

Waikato Arts Navigator

Regional Arts Strategy

Arts as a tool for recovery



Creative Waikato
Toi Waikato

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Introduction

In the wake of COVID-19 important civic conversations are now happening about what will be our new normal. Discussions about community values that serve to bring the community together and to engage with issues that this pandemic may have revealed or underlined, have come to the fore.¹

While the real world relief work, such as isolation, physical distancing and caring for the sick has been progressing, other relief work using the Internet has been launched.² An appetite for culture, has been shown around the world. Online concerts, virtual galleries and musical performances not only provided entertainment or cultural uplift, but also served to remind people of their humanity.

"People need culture. Culture makes us resilient and gives us hope. It reminds us that we are not alone." - UNESCO³

What it means to be human

Art is a vital component of what makes us human. It is a form of communication that has evolved throughout human society. It allows us to reimagine our world and identify ourselves. This has been true throughout history, but COVID-19 has reminded us that it is the arts that keeps our hearts intact and will continue to unite and connect us after this crisis. What will be our new normal will require a collective reflection. However, it is undeniable that the arts are integral to what it means to be human.⁴

The artistic process is critical to the incorporation of deeper meaning into our everyday lives. It can elevate the mundane, giving it a more layered, richer meaning.⁵

Purpose of this report

This report seeks to demonstrate the challenges the Waikato region will face as we move through the from Level 4 to Level 1 and beyond. It also provides local and international examples of how the arts can assist with post-crisis recovery.

"Creativity and culture creates jobs, drives economic recovery and enhances social wellbeing"

- Associate Minister for Arts Culture and Heritage Grant Robertson

¹ <https://forecastpublicart.org/how-artists-help-communities-heal-after-disasters/>

² Ibid

³ <https://en.unesco.org/news/resiliart-artists-and-creativity-beyond-crisis>

⁴ Unesco ResiliArt Debate - <http://svarcstream3a.unesco.org/ksastream/video/ResiliArt-Debate.mp4>

⁵ Chang, A 'The Arts and the City: New models for creative public practice' p, 21

International context

The Agenda 21 for Culture, adopted in 2004, was the first international document to systematically address the importance of the relationship between culture, citizenship, and sustainability. Around 300 cities, local governments and organisations from all over the world are linked to Agenda 21 for culture.⁶

Another framework that places culture at the centre of policy making is the CURE Framework (Framework for Culture in City Reconstruction and Recovery). The CURE Framework is founded on seven guiding principles⁷, derived from a thorough analysis of case studies from different regions of the world and historical periods.

Principle 1 - Acknowledging the city as a “cultural construct” where built structures and open spaces are closely linked to the social fabric.

Principle 2 - Starting the reconciliation process with the (re)construction of cultural landmarks and places of significance to local communities.

Principle 3 - Fostering cultural expressions to offer appropriate ways to deal with post-crisis trauma and reconcile affected communities.

Principle 4 - Prioritising culture early in the planning process, starting with needs assessments and the implementation of emergency interventions that reflect community priorities.

Principle 5 - Engaging communities and local governments in every step of the recovery process.

Principle 6 - Using finance models that balance immediate/short-term needs with the medium/long-term development timeframe of reconstruction plans.

Principle 7 - Ensuring effective management of the reconstruction process by striking a balance between people’s needs and the recovery of a city’s historic character

These international frameworks show that culture is integral to post-crisis city reconstruction and recovery, integrating people-centered and place-based policies.

⁶ Agenda 21 for culture - http://agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/files/culture21-actions/c21_015_en.pdf

⁷ Culture in City reconstruction and recovery ‘The CURE Framework’ position paper- <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000265981>

Waikato Arts Navigator

It is proposed that the vehicle to drive the post-crisis recovery arts response is the Waikato Arts Navigator (WAN). This framework created by Creative Waikato in 2018, has continued to be refined and developed, and has been made available to all Councils in the wider Waikato region as a strategic tool. Its goal is to build a collective vision for arts and creative outcomes for all our communities.

WAN provides a robust and expert informed framework for making decisions about arts development in communities and clearly links actions to high level benefits and outcomes, which are relevant to Local Government.

