works from being awarded by the panel judges. However it did prevent those images and texts being broadcast to the public. It is interesting to note the reasons that some artworks were excluded. Artworks were excluded due to their objectionable content, the identity and criminal history of the entrant and, in some cases, a combination of both. Some artworks were excluded because the images were deemed inappropriate due to their potential to be considered generally offensive. These included images by male prisoners that sexualised women by depicting women as strippers (or prostitutes), a Playboy Bunny or naked in various situations, such as inside a martini glass or in the arms of a dragon.



Artwork 22: Web of Deceit (2013)

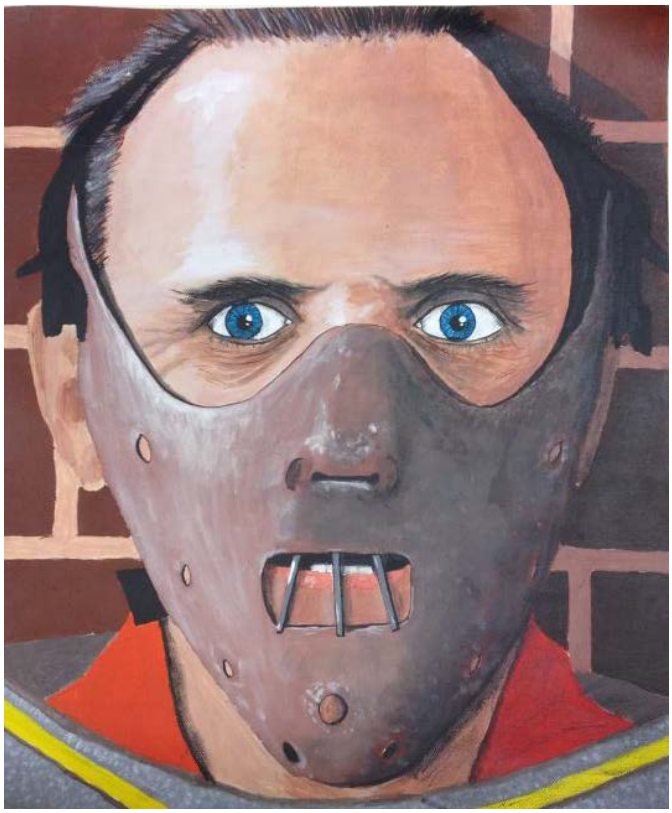
Artwork 23: Regrets (2014)

Text: Woman hungover, sheet covering body having regrets of last night's party.

Artwork 24: Dragon Girl (2014)

Male depictions of nude women or nearly nude women are highly prevalent in visual culture, both as long-standing artistic traditions and often-used images in the advertising industry (Berger 1972). Berger states that the oil painting tradition that developed and flourished from 1600 to 1900 was about depicting items, objects and people that could be possessed. Image-making in prison could be partly understood as representing what people, mainly men in this instance, cannot possess, or can only possess through the image of a car, landscape or woman. Prison, after all, is a place that deprives prisoners of heterosexual relationships, meaning prisoners are involuntarily castrated by the state (Sykes 1958). While it may have been permissible for men to create images of the women depicted above, it was not permissible for prisoners to exhibit images that featured sexualised women or women as objects of sexual desire.

Portraits of unknown people were excluded on the possibility that they might be victims. Portraits of well-known celebrities, such as fashion model Miranda Kerr, were allowed. But a portrait of actor Anthony Hopkins, in character as the psychopathic murderer Hannibal Lecter from *Silence of the Lambs*, muzzled with leather and restrained in readiness for his transport from prison, was excluded.



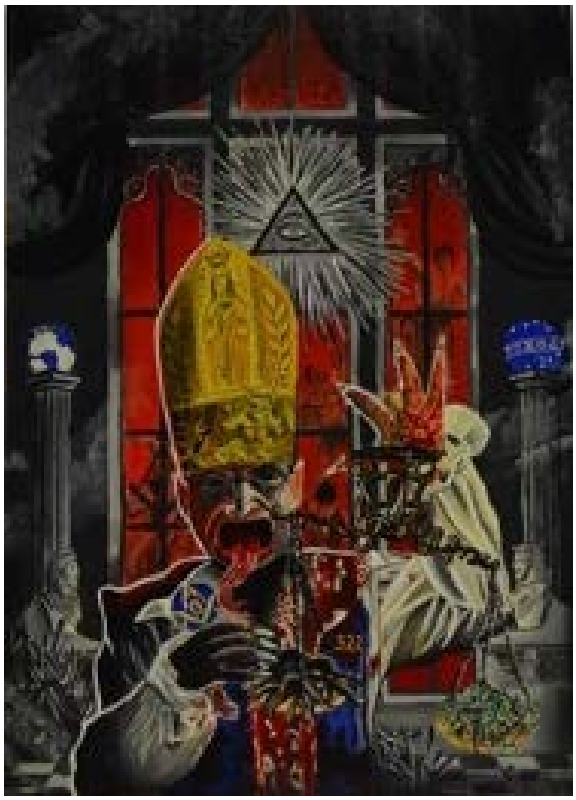
Artwork 25: The Man Behind the Mask (2014)

Text: The man behind the mask, Hannibal Lector, man and criminal icon.

These are examples where the image itself was problematic. These were images that were judged to be too (potentially) offensive for public consumption as images from prison. There was a risk that these sorts of images might send the wrong message or upset the public. For example, the

painting and text about Hannibal Lecter could be interpreted as a celebration of criminality and notoriety.

In some cases, works were excluded based on the content of the artwork in the context of individual criminal history. The main feature of one excluded artwork was a demonic priest with a lizard-like tongue, who held in his hands the scales of justice, weighed down on one side by money and by bodies on the other. This particular piece was contentious, given its explicit attack on powerful religious figures, as well as on institutional and financial power as corrupting forces. The prisoner was technically competent. However, this piece was excluded from the exhibition based on the combination of the irreverent content of the artwork and the prisoner's serious criminal conviction. That year, the same prisoner also entered a large pastel drawing of a red flower, to which there was no objection.



Artwork 26: Untitled (2014)

In 2013, a prisoner who had previously won awards in the 2012 AbP entered a number of works. One of them was entitled *Sowadoyasee* (So What Do You See). The dominant visual element to the composition was red liquid-like splashes, trails and blobs. Also, there were blue liquid-like blobs and other elements such as faint light blue animal tracks crisscrossing the frame.

Artwork 27: Sowadoyasee (2013)

Sowadoyasee is a title that invites the viewer to interpret this abstract work. In making decisions about which works get excluded, DCS staff match the work against the offence and details about the offence. This work was excluded by DCS when matched against the prisoner's specific offence, because, as a DSC staff member explained over the phone, it involved 'lots of blood'. When looking at this image through the filter of the prisoner's criminality and the specifics of his crime,

DCS staff read the author's deviance into the work, seeing his crime or a reference to his crime. Undoubtedly, the somewhat provocative title played a role in the decision to exclude this work. It might have been allowed if the title had instead been *Desert Tracks* for example. Perhaps this prisoner is using this artwork to make a statement about how prisoners can become trapped by their own history. He had by this point served many years in prison. Perhaps by asking 'Sowadoyasee', this prisoner was actually asking, 'How do you see me?' To DCS staff, the answer to this question was that they saw him and his artwork through the lens of his crime and his identity as a criminal. This example and the other examples of excluded art objects either showed poor taste, were images that might send undesirable messages or they did not support the notion that art was being used by prisoners to better themselves. These were images that could be interpreted as evidence of their creators' criminality, their deviance or their lack of respect for the prison boundary and the sorts of things it was appropriate for prisoners to say publicly.

Conclusion

> 'The publicity of punishment must not have the physical effect of terror; it must open up a book to be read'. (Foucault 1979, p. 111)

As Ferguson writes (1996, p. 175) 'exhibitions are publicly sanctioned representations of identity, principally, but not exclusively, of the institutions which present them.' The AbP exhibitions were presented by two institutions: the AFC and the DCS. The exhibitions then had to communicate messages that were sanctioned by those institutions. These exhibitions can be understood as a public relations exercise for DCS, the AFC *and* the participating prisoners. The messages that they broadcast needed to make sense in the context of crime and punishment. DCS censored art objects from each exhibition to ensure the exhibitions broadcast the right messages to the public. In many cases, if works had not been censored by DCS, they may well have been censored by the AFC. It is important to note, however, that the vast majority of art objects entered went on display. The messages then that most prisoners wanted to broadcast to the public were consistent with the sorts of messages deemed acceptable and appropriate to DCS and the AFC.

A number of messages that the prisoners wanted to get across to the public were also strategically aligned to the objectives of the Department. The production of art presents prisoners not as sitting around idle but as productive members of the (prison) community. Further, the production of art is promoted as an important activity that keeps people busy and helps them to cope with and adapt to the prison environment. Many of the images and texts depicted the prison as a challenging and difficult place in which to live. Some graphically depicted the 'pains of imprisonment' (Sykes 1958, pp. 63–82). They referred to the isolation, frustration and regret of being separated from family members, as parents separated from children and vice versa. The art exhibitions formed part of the 'publicity of punishment'. They opened up a book from which members of the public could read about the existential challenges which prisoners must cope and the hardships they must bear. Importantly, the exhibitions enabled people to read about the pain and suffering that prisoners must endure as a consequence of crime and punishment.

By making the 'pains of imprisonment' visible and readable to the public, the prisoners participated in the community as prisoners. The public did not know about the specific identities, crimes and penalties of the participants. Nevertheless, the art objects made evident the connections between crime and punishment and punishment and suffering. This was true also for the Koestler Trust's 2011 AbO exhibition (see Turner 2016). The exhibitions were a spectacle of sorts, where the painful effects of punishment were made visible through, or read into, art and text. This spectacle, however, was far more civilised than the historic public punishment ceremonies of the scaffold (Foucault 1979, pp. 32–69). Public exhibitions of prison art are spectacles capable of producing and disseminating signs about punishment. The AbP exhibitions (and also the Koestler's AbO exhibitions) depict the prison as a place where people experience psychological pain and grapple with feelings of isolation, frustration and regret. Importantly, the idea of punishment and suffering becomes visible; it is no longer secreted behind the prison walls. 'A secret punishment is a punishment half wasted,' writes Foucault (1979, p. 111). The AbP exhibitions become part of the 'natural mechanics' of punishment, for a punishment that is no longer secret is no longer 'wasted' (Foucault 1979, p 111). Punishment, after all, is aimed not just

at perpetrators but at all the potentially guilty (Foucault 1979). Exhibitions of prison art can produce signs that help to disseminate and circulate the message that punishment hurts and 'crime does not pay'. An important aspect of the exhibitions is then, that they are consistent with the messages the state wishes to broadcast to the public. It activates the code that links crime to punishment and punishment to suffering.

Although the works in the exhibitions made known the pain and suffering of others, the burden of this knowledge was mitigated by other artworks that depicted other themes, such as hobbies, boats, cars, motorcycles and Indigenous cultural narratives. The suffering of others was also mitigated through the medium of art. Many of the art objects on display demonstrated a variety of media and skill levels from the naïve beginner to the very accomplished. The skills and talents that many of the works demonstrated symbolised hope. So too did the texts within the exhibition that communicated the way that art making could help to mitigate the 'pains of imprisonment', as an expressive, absorbing and creative activity that allowed prisoners to psychologically and symbolically 'escape' the prison. It was also an activity that enabled prisoners to access more positive states of mind, such as joy or a sense of achievement and satisfaction. The autobiographical nature of the themes present in the work can be understood as depicting (or symbolising) objects and people that prisoners cared about. In fact, the texts that make it clear just how important art making is to some prisoners illustrate that the act of producing art is one of self-care or self-love, as well as care or love for things greater than the self, such as one's culture. Thus, the exhibitions were events that both coded participants as prisoners yet also recoded them. They let participants fracture their prisoner identities by revealing fragments of alternative identities (e.g., father, foreigner, grandson, Doctor Who fan, model builder, Indigenous man/woman) and even that of the (aspiring, developing, or highly accomplished) artist. The art exhibitions let prisoners produce knowledge about punishment and also allowed prisoners to produce alternative knowledge about themselves, knowledge they hoped would elevate them from 'prisoner' or 'criminal' to 'human' or, as one prisoner put it, 'good people'. Thus, exhibitions

of prisoner art can open the door to the moral recoding of the prisoner. Art may enable not just a psychological or visual escape, but an escape (even if temporary) from one's criminal identity.

CHAPTER 5: ON THE WALLS: PART 2

Introduction

I called this series of exhibitions Art by Prisoners to inform the public that the art was made in prison by people convicted of crimes. I labelled those who created the art as 'prisoners'. Being publicly identified and punished for committing crime has consequences for a person's public identity and self-image (Becker 1963; Sykes 1958). The title, Art by Prisoners, reveals the creators as a 'different kind of person from the kind he [or she] was supposed to be' (Becker 1963, p. 32). Knowledge of someone's criminal status is stigmatising, and prisoners can suffer from multiple layers of stigma. According to Goffman (1963, p. 15), one form of stigma is 'tribal stigma', which could be applied to members of the criminal group generally (as well as specific racial groups within prison), and another form of stigma makes known the 'blemishes of individual character'. The term *stigma* originated in the 16th century to refer to the 'bodily signs designed to expose something unusual and bad about the moral status of the signifier' (Goffman 1963, p. 11). Being processed through the criminal justice system involves being identified and labelled as a deviant or criminal. The stigma of a previous criminal record is one of the biggest obstacles for reintegration and desistance (Maruna 2014). According to labelling theorists, formal legal and other informal social responses to those who have committed crime help, and may even be responsible for creating criminal identities (Becker 1963; Lemert 1951; Tannenbaum 1938). According to Tannenbaum (1938, pp. 19–20), societal responses create criminal identities by:

> tagging, defining, segregating, describing, emphasising, making conscious and self-conscious; it becomes a way of stimulating, suggesting, emphasising and evoking the very traits that are complained of … he is made conscious of himself as a different human being than he was before his arrest. The person becomes the thing he is described as being.

Of concern, then, is the self-fulfilling prophecy Tannenbaum articulates above. It is not wrong to condemn and punish criminal behaviour. However, if prisoners are generally denied opportunities

to make themselves visible and known as anyone other than 'criminal', society's responses to crime will entrench deviant identities and pathways to criminal careers (Becker 1963) rather than open up alternative pathways. The stigma of being processed through the criminal justice system is one of the biggest obstacles for ex-prisoners trying to desist from crime (Maruna 2014, p. 121). To encourage desistance and reduce recidivism, society should focus not only on punishment and retribution but on possibilities for redemption and the formation of non-deviant identities (Maruna 2001). This would require, at the bare minimum, opportunities to apply positive and elevating labels to (ex-)criminals by making visible other traits that allow us to tag, describe and make conscious and self-conscious the options for being someone other than a criminal. This, however, can be an incredibly complex and challenging task, and one that may even be too much for the prison system alone to achieve on its own (see Maruna 2011).

For those in prison, the associated labels—prisoner, criminal, deviant—become their 'master status' which overrides most other status considerations. As a consequence, the bearer of that status becomes known first and foremost as a rule- or law-breaker (Becker, 1963, pp. 32–33). Public recognition of a single deviant trait has symbolic value that raises assumptions about other undesirable traits that are associated with it. This also raises questions about the moral status of those labelled as deviant. For suspicion hangs over the person known and named as a rule-breaker, for what kind of person would commit crime? According to Becker (1963, p. 34), the answer is 'one who is different from the rest of us, who cannot or will not act as a moral human being and therefore might break other important rules'. Logically, then, such a person is a danger and should be feared. Criminals are consequently cast downwards in the eyes of the community and naturally come to be regarded as 'not quite human' (Goffman 1963, p. 15).

A good first step to relabel prisoners, then, would be to look at ways to humanise prisoners in the eyes of the public, so that instead of isolating and withdrawing support from the criminal, the public can be open to the idea that criminals might be capable people, worthy of attention and future investment. Generally speaking, convicted criminals have very few chances to produce and

share with the public knowledge about themselves that presents them as people other than criminals, as part of a de-stigmatisation practice. However, the AbP exhibitions (and similarly, the Koestler Trust's AbO exhibitions) stand out as unique events that provided prisoners with chances to present themselves as ordinary human beings. It also allowed the public to 'see' the prisoners as people and acknowledge them as such. In some cases, where the artworks were particularly good, the exhibitions enabled prisoners to be elevated to the extraordinary. There was also a strong moral dimension to the exhibitions. For their wrongdoing, convicted criminals are cast out of society at enormous public expense. Prisoners are allowed back into society in the context of an exhibition because the community widely regard producing art as something useful, valuable, entertaining and educational. In other words, the production of art is considered morally right, so it is widely accepted as a form of 'rightdoing'. Art, as Dissanayake (1995, pp. 13–37) points out, is not only an object but a form of behaviour. Dissanayake refers to art production as 'making special', by which the ordinary is elevated to the extraordinary. She also connects art with play and ritual, two important aspects of cultural health (through bonding and developing social skills), which are essential for inclusiveness, co-operation and group survival. The importance of art and art making to a healthy and well-functioning society helps to account for the overwhelmingly positive public response to the exhibitions. The production of art and the public exhibition of that art was, for prisoners, a way to demonstrate that they were ordinary human beings, some with extraordinary talents, capable of caring and capable of 'acting out of their highest impulses' (Kornfeld 1997, p. 78). Writing about the 2011 AbO exhibition, Turner (2016, pp. 183–184, citing Hugunin 1999, p. 418), noted prisoners' motivation to be and be seen as someone other than their deviant identities, through producing counter-narratives that produce

> a new language of desire … [where] they resist the image and gaze that produces them as 'others'. This idea was true for many prisoners who wanted to participate in the exhibitions so they could be seen and acknowledged as someone other than a 'prisoner' or 'criminal'.

The AbP exhibitions enabled prisoners to present themselves as someone other than criminal, and it enabled the public to see and acknowledge prisoners as that someone other. The exhibitions

were, therefore, events that could contribute to the de-stigmatisation process by challenging negative and punitive public attitudes towards (ex-)prisoners. Thus, these events allowed more positive public narratives about prisoners to play out in the community and through the media.

Art Making, Exhibitions, Feedback and Reactions

Although prisoners remained anonymous, the AbP exhibitions presented opportunities for prisoners to show different sides of themselves to the community. The previous chapter provided examples of the images and texts created by prisoners and exhibited in the community. This chapter will focus on the public responses to the images, texts and exhibitions. Community feedback was recorded on slips of paper handed out at each of the opening nights, as well as through written responses recorded in the comments book that rested on a plinth for the duration of the exhibitions. The 2012 exhibition received 124 comments from the public, the 2013 exhibition received 54 comments, and the 2014 exhibition received 92 responses. Over the three exhibitions, a total of 270 public comments were recorded.

Certificates of award and samples of the public comments were sent to prisoners at the conclusion of the exhibitions, so that prisoners could read about how people saw, read, responded to and were moved by the art and the exhibitions. This involved the prisoners—who, of course, could not attend in person—in the events. In reading the comments, the prisoners could discover whether their own agendas and desires concerning the exhibitions were successful or not. Importantly, the feedback was evidence of how the community saw and responded to what the prisoners had done. Many members of the public referred to specific works in their comments, singling them out because certain images and texts resonated differently or more powerfully with different people. Some responses were long and emotional, while others were very short. They revealed very different levels of knowledge and awareness of the lives of prisoners: from none whatsoever to those who were intimately familiar with the inner workings of the prison, such as correctional staff or prison chaplains. For many members of the public, seeing prisoners' art objects and reading the accompanying stories was an informative, moving and transformative experience.

This chapter will also focus on the prisoner reactions to reading that feedback and receiving certificates. Each year, a sample of at least 12 comments (four pages, with three comments per page), along with a certificate awarded by an expert panel, was sent to each participating prisoner. Prisoners were asked to reflect on the public feedback and the certificates of award they had received. The public comment slips and certificates were designed to give prisoners positive affirmation and recognition for their participation in the events. The comment slips were proof that the public had seen the prisoners' artworks and that these had affected people. Public responses to the exhibitions were also broader than this. Mainstream media coverage is influential and an important part of the overall community response. Each year, the exhibition generated media interest, with large media organisations—specifically, *The Advertiser* and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (the ABC)—publishing print stories and broadcasting small radio segments about the exhibitions.

Visibility

The AbP exhibitions gave prisoners a public exposure and visibility to a vast array of people with broadly varying degrees of knowledge and experience of the criminal justice system. Importantly, they were events that reached people who did not often think about the prison system and those incarcerated within it. For those with little to no knowledge of the prison system, the AbP exhibitions were educational and provided 'insight' (20/2013 O) into the lives and experiences of prisoners:

> Reading the stories that accompany some of the works is very poignant. In the course of my day-to-day life I don't think about prisoners, their lives or activities they undertake while in prison. It's therefore eye opening and a little confronting to view their artwork and get an insight into their lives and experiences. (43/2012 O)

The participating prisoners depicted and described through images and text the 'pains of imprisonment' (Sykes 1958). In their comments, the public made various descriptive references to the prison, confirming that many people thought of it as a difficult and unpleasant place in which

to live. The prison was described as a 'black place' (87/2012), a 'dehumanising system' (25/2012) and a place where people are 'constrained' (22/2012), 'suppressed' (7/2013) or 'locked away' (65/2012). These comments are a fitting way to describe prisons, as they are places of obscurity and, therefore, curiosity. People's interpretations of the art objects were coded by the concepts of prison, punishment and pain. Even images with titles and explanations that did not explicitly communicate the loss of liberty and the disconnection with the world beyond prison were coded through lenses of the prisoners' actual or imagined, but nevertheless logical, desires to escape:

> I felt there was a common theme. Escape. To the outside world or at least most. Only one reflected a life within prison. A very emotional exhibition compounded by some moving captions of regret. (17/2012 O)

At least one commenter acknowledged that their interpretation or understanding of the works was influenced by the knowledge the work was from prison:

> There's also a real sense of longing in the work, though whether this is because the landscapes are clearly something the prisoners do not get to enjoy because they are locked up and I know this and I know they are prisoners and that's coloured my thoughts, I don't know. Maybe I wouldn't feel this way if I didn't know they were prisoners. Also that is reflected in the high number of landscapes as well. The exhibition is excellent ... (49/2012 O)

As the works in the AbP exhibitions were labelled as being created by prisoners, these works became coded by people's subjective understandings of the prison, and this influenced how people interpreted the works. There were many landscapes in each exhibition, and though landscape is a very common style of painting, a landscape painted in prison was symbolic of the prisoner's deprivation of liberty, and it became a symbol of freedom that is denied to the prisoner. The comments above demonstrate how the prisoner is conceived, and often rightly so, as someone who longs for release and to return to the community.