The ultimate objective of WAN is to have all Councils in the region making decisions for arts development with the following outcomes in mind:

- Creative Prosperity
- Creative Experiences
- Creative Wellbeing
- Creative Excellence

This is a simple way to have an effective arts strategy utilising existing knowledge of local communities' activities and working from its strengths. It is a simple tool to develop a practical solution to unifying Waikato districts activities and goals within a single arts plan.

The foundation principles of WAN are that it is:

- Strength based
- Borderless
- Inclusive
- Tangata whenua
- Regionally aligned

Stages 1 and 2

In 2018, during the Long-Term Plan submissions Creative Waikato made submissions to all Waikato Councils. The basis of this submission was that Creative Waikato continue to work with Council staff to develop an arts plan that aligns with WAN and funding (requests ranged from \$2,000 to \$6,000 per annum) to support and build focus within each district. The majority of Councils endorsed the strategy. Hamilton City's efforts were focused on the development of its on City Strategy at this time.

The purpose of Stage 1 was to gain a clear, accurate and current understanding of the arts in each district.

The foundation of this was built from expert knowledge and insight from initial research, consultation with each community, building of a local arts profile (incl artist and art group clusters), undertaking a hard and soft infrastructure stocktake

as well as funding and key arts events. Arts strengths were identified and an infographic showing areas of strength was developed.

Stage 2 was to gain agreement on recommendations for areas of focus and development. This stage has not yet been commenced. The initial intention of Stage 2 was to work with local councils to distribute funding to stand-out arts activity in the districts. To enhance the strengths of the community as a way of furthering arts and cultural activity in alignment with the four key WAN outcomes.

The advent of COVID-19 has provided a challenge, but also an opportunity to ascertain how the arts can play a crucial role in post-recovery efforts. It is proposed that Stage 2 is now focused on providing arts solutions to post-recovery efforts.

Predicted challenges post-lockdown

The main challenges post-lockdown mirror those being experienced globally to a greater or lesser extent. A few of the main challenges have been explored below.

Economic recovery

Pre-COVID-19, the labour market was already undergoing a significant transformation, driven by automation but also other factors such as climate change⁸

When COVID-19 arrived on our shores, we experienced the same devastation experienced around the world - jobs were lost, small businesses closed, tourism came to a halt and planned projects and budgets were cut. All of this occurring against a backdrop of fear and anxiety as the country went into panic not knowing where this would all lead to.

In April 2020, changes in filled jobs for all industries was down 1.7 percent (37,508 jobs). The number of filled jobs (not seasonally adjusted) fell in all regions between March 2020 and April 2020.⁹ The largest falls were in:

- Auckland – down 11,199 jobs (1.5 percent)
- Canterbury – down 4,925 jobs (1.7 percent)
- Waikato – down 4,421 jobs (2.2 percent)

Recent trends have also seen a spike in the number of people seeking hardship assistance and job seeker support. Although the number of people who had

⁸ Culture Lab 2030 'Voices of the City', p 4 - https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/sites/creative-cities/files/16_pages_villes_creatives_uk_bd.pdf

⁹ Statistics New Zealand employment indicators April 2020 - <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/employment-indicators-april-2020>

applied for hardship assistance had decreased to nearly 40,000 at the end of May, it is still double the number who applied in January of this year.¹⁰ Predictably the amount of people on job seeker support has spiked for the month of April for all territorial authorities in the Waikato and New Zealand as a whole.¹¹

There has been some impetus shown from major Waikato companies to respond to Government's request for regions and groups to submit shovel ready infrastructure projects. This provides an integrated response and a focus on a plan for different activities.¹²

However, only time will tell what the real economic impact will be.

Physical and mental health

COVID-19 is having a significant impact on how we interact with others, go about our lives, our work, study and many other aspects of our lives. We know that a combination of stress and uncertainty can have significant and wide-reaching impacts on the [physical and] mental wellbeing of people in New Zealand.¹³

In general, we know at-risk groups for long-term mental health issues will be the healthcare workers who are on the frontline, young people under 30 and children, the elderly and those in precarious situations, for example, owing to mental illness, disability and poverty.

All this should surprise no one; insights on the long-term damage of disasters have been accepted in the field of trauma psychology for decades.¹⁴

Spotlight on inequality

The disruption caused by COVID-19 brings out the strengths and weaknesses across all sectors – it acts as an amplifier. COVID-19 is an equaliser in so far as no one is immune but it exposes our inequalities across our communities, our sectors, our societies.¹⁵

COVID-19 has hit the most vulnerable the hardest, including the 1 billion residents of the world's densely populated informal settlements and slums, as well as other people lacking access to adequate, affordable and secure housing. 'Without a

¹⁰ Statistics New Zealand COVID-19 data portal - <https://www.stats.govt.nz/experimental/covid-19-data-portal>

¹¹ Ibid

¹² 'How Waikato business leaders plan to revive regional economy' - <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries/121180802/coronavirus-how-waikato-business-leaders-plan-to-revive-regional-economy-postcovid19-lockdown>

¹³ Ministry of Health 'Mental health and wellbeing resources' - <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources>

¹⁴ World Economic Forum 'This is the psychological side of the Covid-19 pandemic that we are ignoring' <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/this-is-the-psychological-side-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-that-were-ignoring/>

¹⁵ The Big Idea 'Are you ready for reinvention?' article on PAANZ Hui, 21 April 2020, Shona McCullagh - <http://www.thebigidea.nz/stories/are-you-ready-for-reinvention/>

house, it is impossible to heed the call to stay at home. Without safe shelter and access to basic services, the order to shelter in place has no meaning'.¹⁶

Put simply, if you are poor, your life expectancy is lower than someone with wealth. If you are also Māori or of Pacific Island descent, you can expect to be sicker and die even sooner. There is an argument that our current social systems have moved away from the local, away from the intimacy that drives empathy and compels action. We know where the problems are and the supporting information and knowledge to define and understand these, however, implementing effective solutions and acting on these issues has been less successful.¹⁷

The inequalities that were prevalent prior to the COVID-19 pandemic have intensified already vulnerable communities and added more pressure. It seems perplexing that 'our indigenous people have so much knowledge in regenerative practice and collective knowledge about health and wellbeing' and yet our health and social systems fail to value and utilise this taonga not only for Māori but for the benefit of all New Zealanders.

The arts can be a powerful force to help create more equality in how we respond. It values human impact and an ecosystem that is adaptive, resilient and embraces the collective rather than competitive behavior.

Examples of post-recovery efforts

Artists as first responders

The power of art to restore some wholeness to psyches and souls shaken by disaster has emerged as a major theme in artist-led recovery efforts.¹⁸ The following examples show how artists have been the first to respond to disasters and crises and how they galvanise efforts to connect communities in providing post-recovery solutions.

Community resilience and wellbeing

Artists and community groups are able to take initiative and create innovative forms of leadership and local governance to provide necessary services and amenities in their communities.¹⁹

¹⁶ 'How life in our cities will look after the coronavirus pandemic' - <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/01/future-of-cities-urban-life-after-coronavirus-pandemic/>

¹⁷ Matheson, A – Ideas Room 'Covid019 lays inequality in NZ bare' -

<https://www.newsroom.co.nz/ideasroom/2020/04/28/1143311/covid-19-lays-inequality-in-nz-bare>

¹⁸ Forecast 'How artists help communities heal' - <https://forecastpublicart.org/how-artists-help-communities-heal-after-disasters/>

¹⁹ 'Gauging the Impacts of Post-Disaster Arts and Culture Initiatives in Christchurch' -

<https://www.eqrecoverylearning.org/assets/downloads/2045-Gauging-the-Impacts-of-Post-Disaster-Arts-and-Culture-Initiatives-in-Christchurch-main-document.PDF>

Some of these examples suggest that in addition to natural disasters, some 'man-made' disasters including certain political decisions from recovery authorities – have hindered a smooth recover process. The result is that many community-led initiatives significantly contributed to social connectedness and mental and physical wellbeing.

Transforma project, New Orleans

Transforma was a five year artistic experimentation in New Orleans led by a group of artists and art professionals in response to the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

Transforma emerged out of a series of community meetings, with local and national stakeholders, including artists, architects, lawyers, journalists and academics from a variety of fields. Key elements of this project were its responsiveness to its local context and its collaborative nature. While the founders had ideas for projects in New Orleans, they were, from the outset, more interested in listening and responding to the needs of people in the city.²⁰

The founders envisioned a multipronged initiative supported by the skills and resources of a shifting 'national resource team', a 'diverse and fluid group of professionals, local and national, that provide the structural backbone of the initiative').²¹

Early on, five areas of particular need and interest – housing, education, health care, economic development, and the environment – culminated into three pilot projects that focused on some of these concerns.