Invisibility and the Management of Criminal Identities

It is customary for art exhibitions to feature and promote the identity of the artist and to contextualise her/his art objects and exhibitions within that artist's biography. This information is important, so that audiences can better understand what the artist is communicating. Exhibiting prisoner art objects anonymously means that the audience, aside from knowing the creators are in prison, knows very little about the prisoners' identities or biographies. The public reacted very differently to the absence of information concerning prisoners' names and crimes, for this information is central yet hidden. Their status as prisoners was the sole pre-requisite for inclusion in the AbP exhibitions. The absence, or denial, of prisoners' names was critical information. This confirmed the participants' status as prisoners, as 'outsiders' whose identities were problematic and who were only allowed to re-enter society under strict conditions. Behind criminal identities, lie stories of deviance, loss, violence, pain, trauma, even death. To exclude the names of participants was to exclude what Simon (2011, p. 432) terms 'difficult knowledge'. An exhibition might be considered difficult if it produces the 'burden of negative emotions' such as revulsion, grief, anger or shame (Simon 2011, p. 433). Of particular importance was the protection of both victims and perpetrators of crime from being identified. As Simon (2011, p. 433) explains:

> Exhibitions can be judged as difficult if they evoke the heightened anxiety (and the potential for secondary traumatisation) that accompanies such feelings of identification with either the victims of violence [or] the perpetrators of such violence …

Thus, the condition of anonymity was necessary for the public to be able to enjoy and appreciate the exhibitions. However, the idea that 'difficult knowledge' lurked somewhere in the background was disconcerting for some people. For one commenter, anonymity was a 'contentious question' (23/2012 O). Another commenter acknowledged the tension between the curiosity that anonymity creates with the 'difficult knowledge' that might be revealed with access to the participants' names:

> Having unidentified artists was immediately intriguing. And then deeply moving because the circumstances that led to their anonymity could be … well challenging. The quality impressed me. Lots. It seemed very poignant, but I wondered how much was my imposing stories on the artists. Apart from all that, the connection between art and punishment keeps me musing. (28/2012 O)

The condition of anonymity also brought an element of sympathy and solidarity. One commenter thought it was a 'pity' (48/2012 O) that the artists were not able to be identified, and another commenter thought that it was sad that the artists were identified by a number (47/2012). In some instances, prisoner anonymity created the desire to know more about the prisoners involved. Audiences were naturally curious:

> The art work displayed is at high quality. The initiative is a great insight into the people's thoughts (images) behind the art work who may be locked into isolation. It would be fascinating to see the people behind the work, their crimes etc. I wish all the success and development within this project and I really enjoy and appreciate this type of work done with art and people who can use it constructively. (44/2012 O)

The lack of biographical information on the participating prisoners mean that people were drawn to the works that were accompanied by additional stories and texts:

> This is an excellent showcase of the talents of individuals. I enjoyed the text that accompanied some pieces – it offered additional context and insight. (8/2012 O)

While anonymity allowed for the strategic management of criminal identities, the exhibitions did produce 'difficult knowledge', as they were visual representations of Indigenous over-representation in the criminal justice system. For some, this brought forth negative emotions such as sadness. Indigenous people make up around 2% of the overall Australian population. However, in 2017, Indigenous people made up around 27% of the Australian prison population. In South Australia, Indigenous people comprised 23% of the prison population (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017). Unsurprisingly, Indigenous artwork featured prominently in each of the three AbP exhibitions, with between a third and a quarter of the artworks identifiably Indigenous. The

numerical prominence of Indigenous art was made even more notable because this work was some of the largest and most impressive on display. The burden of negative emotions can be evoked where exhibitions 'raise the possibility of the complicity of one's country, culture or family in systemic violence such as the seizure of Aboriginal land, the slave trade or the perpetration of genocide' (Simon 2011, p. 433). The over-representation of Indigenous people in prison is part of Australia's colonial legacy, which can bring forth feelings of grief, anger and shame. For the public, the AbP exhibitions were powerful visible expressions of Indigenous over-representation and thus as events, they drew attention to this issue; in doing so, they brought forth negative emotions:

> This exhibition leaves me with a couple of strong feelings. Firstly one of sadness. Of those exhibited at least 14 are by indigenous artists. Perhaps that choice was deliberate, as perhaps the most participating group? Or requested from? Anyway it proves the point that the majority of incarcerated are overwhelmingly indigenous and what does that say about social justice in SA. Secondly the quality of overall is wonderful. Thirdly, I know they're prisoners but to be identified as a number. (47/2012 O)

> The art work show a high level of ability by many of the artists. It's also obvious that many of them are indigenous people. An indictment of the struggles and disadvantage experienced by them. (6/2012 O)

> … sad that so many are Indigenous suggesting a huge imbalance in the system. (114/2012)

> The paintings are all so beautiful, and the notes with them moving. This is a wonderful exhibition and from my perspective, privileged to be out here, it does help me connect. It also really illustrates the over-representation of indigenous people in the prison system. This tragedy is brought home by your art. I especially loved the Dolphin Dreaming and Turtle Dreaming. Thank you and God bless. (58/2014)

De-stigmatising Visibility: Challenging the Criminal Stereotype

> [I want] for people to see the side of prison for the good and to be recognised by others for my talents. (Q7.P1.2014)

One aspect of prisoners' lives that the exhibitions introduced to the public was that prisoners are talented and skilled people, capable of producing impressive artwork. This was a strategic message that some prisoners seized the chance to communicate. For one of the consequences of serving time in prison is the low expectations and estimations that the public hold towards (ex-)prisoners, whom they regard as subhuman (Goffman 1963). People who hold the label of 'prisoner' or 'criminal' as their master status are assumed to have other undesirable 'auxiliary traits', such as being untrustworthy, uneducated, uncivilised and immoral (Becker 1963, p. 32). Criminals sit outside the social system in the margins, where they are credited with 'unreliability, unteachability, and all the wrong social attitudes' (Douglas 1966, p. 98). Prisoners were well-aware of the negative attitudes people have of them, with one wanting to enter for the following reason:

> So they can see some of us are not useless prisoners. (Q3.P10.2012)

As outsiders, prisoners exist in a marginal status. As a result, many visitors to the exhibitions simply had no idea what to expect. For some people, the quality of work came as a surprise, with some even suggesting that the quality was higher than that of art in galleries. The fact that people were surprised seems to confirm people's negative assumptions about prisoners and the sorts of things they are capable of doing:

> I heard about this exhibition from a friend and wasn't sure what to expect. I was very pleasantly surprised at the talent and quality of art on show. I really like that the prisoners are given the opportunity to find an artistic outlet, especially as some of the artwork shown here is of a much higher quality than some works you come across in art galleries.
> (3/2013 O)

> I'm surprised at how good the art is, a lot of it is great … (107/2012)

> The quality of these paintings are fantastic. There is a tremendous lot of talent … I think I was surprised by the amount of talent. (14/2012 O)

To the extent that prisoners were able to challenge negative stereotypes and assumptions, the exhibitions were a resounding success, with many visitors leaving comments that praised the participating prisoners and their artwork:

> A great example of amazing art skills a number of people incarcerated uphold. (32/2012 O)
>
> It's a remarkable exhibition showcasing some exceptional work. (37/2013 O)
>
> Excellent standard of work. It's quite a privilege to experience. (21/2014 O)
>
> Several AbP visitors commented on the contrast between the exhibitions' positive portrayals of criminals and negative popular media portrayals:
>
> It heartens and humanises having prisoner's art on show. Prisoners can seem to be nameless, faceless and often heartless if most of the media's portrayals are accepted. The artwork on display is rich and deep, colourful and individual … I like it. (49/2013)
>
> The exhibition reveals something of the humanity of the artists where crimes are likely most often the prime insight or perspective seen … (36/2013 O)

In reading about prisoners and discovering something of their lives that was unconnected to their specific criminal identities, the public were able to imagine prisoners as people with other, more positive auxiliary traits that contributed to the de-stigmatisation of prisoners:

> Again this exhibition makes me think about prisoners, their lives and their families in a different way. It re-frames them. Thought provoking, perspective changing and visually interesting. (31/2013 O)

The nomenclature used by the public was further evidence of how the exhibitions humanised prisoners, and this allowed them to be thought about, described and labelled as 'artists' or 'people' with individual thoughts and emotions:

> This is a heartening exhibition! How is it that these artists are in prison? It seems to me the exhibition shows exactly why there are too many people in prison and that prisoners are so often places to suppress the dispossessed and downtrodden. In each of these paintings you can feel the human spirit overcoming this oppression. (7/2013 O)

> A very interesting glimpse into the thoughts of prisoners. More importantly to me personally a reminder of people. People are people. (29/2013 O)

> Such talent – you are not just prisoners but artists with something so valuable to share. Thank you – it means a lot to me to be able to see these works. (68/2014)

For some, the exhibitions challenged their views of the prison as an institution, the imagined effects that it had on people, and the sorts of activities and achievements that they thought were possible from within prison:

> Seeing this art made me think about the process of its creation – where the prisoner found their inspiration, where they worked to produce it and when they did it. I had never really thought about prisons as sites of creativity, but this exhibition has helped me to imagine it. (19/2013 O)

> It's interesting (although perhaps not surprising) that such a variety of techniques and subjects are employed by individual prisoners. With such a seemingly stale, structured and harsh environment from an outside perspective it seems as though prisoners would lose a sense of individual person and taste – to an extent. This is blatantly untrue and this art has helped me examine the assumption I had unknowingly made. (2/2012 O)

The exhibition also allowed some people to reflect upon and appreciate their own freedom:

> This is an exhibition which enables the humanity of some of our most voiceless citizens to be exposed. It is a humbling experience to freely come and enjoy the fruits of this talent, I'd be free to leave, knowing that the artists do not enjoy such privileges. Thank you so much for the experience. (74/2012)

Moral Visibility

> It shows the public that we are still people like them with something to contribute. (Q7.P8.2013)

The exhibitions were highly symbolic of prisoners' desires and ability to participate in society in positive and productive ways. This stood in stark contrast to the concept of committing crime and thus contributing to society in negative and harmful ways. This was another source of humanising knowledge produced by the exhibition but one with a moral dimension. The exhibitions enabled prisoners to create and offer something of value to society that surprised and delighted the public. In sharing their artwork, prisoners were able to generate positive feelings and emotions and thus gratify the members of the public:

> Fantastic, beautiful art, thank you very much ♥. (18/2012 O)

> Brilliant work all of them. Thrilled to be able to see these works. (80/2012)

> I adore this most spectacular expo. An inspiring yet relaxing insight on Adelaide's most outstanding places to see. Wish the artist all the best for the near future. (66/2012)

The art objects within the exhibitions were highly symbolic, for they were seen by some as evidence of prisoners' desires and capacity to do something good for themselves and society:

> All of the paintings represent something positive the artists have done for themselves and those around them. Thank you for the art. (27/2012 O)

Prisoners were able to broadcast how important it was to produce art in prison. Activities such as art making in prison can be vulnerable to political interventions if prison is perceived as being too easy or not punitive enough. Prisoners, though, were able to communicate complex messages involving pain and despair but also strength, hope and joy. The exhibitions allowed prisoners to communicate what it was like to be prisoners but also how art was a medium for the expression of challenging emotions, and for mitigating the pain caused by incarceration:

> The one thing that stands out to me are the comments by the prisoners, about how much art means to them and the fact that it is helping them to cope a little or maybe a lot more than people realise. (36/2012 O)

> They are impressive, not only the skill but something touch the heart. "This project has given them the opportunity to use their skills, imagination and creativity and makes their life more bearable, enjoyable"… as one of them says. (8/2013 O)

The process of creating art in particular was seen by many members of the public as an important emotional outlet for prisoners:

> I loved reading the stories behind the pictures. It seems like such a great outlet for the prisoners. They've done such a brilliant job on all of the pictures. (58/2012)

Some members of the public connected art production with self-expression, developing talents and spaces for self-reflection. Thus, art making was understood to be both a creative and a therapeutic or healing process. Producing art was connected by members of the public to the process of inner change and transformation:

> We are visitors from Perth, WA. Excellent work – more of it. What a great outlet for prisoners to not only express themselves but as a therapeutic medium … (26/2012 O)

> Art is a great medium for people to work through issues but more importantly realise their creative talents. Having an exhibition encourages confidence, a most enjoyable exhibition for the spectator! (2/2013 O)

> Some really wonderful works. Art obviously provides an opportunity for reflection and self-examination. A very healing process for anyone but especially for prisoners. (110/2012)

That the production of art was a morally good activity held true even to those who did not necessarily like all the artwork. Thus, the art object was a sacred medium that could communicate the desire to do good and be good:

> Inspirational. A mix of delicate works contrast the realities for many artists. Some images are challenging. Some culturally revealing. Some simple but others complex. Some images are not to my personal liking but that is art and in some ways the like and dislike mirror life. Pleased that the art did not explore crime. Testament that people who have done wrong can do something good. (38/2012 O)

The public understood that the exhibition of prisoners' art objects could further enhance the positive effects of making art in prison. Many imagined that participating in an exhibition would be beneficial to prisoners' self-confidence and feelings of self-worth. The public understood that they too were being invited to contribute to a feedback system designed to encourage and support prisoners. The public recognised that their own positive responses played an important role in bringing about these positive feelings and emotions:

> … I imagine that participation in the exhibition would be an empowering experience for prisoners. (8/2012 O)

> I'm impressed with the art displayed here. What a great way for prisoners to use their time. I believe those creative works will enhance the prisoners' self-esteem and self-worth – I hope many of the positive comments from the public are passed onto the prisoners. (25/2013 O)

> So glad to attend … Such an important outlet for prisoners and insight for public. This should be extended and encouraged far and wide in all prisons. Self-esteem, confidence – positive outcome. Hopefully prisoners will be able to see with photos how valued their work is. Well done, see u next year. (7/2012 O)

Media Visibility

Mainstream media outlets published stories about the exhibitions that echoed the supportive comments left by the public. Media articles about the exhibitions also helped to broadcast strategic messages about prisoners and the positive role that art making played in their lives. After the first AbP exhibition in 2012, the local Murdoch tabloid, *The Advertiser*, and its online version,

Adelaide Now, ran a positive news story, titled 'Prisoners paint a life behind bars' (Robertson 2012). In 2014, the ABC published an online article, 'Art by South Australian prisoners goes on display' (Williamson 2014). This article even quoted one of the prisoners, whose comment was exhibited next to his artwork, explaining that the exhibition allowed him to 'experience a small sense of achievement'. Robertson (2012) also quoted a leading Adelaide forensic psychologist, Dr Jack White, who emphasises that art is a useful outlet for expression, which helps prisoners' self-esteem. Robertson quotes Dr White, who articulates and confirms the value of these exhibitions in relation to labelling theory:

> Getting respect from other people who see what they can do is enormous. Society tells them they are useless and can't do anything but with [AbP], people start looking at them like they have some abilities and are not just somebody who is in jail.

Though there were only two print articles in the mainstream media about the AbP exhibitions, both articles were positive and supportive of prisoners and their participation in society through art. These articles stand in stark contrast to the sorts of headlines and stories about crime and criminals that usually dominate the media.

Prisoner Reactions to Public Responses

The participating prisoners were unable to be present at the exhibitions. As such, they could not witness for themselves how the art objects looked in frames hanging on the walls. They could not see members of the public wandering around looking at the artwork and reading the text panels. Prisoners could not participate in the opening rituals. They could not see or hear the opening speakers, and members of the public could not come up to the prisoners, congratulate them in person and speak to them about their work. There were no artist talks, and the media could not talk to any participants. Art exhibitions, particularly the opening rituals, are formal celebrations of both the artwork and of the artist(s). For the AbP exhibitions, the prisoner artists were unable to be included in these uplifting occasions. They were unable to witness and experience directly the reactions of others to their work, their messages and their art.

Prisoners received two main sources of feedback. Firstly, every prisoner received a certificate. The art entered by prisoners was viewed by a panel of art experts who gave awards in the categories of Highly Commended, Commended and Participation. The certificate was a genuine and authentic document, produced by Flinders University and identical to the type presented to students and staff. Presenting prisoners with an official certificate formally acknowledged prisoners' efforts and artistic skills. Secondly, every entrant was sent samples of public feedback that was recorded at the exhibition in the comments book. Each prisoner received four pages of comments. Each page had three comments; thus, in total, prisoners received 12 comments from individual members of the public. At the end of the exhibition, artworks were returned to each prisoner, along with a certificate and photocopied samples of public feedback. The photocopy meant that prisoners could see the individual comments and the unique handwriting, as well as other important marks, such as drawings of smiley faces or love hearts. This gave participating prisoners evidence that their artwork had been part of an exhibition. It was evidence that the public and experts had seen their work and that it had had an impact on them. This next section of the thesis will examine how the prisoners reacted to their participation in the AbP exhibitions after receiving their certificates and samples of community responses. The process of labelling requires that people witness the way others respond to, describe, identify and empathise with them. Deviance is the product of a feedback process triggered by a criminal act. Key here is the reactions of others, as Becker (1963, p. 14) explains: 'Deviance is not a quality that lies in behaviour itself, but in the interaction between the person who commits an act and those who respond to it.' The process towards creating a non-deviant identity encourages behaviour considered good, right and appropriate; allows others to see that and respond to it with positive affirmations and reactions; and allows those who displayed that behaviour to experience those reactions. The prison wall presents a significant barrier for interactions between prisoners and the community. Art exhibitions, though, offer a way around this.

Elevation

Being recognised for their achievements and receiving praise and gratitude from the public were emotionally uplifting for almost all prisoners. Many prisoners wrote that they 'felt good' (Q4.P3.2013) to read the comments, that they 'loved them' (Q4.P4.2013) and that the comments made them feel 'happy' (Q4.P12.2013). Just as many members of the public expressed gratitude in being able to see the artworks. Many prisoners expressed their gratitude at being able to participate and to 'express themselves outside of prison' (017/2012). One particular emotion that prisoners felt at reading the comments was pride:

> Well to receive these certificates it makes me feel very happy and proud and I love the good things people said about my paintings all in all I am so happy and pleased to win these awards. (Q2.P6.2012)

> I felt proud to have my art work up for everyone to see. (Q3.P1.2013)

Concurringly, for some prisoners, this positive feedback was not a common experience or feature of their lives. As a result, it was emotionally powerful:

> It's amazing, those comments amazed me. I've put all my feeling and messages into my drawing to capture the public attention. Those comments meant the world to me. (Q7.P10.2012)

> For me the feedback was very positive as I can't remember when the last time was when I received so much positive feedback for something I had/have participated in. I was on cloud nine when I received the parcel with the award and pages of feedback. (Q8.P12.2012)

Receiving the certificates and comments was a boost to many prisoners' self-confidence in their artistic abilities and to their self-esteem generally. The encouragement and confidence were also motivating factors for prisoners to continue making art and developing their skills:

> It was very important to have expert opinion of the work that I have done and that it will give the encouragement to keep on working and better my skill. (Q2.P13.2012)

> It is great to get a response from my drawing and now has given me confidence to continue in the future. (Q2.P17.2012)

Art is an activity that gives some people's lives a purpose within and beyond prison. For one long-term prisoner with another 10 years left to serve, art was a 'reason to keep going' (Q2.P10.2013). For another, the confidence from the positive responses was important for conceiving a future beyond prison creating art:

> It gives me the confidence to one day put my art out there if I ever get out of this bad dream of a place and make a living off of it somehow even if it doesn't make a lot it will keep me going. (Q3.P10.2013)

For many prisoners, receiving positive comments was proof that the public enjoyed the exhibition and liked the artwork. This was a significant form of acceptance:

> It's good to see that people actually liked my artwork. (Q2.P9.2013)

Receiving a certificate was validating for numerous prisoners who identified as artists. The exhibitions, as well as the feedback and certificates, gave these prisoners a wider audience for their work and also indicated how their work is received beyond the prison walls:

> I was surprised at the certificate I got (Highly Commended). I didn't think it would have done so well. I'm a self-taught artist and I've been painting for approximately 10 years. Everything I'd learnt I had learnt through trial and error. A lot of people here like my style of painting and it was nice to get a piece out there for everyone to see. I would like to enter again when you have another exhibition. (Q2.P6.2013)

It was also an important source of validation for those who did not think of themselves as artists:

> It meant a lot because I didn't consider myself as much of an artist/painter. (Q3.P2.2013)

However, one prisoner who identified as an artist could not see any benefit from taking part in AbP. For this prisoner, the condition of anonymity meant he would be unable to make a name for himself in the art world; thus, he felt that AbP did not contribute at all in promoting specific people as artists or allowing prisoners to challenge their specific prisoner identities. While AbP facilitated connections between prisoners and the public, these were not the right kind of connections for this prisoner:

> I don't feel that it is of any importance because it doesn't mean a thing to me personally – probably would mean something to a long time prisoner that is his only means of gauging his artwork other than his fellow inmates, but to me who will be out on parole next year, it doesn't further my career in art in any form. I remain anonymous to the public even if I won a top award, it would mean nothing. I would still leave here having to go through the various channels to sell my art. I am good and I will make a name for myself in the art world – but it won't be because of Art by Prisoners. (Q2.P9.2012)

Connection

One important aspect of the responses was that they came from people in the community and, hence, it made people in prison feel as though they were connected to the community. Prisoners could read proof that they had been allowed out beyond their closed social networks of the prison. This helped some to feel as though they were not forgotten and that they were still 'part of society and life' (Q7.22.2012):

> It helps to know that you are not forgotten and that someone like me can reach out through my art. (Q7.P8.2012)

> It was just really good to hear from people outside of prison about their thoughts and feelings. (Q7.P17.2012)

> All I wanted was to get some feedback on my paintings to get other people's opinions instead of friends and associates. (Q3.P11.2013)

The positive feedback enabled the public to tell prisoners that they liked their artwork, valued their cultural contributions and thought what the prisoners said was valuable and interesting. This positive feedback is also a statement that the creators of the work, by association, were also valuable for imagining an alternative, crime-free future:

> It is very important to get a positive result back from the public as it makes the inmate (prisoners) feels important that they can do positive things in artwork instead of doing crime. (Q7.P21.2012)

Many prisoners referred to the importance of or satisfaction over reading the more emotional public responses. Such responses evidenced the emotional effects of the art and the ability of prisoners to move and gratify people emotionally:

> It shows me that my works are getting there to a saleable use and that very importantly my art will move people's emotions. (Q2.P15.2012)

> I like how the public can see and feel what message I have put in the drawing. (Q7.P10.2012)

The exhibitions, along with the awards and feedback, were also events that prisoners could speak about with their families. Numerous prisoners wrote that they received support from their families, who were happy, proud and excited that their loved ones' artworks had been awarded and featured in exhibitions. Topics of conversation, particularly positive conversations about what the participating prisoners had done, can serve to enhance the contact between people in prison and their family members. Some friends and family members of participating prisoners came to see the exhibitions. Prisoners' family members could speak about and share in prisoners' sense of pride and achievement, even if it was only fleeting:

> For me it was something new to talk about other than the same old same to my family when I phoned them – my usual conversation when they ask me is "still working, still in same situation, time passing by, no problems, nothing much changes here." Then suddenly! An art comp to enter for, so something new to talk about. But only briefly … they showed some interest. (Q6.P9.2012)

Success

Prisoners wanted to demonstrate to the public that they were talented and creative human beings, capable of being more than just 'useless prisoners' (Q3.P10.2012). Many of the comments were proof that prisoners had successfully transmitted these messages to the public and that the public had indeed been convinced by them. The responses proved that prisoners had talent, but they also proved the public's understanding that the artwork was evidence that some prisoners were doing something positive with their time in prison and were trying to develop themselves. Thus, producing art allowed prisoners to access power, not just over their material world but over the emotions and opinions, or the hearts and minds, of the public. Where art and craft are a hobby and recreation, prisoners are self-motivated. It is something they elect to do and, therefore, achievement in art represents something positive that prisoners have done for themselves, out of their own motivation and possibly at their own personal expense. Art objects symbolise time well spent honing and developing (or perhaps just trying out) skills. Art objects were symbolic of prisoners' desires to transform themselves, to see themselves either as transformed people or people in the process of transformation. In this way, participating in public art exhibitions is a way for prisoners to attempt or begin the process of redemption through positive actions (Maruna 2014, pp. 128–129) External recognition helped bring about this transformation:

> It's important to know that the public can see that prisoners are trying to be constructive with their time. Some are even trying to turn their lives around. (Q7.P16.2012)

> It means to me that people in the trade of art from some top art institutions of SA took time out of their busy day to look at and award art done by prisoners, which in general are looked down upon and put down by society. This art exhibit proves that us prisoners do have a lot of talent. Some prisoners do use their time in prison in a positive and useful way. (Q2.P12.2012)

> Because it shows that I am using my time in a positive manner, instead of walking around in circles not achieving anything. (Q3.P16.2012)

> I like all the feedback it gave me a sense of achievement. (Q7.P13.2012)

It highlighted that my work meant something. (Q4.P2.2013)

It nice to have good feedback on a art piece. It shows that your talent is appreciated. (Q2.P2.2013)

Because it showed another side to us and highlighted that we are not just a number on a door. (Q8.P2.2013)

Conclusion

The AbP exhibitions allowed prisoners to be visible in highly strategic and symbolic ways. The exhibitions enabled prisoners to communicate the pain and suffering associated with incarceration, but they also enabled the public to witness, believe and know prisoners in the context of their creative and artistic skills. These are auxiliary traits not usually associated with criminality. Art objects enabled prisoners to tell stories about themselves and their lives within and beyond the context of incarceration, divorced from their names and their specific criminal identities and histories. The absence of this information and the presentation of the self through art humanised prisoners in the eyes of the community. As Williams and Bendelow (1998, p. 189) explain, 'Like society, art is the creation of individual members who are themselves socially (trans)formed in the process'. The AbP exhibitions were opportunities for prisoners to transform and elevate themselves to 'human' or 'person', and even 'artist'.