²⁰ Chang, A 'The Arts and the City: New models for creative public practice' p, 13

²¹ Ibid, p, 14

HOME, New Orleans?

Home, New Orleans? (HNO?) is a community based, arts-focused network of artists, neighbours, organisers, schools and universities that brings together diverse constituencies in long-term collaboration to create positive change in New Orleans.²²

It was formed in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and subsequent floods, when a group of New Orleans artists and educators saw the need to involve themselves as activists in the city's rebuilding.

HNO? Supports activities that move local participation forward in strengthening, revitalising, and rebuilding community. Community-based arts organisations located in four distinct New Orleans neighbourhoods served as the location for the neighbourhood projects. HNO? Engaged local universities through an interuniversity course, Building Community through the Arts, in which professors teach students from multiple departments within those institutions.²³



ABOVE Home, New Orleans? steering committee meeting. Photo by Jan Gilbert.

RIGHT Performance of "Spaces in Between." Photo by Jan Gilbert.



TOP Theater workshop held at the Porch and Lakeview's bus tour. Photos by Jan Gilbert.

Photos courtesy of - <https://www.transformaprojects.org/pdfs/transformaPilotProjects.pdf>

Fostering an emerging identity of the urban landscape

²² Transforma Pilot Projects - <https://www.transformaprojects.org/pdfs/transformaPilotProjects.pdf>

²³ Transforma Projects - <http://www.transformaprojects.org/#three>

Operation Paydirt/Fundred Bill project, New Orleans

This project was initiated by conceptual artist Mel Chin. In researching the impact of the Hurricane Katrina and the pre-existing conditions in New Orleans, Chin discovered that New Orleans was the city with the second-highest levels of lead contamination in the United States. The presence of polluted soil and the absence of capital to respond to the situation motivated the creation of this dual-layered project. The Paydirt/Fundred project seeks to facilitate the complete transformation of New Orleans into a city with lead-safe soil through the delivery of a scientific solution to lead contamination while calling for action through a nationwide drawing project designed to engage young people.²⁴

This project not only helped shape New Orleans emerging identity, it redressed and created awareness about what was not working prior to this disaster.

BELOW Safehouse, Fundred collection center, located in St. Roch neighborhood, New Orleans. Courtesy of Paydirt / Fundred.



LEFT AND ABOVE Student inside Safehouse and Fundred armored car making pickup in Roswell, New Mexico. Courtesy of Paydirt / Fundred.

Photos courtesy of - <https://www.transformaprojects.org/pdfs/transformaPilotProjects.pdf>

²⁴ Ibid

Physical and mental health benefits for participants

There has been research which considers the multiple factors of biological, psychological and emotional variables that contribute to states of health or disease and explanations put forward for the mechanism of the mind-body interaction, particularly the various stress factors that affect the immune response. This model of health has some overlap with Māori models of health such as the Te Whare Tapa Wha, which shows that experiences which support and raise psychological and emotional wellbeing may also improve physical health. In this respect, participation in the arts is receiving increasing attention for its health promoting potential.²⁵

Sandy Storyline project, United States

By engaging people in sharing their own experiences and visions, Sandy Storyline built a community-generated narrative of the storm and its aftermath that sought to build a more just and sustainable future. Sandy Storyline features audio, video, photography and text stories — contributed by residents, citizen journalists, and professional producers—that are shared through an immersive web documentary and interactive exhibitions.²⁶

The aim of the project is to use storytelling to amplify the voices of community members during this historic moment. Hurricane Sandy was a devastating event that affected millions across the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern United States and the Caribbean. It is also the beginning of a sweeping, multi-year rebuilding process that will reshape the physical landscape and alter the use of our most basic resources, including land, water and energy.²⁷

Sandy Storyline highlights the voices and faces of people affected by the storm, bringing the human impact into the national conversation about economic inequality, climate change, infrastructure development and the future of coastal cities in America.

It was considered a moment so big that it required a new kind of documentary storytelling: a project designed to foster civic dialogue so communities can decide, from the ground up, their own futures.