The art object was something tangible that could demonstrate beyond doubt certain positive attributes that some prisoners possessed. Thus, the art objects were charged with the sacred power to restore or help repair the moral status, or at the very least, the moral potential of the prisoner. The exhibitions also meant that the public could be part of this transformative process. Members of the public understood that their encouragement, support and praise for the work played an important role in this respect. There are limits to this, of course, when prisoners cannot be identified. Nevertheless, the art objects signified prisoners' desires to 'do good', or to use the language of desistance, to give back and make good (Maruna 2001) and, therefore, their actual capacity to 'be good'.

Prisoners transformed themselves by interacting with people in the community through their art. Generally, and with some exceptions, prisoners are unable to participate in the world beyond the prison. One of the notable elements of the AbP exhibitions was that in the context of the prisoner's rightdoing, or their performance of what was understood to be moral behaviour, the public could unite in support and encouragement of the prisoner. Becker (1963, p. 61) provides an example (now, possibly dated) that the informal sanctions imposed upon a marijuana user by friends, family and associates, once this knowledge is made known, are ostracism and the withdrawal of affection. People's reactions to deviance, illegality and immorality are part of the social control mechanism (Becker 1963). Prison, of course, is the ultimate symbol of (mainstream) social rejection (Sykes 1958). The exhibitions reversed this reaction and thus became part of a social control mechanism that worked in the other direction: namely, not to condemn bad behaviour but encourage good behaviour. In response to prisoners' good behaviour, the prison administration allowed prisoners to participate in such events. Prisoners were also welcomed into the community, and the exhibitions prompted an outpouring of affection in the form of gratitude, support and encouragement. This created feelings of inclusion for prisoners and helped to lessen feelings of isolation and rejection. Public reactions also filled prisoners with positive emotions, confidence, the ability to imagine alternative futures, and desire to keep making and participating in the community through art. Reintegration, writes Maruna (2014, p. 128) is a two-way street that involves changes on the part of the person returning to the community, as well as acceptance from the community to which the person returns. The AbP exhibitions enabled prisoners and the community to rehearse this idea, as became evident to one commenter:

> I love the exhibition because it makes a connection between society and people who have been removed from it. It reminds us of the personal perspective of life incarcerated and the importance of re-integrating people returning to the public domain. (78/2014)

CHAPTER 6: BEYOND THE WALLS, PART 1: ESCAPE ARTISTS

Introduction

Producing art is a popular pastime for people in prison (for various reasons that have already been explored in this thesis). But it is also something that some prisoners have managed to turn from a pastime into an activity that brings about more profound personal and social change. Many believe that art can play a vital—if not starring—role in the rehabilitation of offenders. Producing art in prison is encouraged, facilitated or tolerated as an activity if it helps to occupy people productively, and it can make them more manageable. But occasionally too, producing art in prison has led to transformation from 'prisoner' to 'artist'.

Recent criminological research into the process of desistance focuses on identity and the ways in which ex-prisoners construct new non-criminal narratives and identities (Maruna 2001). There is little scope for prisoners to create alternative non-criminal identities that are visible, genuine and capable of convincing a speculative public with an appetite for punishment and retribution. With the production of art, however, this can become possible to varying degrees because it is a product that embodies its criminal author and, unlike its criminal author, it can travel beyond the prison walls and facilitate interactions with the community. Art making develops and displays creative talents while embodying powerful symbolic messages of transformation. Art objects can symbolise individually or collectively (as a body of work) achievements and behaviour that are inconsistent with deviant identities. Art objects offer a new lens and give rise to a new pro-social language with which to describe, understand, define and know those who created it. This chapter will focus on four convicted criminals and how, through their art production, three of them managed to remove their criminal label and their status as outsiders. Through art, they were welcomed by sections of the community who accepted them and helped relabel them as artists. The process through which this happened can offer important lessons for correctional practice and the creation of pro-social identities from within prison. Becoming an artist from within prison is challenging, but it is not impossible, as this chapter will demonstrate.

Jimmy Boyle

Jimmy Boyle was born in 1944 in the Gorbals, one of Glasgow's poorest neighbourhoods. He became part of the area's gang culture from a young age and, as a result, was in and out of institutions from the age of 12. As a young adult, Boyle was an enforcer for protection rackets. Boyle served time in prison for various offences and was brought to trial for murder twice, though each one was aborted, for witnesses were too terrified to testify. In 1967, Boyle was sentenced to 15 years for the manslaughter of another criminal figure, William 'Babs' Rooney. While in prison, Boyle's sentence was extended due to several violent incidents with other inmates and prison officers (Boyle 1977; Nellis 2010). Boyle's violent past led the media to label him as 'Scotland's most violent criminal' (Nellis 2010, p. 35). Boyle, however, would leave prison a married man, who had begun to make a name for himself as a sculptor.

Boyle was one of a handful of prisoners deemed unmanageable in the Scottish prison system throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. In response to concerning levels of violence in Scottish prisons, the Scottish government constructed the Barlinnie Special Unit. The Unit was built within Barlinnie prison and was designed to function as a therapeutic community under the supervision of psychiatric staff. The culture of the Unit was vastly different from the often violent and brutal prison culture that men like Boyle were used to. The Unit held community meetings and group therapy sessions, which allowed communication to open up between prisoners and between prisoners and staff. This was instrumental in creating a culture of trust and understanding between these two opposing sides. But through its art, the Barlinnie Special Unit really found its identity as a more open, therapeutic and transformative institution. The flexibility and freedom of the Unit allowed the arts to thrive within it. In fact, Nellis (2010, p. 6) notes that at 'no other point in Scottish (or British) penal history had a penal institution become so identified with the arts, or the rehabilitation of prisoners so tied to creative expression.'

A few months after the Unit opened, its first governor invited Joyce Laing, a fine arts graduate and art therapist, to conduct weekly arts activities for the first five prisoners (Nellis 2010). Initially,

Laing's efforts were frustratingly fruitless, with the prisoners showing very little interest in participating. Some weeks later, Laing sat down and modelled a head out of clay. Boyle got up to join her, initially just feeling the clay. This was a turning point for Boyle; over the course of the following week, he made his first sculpture—a small, crouched figure surrounded by some wire. As Laing notes, art making contributes to institutional settings, firstly, as a pleasurable activity to fill time; secondly, as a form of education; and thirdly, and most importantly, as a way of facilitating individual growth and change as a 'living expression of thought, emotion, and portrayal of images from the subconscious' (Laing 1982, as quoted in Nellis 2010, p. 42).

In the Unit's therapy sessions, consultant clinical psychologist Maxwell Paterson explained that personal transformation involved transforming one's identity. The paradoxical challenge for each prisoner then was to reconcile his previous identity, an identity often formed through histories of which they were not proud, with 'an emergent identity – the same yet another' (Nellis 2010, p. 38). Laing observed this process take place within Boyle. Following Boyle's experimentation with the clay, Laing (1982, p. 58, as quoted in Nellis 2010, p. 39) observed that Boyle was 'bursting with enthusiasm for new ideas', but, importantly, according to Laing, Boyle was also experiencing 'a new concept of the self: the former hard man spending his time working on art.'

Boyle was transitioning from a 'hard man', one which he forged through his long history of violence, to that of artist. Boyle's emergent identity as an artist was being forged through his relationship to his teacher, education and artistic practice; this relationship enabled him to both create physical objects and express his thoughts and emotions. At this point, though, Boyle's transformation was taking place within himself and in the eyes of those around him, which, of course, was limited to the people who lived in, worked at and visited the prison Unit. Again, this occurred through Laing, who introduced several professional artists and gallery owners to the people and the work taking place in the Unit. These links made possible an exhibition of the Unit's work (though mostly Boyle's) at the Edinburgh Festival in 1974, which Boyle was allowed to attend under guard (Nellis 2010). Boyle managed to create an identity and participate in society as an

artist during his incarceration. While he was still in prison Boyle began to receive commissions from other galleries and festivals, and other opportunities to exhibit his work in solo shows opened up (Nellis 2010). Boyle was released from prison in 1981 and has since continued to work as an artist.

Adolf Wölfli

Adolf Wölfli was born in Bern, Switzerland. He was brought up in poverty, and during his childhood, he experienced significant trauma. His alcoholic father abandoned him, and his mother died sometime after he was removed from her when he was around eight years old. After being separated from his mother, Wölfli was passed around to various farming families, his life characterised by beatings and hunger (Cardinal 1972). Later in life, Wölfli suffered from depression and committed acts of assault and sexual assault against women and children. In 1895, Wölfli was declared a schizophrenic and a danger to society. He then spent over 30 years—the rest of his life—in Waldau Asylum in Switzerland, where records show that Wölfli was a violent and unpredictable patient in need of constant surveillance. What sets Wölfli apart from the great many who have no doubt lived wretched, invisible and forgotten institutional lives is that Wölfli is now known, remembered and regarded not for his unpredictable violence, his convictions for assault or paedophilia but as one of the first great 'outsider artists' (Cardinal 1972). This is demonstrated by the opening line of Wölfli's Wikipedia entry:

> **Adolf Wölfli** (February 29, 1864 – November 6, 1930) was a Swiss artist who was one of the first artists to be associated with the Art Brut or outsider art label.

While in Waldau, Wölfli developed an interest in art, and because the activity seemed to absorb and calm him, asylum staff encouraged it and supplied him with materials. Much of Wölfli's work explored his childhood, particularly the period of his life when he was separated from his mother, an event that undoubtedly caused Wölfli great psychological trauma. Though he was never released, Wölfli's art, as it evolved over the years, was linked with his rehabilitation. Not only did it occupy and pacify him, but the style of his artwork towards the end of his life is described as more

ordered, which, according to psychiatrists, indicated a journey from chaotic schizophrenic to a somewhat more stable and ordered psychic state (Cardinal 1972). Importantly, his drawings meant Wölfli's psychological improvement was recorded, made visible and verifiable.

The substantial body of work that Wölfli left behind was given a wider audience and greater cultural value by the French artist Jean Dubuffet, who termed this *Art Brut* (Raw Art), which the art critic Roger Cardinal later translated to English as *Outsider Art* (Cardinal 1972). Dubuffet was interested in exploring new aesthetics, untouched by the influence of the art world. Dubuffet created the intellectual and artistic space for the art of schizophrenics, mental patients, prisoners and others on the margins of society. Outsider art was unconventional, unpredictable, original and authentic. Dubuffet's interest was always underpinned by the idea that outsider art proceeded from 'truly original mental attitudes' (Cardinal 1972, p. 24) and that such artwork was considered authentic visual expressions and representations of psychosis, criminality and often both. Therefore, outsider art offered insights into the mysterious mental processes and states of the abnormal mind. One of Dubuffet's legacies is that he helped give cultural value to art and artists to people and objects to whom those labels would not usually be applied.

Wölfli's transformation from mad criminal to artist did not take place while he was alive. It happened after his artistic legacy was discovered and given wider public visibility and validity through Dubuffet. Wölfli's drawings were a medium for his deviance and madness to be celebrated rather than condemned. If we understand Wölfli's schizophrenia or madness as a contributing factor in his deviant sexual behaviour, his violence and, therefore, his dangerousness, then it is through art that Wölfli was able to give visual artistic expression to his psychological state. This expression contributed productively to artistic culture; therefore, his madness was channelled into a medium that could be distributed, accepted and celebrated throughout society, rather than manifesting in harmful behaviour that must be contained. Dubuffet's discovery and promotion of Wölfli's work made Wölfli visible and known as a criminal and a schizophrenic but also an artist. Through his work, Wölfli is now written in history as a significant contributor to the

outsider art movement. Wölfli's left a legacy through his art, and out of that legacy, his identity was rewritten and transformed.

Myuran Sukumaran

In 2006, an Indonesian court sentenced Myuran Sukumaran to death. The court convicted Sukumaran for being one of two Australian ringleaders who had organised nine Australians (himself included) to smuggle heroin from Indonesia to Australia. His subsequent appeals, however, were unsuccessful, and Sukumaran, along with co-offender Andrew Chan, was executed by firing squad on 29 April 2015. The other seven involved each received life sentences.

Sukumaran's plea for clemency received high-profile support from Australian artists, musicians, media personalities and politicians. Most notably from Sukumaran's teacher and well-known Australian artist, Ben Quilty. There is little doubt that support for Sukumaran was partly a response to the death penalty, a punishment that many considered disproportionate to his crime of attempted heroin trafficking. This feeling was intensified because Sukumaran had managed to create a new public identity for himself in Australia not just as an artist but as an art teacher in Indonesia's Kerobokan prison. For many, this change in identity was proof that Sukumaran had reformed himself.

One major reason that Sukumaran and his art rose to such prominence was that he received tuition and support from Ben Quilty, one of Australia's best-known contemporary artists. Quilty first visited Sukumaran in 2012 in his Kerobokan art studio after Sukumaran had written to Quilty via a member of the Mercy Campaign, asking for his advice on how to make paint thick (Quilty 2015). After his first visit, Quilty made regular trips to Kerobokan to teach Sukumaran and others how to draw and paint (Quilty 2015). The campaign for a stay of execution for Sukumaran (rather than his release) was given a huge boost, partly from Quilty's involvement in his art tuition but also through the art that Sukumaran himself produced. Sukumaran was an ambitious and enthusiastic student, who worked hard and who was a generous teacher to others in Kerobokan prison (Ross 2015). Indonesia's prison system has a more open, flexible and accommodating

culture than Australian prisons, driven in part by the entrepreneurship of inmates who must raise money to pay for their confinement by running businesses from prison. It was Sukumaran himself who persisted and negotiated with Indonesian authorities to establish the art room in Kerobokan (Quilty 2015). Establishing the art room was the act that would help transform Sukumaran's identity from criminal to artist. Key to this process was access to artists such as Ben Quilty and Matthew Sleeth, both of whom taught Sukumaran and others but also helped Sukumaran to exhibit and sell his works so that he could afford to continue producing and teaching art. Sukumaran, with help from photographer Matthew Sleeth, staged a solo exhibition in Melbourne. The funds raised from the sale of his work helped to fund a prison art gallery in Kerobokan prison (Quilty 2015). Quilty helped to introduce Sukumaran's work to the public. As a result, Sukumaran, received a high level of public visibility and attention. People saw his art, bought it and hung it on their walls. The public found out about Sukumaran and in doing so they came to know some of his biography, his crime, his death sentence, but importantly who he was becoming. Through his art, Sukumaran could communicate with and participate in the community from within prison—and from within a prison in a foreign country for that matter. And through Sukumaran's art, the Australian public saw another side of him. We were introduced to Sukumaran the aspiring artist, Sukumaran the art teacher and Kerobokan Prison community leader.

Sukumaran's artwork gave him a heightened visibility that others, such as his co-accused, Andrew Chan, did not receive. Photographs of Sukumaran's artwork and studio featured in newspaper articles about him and his plight. Even as the day and hour of his death approached, Sukumaran continued to paint, and while he remained invisible and inaccessible to the public, the pictures he painted were broadcast nationally as they were brought out of prison and taken away. Neither Sukumaran nor any of the other eight people who were executed with him were able to talk publicly through the media at this time so close to his death, yet his art could and did communicate powerful messages about his impending execution. Only hours prior to Sukumaran's execution, a large painting of a human heart was taken from the prison, along with a painting of an Indonesian flag. The Indonesian flag was designed with two horizontal colours, red on the top

and white on the bottom. Sukumaran's painting of the flag had red drops running from the red upper half and staining the white lower half, a clear reference to the spilling of blood that the execution would involve when he and the others would be shot through the heart by firing squad.

Sukumaran's legacy and identity as an artist are still being written. Nearly two years after his execution, on 13 January 2017, 100 of Sukumaran's artworks went on display for the first time in a major Australian gallery, as part of the 2017 Sydney Festival. The exhibition was called *Another Day in Paradise* and was co-curated by Ben Quilty and Michael D'Agostino, the Director of the Campbelltown Arts Centre. The exhibition also featured the works of six other artists. In his review of Sukumaran's show, Yip (2017) refers to Sukumaran initially as an 'outsider artist' but subsequently as an 'emerging artist holding his first show'. Yip (2017) acknowledges the competing 'almost mythical' narratives that surround Sukumaran. Yip, like anyone familiar with Sukumaran's story, and no doubt most who saw or read about this exhibition, had to confront the 'difficult knowledge' (Simon 2011, p. 432) and the difficult emotions that this exhibitions stirs up. Namely, the star of this show was convicted of smuggling heroin and as punishment he was executed. However before he was executed he became an accomplished artist, mentor and teacher. As with all well-known artists, Sukumaran's biography was an important part of this show. Further, this show was not simply about Sukumaran's aesthetic sensibilities and his technical skill. This show was also about Sukumaran's identity, who he was, who he became, what he managed to achieve against incredible odds, and what he could have done had he not been executed. This show went beyond the pure aesthetic, as Yip (2017) acknowledges:

> Many would be unwilling to assess the strength of Sukumaran's work on its aesthetic merits alone, divorced from the bleak celebrity of its political context. This would be a disservice. All artworks, like their creators, are indebted to their biographies and in critiquing them we listen to their language and evaluate its ability to speak.

For Sukumaran, his artwork speaks to his transformation and redemption. According to D'Agostino and Quilty, the exhibition explored 'how art has the power to provide change and how justice

could be sought if … rehabilitation were at its core' (Yip 2017). Sukumaran's transformation to artist is also dependent on community acceptance of that identity. Sukumaran and his work were part of a major international arts festival and his show received excellent reviews, which were written and published through national media outlets (Convery 2017; Yip 2017). His inclusion in the Sydney Festival is a powerful statement of acceptance and validation of Sukumaran the artist.

Transformation and Redemption through Art

The previous three case studies involve three men who had been through the criminal justice system and labelled as criminals. While the biographies offered here are brief, the one thing these men share is that by producing art, they managed to disrupt, challenge and overturn their criminal master status. Their art production opened up new ways of seeing, talking about and knowing these men. Their artworks allowed for personal expression, and it gave the community insight into these men's situations and psychological states. For Boyle and Sukumaran, their art production gave them a tool not just to communicate and participate in the world beyond prison but to do so in ways that cast them as useful and productive human beings. Even Wölfli's technical improvement and expression were understood as a self-administered therapeutic intervention that brought about positive psychological change.

Boyle, Wölfli and Sukumaran were all considered 'outsiders' who had committed 'rule-breaking behaviour' (Becker 1963, pp. 8–14). In contrast, the artwork of Sukumaran and Boyle was considered publicly sanctioned, rule-conforming behaviour or 'right-doing'. Through the production of art, these men found supporters within the community who were willing to invest in them and open up opportunities for these men to interact with the community in a new way. As a result, these men were able to challenge and even dismantle their deviant identities. After all, their art is useful to society as entertainment, as an escape, as inspiration, as well as a way to educate people. Art produced in prison is often self-referential and explores life under physical and psychological compression. It provides insight into the human condition under punishment or, in the case of Sukumaran, the existential terror of the death penalty. Boyle's first art object was a

crouching figure surrounded by walls. Again, exhibitions of art disseminate authentic information about crime, punishment and suffering by people who are living that experience. Prisoners can thus perform the role of a 'wounded healer' by offering up their stories and experiences as a cautionary tale to others (Maruna 2001, pp. 119-121). But also, art making makes it possible for prisoners to contribute to the community in positive ways, which is how prisoners (might begin to) 'give something back' to society and to 'make good' (Maruna 2001, p. 87), thereby opening up the possibility for redemptive scripts to be enacted from within prison. Both Boyle and Sukumaran were able to write their redemptive scripts through the art they made. This was no easy task, as there were no dominant narratives that allowed positive outcomes for hard men or 'villains' such as Boyle (Nellis 2010, p. 44):

> [T]hey were either executed; or became elderly "crime boss" figures, evil to the end; died young by violence amidst their own kind; became burnt-out non-entities in early middle age or ended drunk in the gutter. They were not thought to have the "potential" to be otherwise.

The process of becoming deviant requires a person to behave in ways that are consistent with deviance (Lofland 1969, p. 222). This behaviour allows that person to be thought of, described and labelled as deviant. Tannenbaum (1938, pp. 19–20) explains that the making of a criminal involves the process of 'tagging, defining, identifying, segregating, describing, emphasising, making conscious and self-conscious; it becomes a way of stimulating, suggesting, emphasising and evoking the very traits that are complained of.' The process, then, in which a person establishes herself or himself as normal or ordinary is a process whereby a person displays features that are 'inconsistent with deviance but consistent with normality' (Lofland 1969, p. 222). Producing art is a way that prisoners can be noticed for their talents and skills, and it can be considered a civilised and respected code of expression and behaviour. Art production can allow prisoners to present to the world auxiliary traits not usually associated with criminals. Boyle, Sukumaran and Wölfli are singled out in these case studies precisely because of their artistic achievements and abilities to demonstrate behaviour inconsistent with their deviance. As Lofland (1969, p. 222) explains, 'such

inconsistencies not untypically involve intelligence, physical beauty or unusual leadership ability.' Such people, Lofland goes on to note, are often singled out for their 'high value' qualities and become objects of special recognition, which makes them more likely to be considered normal and can mean, in the context of deviant identities, transformations. For Boyle, Sukumaran and Wölfli , their art objects gave the public a new way to look at and know these people. In the words of Tannenbaum (1938), we are able to identify, describe, emphasise and make conscious and self-conscious their right doing, their normality, and their high-value skills as artists and teachers. Sukumaran's art objects helped draw attention to other ways he was contributing positively to the prisoners in Kerobokan prison as a teacher, mentor and leader. Artworks can also become a body of work and a permanent legacy to their creator, reminding us of who the creator was, what he or she achieved and, ultimately, they are marks of his or her valuable contribution to society. One can imagine that for Sukumaran, there was a more pressing urgency to establish himself as an artist prior to his execution, for his time was limited. Sukumaran's art now continues to speak and remind us of not just his crime and punishment but also that he was a decent person with integrity, who regretted what he did, cared for others and tried his best to give back, make good and redeem himself in his own eyes and (crucially) in the eyes of others (Maruna et al. 2004).

Many issues can influence whether or not we choose to accept someone's transformation from convicted criminal to artist. Temporal and physical proximity matter. As does the ability for victims to speak out against someone. Personal experience that might link you either to the victim or perpetrator will influence how you feel towards people such as Boyle, Sukumaran or Wölfli. Even though Boyle was convicted of murder, his personal biography of growing up in poverty in a Glasgow slum might mean that many can see his behaviour as symptomatic of a sick society rather than a sick individual. Wölfli's crimes were committed over 100 years ago, and he has long since died. Thus, for many, the criminal identities of these men are not beyond redemption. But what of those people who *are* beyond redemption? How are we to tag, describe, define and identify someone who has been convicted of terrible crimes and who is subsequently revealed to be the creator of a spectacular and beautiful artwork? As Becker (1963, p. 3) writes, 'We regard the thief

as less like us and punish him severely. Crimes such as murder, rape, or treason lead us to view the violator as a true outsider.'

Colin Pitchfork

In 2009, London's Southbank Centre purchased and displayed a small but exquisite diorama made of paper, depicting an orchestra and choir. The diorama was entitled *Bringing Music to Life* and was accompanied by the following message from the artist:

> Without this opportunity to show our art, many of us would have no incentive, we would stay locked in ourselves as much as the walls that hold us.

The intricate work was skilfully and painstakingly created in prison from the score of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall purchased the piece for £600 and displayed it in their lobby, where it presumably continued to delight, impress and perhaps even inspire people. The piece was popular and, according to the *Daily Mail*, could be described as 'beautifully exquisite' (Chalmers 2009). However, staff at the Southbank Centre quickly withdrew this work and issued an apology for having purchased and put it on display when its creator was revealed to be Colin Pitchfork, who at the time was serving a 30-year prison sentence for the rape and murder of two 15-year-old schoolgirls. Pitchfork was infamous not only for his shocking crimes but for being the first person in the world to be discovered through large-scale genetic testing. Pitchfork had submitted his artwork to the Koestler Trust, where he won an award. It was also selected by the curators, from an entry pool of around 7000 works of prisoner art, to be part of the Koestler Trust's 2009 exhibition. As with the public who visited the exhibition, staff at the Southbank Centre had not known Pitchfork created the artwork. His work had been exhibited anonymously. Pitchfork's identity was discovered and published by a journalist who worked for *The Times* newspaper. Following the article in *The Times*, the decision to purchase and display Pitchfork's art received almost universal condemnation by major media in the UK, including *The Guardian*, the *Daily Mail*, *The Sun* and the BBC. This reaction resulted in a policy re-think from the

Southbank Centre and the Koestler Trust over future displays and purchases of prisoners' artworks (Cox & Gelsthorpe 2012).

The widespread condemnation of the decision to purchase and display *Bringing Music to Life* was driven by the shocking nature of Pitchfork's crimes, which rank among the most serious and objectionable. The youth and vulnerability of his victims, plus the seemingly random and opportunistic nature of his crimes, made him one of society's most feared and reviled men. As a result, Pitchfork has a powerful public identity and stigma as a double child killer. The nature of his crimes speaks more to his individual (psycho)pathology and sexual perversion, as opposed to crimes by Boyle, which could be more easily attributed to the social, cultural and economic reality of a Glasgow slum. The exhibition and purchase of Pitchfork's work mattered too. Pitchfork's artwork had been exhibited in and had become part of the permanent art collection of a prestigious cultural institution in central London. Had his art been displayed more discreetly in a suburban church, or in a prison away from the attention and accolades that come with a more significant and high-profile venue, then the public might have reacted differently.

The revelation of Pitchfork's identity meant that the media retold the public of his criminal past and about the tragic murders of Lynda Mann and Dawn Ashworth, who were both 15 when raped and strangled to death. The display of Pitchfork's artwork clearly caused pain and distress to the victims' friends and families. Mann's mother, Kath Eastman, said she was 'horrified' and 'disgusted' that Pitchfork had been paid and his work was displayed in the Southbank Centre (BBC News, April 2009). Eastman was quoted in relation to this:

> He's been rewarded now — the families of both victims are left to carry on suffering and going without their family. Art is art maybe but he's hiding behind that — it's not going to change him and I can't feel anything but anger.

Similarly, the *Daily Mail* (Chalmers 2009) quoted Kelvin Donaghey (a friend of the Ashworth family), who created a memorial website to the two murdered girls:

> Lynda was good at art and so was Dawn. They never got the chance to have their works exhibited, yet the man who took their lives away not only has that, but earns money from it, too.

The voices of Lynda's mother and friends of the two murdered girls are powerful and remind the public of the intense pain and suffering caused by Pitchfork's crimes. It mattered too that the victims' families have not forgiven Pitchfork. This information produces 'difficult knowledge', for it elicits emotions of anger, grief, sadness and revulsion (Simon 2011, pp. 432–433).

As with Boyle and Sukumaran, Pitchfork's artwork was seen by many as evidence of an inner transformation that threatened to displace—perhaps even replace—his criminal identity. Journalists and the public linked Pitchfork's artwork to his rehabilitation and moral correction (Grove 2010). It was a symbol that he had changed and was ready to re-join society, or it was a symbol that he was still the same person he was when he was convicted. Either way, the media and the public had to come to grips with his 'bad' or 'evil' criminal history and identity and his alternative, emergent 'good' identity, symbolised by his artwork. *Bringing Music to Life* invited people to see, describe and identify Pitchfork in ways that were completely inconsistent with his deviance.

According to the *Daily Mail* and other articles subsequently published, Pitchfork has been a model prisoner. He had previously studied Beethoven for an Open University degree (Chalmers 2009). He had also become an expert in transcribing sheet music into Braille that is now used across the UK and internationally (BBC News, 2016). Pitchfork, in other words, has been behaving well and making positive cultural contributions to society. There is plenty of evidence, his art included, to make a case that he is a changed man. This was one of the concerns the families of Pitchfork's victims had. For around the time of the controversy, Pitchfork was in the process of appealing his 30-year sentence, arguing for a reduction and for early release, while the family members of the victims were fighting for his continued incarceration. Pitchfork's criminal identity and his emergent artist identity introduce the public to two contrasting and contradictory identities. His criminal identity as child killer is evil, cruel, fearsome, savage and psychopathic. His emergent 'good'

identity as artist taps into a highly civilised code of behaviour. It constructs Pitchfork as cultured, refined and talented, as someone who is making useful and important contributions to people's lives.

This makes it difficult to categorise Pitchfork and introduces confusion as to whether someone such as Pitchfork deserves opportunities and recognition. The sort of person he might have become was briefly open to negotiation and interpretation. There were those who thought Pitchfork could and should be seen as the product of a justice system that can achieve reform. But there were others, such as the victims' families and friends and a number of journalists, who doubted whether Pitchfork could be truly reformed (Chalmers 2009; Jones 2009).

For many, Pitchfork was irredeemable. Redemptive narratives and new identities require acknowledgment and acceptance from others. It should be noted that this opportunity had initially been denied, as Pitchfork's work had been displayed anonymously. But once information about his identity and crimes was leaked, then evidence of his deviance and criminality was interpreted as being subtly expressed through his artwork. *Bringing Music to Life* was made from the score for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, which was, as *Guardian* journalist Jonathan Jones reminded readers, the favourite piece of music of Alex from *A Clockwork Orange* (Jones 2009). Alex is one of the most infamous fictional psychopaths. The sheet music Pitchfork used was not meticulously cut with precision and care: it was torn, destroyed. Instead of being evidence or a symbol of Pitchfork's virtue, it may be evidence of his psychopathology and irredeemability. The *Daily Mail* reminded us of the judge's comments that Pitchfork was 'callous and cunning' and that even the title of *Bringing Music* [Back] *to Life* seemed 'calculated to offend' (Chalmers 2009).

There is little doubt that the seriousness of Pitchfork's crimes resulted in the very emphatic public rejection of his artwork, which was also a rejection of Pitchfork the artist. In essence, this was a renewed opportunity to establish and affirm Pitchfork the as the bad child rapist and killer. Pitchfork is a true outsider. Our knowledge about his terrible crimes, the anger and pain of victims'

families influence how we feel toward him. When we reject and withdraw from Pitchfork, we keep him there, as an outsider.

Summary

One of the most important aspects of social transformation and redemption is that others are willing to accept that transformation and reflect it back so that the (ex-)offender can see their 'looking glass self' (Maruna et al. 2004, p. 274). Becoming deviant is largely a product of societal reaction; therefore, redemption, change and reform, argues Maruna (et al. 2004), also require societal reaction. Redemptive scripts are written not only by the (ex-)offenders but also by the community around them, whereby identities are negotiated through interactions (Maruna et al. 2004). To go straight, the (ex-)offender must accept conventional society, but conventional society must also accept that person (Meisenhelder 1982, as cited in Maruna et al. 2004, p. 273). Art objects and art as behaviour can symbolise the creator's acceptance of conventional society but also symbolise the way that the creator is contributing to and enriching society as an 'active' (as opposed to 'passive') redemptive process (Maruna 2014, pp. 128–127). This allows for opportunities for acceptance, de-stigmatisation and the 'pro-social labelling' process that accompanies acceptance (Maruna & LeBel 2012, p. 78).

There are undoubtedly people who do not accept Sukumaran, Boyle and Wölfli as artists, but it is clear that enough people do. Their artworks have allowed these men to rewrite their life narratives and left legacies that allow others to do this for them. Their criminal histories have not been erased or wiped clean; it is simply that producing art objects allowed these people to contribute to the community in positive ways and thus demonstrate to others that they had become changed people. Their contributions also enabled them to give back and thus make good, to the extent that their artistic achievements outweighed and outlasted their crimes. Particularly for Boyle and Sukumaran, they managed to reconcile their bad histories and become, in the eyes of many, good.

It is worth reflecting on the conditions that allowed for such transformations to take place and to consider whether or not the current prison system and community attitudes might support such transformations to take place. It is now less likely that a 'hard man' such as Boyle might participate as an artist in the way he was supported to do so in the 1970s. For starters, the Barlinnie Special Unit has long since been decommissioned and, with it, the progressive and creative ideas about reform that underpinned its existence. For Boyle, Sukumaran and Wölfli to become the artists they are now recognised and accepted as being, they needed institutional support to access materials and implements necessary to produce art. In the case of Sukumaran and Boyle, institutional support facilitated access to education from members of the art world. Art world figures opened up support networks within the community, particularly in the art world. Australian artist Ben Quilty played a critical role in Sukumaran's life as a teacher and mentor, but Quilty was also someone with power and connections within the art world who could champion Sukumaran's art. For Boyle, the art therapist Joyce Laing introduced him to clay and enabled him to make other prominent contacts in the art world. For Wölfli, it was Dubuffet, an artist who saw cultural value and importance in the art created by people outside the formal institutions. Allowing access to materials and people in the community to teach skills and take part in the change process improved prisoners' creative and technical quality of artistic output (human capital), and it also increased their social capital (Bourdieu 1986a). McNeill (2006) identified the development of human and social capital as vital for the desistance process.

The Torch

There are few organisations whose business centres on the production of art within prison and the exhibition of that art outside of prison. The Koestler Trust is the most established and the most successful of its kind. The Torch is another. The Torch is run by Indigenous artist Kent Morris and is based in St Kilda, Melbourne. It uses art to 'focus on the role of culture and cultural identity in the rehabilitative process of Indigenous prisoners' (Hallwright 2012, p. 11). As with all programs that occur within the prison system, The Torch has a guiding rationale around rehabilitation and the

reduction of recidivism. This rationale is, of course, consistent with the rehabilitative aim of the prison. The Torch develops Indigenous prisoners' artistic identities from within prison, but then, critically, assists released ex-prisoners to maintain and develop those identities beyond prison in the transition from criminals to artists, thereby altering their life narratives by orienting the people away from offending identities and towards becoming artists within and beyond prison.

A program evaluation of The Torch acknowledges the historical context that causes and contributes to Indigenous over-representation in prisons (Hallwright 2012). Colonisation and policies of extermination and assimilation resulted in the forced removal of Indigenous people from their lands, as well as the forced removal of children from their parents. The evaluation specifically identifies the loss of 'positive identity and connection to culture' (Hallwright 2012, p. 9) as a central problem that perpetuates social exclusion and disadvantage. Incarceration is another form of forced removal from lands, people and culture, which exacerbates Indigenous people's feelings of isolation and disconnection from their culture. This cycle reduces Indigenous self-determination and agency and undermines the authority of traditional Indigenous community structures (Hallwright 2012, p. 9). The report also validates the positive effects of art making within prison, specifically around managing emotions through personal expression, as well as increasing self-esteem, confidence and cultural pride. This, in turn, can start a process of identity change, particularly in the context of a program designed to bring about such changes.

The Torch responds to the needs and challenges of Indigenous prisoners within prison and post-release, particularly with regard to the causes of recidivism, such as the lack of opportunities post-release for employment and financial independence. Through interviews, the evaluation report identifies four key challenges experienced by Indigenous prisoners:

- systemic trust and anger issues;
- experiences of disconnection from cultural identity;
- estrangement from family and community;
- economic insecurity after being released from prison.

The evaluation identifies that many participants lacked the willingness to trust people due to experiences both inside and outside prison. Several prisoners said that before they began The Torch program, they felt they had no outlets to express their anger. The ability to both deal with negative emotions such as anger and the ability to trust people were identified as barriers to building networks beyond the prison and having the confidence to explore new opportunities (Hallwright 2012, p. 18). The report also identifies feelings of general disconnection from cultural identity and that information and culture had not been passed down or taught to Indigenous prisoners earlier in life. This was exacerbated by the general feeling of isolation from life caused by incarceration, the loss of contact with people on the outside and the inability to avoid jail culture. All interviewees identified the need for financial stability and independence as critical to staying out of prison.

According to the interviewees, The Torch had been effective at addressing these challenges by improving inmates' confidence and self-esteem, which helped to bring about attitudinal changes in prisoners towards themselves and their own potential. Prisoners' abilities to produce and then display art was a way to contribute to society constructively, which helped demonstrate to themselves and others that they are more than 'drunks' or 'crooks' (Hallwright 2012, p. 20). Some quotes were strikingly similar to those received in the AbP responses (Hallwright 2012, p. 20):

> It's shown me that I'm not just another black fella drinking in the park, that I can do something positive too. The exhibitions give you hope. (9.1.5 Participant 5)

> It's good to show people that you've got something, you're not just crooks, that you're able to do something positive. (9.1.3 Participant 3)

Staff at The Torch were able to establish good levels of trust with participants around their artwork, but also through their encouragement both within and beyond prison. Exploring and expressing cultural identity were important in establishing prisoners' sense of personal pride, not just at what they were able to achieve through their art but at who they were and where they

came from. This had both institutional and individual benefits, with a number of Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Aboriginal Well-being Officers commenting that success and confidence in The Torch program meant prisoners were open to other educational opportunities and programs within the prison. Participation in The Torch also helped increase social capital by improving relationships between Indigenous prisoners and their families. Former prisoners reported that family members saw them more as artists than offenders, and The Torch program made family members proud of them, with one former prisoner describing the way personal change is evident not just through one's art and behaviour as an artist but in one's physical expression (Hallwright 2012, p. 25):

> It makes them proud of their child because of what they've become now. For families to see in their sons a softness. Their son's growth. They're blooming. There's a shine to their face, not just that evil look. Parents are looking at their kids thinking, 'It's art that's doing it'.

An important aspect of The Torch was the sense of hope for the future that underpinned many of the responses. The evaluation stated that the majority of interviewees wanted to pursue art once released and that the program helped them to develop their own style and realise that producing art could be a genuine alternative to criminal activity (Hallwright 2012, p. 22). The evaluation reported that all the released former prisoners were involved in producing artwork and participating in and organising exhibitions and were making inroads into established arts and cultural networks. Two former prisoners had teaching roles. One taught wood-burning in an Indigenous art centre one day a week. This participant commented that through his job he had 'been accepted in the community' (Hallwright 2012, p. 22). Crucial to keeping former prisoners engaged and motivated about developing their art and their careers as artists was the on-going contact and support or 'throughcare' from The Torch. This involved keeping in contact, encouraging, and essentially caring about the welfare and future of former prisoners. To do this, The Torch maintains contact with ex-prisoners after release and connects them to community arts networks and to people in the professional arts industry (Hallwright 2012).

Identity, loss of cultural (and therefore individual) identity and negative (such as criminal) identities are key issues for all prisoners, but particularly Indigenous prisoners. The Torch uses art to connect and engage Indigenous prisoners with their cultural heritage by sharing information and educating Indigenous prisoners about their people, their origin stories, their lands and significant features of their lands, including specific land formations, flora and fauna. Art then becomes an activity that can assist Indigenous prisoners connect with themselves and express their Indigenous heritage and identities in ways they can feel proud of. In doing so and by contributing to their community, Indigenous prisoners can begin the process of reconciling their criminal histories and identities with their individual and collective Indigenous identities. Through producing art, prisoners can start to see themselves differently and find positive identities, such as artist or provider. Art objects that embody Indigenous cultural expressions that are created in prison can be shared or offered to the community through public exhibitions. Public exhibitions of prison art are important to allow prisoners to participate in society as artists, particularly when the public responses to such exhibitions are positive.

An important litmus test of public reaction to and support for the exhibitions is the response of popular media. The Torch has attracted a good amount of positive media attention over the years. Prison art exhibitions allow the organisations and people behind them to promote positive messages about art making and its role in prisoners' reformation. The important message here is that art making is not simply a hobby or a leisurely and enjoyable way to help prisoners pass the time. Rather, it helps to achieve active redemptions through individual change that results in positive social and economic outcomes for the community. This is how the production and public exhibition of prison art are grounded in the purpose and logic of the prison. The articles about The Torch speak of prison art as a way for prisoners to transform themselves through exploration and expressions of cultural identity. According to an article in *The Herald Sun*, the exhibitions produced by The Torch promoted the idea that 'many'—not all—of the participating prisoners, or artists, were 'on their way to a better life' (*Herald Sun*, 2013), or it was a way for Indigenous prisoners to 'break the vicious cycle' (Harford 2013). By selling their work, prisoners are also able to be more

financially independent. Such responses are important because identity transformation requires that we consider ourselves as different or changed but also that others do (Maruna et al. 2004). The media can reflect and re-inforce this process. Public exhibitions are important points of contact between prisoners and the public, whereby the public, in viewing and accepting prisoners' artwork, help open up pathways for these redemptive scripts.

Conclusion

Once in prison, it is very difficult for prisoners to publicly challenge or overturn their criminal identities. The prison walls are a powerful physical and symbolic barrier for people to be anything other than prisoners or criminals. Prisoners form many roles, affiliations and identities for various reasons (e.g., to cope, to be protected or to find belonging). There are few roles or identities available to prisoners that open the possibility for redemption that they can take with them upon their release. Creating art is one such activity, however. The examples of Boyle, Wölfli, Sukumaran and Pitchfork all attest to the power of art to change or challenge one's self-perception and the perceptions of others from the perspective of labelling theory.

Art can by symbolic of one's commitment and motivation to change. Creating art produces a physical, tangible product, which, in itself, demonstrates skills and talents. It is a marker of a person's artistic development and technical improvement. It is also a civilised code of behaviour and a culturally valued medium to express and communicate thoughts, desires, emotions and aspirations. Furthermore, art serves as an offering or a contribution to social and cultural life, one that is commonly associated with others' pleasure through beauty and/or intellectual stimulation. People also associate the ability to produce art with moral correction, personal improvement, virtue and individual genius. These factors make it possible for people in prison to *re*present themselves to society as people other than criminals. Boyle and Sukumaran demonstrated a commitment to a new set of values, goals and aspirations, ones that were more aligned with active and contributory citizenship, rather than criminality and deviance. Participating in society as artists helps to reform individuals by reforming identity and, in so doing, opening up the possibility

for prisoners to write redemptive scripts for themselves. Through art, Boyle, Wölfli and Sukumaran changed their identities and their relationships to society. Their artwork enables us to think of them differently: as humans, as good, as artists, as redeemed. In having these thoughts we contribute to their reformed identities.

The Torch stands out as an organisation that actively creates artist identities and narratives for Indigenous prisoners in Victoria. The Torch works with Indigenous prisoners to improve their technical abilities and inform their cultural knowledge, so that this can enhance their artistic practice. The Torch works to create prison artists. But crucially, The Torch works to assist prisoners upon their release to transition from prison artist to artist in the community. This is a strategy designed to de-stigmatise, delabel and relabel participants in ways consistent with pro-social identities and desistance.

The creation of these alternative identities involves the support of people outside the prison institution in developing skills and talents and providing inroads into networks of community support that assist (ex-)offenders in their transitions to artists. What distinguishes Boyle and Sukumaran from other prison artists was that others beyond prison—importantly, members of the established arts community—also saw and accepted them as artists. This is an important aspect of identity transformation. To establish oneself as an artist in the community is no easy task, particularly in the context of a criminal history. Being an artist in the community is a very public form of participation. The nature of an individual's offending and the temporal and physical proximity to the offender or victim(s) has the power to influence community acceptance. Not everyone supported or believed in Boyle. For some members of the Glasgow police, the Scottish Prison Officers' Association, the media and for some politicians, Boyle was irredeemable, and his transformation to artist challenged their ideas about what sort of institution a prison should be and the sorts of people a prison should produce. There are similar conflicting sentiments about Sukumaran, especially given the high-profile exhibition of his work in the 2017 Sydney Festival. This model of re-identification, of reconciliation, is not one that need be exclusive to the formation

of artist identities. It applies to any non-criminal identity that centres on a prisoner's or ex-prisoner's ability to contribute to the emotional and economic well-being of the self and others and that helps foster acceptance by others.

CHAPTER 7: BEYOND THE WALLS, PART 2

Introduction

Ritual plays a key role in the solidarity-producing effects of punishment. One of the effects is that people are united *against* the criminal and in support of his or her expulsion from society. The ritual welcoming back of the criminal would then require that the community unite, not for the purposes of rejection but of acceptance. Maruna (2011) has conceived of what elements re-entry rituals should comprise to bring about meaningful individual change. The three AbP exhibitions were not re-entry rituals as imagined by Maruna (2011). However, this chapter will demonstrate how public exhibitions of prison art can be managed to create successful interaction rituals between prisoners and members of the community. The AbP exhibitions were highly emotive and symbolic events, whereby the prisoners offered their art objects up to the community, and the community welcomed, accepted and valued the objects in return. These exhibitions had all the characteristics of a successful re-entry ritual. As a result, the exhibitions provided the cultural context to see and write about prisoners differently; thus, they were momentary opportunities for the delabelling, relabelling and status elevation of the participating prisoners. The exhibitions charged prisoners and the public with emotional energy and created feelings of group membership and solidarity around the inclusion of prisoners—albeit temporarily and through their art—in the community. While these events had substantial limitations on the sorts of positive permanent changes they could effect in the individual, these events momentarily allowed prisoners to symbolically communicate their desires to accept and contribute to conventional society, while also allowing the community to practise acceptance.

Ritual, Punishment and Solidarity

Punishment, according to Durkheim, is a moral institution that reflects and is shaped by collective values and social relationships, as opposed to an instrumental institution concerned with the control (perhaps even the reduction!) of crime (Garland 2012). According to Durkheim,

punishment rarely succeeds in deterring people from committing crime or reforming those who have. Its true function, regardless of public assumptions and official intentions, 'is the ritualised re-affirmation of collective values and the reinforcement of group solidarity' (Garland 2012, p. 23). Durkheim focuses on the social effects rather than the technical work of punishment. For Durkheim, one of the most useful and powerful effects of punishment is its communicative and expressive functions, which are aimed not so much at the criminal but at society more generally, and, in particular, at law-abiding citizens (Garland 2012). For Durkheim, the criminal law reflects society's moral values. Anyone who violates the law violates this moral code and the 'conscience collective' (Garland 1991). Punishment, therefore, channels and expresses collective moral sentiment. It galvanises society against crime and those who commit crime, and in this way, punishment is a mechanism for restoring and reaffirming the social and moral order against those who violate it. Garland (1991, p. 123) writes in relation to this:

> [P]unishment thus transforms a threat to social order into a triumph of social solidarity. Instead of damaging the cohesiveness of society, crime sets in motion an elaborate moral circuitry that channels the energy of outraged sentiments into a socially binding ritual of moral affirmation.

This statement speaks to the powerful emotions that crimes and criminals energise within people, and it is these emotional reactions that Durkheim sees as being at the root of society's response to crime, as opposed to the rational utilitarian process and institution the modern prison *appears* to represent (Garland 1991).

Reactions and responses to crimes are highly visible and ritualised events that include arrests, trials, sentencings and incarcerations. Through these rituals, people are denounced and condemned, and punishments are meted out. These are what Garfinkel (1956, p. 420) terms 'status degradation ceremonies', in which the people judged to have violated collectively held moral standards of behaviour are 'transformed into something looked on as lower in the local scheme of social types'. One of the effects of status degradation ceremonies is that people become totally identified by their criminal behaviour; in essence, these people are labelled as

criminals or offenders, and they are taken out of regular society for a set amount of time. Such ceremonies reinforce the moral order, but they are also designed to induce feelings of shame in the offender (Garfinkel 1956). The effect of the ritualised public denunciation and condemnation is the transformation or recasting of identity, the ritual destruction of one identity and the imposition of another, whereby the individual becomes in the eyes of the condemners a 'different and *new* person' (Garfinkel 1956, p. 421, emphasis in original).

The pathway into prison consists of inordinate and well-established rituals of excommunication, stigmatisation and expulsion of the offender (Garland 2012; Maruna 2011). But it is not just the pathway into prison but the period of incarceration itself, Maruna (2011, pp. 10–12) argues, that constitute one long, drawn-out ritual or 'rite of passage'. Rites of passage are rituals whereby people undergo changes of identity. They involve a separation from normal reality. In this separation, someone is put in a state that is 'betwixt and between' stages, a period of liminality, of transformation from one identity to another (Maruna 2011, p. 8). Maruna (2011, pp. 10–12) outlines three important stages involved in rites of passage. Firstly, there is a separation, whereby an individual undergoes some form of ceremony that often involves ritual cleansing and/or alteration of one's physical appearance, such as a change of hairstyle or clothing, or the direct application of marks on the body. Secondly, the person is kept in a place that is symbolically outside the normal sociocultural order. In this liminal state, a person's normal relationships and attachments to people and objects are suspended temporarily. Liminal people have no status and often develop deep and lasting bonds with others who go through the same experience together.

This, argues Maruna (2011), is a good description of the imprisonment ritual; however, the difference between the prison rituals and other rites of passage that accompany life changes is in the third and final stage, which is usually associated with personal development. This stage involves the welcoming back of the person but to a new status. This is accompanied by symbolic acts of incorporation, such as a new name, insignia and usually a communal meal. At the end of his or her sentence, the criminal or offender who has been labelled as such is more likely to undergo

transformations that create or reinforce his or her identity as deviant. Ex-offenders (as that very label implies) must live with the stigma of previous records of criminality and incarceration once released, which can present as significant barriers to employment and access to housing. Ex-prisoners can also lose other aspects of citizenship, such as the right to vote or to travel across international boundaries. For this reason, Maruna (2011, p. 11) observes the following:

> The imprisonment ritual as practiced […] takes people out of normal society, initiates an extended period of liminality, but does not take advantage of this to effect change. If prison is a rite of passage, then, the direction it leads is clearly down.

The idea that people are released from prison no better than when they entered—or are even worse off—offends the concept of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is one of the core ethical and moral justifications for the prison because, ideally, a rehabilitated offender will not engage in future criminal behaviour upon release. It is also a popularly held public assumption, or expectation, that rehabilitation happens in prison. This idea is reflected by the role of the South Australian Department for Correctional Services (SA DCS), which states its vision on its internet home page for '[a] safer community by protecting the public and *reducing re-offending'* (South Australian Department for Correctional Services n.d., emphasis added).

Rehabilitation these days refers to the prison courses grounded in cognitive behavioural science and designed to change offenders' thinking (Maruna 2011). Such courses are offered to (and may sometimes be conditional for) offenders to undertake while they are in prison. Such courses target criminogenic thinking and desires in an attempt to cognitively re-program offenders: to 'cure' them through treatment. Maruna (2011), however, points out that this understanding of 'rehabilitation' is different from its original meaning, which was about restoring a person's individual reputation and status as a citizen. The modern understanding of prisoner rehabilitation is also different from Foucault's idea that punishment should 'requalify individuals as … juridical subjects' (1977, p. 130, as quoted in McNeill 2012). According to Maruna (2011), the rehabilitation movement for most of the 20th century focused on stigma-removal as part of the reintegration

process. Removing stigma is about delabelling and relabelling ex-prisoners. The pathway into prison is about the relabelling of citizens in order to demote them to 'criminals' in their eyes and in the eyes of others. The pathway out of prison should, by that logic, also involve ritual in order to transform identity the other way (Maruna 2011). At a bare minimum, this would involve the status elevation from criminal back to person or citizen. The concept of status elevation rituals at the conclusion of a person's prison sentence was explored by Maruna (2011), who advocates for the role of ritual as a way of restoring or elevating identity. One of the numerous significant barriers to the ritual re-entry and, therefore, the ritual transition from offender to citizen (but usually, and problematically, to 'ex-offender') is that it is difficult for prisoners to demonstrate that they have become changed people. It is also very difficult to motivate people in the community to care about the lives and futures of ex-offenders. Furthermore, it is difficult to create authentic ritual interactions between prisoners and the community that trigger feelings of social solidarity and inclusion around the return or welcoming back of ex-prisoners. Maruna (2011) acknowledges that in many cases, news around the release of prisoners back into the community is more likely to spark fear and concern.

Art Exhibitions as Successful Interaction Rituals

The AbP exhibitions (and also others such as the Koestler Trust's AbO exhibitions) were successful 'interaction rituals' (see Collins 2004). The AbP exhibitions, particularly the opening events, were traditional and common modern-day rituals. In an age where the importance of rituals, particularly religious ones, might be on the decline in western secular culture, the ritual of the art exhibition (opening) is one that has maintained its popularity. According to Collins (2004, p. 48), a successful interaction ritual (IR) has four key ingredients:

1. Firstly, IRs involve communication and shared experiences. This might involve an assemblage of bodies in the same place where people affect each other with their presence and proximity to one another.

2. Secondly, there are boundaries to outsiders, so participants know who is taking part and who is excluded.
3. Thirdly, people focus their attention upon a common object or activity and become mutually aware of each other's focus.
4. Finally, people share a common mood or emotional experience.

Collins (2004) explains that these ingredients feed back on one another, especially points three and four. When people have a shared experience through a common focus, they become more aware of what the other is doing and feeling. The more this happens, the more the shared experience dominates their awareness and the more intense the shared emotions can become.

An assemblage of Bodies, Communication and a Shared Experience

The exhibition ritual is at its most intense during the opening event. It is at the opening that exhibitions typically attract large concentrations of people who all experience the exhibition and each other's presence and reactions at the same time. Ritual, writes Collins (2004, p. 53) 'is a bodily process. Human bodies moving into the same place start off the ritual process.' Ordinarily, an art exhibition opening begins with the gathering of a crowd at a certain venue at a specified time. The artist or artists who created the work are often present and mingle with the crowd. It is common to have complimentary food and drink, as this helps the ritual by attracting and maintaining a crowd. At some point, notable people such as the curator(s), artist(s) and/or other prominent people speak about the exhibition, the work, the artist(s) and their significance. The formal opening of each AbP exhibition followed this format.

Boundaries to Outsiders and a Mutual Focus

Like all social events, boundaries are created through these rituals. Ordinarily, those invited and those who attend exhibition openings have some form of connection that will vary in proximity and intensity to the artist(s), the curator or the institution or location at which the event is taking place (a friend, a relative, a fan, a professional association, someone wanting a free drink and

something to do on a Friday night). To be invited to an exhibition opening, one generally needs to be a member of a group or connected to someone who is. The people who attended the AbP openings had been invited from the DCS, victims' advocates, faculty from Flinders University and other Adelaide universities, organisations that support prisoners post-release, and from the visual arts mailing list of the AFC. At each opening, the gathering of people who had assembled listened to speeches by prominent people, such as the DCS Chief Executive, the Dean of Flinders University Law School (2012), the DCS Executive Director of Offender Development at DCS (2013), and a curator from the Art Gallery of South Australia (2014). The exhibitions and art objects within them were, of course, the common focus for everyone at the openings. People looked at the works, read the texts and talked, moved around and interacted with others and the exhibition by voting for a favourite piece. These were common activities through which people became mutually aware of their shared focus and experience.

The AbP exhibitions drew attention not just to the boundaries that regulate the art world and attendance at art exhibition openings but to the boundaries that regulate participation in society. These exhibitions were IRs designed to make the prison wall boundary simultaneously clear yet murky, for prisoners were both absent and present. The focus was on the art objects but also on where the art objects had come from. The AbP exhibitions were designed to include prisoners. They were also designed for the art objects convicted criminals made to be the central focus and thus draw everyone's attention. The exhibitions were called 'Art by Prisoners' to inform the community that prisoners had, in this instance, taken on the role of artists. Generally speaking, convicted criminals cannot attend such occasions by virtue of their bodily exclusion, which means they are unable to be co-present at virtually every occasion, event or ritual—no matter how big or small—that happens in the community. The few exceptions to this are, in fact, significant cultural rituals that (some) prisoners are able to get special permission to attend, such as the funeral of a close relative.

A Common Emotional Experience

Public responses to the art exhibitions indicated that many people had similar, albeit varied, emotional reactions to the exhibitions. Overwhelmingly, the common themes in the public responses were positive, supportive and encouraging. They were filled with gratitude, praise and empathy, which affirmed the status of the art objects as accepted and valued. Across the three years, not one member of the public wrote a response condemning or expressing hostility toward the exhibitions or the anonymous prisoners who took part. Admittedly, the people who attended the opening nights were important stakeholders in the exhibition and so were unlikely to be disparaging or negative. However, this trend continued and was repeated in other contexts. While approximately half of the audience comments data came from opening nights, the other half came from people who experienced the exhibitions at other times. Further, a number of media articles published in print and online, including one published in the Murdoch tabloid *The Advertiser*, were supportive of the exhibitions too.

Interaction Ritual Outcomes

According to Collins (2004, p. 49), there are four main outcomes of IRs. A successful IR will build up high levels of mutually focused and emotionally shared attention, so that participants have the experience of creating the following:

1. Group solidarity and a feeling of membership;
2. Emotional energy in the individual: a feeling of confidence, elation, strength, enthusiasm, and initiative in taking action;
3. Symbols that represent the group: emblems or other representations (visual icons, words, gestures) that members feel are associated with themselves collectively; these are Durkheim's 'sacred objects' (Collins 2004, p. 49). Persons pumped up with feelings of group solidarity treat symbols with great respect and defend them against the disrespect of outsiders and, even more, of renegade insiders;

4. Feelings of morality: the sense of rightness in adhering to the group, respecting its symbols and defending both against transgressors. Along with this goes the sense of moral evil or impropriety in violating the group's solidarity and its symbolic representations.

Group Solidarity

Importantly, the artistic contributions that prisoners offered the community were overwhelmingly accepted and appreciated, which led to feelings for both prisoners and members of the public of group solidarity, inclusion and group membership. The AbP exhibitions enabled prisoners to participate in the cultural, artistic, political and (to a lesser extent) the economic world beyond the prison through their art objects. Prisoners were permitted to sell their work but could not receive any portion of the funds. Money from sales was donated to charities and used to cover costs associated with the exhibitions. Nevertheless, this participation made prisoners feel as though they were still capable members of the community or that they were still people. This sentiment was expressed by a number of prisoners for whom participation, inclusion and acceptance was symbolic and important:

> It helps to know that you are not forgotten and that someone like me can reach out through my art. (Q7.P8.2012)

> It shows the public that we are still people like them with something to contribute. (Q7.P8.2013)

> Because it allows one to feel normal for a brief period of time. (Q7.P5.2013)

These feelings came about through the feedback mechanisms through which prisoners could read the positive, encouraging and empathetic community responses:

> This is a heartening exhibition! How is it that these artists are in prison? It seems to me the exhibition shows exactly why there are too many people in prison and that prisoners are so often places to suppress the dispossessed and downtrodden. In each of these paintings you can feel the human spirit overcoming this oppression. (7/2013 O)

Emotional Energy

Another important element of a successful IR is that it produces positive 'emotional energy', which, according to Durkheim 'is a feeling of confidence, courage to take action, boldness in taking initiative' (1912, p. 178, as quoted in Collins 2004, p. 39). The AbP exhibitions, for both prisoners and members of the public, were powerful emotional experiences. Members of the public wrote of 'holding back tears' (5/2013), of being 'blown away' (5/2013) and 'impressed' (25/2013 O) and that the exhibition was 'truly' (10/2013 O) or 'very' (31/2012 O) moving:

> This is a highly emotionally charged exhibition. I work closely with offenders and have been involved in artistic projects with them. This exhibition displays how important art is as a healing tool and a way in which people can express their feelings when there is no other outlet for expression. (46/2012 O)

> The standard of artwork is fantastic and it is great to see the talent harnessed and the folk being productive. The vibe in the room is amazing, well done. (20/2012 O)

The community responses and reactions to the exhibitions could be read and felt by the prisoners who helped to create such reactions. In response to the public reactions, many of the prisoner participants felt emotionally uplifted and energised. Some experienced intense levels of emotional energy, as the following comments demonstrate:

> What a boost to my self-esteem "Wow". (Q7.P15.2012)

> One word again – CONFIDENCE (Q4.P10.2013)

> For me the feedback was very positive as I can't remember when the last time was when I received so much positive feedback for something I had/have participated in. I was on cloud nine when I received the parcel with the award and pages of feedback. (Q8.P12.2012)

> I found it a great honour to be able to enter my artworks... I only hope that I can produce more pieces of art that will instil emotional thoughts and feelings in the public. Already my mind is racing with ideas for the next exhibition. Thank you. (P15.2012)

Sacred Symbols

Successful IRs generate sacred objects and symbols that become charged with significance (Collins 2004). Cultural events have the potential to create multiple sacred objects. For sports fans, it could be a team symbolised by an emblem (Collins 2004), but so too can a field or stadium (the hallowed ground) or a ball or racquet become charged with significance. For those who go to the theatre or a concert, it can be the performers, the music, the author or writer, just as certain venues can also become sacred by association with certain music scenes, such as the Cavern in Liverpool. Whatever the audience consciously focuses upon can become the Durkheimian 'sacred object' (Collins 2004, p. 83). Art galleries and art exhibitions are sacred spaces that contain sacred objects (Duncan 2005). We see objects and their creators differently when those objects are placed in an art gallery. The idea that art produced by prisoners (and, by association, the prisoners themselves) might be elevated to the 'sacred' is potentially problematic, for it involves the coming together of two concepts or symbols that are separated and distinguished regularly in the community through ritual. The criminal is a symbol of the profane and worse in many cases: a symbol of immorality, wickedness or evil. In contrast, in many cases, the artist is a symbol of the sacred.

The art objects in the exhibitions were carefully managed to symbolise the concept of rehabilitation, or the idea that the criminals who contributed desired to be someone other than a criminal (an artist, for example), to regain their status as citizens, to contribute to and be accepted by the community. At the very least, the exhibitions were designed not to offend those ideas. The public presence of criminals who have not yet completed their sentences must be managed so that the criminals' visibility is consistent with the purpose of the prison, which, put simply, is the concept of punishment (but also rehabilitation). To Foucault (1979, p. 109), the public visibility of prisoners engaging in public works is useful because it results in the collective interest in the

punishment of criminals, as well as the visible and verifiable character of punishment. Thus, convicts pay twice, writes Foucault (1979), through their labour and by the signs they produce. The convicts' public presence symbolises the concept of 'crime-punishment', 'a secondary, purely moral, but much more real utility' (Foucault 1979, p. 109). The concept of 'crime-punishment' here becomes the Durkheimian sacred object.

A public exhibition of prison art must be underpinned by a culturally and emotionally acceptable logic that makes sense to people. It must be evident how an exhibition of art created in prison, 'does something that needs to be done for people and society' (Becker 1982, p. 4). A public exhibition of prisoner art cannot merely be a creative exercise in unrestrained artistic and expressive freedom or a celebration of pure aesthetic beauty. Prisoners cannot use a public exhibition to court controversy by pushing social, moral and even legal boundaries through their art. The art itself is already controversial, given where it has come from. Therefore, logic demands that prison art, to be of service to people and society, makes criminals better people, which in turn makes society a better place. Exhibitions of prison art must produce signs consistent with the concepts of punishment and/or rehabilitation. Prison art is thus framed and constrained by these concepts. The AbP exhibitions were managed appropriately so that they symbolised the concept of crime-punishment-rehabilitation. This was the sacred symbol for the audience at the AbP exhibitions, as the following comments illustrate:

> Fabulous initiative to positively engage prisoners. Teach them skills or enhance others they already have. Also to get the public to understand prisoners are people too. Rehabilitation and positive effort. (46/2014 O)

> I think art and expressing creativity is a very good idea for prisoners to express their innermost feelings in a non-verbal way. It also helps them with developing a sense of identity, pride and self-satisfaction – which are important values in the rehabilitation of offenders. (41/2013 O)

This sacred symbol enabled the public to derive pleasure out of the exhibitions by witnessing the prisoners' efforts at reform but also, through acceptance and support, actively contributing to

prisoners' transformations upwards towards imagined positive futures, as the following comments indicate:

> I adore this most spectacular expo. An inspiring yet relaxing insight on Adelaide's most outstanding places to see. Wish the artist all the best for the near future. (66/2012)

> Art is a great medium for people to work through issues but more importantly realise their creative talents. Having an exhibition encourages confidence, a most enjoyable exhibition for the spectator! (2/2013 O)

The art objects in the exhibitions were managed and censored in order to symbolise prisoners' desires to better themselves, contribute positively to society, produce offerings and teachings for others and seek opportunities for redemption and rehabilitation. This was the message that many members of the public responded so positively towards. This was how AbP and the institutions that produced it did something for the individual and for society that needed doing.

Morality and a Sense of Rightness

The crime-punishment-rehabilitation sacred symbol relates to the final element in successful IRs: namely, they generate feelings of morality. According to Collins (2004, p. 39), an 'individual feels moral when he or she is acting with the energy derived from the heightened experience of the group.' Rituals are an important source of group morality, as Collins (2004, pp. 39–40) explains:

> It is the heightened experience of intersubjectivity and emotional strength in group rituals that generates the conception of what is good; what is opposed to this is what is evil. Transferred to symbols and sacred objects, the concept of moral good is attached to beliefs in religious beings, and to their secular equivalents.

For the public, the AbP exhibitions and the art objects within them had a moral quality due to the sacred crime-punishment-rehabilitation symbol they signified. Many members of the public thought these exhibitions were worthwhile and that they were a good—or even fantastic or

brilliant—idea. Some thought AbP should be made more visible to a wider public audience. The exhibitions were rituals that both prisoners and the public could take part in to generate feelings of support, encouragement, belonging and inclusion to feel that the efforts of the prisoners and the events themselves were morally right and good:

> Inspirational. A mix of delicate works contrast the realities for many artists. Some images are challenging. Some culturally revealing. Some simple but others complex. Some images are not to my personal liking but that is art and in some ways the like and dislike mirror life. Pleased that the art did not explore crime. Testament that people who have done wrong can do something good. (38/2012 O)

To summarise, the AbP exhibitions were successful IRs that enabled the public and currently serving prisoners to assemble together in the exhibition space, to communicate with each other and have a shared experience. Although prisoners and the public could not achieve physical co-presence with each other, they achieved co-presence and communicated with each other through art objects, written texts and temporary exhibitions. The exhibitions created feelings of inclusion, group solidarity and group membership both for those in prison who felt connected with or 'not forgotten' (Q7.P8.2012) by the outside world and for the public who welcomed and valued the art objects from prison. Prisoners felt as though they could still be valued members of the community, and in the context of an art exhibition, the public could accept and acknowledge them as such. The exhibitions were sites where it was possible for the anonymous prisoners to be someone other than their criminal identities. They were moments where the public could see them as humans and, in some cases, artists.

The exhibitions produced a number of sacred symbols and signs that can all be related back to the concept of prisoner self-development, improvement, rehabilitation and the desire to be accepted by society. Neither the art objects nor the anonymous prisoners who created them became sacred. Rather it was what the art objects symbolised: prisoners' moral and technical improvement; their desire to conform to society rather than rebel against it; their ability to

demonstrate a controlled, considered and civilised form of emotional and creative expression; and a desire to contribute to society in positive, productive and culturally valued ways. Allowing prisoners to behave in ways the public understand to be morally good is a way that prisoners can start building social and human capital, as well as feel as though they can make good on their past wrongs. The exhibitions symbolised the process, the aspiration for (or perhaps at least the possibility of) individual transformation from evil (criminal, offender) to good (human, citizen), and it invited the public to witness and be part of this transformation.

Ritual Delabelling

The AbP exhibitions were events that gave prisoners chances to present themselves and be seen by the public as people and, in some cases, the more esteemed label of 'artists'. Seeing and describing prisoners in these ways are a step up from seeing, reading and describing them as 'prisoners', 'offenders', 'criminals' or even 'scum' or 'monsters'. The title of the exhibitions, Art by *Prisoners*, uses the label 'prisoner' to describe the participants. But the events themselves allowed the prisoners to challenge that label and accompanying stereotypes, along with the belief that prisoners 'are fundamentally and permanently different than "normal" people' (Irwin 1985, as quoted in Maruna 2001, p. 4). Sending public feedback to prisoners meant they were able to read themselves described as people, humans and artists, as described by the public. These labels were thus reflected back at them. The AbP exhibitions were, therefore, rituals that welcomed prisoners, albeit anonymously and through their art objects, back to the community in ways that contributed to prisoners' de-stigmatisation and status elevation. The role of labelling or, more importantly, de/relabelling through ritual has been an area of recent criminological focus, particularly around desistance (see Maruna 2001, 2011). The AbP exhibitions were not re-entry rituals as imagined by Maruna (2011). However, these exhibitions (and similarly, the Koestler Trust's AbO exhibitions) satisfy many of the criteria that Maruna (2011) sets out as his imagined re-entry rituals. Maruna's exhibitions are symbolic and emotive, they are repeated, they involve the community, they focus on challenge and achievement and they are designed to 'leave a mark' (Maruna 2011, p. 21). I do

not claim these exhibitions do the job of permanently welcoming ex-prisoners back to the community. Nevertheless, these events can contribute to the change process in individual participants by letting them push back against—or at least crack open—their criminal identities to allow other more positive identities to co-exist. These events are also significant because they contribute to wider cultural acceptance, support and encouragement towards prisoners of the sort needed to sustain the idea of the re-entry ritual as imagined by Maruna (2011).

Labelling and Identity

The labels (human, people, artist) that the public used in their AbP feedback to describe prisoners stand in stark contrast to the labels placed on participants through degradation rituals by the courts, the media and other criminal justice agencies (Garfinkel 1956). The AbP exhibitions enabled prisoners to present to the public as people other than criminals and enabled the public to reflect those new identities back to the participating prisoners. These ideas are at the heart of labelling theory (Becker 1963; Lemert 1951). Once someone is labelled as 'deviant' or 'criminal' and excluded from society through incarceration, they are fixed with a negative (master) status that is very difficult to dislodge or challenge, once released, but especially from within prison. Punishment ceremonies are rituals of status degradation designed to communicate and therefore bring about the transformation of a person's identity downward from that of citizen to that of criminal (Erikson 1962; Garfinkel 1956; Maruna 2011). According to Erikson, these ceremonies are '*almost* irreversible' (1962, p. 311 emphasis added). Labelling theory proposes that criminal identities are created and entrenched by the rituals and ceremonies that are used to condemn, shame and punish such identities (Becker 1963; Lemert 1951; Maruna 2011). But by entrenching criminal identities, punishment rituals are, in fact, a cause rather than a cure for recidivism. In order for recidivist offenders to go straight, recent desistance research has emphasised the importance of delabelling, or the opportunity and/or ability to shed a criminal identity and construct a new non-criminal identity (a process of relabelling) (Maruna 2001). One barrier to ex-offender (re)integration is that society holds punitive attitudes towards those who commit crime.

Maruna (2011) points out that releasing people from prison can be a cause for community concern. One reason why communities respond this way is that there is a (near total) lack of restorative rituals and ceremonies designed to welcome the ex-offender back into the community. The status degradation of prisoners is achieved through ritual. By that logic, it should be towards ritual that we turn for the restoration or elevation of a person's status from criminal to citizen.

Public Exhibitions of Prisoner Art as Rituals of Temporary Re-entry and Status Elevation

Maruna (2011) argues for the role of ritual as a way to restore and elevate the status of released prisoners back to that of citizen or human. But Maruna (2011) must merely imagine what such rituals might entail due to the lack (or in most cases, complete absence) of restorative re-entry rituals of the type he conceives. For Maruna (2011), a successful re-entry ritual that welcomes prisoners back into the community upon their release, must (like successful IRs) create feelings of solidarity with and acceptance of prisoners based on merit and achievement. Maruna (2011, pp. 12–21) proposes that successful re-entry rituals would need to meet the following criteria:

1. Be symbolic and emotive;
2. Be repeated as necessary;
3. Involve the community;
4. Focus on challenge and achievement, not risk;
5. Involve wiping the slate clean.

Symbolic and Emotive

As discussed above, the AbP exhibitions were successful IRs. These rituals were for some members of the public and participating prisoners, highly emotive and symbolic events. Many AbP visitors were moved, impressed, surprised and grateful for experiencing the exhibitions. Similarly, the prisoners who took part wrote about how they were emotionally boosted by their participation. These rituals generated 'emotional energy' and feelings of confidence and enthusiasm in

participants (Maruna 2011, p. 14). Maruna argues that reintegration rituals must acknowledge not only the harm created by offenders but also the hurt inflicted on offenders in the name of punishment. For many offenders have been victimised before and during their punishment. For reconciliation to take place, such rituals require a mutual effort on the part of offenders and society to 'work together to make amends — for hurtful crimes and hurtful punishments — and move forward' (Maruna 2011, p. 15).

The AbP exhibitions did not focus on apologies from specific offenders to their victims. They did, however, allow some prisoners to be reflective and express remorse (e.g., the work entitled *Life's Ripples of Decisions*). The exhibitions also allowed prisoners to express the pain caused by committing crimes and being incarcerated. The expression of prisoner pain is taboo, for it is deserved and thus cannot be publicly expressed or complained about. The AbP exhibitions allowed prisoners to express and thus transform pain (as detailed in chapter three), but also the public interpreted pain in images that did not explicitly do this. For example, landscapes were not simply landscapes but became images of country from which prisoners were separated and isolated. In response to the exhibitions, the public were able to empathise with prisoners' situations. Thus, these exhibitions can be important for the reconciliation process because they allowed prisoners to express their pain and allowed members of the community to become aware of, empathise with and acknowledge that pain.

For some prisoners (and many members of the public), the AbP exhibitions were symbolic rituals of personal achievement, along with individual efforts of self-discovery, self-improvement, reform and of keeping out of trouble, as the following sample of prisoner comments, taken across each year, indicate:

> It helps pass the time, it shows you another side to yourself you may have never experienced, its impact make you feel good and mature from others comments. (Q5.P11.2012)

> I have only been drawing while in custody and it helps me feel good about my ability and myself. Without this program people don't change. (Q2.P11.2012)
>
> It would show the public what prisoners can do for themselves in prison. (Q7.P10.2013)
>
> I think that it would be good so that people can see what we do and to show that we do learn things in prison. (Q7.P5.2014)
>
> To challenge myself to learn new hobby while I got so much free time. (Q6.P14.2014)

Repetition

Another important element of reintegration rituals is that they are repeated (Maruna 2011, p. 16). Repetition is important to sustain and strengthen the ritual because solidarity can fade if rituals are not regularly practised (Collins 2004, p. 235; Maruna 2011, p. 16). The AbP exhibitions were repeated annually from 2012–2014 as part of this research. A further exhibition took place in 2015 at the Artspace gallery, which achieved above-average gallery attendance, as well as positive national and local press coverage. The AbP exhibitions were rituals that were easily repeated, which has also been the case in the UK with the Koestler Trust. In 2012, the Trust celebrated its 50th anniversary. Not only have the Trust's exhibitions continued annually now for over 50 years, they have also expanded to other locations outside London across the UK. The exhibition locations and venues have changed over time too, which means they have attracted new audiences and new participants. The Koestler Trust have also been innovative and progressive in the way they engage different stakeholders from the criminal justice system, the media and victims of crime, along with artists, to give a new perspective each year. Art exhibitions are already an established ritual that is constantly practised in the cultural landscape in many different contexts. Such repetition serves to continually elevate the objects and those who create them, as well as reinforce the importance, significance and value that society places on art and art exhibitions as important cultural and, in many cases, economic rituals of communication and interaction.

Involvement of Community

Rituals, writes Maruna (2011, p. 17) influence both participants and wider audiences. For instance, in the punishment ritual, the audience is the primary beneficiary of the ritual's work. Rituals have the power to transform identities precisely because they are witnessed by others; thus, in the punishment ritual, the citizen is transformed into a criminal, not simply in their own eyes but, most importantly, in the eyes of others. The AbP exhibitions were rituals that worked in the other direction for both participants and the public. For Maruna (2011), reintegration rituals must involve the public directly in ways that engender solidarity and build social inclusion. The AbP exhibitions were rituals that actively involved the community. The exhibitions were seen by hundreds of people, some of whom visited the venue specifically to see the exhibitions, while others chanced across the exhibitions. Many visitors left responses to the exhibitions and voted for their favourite artwork(s). These were key points of interaction for the public, for the prisoners were unable to be physically present but could nevertheless read how some of the public reacted. Thus, the prisoners could see themselves, reflected in the audience's comments, as 'people' and as 'artists'. In addition, some participants were awarded with a gold, silver or bronze 'People's Choice' award. The prisoners were also given awards by a panel of professional artists and curators. This was how the prisoner participants were able to experience the community responses to the exhibitions. Participants knew their work had been seen and that it had moved those who experienced it but, most importantly, they experienced community acceptance, gratitude, support, encouragement and empathy. In this way, the prisoners could read how the rituals worked on the audience, and in doing so, the rituals were able to work in the other direction on the participating prisoners. The positive emotional energy of the audience was sent into prison to charge the participating prisoners with positive emotional energy and feelings of confidence and enthusiasm. Thus, the rituals were interactions or (re)integrations that produced feelings of solidarity and inclusion on both sides of the prison walls.

Maruna also argues for the involvement of official members of the criminal justice and law enforcement organisations, such as the police. The importance of law enforcement involvement in

any reintegration ritual is to address institutional attitudes towards released prisoners who can become targets for police attention once back in the community. In a similar vein, for many participants in the AbP exhibitions, it was important for not only the public to view the work but also DCS staff, particularly members of upper management who prisoners typically have little, if any, access to. Numerous participants expressed this motivation to participate in AbP:

> To have my art seen by the public and DCS management. (Q2.P4.2012)

One survey question informed participating prisoners that DCS staff had viewed the exhibition and asked entrants how important it was that the artwork had been viewed by senior DCS staff. Many did not answer this question, and for some, it was not important. But to others, institutional interest and support were important to communicate and demonstrate to staff within the prison institution that prisoners were talented and creative people:

> Because it showed another side to us and highlighted that we are not just a number on a door. (Q8.P2.2013)

> Because I hope that they can see another side of me and how art is helping to mend what was once a very broken person. (Q8.P10.2013)

> It proves to DCS management and staff that prisoners do have talent and in general DCS management and staff see prisoners when we have done wrong in jail. Very rarely do prisoners have much to do with DCS management outside of the prison we are housed at. (Q3.P12.2012)

> I'm glad to see and know that staff and the Chief Executive were there to see our efforts and to know that we are still human. (Q3.P15.2012)

These comments speak to the importance for prisoners to challenge their criminal identities within the prison institution, as well as beyond it. For some prisoners, producing art was a way to influence both institutional and public attitudes towards them. DCS staff attended each exhibition opening, from the Chief Executive and other senior executives to middle management and prison

officers. A number of senior DCS staff spoke at the openings, including the Chief Executive in 2012 and the Executive Director of Offender Development in 2014. Other stakeholders in criminal justice circles attended too, such as the Commissioner for Victims' Rights and staff from the Victims' Support Service. There was also political support for the exhibitions. In 2015, a federal senator and the state correctional services minister gave speeches at the opening. Thus, the AbP exhibitions were rituals that engaged and involved the public and a wide variety of community members, including official members of the political and criminal justice establishment.

Challenge and Achievement

Initiation rituals and rites of passage typically focus on some sort of challenge or achievement that must be performed before someone has earned entry into a club or group. This challenge typically involves a 'demonstration of courage, valour or other valued qualities' (Maruna 2011, p. 18). The AbP exhibitions were designed to showcase and thus focus upon prisoners' talents, skills and achievements. The exhibitions were not without the concept of risk, which played a key role in curating and managing the images that were permitted to be publicly exhibited.

Producing art can be a challenging process, especially in prison (as explored in chapters two and three). It requires commitment and patience and can involve trial and error, as well as the learning and development of new skills (The Arts Alliance 2010, as cited in McNeill et al. 2012). But further, producing art is not usually an activity, program or behaviour that prisoners must do as part of their sentence. Living in prison can be extremely challenging, yet the completion of a prison sentence is generally regarded as a badge of shame. A criminal record invites discrimination and social exclusion and so must be hidden and managed (Goffman 1963; Maruna 2011). A reintegration ritual must therefore involve a demonstration or proof that the prisoner has done something above and beyond their sentence. In some prisons, prisoners make art as a component of therapeutic programs. But for participants in AbP, art making was a recreational activity that some prisoners chose to do. Art objects were symbolic of prisoners' desires and motivation to do

something above and beyond what is required of them. Importantly, this was a message that their art could also tell the public:

> … it shows that I am using my time in a positive manner, instead of walking around in circles not achieving anything. (Q3.P16.2012)

> It's important to know that the public can see that prisoners are trying to be constructive with their time. Some are even trying to turn they're lives around. (Q7.P16.2012)

Prisoner anonymity meant the public were not distracted by focusing on what crimes the participants had previously committed. The art objects meant the focus remained on what prisoners might be able to achieve in the context of showcasing their valued qualities:

> An exceptional exhibition showcasing some amazing artwork. The collection includes a diverse assortment of thoughtful pieces (and equally compelling descriptions) that offer a unique perspective on life in prisons. A job incredibly well done by all involved.
> (28/2013 O)

Leaving a Mark

Successful rituals, writes Maruna (2011, p. 21) must leave 'a mark': they require certification, a process in which a piece of paper can take on sacred or deeply symbolic value. Accordingly, AbP recognised and involved prisoners in two important ways. Firstly, each prisoner was issued with a certificate, which (at the very least) acknowledged the effort that prisoners had exerted to produce their work (Participation Award), but it also acknowledged artistic talent (Commended and Highly Commended Award) and popularity (First, Second and Third People's Choice Award). As a further incentive and reward, the Koestler Trust also provides cash prizes for the highest award winners. The AbP certificates were awarded by a panel of professional artists and curators and printed by Flinders University on their official certificate stock. The involvement of professional artists and the production of genuine paper certificates meant that the certificates were authentic symbols; they were not simply given but deserved and, therefore, were meaningful. Prisoners

responded positively to receiving the certificates of award as acknowledgment for prisoners' efforts and in recognition of their artistic talents and achievements. This is evident in the following sample comments:

> Well to receive these certificates it makes me feel very happy and proud and I love the good things people said about my paintings all in all I am so happy and pleased to win these awards. (Q2.P6.2012)

> It was very important to have expert opinion of the work that I have done and that it will give the encouragement to keep on working and better my skill. (Q2.P13.2012)

> Getting a certificate is in itself a sense of achievement and it shows my family that I'm actually doing something positive with my time in prison. (Q2.P11.2013)

> I was overjoyed to find that I had been recognised for some of my artwork. (Q2.P12.2013)

> I was surprised at the certificate I got (Highly Commended). I didn't think it would of done so well. I'm a self-taught artist and I've been painting for approx. 10 yrs. Everything I'd learnt I had learnt through trial and error. A lot of people here like my style of painting and it was nice to get a piece out there for everyone to see. I would like to enter again when you have another exhibition. (Q2.P6.2013)

One prisoner acknowledged the different relationship dynamic, as one that was designed to encourage and support rather than condemn:

> It means to me that people in the trade of art from some top art institutions of SA took time out of their busy day to look at and award art done by prisoners, which in general are looked down upon and put down by society. This art exhibit proves that us prisoners do have a lot of talent. Some prisoners do use their time in prison in a positive and useful way. (Q2.P12.2012)

Former Koestler award winner Erwin James (2010) writes that 'in prison, a little praise goes a long way'. Participation in the AbP exhibitions left a mark that was both visible and tangible

documentary evidence that the prisoners could have and display to others. If we acknowledge that art making is a valued activity and behaviour, then a certificate recognising a prisoner's artistic skill, achievement and contribution is equivalent to acknowledging the prisoner's good conduct. The certificates also left an emotional mark on prisoners, filling some prisoners with confidence and boosting their self-esteem. It also gave some prisoners an event and a positive achievement they could talk about with others. This opened up opportunities to engage in positive script work. Official recognition gave prisoners new ways of narrating and labelling themselves as award winners, valued contributors, human beings and even artists.

In summary, the AbP exhibitions were repeated annual events that were highly symbolic and emotive for prisoners and the public alike. The exhibitions invited the community to participate in the events by acknowledging and supporting prisoners' creative achievements. This was symbolised by the giving of feedback, along with certificates awarded by a panel of experts to prisoners in response to their art objects. The art objects became the sacred symbols and a medium through which prisoners could experience temporary group membership, acceptance, inclusion and encouragement. Importantly, the art objects charged prisoners with emotional energy and motivated them to keep making art and participating in future exhibitions. The AbP exhibitions were successful symbolic re-entry rituals that welcomed prisoners back to the community, albeit anonymously and temporarily. They were events that created social solidarity in support of prisoners.

Short-circuiting the Condemnation Script

Punishment rituals are good examples of successful IRs that exclude and punish those who commit crime. For Durkheim, punishment rituals are useful for re-asserting the moral order and social solidarity in the face of threats to that order. Punishment rituals unite people against crime and against criminals. Much has been written about society's voracious appetite for punishment (see Pratt 2007). Carvalho and Chamberlen (2017, p. 9) argue that rituals of punishment are not only pleasurable but mutually reinforcing:

> [W]hile punishment can be considered an instrument to generate and reinforce solidarity, the peculiar image of community and belonging which it produces is precisely one which depends on punishment for its maintenance.

Similarly, Maruna (2011, p. 6) notes the following:

> [R]ather than being a *product* of collective morality, then, the reaction to crime is itself said to be the *source* of that morality, suggesting crime plays a key part in maintaining social order.

This idea is consistent with Maruna's (2011) assertion that rituals and ceremony do not just reflect society; they help shape it. To borrow Maruna's analogy, the routine practice of rituals is a cultural muscle that gets stronger the more it is flexed. When it comes to matters of crime and justice, the dominant cultural muscle that is flexed relates to punishment, retribution and condemnation of the criminal. The reliance on punishment as a tool for achieving social solidarity and as a political response to the uncertainties and anxieties of late modern society have been credited as factors that have led to unprecedented growth in prison numbers across the Anglophone world (Pratt 2007). Maruna (2011, pp. 15–16) acknowledges that public mood and sentiment towards prisoners and ex-prisoners, along with a politically risk-averse environment, present a major obstacle that may mean 'little to no hope' (Maruna 2014, p. 131) for the restoration and elevation of prisoner status through re-entry rituals.

Given this cultural environment, it is important to find ways for prisoners to connect to the community, and create feelings of shared values and social solidarity in order for the community to flex its cultural and emotional muscle in the other direction. Another consequence of public exhibitions of prisoner art is that these events provide moments that can short-circuit the condemnation and retribution script. In contrast to the degradation rituals of punishment, the AbP exhibitions (and similarly, the Koestler Trust's AbO exhibitions) were rituals of elevation that generated positive collective sentiment from members of the public in support of people in prison. The AbP exhibitions were valuable rituals that captured the community's attention in a way that other prisoner contributions to society are unable to do. This is reflected in the media coverage

the exhibitions received in *The Advertiser* and its online equivalent, www.adelaidenow.com.au. The exhibitions were a discussion point for local radio and television by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and Channel 7's Sunday evening news. The exhibitions were covered positively by mainstream media organisations. These same media organisations are part of the media machine that so frequently takes a more punitive line against crime and those who commit it. However, when the media reported on the AbP exhibitions, journalists made the link between the production of art and prisoners' rehabilitation or moral improvement, even when these links were not explicitly put forward. The media helped explain to the public why these exhibitions did something for society that needed doing.

The Clink

Another initiative that grew out of HMP High Down which links the prison community with the free community in ways that elevate prisoners through ritual, which generates public support and encouragement is The Clink. The Clink is underpinned by certified training and education, but the ceremony and ritual around fine dining plays an important role too. The Clink operates four restaurants from prisons in the UK. The Clink restaurants are spaces within the prison that are open to the public, where the food preparation and service are the responsibility of currently serving prisoners. Work at The Clink is undertaken as part of hospitality training. I had the good fortune to dine at The Clink in 2011. The restaurant was an oasis within HMP High Down for someone who, at the time, was unaccustomed to the disconcerting experience of entering a prison. Entering a prison, which the public must do in order to dine at The Clink, is itself a valuable and undoubtedly enlightening experience for the public. There was a strong theatrical element to The Clink experience, where the customer is transported into prison, only to be transported back out of it upon entering the restaurant. The restaurant provides a cultural context that can draw comparisons with prison art exhibitions. The prison boundary is made permeable and accessible, though rather than prisoners or products leaving the prison, it is the public who enter; thus, The Clink enables physical co-presence between prisoners and diners. Prisoners operate the restaurant under the guidance of professionals. Waiting and kitchen staff in restaurants commonly wear

name tags; however, nothing is known about the offending history of staff at The Clink. In this context, difficult knowledge is easily managed and hidden. The public are, by dining at The Clink, enlisted into the project of transforming prisoners into competent waiters and chefs. Dining in The Clink can help dispel myths around prisoners, who they are and what they are capable of, and it gives the public a chance to see what is on the other side of the wall. It is also a context that avoids the condemnation and retribution script. The collective consciousness is channelled in support and encouragement of prisoners, their work and, ultimately, their efforts to better themselves. At the time of writing, the restaurant review site Tripadvisor (Tripadvisor 2017) rated The Clink at five out of five stars after 489 public reviews, with 79% rating their food and dining experience as 'excellent' and 18% as 'very good'. Public comments left on the site confirm as much. In May 2017, Peter W from London rated The Clink as 'very good' and wrote the following review, entitled 'Lunch in the nick!':

> We went to The Clink Restaurant with a party of 30/40 people from the University of the Third Age (U3A). The restaurant is actually inside the prison so we had to go through security to get in, including sniffer dogs and an electric baton check for hidden weapons I suppose. For those of us who had never been inside it was an interesting experience. The dining room was in a nearby building and was staffed completely by serving prisoners. Your heart misses a beat when you hand your coat in at the cloakroom ... but it was all there when we left with contents intact :)) The food was prepared by the prisoners and was quite good and not detracted from by having to use plastic knives and forks. There was no wine list of course. There was however a good selection of Clink memorabilia to purchase. The prisoners were quite polite and very chatty, regaling us with numerous stories. All told a very interesting experience. Getting out was easier than getting in!!!

Some other reviews by diners offer similar sentiments of hope and encouragement for the prisoners involved in The Clink:

> Great food and staff you are rooting for.

> We went here for my husband's birthday and we had a lovely time. The food was delicious and the staff attentive and very polite, but not over the top and invasive. It's an excellent social enterprise and I really hope it helps the staff move on to better things.
>
> The best restaurant in Sutton.
>
> It requires a bit of organisation to eat lunch here as it is in a prison and therefore advance booking and security procedures are required! However it is worth it. The food was excellent and the setting really impressive.
>
> Delicious lunch in nice surrounding.
>
> Had lunch with two girlfriends. Great experience. Delicious food. Well presented and served by the inmates in all very good humour. Bought their cookery book too.

Reviewing The Clink in Brixton, *The Telegraph's* hotel critic 'ate perfectly-cooked loin of venison with artichoke and confit potato, and Indian-spiced risotto with spiced tofu and baby coriander salad' (The Telegraph 2015). She went on to praise The Clink's efforts to reduce recidivism, as well as the effervescent atmosphere:

> The scheme provides much-needed employment training and rehabilitation for inmates. The primary aim is to cut recidivism rates. But also — and crucially — it's a buzzing, entertaining, and highly enjoyable mid-priced restaurant. It is also a fascinating one, staffed by people who are battling against the odds to rebuild their lives and learn a new trade.

The Clink's restaurants and training program are a concrete example of how investment in prisoners' skills and training, coupled with opportunities to use those skills to connect positively and productively with the public, can help prisoners gain skills, self-confidence and employment pathways post-release. Interestingly though, The Clink, like the Koestler Trust, is an independent organisation that works within the prison system. This is surely an important aspect of this sort of work, necessary to get buy-in from prisoners who may be more willing to embrace programs from 'outside' the prison system.

The Clink allows prisoners to transform themselves and their identities from within prison. Through this program, prisoners can become chefs or waiters. Crucially, it allows prisoners to enact these roles with members of the public to create meaningful and productive interactions that result in de-stigmatisation effects. The positive comments left by diners at The Clink on its website share an encouraging, supportive and grateful tone, similar to the comments left by the public at the AbP exhibitions.

Conclusion

Rituals are used to create social solidarity and feelings of group membership or belonging. They also symbolise, communicate and make real individual transformation. Rituals are used in the criminal justice system to reaffirm collective values in the face of threats to those values. The community does this through rituals of condemnation and expulsion of those responsible. As a result, these ritualised responses create criminal identities. The journey into prison involves the ritual transformation of identity downward from citizen to criminal. Logically then, the journey back to society should involve the ritual transformation of identity from criminal back to citizen. This is far easier said than done, as degradation ceremonies are very hard to undo, not least because the community seems either ill-equipped, unconvinced or just indifferent. Perhaps it is easier not to think about or care for those in prison because we are rarely given cause to, and prisoners are rarely visible outside the usual scripts that induce feelings of fear, pain, anger, shame, condemnation and other such powerful negative emotions.

The AbP exhibitions were rituals that allowed the public to see prisoners, even if only temporarily, as people worthy of support and encouragement, which is to say these exhibitions got members of the public *en masse* to care about prisoners and their future. The AbP exhibitions enabled prisoners to experience ritual, symbolic inclusion in and acceptance by the community. They enabled members of the public to experience pleasure, not through the punishment of criminals but at the idea of their self-development, or their self-directed efforts towards their moral

improvement. These were concepts that, for many prisoners, were symbolised by the art they produced. They were also concepts that the public understood.

Producing artwork is an activity and behaviour that prisoners can do to contribute to their de-stigmatisation. Public feedback to the AbP exhibitions facilitated the community's involvement in a process of delabelling and relabelling. Moments such as these are incredibly rare in the criminal justice system. The exhibitions also provided an appropriate backdrop for reflection and enabled more progressive discussions about punishment and its effects to occur. But these events also allowed prisoners and the community to practise reconciliation. The prisoners made symbolic gestures that demonstrated desires to be someone better and to make that better self visible. The public acknowledged this and reflected it back. The public here are not learning forgiveness, but they are at least learning that prisoners are people—talented people even. They are learning about the sorts of issues some prisoners are grappling with, and they are learning to welcome, encourage and support prisoners in the context of their creative contributions. These are the cultural muscles that need more exercise if we are to create a community that might, at some point in the future, embrace the re-entry ritual.

CHAPTER 8: BEYOND THE WALLS, PART 3

The AbP exhibitions invited prisoners to communicate and interact with the public through the medium of art and written text. Surveys asked prisoners to reflect on what they wanted their artworks to say. Art making in prison has different meanings and significance for different prisoners, just as it does for both serious and amateur artists in the community. Some prisoners did not place much importance on the meaning of their artworks. But many did and wanted to use these exhibitions to demonstrate to themselves, prison officers and management and, importantly, to the public, that prisoners were more than their identities as 'criminals', 'offenders' or 'deviants'. For many prisoners, the content of their art and the medium of expression were a mixture of pain and suffering, along with affirming messages of hope and strength in the face of such adversity. The messages expressed in the content of the art and within the medium itself were glimpses of the prisoners' struggles with their predicaments and the labels, stigma and shame that come with incarceration.

Art making is an activity many prisoners undertake as a coping strategy. Making art, though, can allow prisoners to contribute to society in positive ways; thus, it is a way that prisoners can give back to society. In doing so, art making can be understood as a 'generative' activity that can result in the development of human and social capital. This can provide prisoners with a sense of meaning, purpose and agency and hope for the future. The cumulative effect, then, can lead to more profound personal changes. There are examples of where art making has led to complete identity transformations for some prisoners (as explored in chapter 6). Art making is a powerful symbolic act, capable of making the change process visible, authentic and believable. The '(becoming) artist' script, while not in any way easy to achieve, is another meta-narrative that can potentially enable a prisoner to open up a redemptive script for himself or herself.

At a macro-level, public exhibitions of prison art can also provide a cultural context in which to have alternative conversations about the prison, punishment, the sorts of people prisoners are

and the sorts of people they might become. Importantly, they channel collective energies in support of prisoners. Thus, art exhibitions can contribute to what McNeill refers to as tertiary desistance. The exhibitions allowed prisoners to come to the community with an offering and allowed the community to accept that offering. These were events then that enabled prisoners and society to rehearse the concept of reintegration, whereby prisoners demonstrated and accepted conventional values, and society, in turn, accepted and welcomed prisoners through their creative contributions.

Sukumaran and Chan: Transformations to Artist and Christian Minister

Firstly, I wish to briefly recap (and provide some additional information) about Sukumaran and his co-offender Andrew Chan. Sukumaran was one of several people whom the Indonesian government executed in 2015. Another man executed alongside Sukumaran was his fellow 'ring leader' Andrew Chan, who was arrested with Sukumaran and seven others for attempting to smuggle over eight kilograms of heroin into Australia. For many, the death penalty is an objectionable punishment, but for these two men, it seemed particularly unjust and brutal, for both were considered to have transformed themselves from within Indonesia's Kerobokan prison. At the time of his execution, Sukumaran's artistic achievements were widely acknowledged in Australia as evidence of his transformation, or his successful 'rehabilitation'. Numerous people also believed that Andrew Chan had transformed himself through his work and qualification as an ordained Christian minister (Allard 2015).

The remarkable aspect of Chan's and Sukumaran's transformations was that they achieved them *during* their incarceration. For these two individuals, there was to be no release, making the tasks of carving out new identities, finding redemption and leaving behind positive legacies considerably more challenging, yet that is what both men achieved. Chan's redemptive script involved his spiritual and social transformation through Christian conversion. As a Christian and an ordained minister, Chan contributed to prison through personal interactions, such as leading prison church services and providing spiritual and emotional support to inmates. This role was one that centred

on the care and well-being of others. Sukumaran's redemptive narrative involved his personal creative and artistic development. But this also involved his contributions to others' lives through teaching and helping fellow inmates to realise their own artistic talents. Sukumaran's art classes ran like a therapeutic community, and it involved helping drug addicts get clean, a highly symbolic and redemptive act given his conviction. Nevertheless, it was his personal transformation from criminal to artist that captured public attention and enabled him to demonstrate to himself but, critically, to others that he had become someone other than a criminal. He became an artist, teacher, mentor and a leader. Sukumaran worked at developing skills and vision through which he became 'good', and through which he could model being good to others. In the context of his criminal conviction for heroin smuggling and his death sentence, prison officers and fellow prisoners within Kerobokan prison, as well as many in Australia, recognised Sukumaran and Chan as changed people. One of the reasons why their transformations were so widely acknowledged is that both men successfully constructed redemptive scripts through publicly accepted 'meta-narratives' (Maruna et al. 2006, p. 180) around religious conversion and artistic transformation. That is, the journey or transformation from criminal to Christian minister or criminal to artist are widely accepted by the public as believable and legitimate narratives for individual change.

Becoming Criminal

Sukumaran and Chan managed to do what Maruna et al. (2004) describe as a problem that is 'irksome to researchers, but positively infuriating for *ex-offenders*, who often want to make the case that they have permanently "changed", "reformed" or become "new" people' (p. 272, emphasis added). It is important to note, though, that Chan and Sukumaran never became 'ex-offenders'. Their new identities were born in prison and died with them in prison. These men never faced the challenges of returning to the community as 'ex-offenders' who take their identities into the community. Likewise, the community never had to face the challenge of accepting Chan and Sukumaran back. The reality for most sentenced prisoners is that their status

as criminals, fixed to them through ceremonies of degradation (Garfinkel 1956), can be extraordinarily hard to remove.

According to labelling theory (Becker 1963; Lemert 1951), criminal identities are formed in response to societal responses that punish, label and shame certain kinds of behaviour. For Lemert, someone becomes 'deviant' in a two-stage process known as primary and secondary deviation. Primary deviation involves experimentation or flirtation with deviant behaviour. Secondary deviation happens at the level of one's identity and occurs when deviance becomes 'incorporated as part of the 'me' of the individual' (Lemert 1951, p. 76, as quoted in Maruna et al. 2004, p. 273). Maruna et al. (2004, p. 274) use the symbolic interactionist concept of the 'looking-glass self' to explain that identity formation is a process by which we see ourselves, and the way we see ourselves is also dependent on how others respond to us. Our identities then are shaped by what we do, how we behave and the sorts of feedback we receive in response. Acknowledging though that this dialogue is not simply a two-way process. We are constantly acting in and reacting to our environment. The deviant or criminal labelling process changes people by recasting individuals downward in their own eyes and in the eyes of others.

The stigma of a criminal conviction (or criminal record) is deeply discrediting and one that spoils or taints individual identity to reduce those stigmatised in the minds of those whom Goffman (1963, p. 15) labels 'normals'. 'Normals', explains Goffman (1963, p. 15), are those people who 'don't depart negatively from expectations'. The effects of stigma result from knowledge about discrediting attributes of an individual or a group of people. In general, criminal behaviour lowers people's estimation of the person responsible, or in the absence of specific knowledge of a crime, the person so labelled. For Goffman (1963, p. 15) an important aspect of stigma is that this influences the attitudes of the 'normals' towards those with a stigma, who come to be regarded as 'not quite human'. Normals communicate this status by withdrawing and distancing themselves from those who carry this stigma. This new status can be very difficult and painful to come to terms with. Of all the pains of imprisonment famously outlined by Sykes (1958), he singles out the

loss 'of that more diffuse status which defines the individual as someone to be trusted or as morally acceptable [as] the loss which hurts most' (Sykes 1958, p. 67). Thus, Goffman (1963, p. 19) identifies 'acceptance' as the central issue in the life of those who are stigmatised. For prisoners, their lack of acceptance is made patently obvious by their physical isolation. The prison walls are a constant reminder of their rejection from society. Prisoners must find ways to psychologically cope with social rejection, which frequently continues after release. There is no guarantee of acceptance at the end of a prison sentence. The labels and stigma associated with criminality follow many prisoners into the community, where ex-prisoners can encounter hostile and discriminatory social attitudes. For people returning to the community from prison, these attitudes create all sorts of obstacles for finding employment and other social support networks. These attitudes also affect the identities of ex-prisoners, for such obstacles are the result of attitudes from those in the community who either refuse or are unable to see ex-criminals as trustworthy or morally acceptable. Negative attitudes towards ex-criminals are contributing factors in perpetuating deviant identities and the formation of deviant sub-cultures (Braithwaite (1989). In order to go straight and to cease offending, it is the ability and opportunities to change and to form new non-criminal identities that are important (Maruna 2001, Giordano et al 2002).

Becoming Other

Once people have been 'changed' into criminals, it is very difficult for them to demonstrate to others that they have subsequently changed for the better and prove that they are no longer criminal. Becoming a criminal involves changing someone at the level of their identity to the extent that the criminal label overwhelms all others. To become someone other than criminal involves finding ways to cast off a criminal identity and construct a new one. The same theoretical logic put forward by labelling theorists to describe the process of becoming criminal has been used to explain how ex-prisoners manage to go straight and desist from crime (Maruna et al. 2004). Accordingly, the process of desistance has at least two stages: primary and secondary desistance. Primary desistance refers to a lull or break in offending, whereas secondary desistance is the

process by which someone moves from that lull to identifying as going straight or being a changed person.

A strong body of evidence has demonstrated that long-term desistance, like secondary deviance, involves 'identifiable and measurable changes at the level of personal identity or the "me" of the individual' (Maruna et al. 2004, p. 274). A necessary component of the desistance process, therefore, relates to societal reaction. As Meisenhelder (1982, as quoted in Maruna 2001, p. 155) puts it, 'Not only must a person accept conventional society in order to go straight, but conventional society must accept that person as well.' Peeling off the deviant label is an interactional process that requires individuals to see themselves as changed, and it requires this change to be reflected back to them by others. This is how someone is de-labelled and re-labelled. The challenging aspect of this theory is how (ex-)prisoners, and indeed society, go about creating the conditions for such change to happen.

All prisoners suffer from a stigma that relates to their individual character (Goffman 1963) or their moral standing. Displacing a moral stigma that affects judgment about a person's character is an incredibly challenging task, for how does someone demonstrate that he or she has corrected a moral deficiency? How is it possible to demonstrate one's moral improvement to oneself and others? How does someone demonstrate that they are no longer 'bad'? Maruna (2001, p. 158) acknowledged the difficult and complex nature of this task when he wrote the following:

> Reformation is not something that is visible or objective in the sense it can be "proven". It is, instead, a construct that is negotiated through interaction between an individual and significant others in a process of "looking-glass rehabilitation." Until ex-offenders are formally and symbolically recognised as "success stories," their conversion [not to Christianity but to reformed citizens] may remain suspect to significant others and most importantly to themselves.

This idea was also expressed by Lofland (1969, p. 210, as quoted in Maruna 2001, p. 123), who wrote that '[l]ong years of truly exemplary conformity or even hyper-conformity and stellar service

to society may be required' before someone who was publicly identified as a deviant can be elevated to the status of 'pivotal normal'.

Public art exhibitions provide a cultural context and ritual for momentary de-labelling and re-labelling—an opportunity for which prisoners were all too aware. A key concern for many participants was around displacing the stigma of their criminal identities:

> I would like the public to see there is some good talent in the prison system and not all prisoners waste their time in prison. (Q4.P12.2012)

> To make a point to the general public that all prisoners are not violent brain dead uneducated no gooders in life and that we can all strive to search within ourselves to better ourselves for the future that lays ahead of all of us. (Q6.P12.2014)

> It is a great way for prisoners to get exposure for their talents and it is positive way of expressing their skills and talents. (Q10.P1.2014)

A strong theme running through the public responses was that the exhibitions did, in fact, present prisoners as people, and talented people at that. Artistic talent is a quality not usually associated with prisoners. Thus, the public offered their support and encouragement to prisoners. In doing so, the public were acknowledging and affirming prisoners' skills and talents, thereby de-labelling and then re-labelling prisoners as 'people', 'human[s]' and even 'artist[s]':

> A fabulous display of moving past the offender and to the person. (19/2014 O)

> Creativity has the power to liberate so these works represent the potential for a new beginning. Many artists show a raw talent and others a striking inventiveness. The program should expand and continue. (25/2014 O)

Further, prisoners' talents were also acknowledged with certificates issued by members of the established art world, which was also an affirming experience for prisoners:

> I was surprised at the [Highly Commended] certificate I got. I didn't think it would have done so well. I'm a self-taught artist and I've been painting for approx. 10 yrs. Everything I'd learnt I had learnt through trial and error. A lot of people here like my style of painting and it was nice to get a piece out there for everyone to see. I would like to enter again when you have another exhibition. (Q2.P6.2013)

When used in this way, art empowers prisoners to become active agents in their own change or de-labelling process. Many prisoners wrote about how producing art was proof they were developing themselves in positive ways, as opposed to being passive:

> Because it shows that I am using my time in a positive manner, instead of walking around in circles not achieving anything. (Q3.P16.2012)

Thus, self-conception can change through art making, as an activity that can facilitate positive change and encourage reactions from others in response to the 'self as a causal agent' (Maruna et al. 2004, p. 279). This is consistent with the notion of the 'looking-glass self' preferred by Maruna et al. (2004, p. 278, quoting Gecas & Schwalbe 1983):

> Human beings derive a sense of self not only from the reflected appraisals of others, but also from the consequences and products of behaviour that are attributed to the self as an agent in the environment.

I have argued that under certain circumstances making art can be an empowering, pro-social act of 'right doing'. The act of creation can become what Giordano et al (2002, pp. 1000-1002) describe as a 'hook for change' which are important in opening up a vision and new pathways to a 'replacement self'. Supportive and encouraging reactions from the public are thus important positive reinforcements that can help the process of identity change. A public exhibition of art casts prisoners not as passive recipients of punishment but as reflective people, generators of cultural content, and active agents in their own change. The discovery of agency is important for inspiring the desistance process (Maruna 2001; McNeill et al. 2011). The AbP exhibitions enabled

alternative identities such as artist to be confirmed but also enabled new identities to emerge, be tried on, practised or rehearsed:

> It meant a lot [to be included in the exhibition] because I didn't consider myself as much of an artist/painter. (Q3.P2.2013)

Hope, Purpose and Meaning

Art making and its attendant identity as (becoming) artist gave some prisoners a sense of hope and meaning in their lives. Having a sense of control, purpose and hope for the future was identified by Maruna (et al. 2006) as contributing positively to prisoners' abilities to cope with the anxiety of an uncertain future. Art making was an activity that some prisoners could envisage doing both within prison as well as post-prison. An identity as an artist, like that of a Christian or other religious convert or devotee for that matter, is an identity that can be created in prison, and crucially, it is one that can be exported beyond prison and accepted by the community, as the following public comments demonstrate:

> Great talent that needs to be developed and pathway created for life outside of prison. (10/2014 O)

> Amazing work. Some very talented individuals that will hopefully be nurtured and continue on to bigger things. (81/2012)

Numerous prisoner responses indicated that making art and developing talent were important for imagining a more positive future self:

> I want to learn how to exhibit my work so that I can do that when I get out. (Q4.P8.2012)

> … if I ever get out of prison I hope to paint for a small living. (Q5.P8.2012)

> A prisoner's self-confidence in her or his ability to make art or become an artist was important in seeing herself or himself as an artist in prison but also beyond it:

> It gives me the confidence to one day put my art out there if I ever get out of this bad dream of a place and make a living off of it somehow even if it doesn't make a lot it will keep me going. (Q3.P10.2013)

Although art making could help some participants envisage a life and an identity beyond prison, the pathway was not always clear. Participation in AbP was for some prisoners an opportunity they feared would be unavailable to them once they were released from prison. In addition to these comments, the researcher was contacted by a prisoner upon his release, who was concerned he would not be able to participate in future exhibitions because he was no longer incarcerated. The desire to be included in future exhibitions post-release was also expressed by another prisoner, who asked:

> Can I enter the Art by Prisoners exhibition after I'm released? I would be on parole, and after parole, I would like to keep entering. (Q9.P6.2013)

Maruna et al.'s (2006) research demonstrates that Chan's Christian conversion trod a well-worn path to identity change within (but also beyond) prison. For the participants in Maruna et al.'s (2006) study, Christian conversion provided a solution to the questions inmates had around their self-identity. Of particular concern to the Christian converts was how they were able to maintain their self-esteem and sense of self-worth from within the prison. Prisoners can find it very difficult to make sense of their lives in ways that maintain self-esteem. Prisoners can also find it difficult to feel good about who they are, the direction their lives have taken and what the future holds for them. One's life narrative involves making sense of one's past, present and projected future. According to McAdams (1993, as quoted in Maruna et al. 2006, p. 168), this is the way modern adults construct their own 'personal myth', and it is the process of identity development. Stories that provide a sense of unity, coherence and meaning are important to ward off feelings of meaninglessness and existential void, which are frequently at the forefront of many prisoners' minds (Maruna et al. 2006). For some participants, developing themselves as artists was a way to

use their time productively, which helped them to see their time in prison as constructive and useful:

> Because I have always love art, as a young boy I wanted to do Art, study Art at school, but my parent wouldn't allow me to I never had the chance to study. Now that I'm in prison I used this opportunity to do what I love to do and to make my wife and children proud of me. (P2.Q10.2012)

> I paint and draw because it is the only thing that I have left in this world that I can truely call my own. It helps me take my mind off of the more negative aspects of prison. And lets face it there is a lot of that coming from the other side of the fence and ours as well. I am a lifer that has 12 years left and at 42 years of age it allows me to have a small sense of achievement. Plus it helps keep depression at bay (without it I probably wouldn't still be alive). And if I ever get out of prison I hope to paint for a small living. (Q5.P8.2012)

Art, Generativity and the Redemptive Script

Desistance research has emphasised that finding ways to give back to the community and make good on past wrongs helps to reconcile a person's criminal past and construct a new non-criminal narrative. It is through this process that ex-prisoners can construct 'redemptive scripts' (Maruna 2001, pp. 85–108). This process is how some (ex-)criminals are able to transform themselves and maintain that transformation in their own eyes but, crucially, in the eyes of others.

According to Maruna (2001, p. 123), by adopting 'generative roles', (ex-)prisoners can expedite the process of achieving public acceptance. 'Generativity' and the creation of 'generative scripts' involve 'giving back' to society in positive ways (Maruna 2001, pp. 117–130). Generativity in the form of 'action' is essentially about 'creating, maintaining and offering' (McAdams, Hart & Maruna 1998, p. 8); an obvious generative role involves giving birth and caring for the next generation. Yet generative roles can also involve generating products and/or ideas and being 'creative, productive and fruitful' (McAdams, Hart & Maruna 1998, p. 25). Generativity also goes beyond pro-social behaviours towards the 'creation of a product or legacy in one's own image' (McAdams, Hart &

Maruna 1998, p. 25). Generative behaviour, therefore, can potentially encapsulate a wide range of activities: for example, teaching somebody a skill, reading a story to a child, attending a neighbourhood meeting, donating blood or producing a piece of art or craft, assuming these activities are performed in the service of generativity (McAdams, Hart & Maruna 1998, p. 25).

For many participants in the AbP exhibitions, art making was done in the service of generativity. Producing art itself can be an act of generativity through which prisoners were able to contribute to society in positive ways:

> I feel it is important because you are deemed a no hoper when coming to prison and to let people be aware that there is talented and good people who are in prison and may have an impact on others. (Q4.P11.2012)

> It's important to know that the public can see that prisoners are trying to be constructive with their time. Some are even trying to turn their lives around. (Q7.P16.2012)

Further, this positive contribution was affirmed by the community, which led to positive energising effects on prisoners. The buzz that many prisoners described as a result of reading public feedback can be an important experiential thrill through which prisoners can learn to enjoy the effects of being generative (Maruna 2001, pp. 126–127). For participants in Maruna's (2001, p. 100) study, desisters expressed a desire for lasting accomplishments, which included the pleasures of creative and productive pursuits, as one former drug smuggler who took up painting described as a 'change of currency':

> The only thing that is going to improve a geezer [guy] is changing your currency of life, from pounds [money] to something slightly more heady: yoga or art or music of whatever. The people I know from nick [prison] that took up art, they get an equivalent buzz. When I finish a painting, I get the same buzz as I got when I landed 80 kilos on a beach in Spain. So, I don't make much money, I'm quite poor, but I altered the currency. Life's currencies can be less, you know, hard cash, basically less physical. What do you spend your money on? Having a nice time. For what? So you can enjoy

> life. But if I can enjoy life by painting pictures, talking to impoverished artists and getting arse-holed [drunk] every now and again, going to exhibitions, it suits me fine (male, age 47).

Participants in AbP described similar emotional highs from participating and receiving positive feedback from the public:

> I was praised by my inside friends before the exhibit and they suggested to enter my project when I received the award I was on cloud nine for a while. (Q6.P12.2013)

> It's amazing, those comments amazed me. I've put all my feeling and messages into my drawing to capture the public attention. Those comments meant the world to me. (Q7.P10.2013)

The AbP artworks that expressed the pains of incarceration, the regret or the isolation that prisoners experience can be helpful to the individual prisoner in a therapeutic and cathartic sense. But it can also be useful for prisoners to share these experiences with others. One redemptive or generative script identified by Maruna (2001) is that of the wounded healer, whereby prisoners use their past experiences as lessons or examples to help others in similar situations or to serve as warnings to those at risk of embarking on similar deviant paths. Sharing the pain and struggles of incarceration is a way that prisoners can offer their stories as cautionary tales. Thus, these exhibitions allow prisoners to contribute to society as artists and as wounded healers:

> [Being awarded was] very important to me as an aspiring artist it is good to know my work is commendable. I wish to use my art and history as a pathway to help others who are in troubled times… (Q2.P16.2012)

Symbolic Re-entry and Acceptance

Interacting through the medium of the temporary art exhibition was highly symbolic for both prisoners and the community. The ability to produce art objects can communicate the acquisition or the development of culturally valued talents, skills and aspirations. The production of art is thus symbolic of one's acceptance of shared conventional values. Thus, art making can be symbolic of

one's desire to be accepted by conventional society by offering up objects that demonstrate an understanding of, and a conformity to, conventional society. Temporary exhibitions provide a context for conventional society to accept prisoners in return. With AbP, the community at large could recognise and acknowledge the good things that prisoners do. While criminal behaviour or labels stigmatise by lowering our estimation of someone, other behaviour can raise our estimation of someone, and art making, particularly where someone is technically competent, is an example of an action or behaviour that does just that, as the following comment encapsulates:

> Inspirational. A mix of delicate works contrast the realities for many artists. Some images are challenging. Some culturally revealing. Some simple but others complex. Some images are not to my personal liking but that is art and in some ways the like and dislike mirror life. Pleased that the art did not explore crime. Testament that people who have done wrong can do something good. (38/2012 O)

The idea that the production of art objects can be evidence of one's technical and moral improvement is also symbolic of art making and the 'becoming artist' script as a civilising transformation from 'not quite human' (Goffman 1963) back to human. The idea that art produced by prisoners is symbolic of prisoners' civility and moral goodness is not a new one. Possibly the world's first display of Indigenous art as 'art' and not artefact or ethnographic curio was exhibited at the 1889 Melbourne Centennial International Exhibition and produced in Fannie Bay Gaol (Angel 2002). This art was 'commissioned' by then Deputy Sherriff, John George Knight, a progressive administrator whose attempts to tackle the over-representation of Indigenous prisoners included teaching European trades such as masonry. But Knight also recognised the power of art, through which he could 'demonstrate to the local community that [Aboriginal people] were less of a threat than generally perceived', and further, Knight recognised that art could be evidence of rehabilitation (Angel 2002, p. 34).

The public feedback and certificates provided a positive feedback loop that helped to challenge and displace negative prisoner stereotypes. Occasions for prisoners to be acknowledged and

recognised for the positive things they do are rare, for as Maruna notes (2001, p. 162), the criminal justice system is almost entirely negative. Through certificates awarded by arts experts and also through the positive and supportive written feedback from the public, the AbP exhibitions enabled prisoners to be formally acknowledged, complimented and encouraged for producing artwork. According to Lofland (1969, p. 289, as quoted in Maruna 2001, p. 157), 'Merely individual claims of privately accomplished change carry little weight'. Further, for those seeking to demonstrate personal change, documentary evidence can carry important evidence of such change. Good examples are testimonies from teachers, letters from parole officers or, even better, certification or official endorsement from the media, community leaders and members of the social control establishment (Maruna 2001, p. 157). Official recognition involving certification for individual achievements is important for elevating a person's status, as it contributes to a delabelling process (Maruna 2001). In such moments, people are recognised and awarded by others with authority for what they have done. Thus, individuals become someone other in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. Education in prison can provide such opportunities. Sukumaran was awarded an associate degree in fine arts from Curtin University. Chan was ordained as a minister in a process that involved others endorsing his achievements. Institutional recognition from a university or religious order is a significant event that acknowledges achievement and hard work. It contributes to a person's personal narrative and thus to his or her (new) status and identity.

Participation in AbP was designed to give prisoners certification and thus contribute to the positive documentary evidence of their participation and achievement, as a positive reward for something they did. But also, in the case of art, the objects themselves have the potential to be a form of documentary evidence. Prisoners' creative skills and artistic talents are embodied in tangible physical objects capable of communicating inner change. In contrast, the criminal justice system usually rewards ex-prisoners for things they do *not* do by *not* doing things to them (see Maruna 2001, p. 162). With art making, the public can conceive of prisoners and prisons differently. Art making can also help prisoners to think of themselves differently. Sending comments and

certificates to prisoners to acknowledge and award their art can assist with this process. This feedback loop was important for affirming those identities, as the following comment indicates:

> [Making art] helps pass the time, it shows you another side to yourself you may have never experienced, its impact makes you feel good and mature from others comments. (Q5.P11.2012)

Participation in AbP was a way to shift the attention away from what the participant had done, and perhaps who the person was, to what the participant could do, which was symbolic of who he or she could potentially become. The feedback loops from the public and art experts could be read by participants as a form of belief that they could be someone other than a criminal:

> It is very important to get a positive result back from the public as it makes the inmate (prisoners) feel important that they can do positive things in artwork instead of doing crime. (Q7.P21.2012)

The exhibitions enabled the prisoners to be labelled as the productive, capable and talented humans and/or artists they wished to be seen as, in response to their own active behaviour, as demonstrated by the following comments:

> It means to me that people in the trade of art from some top art institutions of SA took time out of their busy day to look at and award art done by prisoners, which in general are looked down upon and put down by society. This art exhibit proves that us prisoners do have a lot of talent. Some prisoners do use their time in prison in a positive and useful way. (Q2.P12.2012)

Producing art can be a way for prisoners to be viewed as 'normal', as opposed to the dangerous and unknown 'other'. Art objects can make that 'normality' visible and thus believable to others. AbP exhibitions, like the Koestler Trust's AbO, are events that make the public confront the myth of the 'bogeyman' (Maruna 2001, p. 168). For many members of the public, these exhibitions dispelled such a myth, but also invited the public to contribute, through their encouragement and support, to a transformative process in the other direction. The artwork was awarded by a panel of arts professionals. This helped give the exhibitions a certain aesthetic legitimacy and also communicated that support and encouragement to prisoners were forthcoming from the

professionalised art world. In this sense, the public and the media were primed to contribute further to the encouragement and support that the prisoners had already received. Punishment is meted out to deter people from certain behaviour. On the other hand, support and praise are given to encourage other more desirable and valued behaviour. This idea is expressed more broadly throughout society by the institutions of the prison and the art gallery. The AbP exhibitions provided momentary relief from the usual condemnatory scripts reserved for those who have been convicted of crime. This change in public discourse to one that focuses on the challenges around acceptance, along with the de-stigmatising and humanising effects of public exhibitions of prison art can contribute to what McNeill (2016) refers to as 'tertiary desistance'. For other necessary aspects of the maintenance of going straight are the recognition by others that a person has changed and that person's development of a sense of belonging (McNeill 2016).

Conclusion

It is not my intention to claim that all those who produce artwork in prison, or all those who entered work in the AbP exhibitions were changed people or wished to demonstrate that they were. There were many who did want to demonstrate such change, though. There were others for whom the process of changing was opening up and beginning to take place. If offenders do want to change, then they need to be given chances to change, and that change needs to be affirmed and supported through the reaction, encouragement and support of others (Giordano et al 2002). Art making in prison can be an important activity for maintaining hope, pride, meaning and purpose in life. If managed and supported through programs and pathways that allow prisoners to participate in the community 'as artists', then art making can allow prisoners to form generative identities and they can begin to write redemptive scripts.

Maruna et al. (2006) identify the Christian conversion narrative within prison as a type of 'redemptive script', a term Maruna used in an earlier study to describe the self-narrative of reformed ex-offenders who were going straight (see Maruna 2001). Those who were successfully desisting from crime were able to find meaning out of their experiences of crime and punishment;

they had the desire to 'give back', as well as a sense of hope and control over their futures (Maruna et al. 2006). One of Maruna's (2001) conclusions in his well-known study into desistance is that there are too few opportunities for ex-offenders to reconstruct their self-narratives, for there are 'too few plausible scripts or meta-narratives for them to model their self-narratives on' (Maruna et al. 2006, p. 180). Maruna et al. (2006, p. 180) conclude that Christian conversion provides a meta-narrative that is a 'widely accepted script for exiting a criminal identity.' If opportunities for constructing redemptive scripts are too limited beyond prison (Maruna 2001), then they are even more limited from within prison.

The 'becoming artist' script is another plausible and accepted meta-narrative that is widely accepted in western society. Artists are viewed as a valuable asset to society. Just like being a probation officer, or an anti-drugs campaigner, being an artist is a way for prisoners to demonstrate their acceptance of conventional values, for it is embedded in the role of an artist (Maruna 2001, p. 123). (There is a certain paradox here, for artists are often symbols of rebellion against conservative society and values.) Through art, prisoners can fracture their criminal identities. Art can produce and disseminate de-stigmatising information. Importantly, it can be used in ritual settings and open up the possibility for new pro-social labels, which can elevate and be a catalyst for identity transformation.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

Art making is, to a greater or less extent, transformative at an individual, institutional and cultural level. The production of art brings together the immaterial and material worlds. It is an interaction between a person, their ideas and certain objects, tools and material resources. Art making is a transformative act, for it is a process whereby a creator alters or transforms the material world in some way. Through art making, people give tangible physical shape and form to thoughts, ideas, emotions, feelings and identity. It is also a form of action and communication that gives rise interactions, inter-subjectivity and exchanges with others. A completed work of communicates a whole range of messages about its creator and the human condition, as informed by the world in which the creator lives and the experiences and emotions she or he is experiencing or grappling with. In transforming the material world, it becomes possible for the creator – the artist – to transform themselves socially and culturally to a greater or lesser degree. For art making is an activity through which one can discover, develop and hone artistic, intellectual and creative skills, connect with people and offer something that has value to the world. 'Art' is a term that refers not only to objects or images but also to a practice or 'behaviour' (Dissanayake 2017), one that is moral and right. Through art making, one can come to see oneself differently, but art, crucially, also has the power to make others think differently about its creator. These concepts are significant when it comes to art making in the context of prison where people have been morally compromised.

Behind the Walls: Prison Coping

It is clear that regardless of prison rules or regulations, prisoners will find ways to create new objects and find surfaces upon which to create images, modify their possessions, bodies, and/or their environment through individual creativity. This, as Dissanayake (2017) points out, is natural human behaviour, borne from a human need to play, connect, interact, bond, exert some autonomy and, ultimately, to adapt to, cope and survive with each other and our environment.

Much like artists in the community, prisoners are motivated for various reasons and in varying degrees to produce art. Some of those who produced art and submitted it into AbP were motivated to draw for their child or other family member. Others painted places and people from whom they were separated. For some, art making was an activity for developing or maintaining connections with their culture and heritage. Art making is an entirely subjective experience, which holds different layers of meaning and significance for different people at different times. For some, this might be shallow, while for others, it may be profoundly deep. For the participants in this study, motivation to make art could rarely be reduced to any one specific reason.

With this thesis, I have demonstrated that art making had multiple and simultaneous effects that helped prisoners adapt and cope with the prison environment. It addressed one of the most immediate needs of prisoners' which is having something productive to do to pass the time. It was also an important behaviour and emotional management activity. It was an alternative to 'trouble', and it was also important for prisoners' emotional well-being. The production of art enabled a kind of emotional alchemy to take place. Through art making, some prisoners converted their emotional lead—the shame, anger, frustration and regret—into emotional gold—enjoyment, pride and satisfaction. Art was an activity that enabled some prisoners to express more nurturing emotions such as care and love in an environment devoid, and even hostile, to such sentiment. Importantly too, art making was an activity through which prisoners could psychologically escape the prison as well as accelerate the passing of time. Once finished, a work of art can be a visual porthole into a different world or scene, as another point of focus for psychological escape. Art making was also an activity that facilitated escape in other ways by engaging people in identity work. Through art making, prisoners could push back against their criminal identities and open the possibility for new ones to emerge. Art making was an activity through which prisoners could reflect and feel good about themselves, who they are, and where they come from. Recovering or reminding oneself of one's core good self is an important step in developing redemptive narratives (Maruna 2001).

On the Walls: Prison Pain and Status Elevation Rituals

The series of three AbP exhibitions gave a platform to marginalised voices and thus produced 'new sites of speech' (Ferguson 1996, pp. 184-185). With this thesis, I have examined what prisoners wanted their art objects to say, as well as what they said to members of the public who encountered that art. The artwork in the exhibitions disseminated images, stories and texts one might expect from those in prison. These were messages that made visible the psychological pains of imprisonment which reinforced the idea that prison is a very unpleasant place to be. This message is an acceptable message for DCS and the State to broadcast for it reinforces the idea that prison exists as a deterrent to criminal behaviour and that prison is a place where people must grapple with isolation, suffering, pain and regret. Such narratives reinforce the idea that prison is a place of punishment and punishment is painful.

Historically, the art and craft objects produced in prison were used to confirm the idea that prisoners were uneducated, untalented and uncivilised. This subsequently helped to create and reinforce the concept of the inferior and dangerous criminal 'other'. Exhibitions such as AbP and the Koester Trust's AbO are managed in co-operation with correctional departments and other stakeholders to present prisoner-produced art objects to help challenge this stigma. The displacement of their criminal stigma and identity was a core concern and motivation for participating prisoners. When it comes to art exhibitions, both the object and creator are elevated and venerated. This series of exhibitions temporarily elevated the participating prisoners from 'not quite human' back to human. Some of the art was basic or naïve and some was extraordinary, but it was the prisoners who were made ordinary. The exhibitions enabled prisoners to demonstrate their (developing) talents and skills and to give people insights into who they are and where they are from. As well as communicating the pains of imprisonment, the stories and even the medium of art itself communicated strength, determination and hope. The positive aspects of art making were enhanced for prisoners when they knew their art would travel beyond the prison walls and link them into the community. The AbP exhibitions enabled prisoners to offer something that was

useful, appreciated and valued by others. These events also allowed prisoners to temporarily adopt and perform the roles of both of prisoners and artists. This enabled the community to see the participating prisoners as people, and for some, this went higher, giving rise to more esteemed labels such as artists. Although prisoners remained anonymous, the positive feedback loops created through the prisoner-community interactions helped some prisoners to use creative expression to discover, enjoy and experience power and agency, as well as envisage a positive future for themselves which is a key element of the desistance process (Maruna 2001). Art making was an activity whereby prisoners could actively participate in their own re-labelling process. Consequently, many prisoners felt energised and charged with emotion after reading positive feedback and receiving awards.

Art objects, produced in prison and presented to the public through the medium of the temporary art exhibition created opportunities for social inclusion and temporary status elevation rituals. Such moments can open up prisoners' opportunities for both individual change and broader cultural change (in how members of the public conceive of prisoners). There are a number of examples of prisoners such as Sukumaran, Boyle, and Wölfli who managed to make the transition from 'criminal' to 'artist' through their artistic development and practice. The three AbP exhibitions were highly symbolic events that allowed prisoners and the community to have safe encounters with each other. Interactions between the community and those who commit crime are usually characterised by harm, condemnation, retribution, anger and fear. The AbP exhibitions were contexts whereby interactions between prisoners and members of the community were characterised by support, encouragement, gratitude and empathy.

Beyond the Walls: Giving Back, Making Good and the Possibility of the Redemptive Script

The three AbP exhibitions were cultural events that used ritual and ceremony to present art objects made by prisoners to the public. These were events that generated positive emotional energy and a general feeling from the public that the prisoners, in producing art, had done something good and morally right. As a result, the exhibitions provided moments of temporary status elevation. Some members of the public were surprised, and some even confused when they saw the art. The art objects enabled the participating prisoners to transcend their prisoner status. For some this was a return to 'human' or 'citizen', but for others this went higher to 'artist'.

If committing a crime is a (pattern of) behaviour in which people leave a destructive and negative mark upon the world, then art making is a way that people can leave a positive or constructive mark upon it. We condemn criminal behaviour because it is morally wrong. It is 'wrongdoing'. Art is an activity or behaviour that we encourage because it is considered morally right and virtuous. I have called it 'rightdoing'. It is very difficult for prisoners to be visible to people in the community in the context of their virtues or their 'rightdoing'. The AbP exhibitions were events that allowed prisoners to be visible and they allowed the members of the public to encourage, support and complement participants. Public comments and awards provided positive reinforcement for prisoners' 'rightdoing'. They were texts through which prisoners were re-labelled as 'people' or 'artists' but crucially these texts were sent to prisoners so they could read themselves as people other than their criminal status. Art making was an action that prisoners could do in which they could 'do good' and thus be seen 'as good'. The art object is an ideal medium for prisoners to communicate with the community because the objects themselves can be anonymous and thus any difficult knowledge about past wrongdoing can be easily hidden.

Doing right is consistent with the idea of 'making good' (Maruna 2001). A key part of desistance and identity change is the ability to create a coherent and generative narrative to explain how and why someone has become a changed person. This is known as a redemption script (Maruna 2001).

Redemption scripts are difficult to write once released from prison. They are even more difficult to write from within prison. One of Maruna's (2001) conclusions is that there are too few redemptive scripts available to (ex-)prisoners. Making art and sharing that art with others is an activity and a behaviour which can be a 'hook for change' and which can open up a vision of one's future self, or the possibility of new 'replacement self' (Giordano et al 2002). It is a behaviour that can be supported institutionally both within and beyond prison. An important part of writing a redemptive script is the ability for (ex-)prisoners to contribute to the community in positive, pro-social ways. Participating in the community as an 'artist' is one way that prisoners can begin to do this. Further, messages that broadcast the pains of imprisonment means that prisoners can begin to enact 'wounded healer' identities whereby they reflect on their situation and offer, what ultimately are deterring images and stories, up for others to learn from.

McNeill and Farrall put it simply when they observe that desistance is about 'moving from behaviours that are routinely morally condemned (at least by many people and institutions) to behaviours that are (at least) expected of and (often) celebrated in "good citizens."' Art is regularly celebrated and affirmed as a behaviour and an object that has significant economic and cultural value. Thus it is a way that prisoners can demonstrate change and a desire, a commitment and movement toward becoming a 'good citizen'. While certain sections of society might forever condemn prisoners such as Sukumaran and Boyle, it was through their art practice that they were able to create pockets of support within the community who were willing to see them and accept them as changed people. Sukumaran's art was symbolic of his status as a 'changed person' because his art, as well as his role as an artist and teacher, made that change visible and believable to others. It also provided Sukumaran with an authentic narrative that affirmed and emphasised his moral transformation through his positive contribution to the community, both within Kerobokan prison and, to an extent, in the wider community. Sukumaran had become someone who cared for others and this new 'replacement self' as carer, teacher, mentor and artist was visible to a great many thanks to his art, but also his connection to Ben Quilty, one of Australia's

most famous artists. Boyle's redemptive script was similar, only he was able to continue and complete his transformation upon his release.

The examples of Boyle, Sukumaran, Wölfli and Pitchfork confirm that art making is an activity, a behaviour, as a legacy has the power to completely reform and re-script individual biographies, and reconcile (certain) criminal identities, and mount a serious challenge to high-profile serious offenders. It is also more likely to happen to those individuals marked out as having special talents, or at least the drive and determination to develop themselves. The becoming artist script is a widely accepted meta-narrative for exiting a criminal identity, however, it is only open to those the community is willing to accept as redeemable figures. If one is to announce one's transformation to the world through art, then one's offending history must first of must not be too discreditable. Society may be willing to accept the transformation of the armed robber, underworld hard man, drug dealer (or smuggler) to acclaimed artist. For example, *The Huffington Post* published an article in 2014, entitled 'John Costi: Armed robber to critically acclaimed artist' (Hodson 2014). In 2015, Nigel Milsom, a 'former armed robber' won the prestigious Archibald Prize for a portrait of his lawyer, Charles Waterstreet, pocketing $100,000 in prize money (Ong 2015). Also, one of Australia's most infamous hard men, Mark 'Chopper' Read, became a best-selling author prior to his death in 2013 at the age of 58 (Cartwright 2013; King & Stavropoulos 2013). There are limits to who can achieve elevation and redemption, be it through art, religious conversion or other redemptive script. In such cases, some meta-narratives are rejected. For example, redemption through religious conversion or devotion would be unavailable to priests convicted of paedophilia. It is highly unlikely that a newspaper would publish an article with the title: *From Paedophile to Painter*, or *From Child Sex Murderer to Acclaimed Artist*. Men such as Colin Pitchfork, who have committed terrible crimes against vulnerable young girls, are heavily stigmatised as a result. They have a far more difficult pathway to redemption, if it is even possible. If it were, though, redemption for people such as Pitchfork surely resides in more direct restorative acts and processes that involve atonement, apology, and, ideally if possible, forgiveness from victims and relatives. More likely though people with a high profile criminal

identity such as Pitchfork must, as far as possible once released, find ways to get on with life as discreetly as possible.

Recent research has emphasised the importance of creating non-criminal identities for successful long-term desistance from crime. The formation of a *new* identity is a process through which individuals see themselves differently, but critically, the way others see individuals differently. The challenge for the prison and in the community is the extent to which prisoners are allowed to become or be someone other than a prisoner or criminal. Through art exhibitions, prisoners can begin to rebuild their relationships with the community, demonstrate shared values and express a desire for co-belonging and inclusion. Art making is an activity through which prisoners can discover a sense of agency. But it is also an activity that can enable a self-relabelling to occur. For this to happen, 'one has to be organismically involved in the new role of carrying that label' (Maruna 2001, p. 126). Few activities give prisoners opportunities to develop pro-social, moral identities that they can take with them into the community upon their release. One such redemptive, pro-social identity is that of 'artist'.

The AbP exhibitions, and similarly the Koestler Trust's AbO exhibitions can be cultural contexts to have more productive and reflective conversations about the correctional system. Public exhibitions of prison art are a collection of objects that embody the 'rightdoing' of those who have done wrong. Events like this provide a backdrop for alternative conversations about prisoners, but also about the justice system. They can highlight issues of social policy significance like such as Aboriginal overrepresentation, and the rapidly growing prisoner population. These events can also provide respite from the condemnation and retribution scripts and can capture public attention and concern as well as educate the public as to what happens behind the walls. Art making can encourage change at an individual level. When art objects are grouped together in a public exhibition their ability to speak becomes amplified. At a macro-level then, art making and public exhibitions can make important contributions to community understanding and attitudes toward those living with the stigma of incarceration.

Future Research

The way that Sukumaran and Boyle redeemed themselves through their art practice can serve as a model for reintegration and desistance practice within prisons. It is worth reflecting in a very basic way on how this transformation happened for Sukumaran and Boyle. Both were incarcerated in prisons that enabled them access to resources, along with teachers who nurtured, developed and encouraged their talents. Their art teachers were not just teachers; they became mentors and friends who worked *with* their students to increase their human capital. This enabled the prisoners to create images and objects that people liked and which came to have artistic, cultural and economic value. Their art teachers were also able to increase social capital by opening doors to Sukumaran's and Boyle's participation in the community and to people willing to accept and welcome these men. This is the model applied by The Torch in Melbourne. But it is also similar to the way The Clink restaurants operate too. Future lines of inquiry that have emerged as a consequence of this study point to strength-based programs delivered by outside organisations within the prison system with a creative focus. There are a few excellent of examples of strength-based creative organisations that develop prisoners' skills and talents and then create opportunities for prisoners to use those skills and talents to contribute to the community in positive ways. One organisation is called Fine Cell Work, which trains prisoners in the UK in embroidery (https://finecellwork.co.uk/). Once prisoners have reached a certain level, they may receive commissions. The work can be purchased online, in their pop-up shops and other locations. The consumer is encouraged to send a note of thanks to the prisoner who created the embroidery in order to recognise and show appreciation for the work.

The number of possible redemptive scripts is very limited due to the closed and regimented nature of the prison institution, the complex needs of prisoners, the nature of prison culture and the fact that many prisons operate at or above prisoner capacity. Also low prisoner labour costs mean that certain work opportunities are available and feasible within the prison walls, but become unsustainable beyond it. At an individual level, a prisoner may feel uplifted and celebrate

his or her achievement at being commended for a work of art. But beyond that individual, perhaps some prison associates and maybe even a few correctional officers, this is not the sort of thing that correctional services and many correctional staff see more broadly as worthy of celebration. While art making does have the power to humanise prisoners, including within the prison, the prison is still an institution where deviant identities are consolidated and entrenched (Goffman 1963; Sykes 1958). Art making is an activity that allows prisoners to push back against this idea.

Redemptive scripts are difficult to write in a climate where public anger, condemnation and retribution are too often galvanised and directed against those who commit crimes. But the public, and perhaps those working in prisons, can be convinced otherwise. The public reactions to the art objects created by prisoners in the AbP exhibitions inspired collective outpourings of empathy, support, encouragement and gratitude towards the prisoners. The AbP exhibitions let prisoners feel an emotional buzz from contributing positively to the community, from doing something that people appreciated and liked. These exhibitions allowed prisoners to be recognised and acknowledged for something positive, productive—even beautiful—that they had created and that they could do. Programs that let prisoners contribute to the community positively can set up positive reciprocal relationships and dialogues which allows the community to accept and support prisoners. The Clink restaurants have created a program where prisoners can transition from prisoner to various roles in hospitality such as waiter or cook. The Clink is another example whereby prisoners can be visible and interact with the public in the context of work and training which, going on the rave reviews is widely considered as 'rightdoing'.

If these are the sorts of processes that can bring about positive and non-criminal identity transformation of the kind that can lead to long-term desistance, then policy makers and correctional practitioners should look at ways they can encourage, facilitate and open up opportunities to recognise and develop other narratives, pathways and visions of success. Unlike other major social institutions such as schools and universities, prisons do not go out of their way to celebrate those who manage to desist by selling these stories to others and holding them up as

symbols of success to others. There is much work to be done to identify other pathways and narratives out of criminal identities and careers. We know that strong relationships with family and other social support is important as is housing and employment. These are all significant barriers. But prisons, correctional systems and prisoners themselves, generally speaking, lack clear visions, stories and poster-people for success. There to be done in creating more pathways, but also at finding others that already exist. Crucially, it is important to put these stories into a format whereby they are accessible to those prisoners who need it and even those employed to work with prisoners, to help them cope and to help them transition from prisoner to citizen.

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