²⁵ Bidwell, S 'The arts in health' Evidence from International Literature' Population Health and Community Engagement, 2014, p 5 - <https://www.pegasus.health.nz/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Arts-in-Health-Susan-Bidwell.pdf>

²⁶ Sandy Storyline project - <https://www.sandystoryline.com/about/>

²⁷ Ibid

to take another hard blow. I know that you forced me to leave after the last storm. But this time, after you destroy all that is dear and meaningful to me, I will not just leave for a little while, I will be one step...

Sad

My house but mostly my property which is right on the water received over \$30,000 in damage. I wasn't able to get any help because my damage wasn't covered. The water table has changed. I lost two wells and now am looking at replacing three septic systems. I've lost beach front. I can't afford and...



Life Will Never Be the Same



Pre-Sandy Preparations

Renters have to start from scratch

I'm sure many people are still trying to recover from Sandy. For myself, and many other renters, it has been a battle that seems too hard to win. My landlord did nothing to renovate the home I had lived in for over a year and my children and I were forced to stay with family...

Sandy Ripped Apart Our Lives as We Knew It

Sandy didn't just take my house and rack it for 10 hours during its wrath, it took my lifestyle, my community, quick chats with my neighbors away from me. It broke up my family and how we communicate and

I remember...

I remember Oct. 29, 2012 like it just happened. At times it was a warmer night than usual; it was very quiet also. I remember hearing about the storm coming on the radio and on the weather channels. I didn't think much of it at the time, I thought it was just a bad storm...



Union Beach 2 Years Later



Wedding in the Park

Snapshot of some documentaries -

<http://sandystory.wpengine.com/stories/>

Yappeshi Festival, Tohoku, Japan

In this area of Japan's northeastern Iwate prefecture, the impact of Japan's tsunami in 2011 left a trail of destruction, which was gradually cleaned up with relief efforts bringing many people and their essential needs in the seaside areas of Tohoku, artists too played significant role in the emotional recovery of residents in towns such as Ofunato.

The first trip to Tohoku after the water subsided in May 2011 and was very emotional for the artists, collectors and gallerists who travelled with well-known Tokyo art collector, Hiroko Ishinabe, to Ofunato, where she grew up. Feeling the need to do "something," she resolved to engage her creative network to spark new life amidst the loss and devastation in the city, where many of her relatives still live. Since the disaster, she has brought a steady stream of creative volunteers to her hometown to contribute to the many festivals that dot the Japanese calendar, bringing signs of hope into an everyday where daily necessities such as food, water and a warm place to sleep are no longer taken for granted.

Yappeshi Matsuri was a name chosen by the local people, taken from a dialect term used in the Iwate region, meaning "lets do it!" (yappeshi), emphasising the local nature of the event. It was held during the Tanabata festival. Despite rain on the first day, hundreds of local community members came to hang up their handwritten hopes and wishes, receive massages, play games, fly paper lanterns and visit the "listening booth"—all set up along the temporarily rebuilt Yume

Shotengai (“Dream Shopping Street”), which had been completely destroyed by the tsunami. It is a festival that still continues today.²⁸



Photos courtesy of - <http://artasiapacific.com/Blog/YappeshiFestivalAtTohoku>

²⁸ ArtAsiaPacific magazine – Yappeshi Festival At Tohoku
<http://artasiapacific.com/Blog/YappeshiFestivalAtTohoku>

Preserving and/or reinventing social memory

The loss of social memory, of urban landscapes, and of previous community involvement and engagement, has serious detrimental effects to the wellbeing of communities. Arts and culture can be key tools in preserving, recovering and creating new social memory, with positive impacts on communities abilities to be resilient and appropriately engage and participate in the emerging post-crisis city/town.

Gapfiller, Christchurch

Gap Filler is a globally acclaimed creative social enterprise that works with communities – and the public and private sectors – to design and deliver placemaking strategies and programmes that are the foundation for long-term community outcomes.²⁹

This enterprise arose out of the post-recovery efforts after the Christchurch earthquakes and creates installations, events and processes to make places more memorable, fun, participatory, surprising, equitable and sociable. It's work has helped shift the identity of what was once a conservative Garden City to “a city where anything is possible.”³⁰ Drawing on this evolutionary experience, it delivers strategies, installations and support services all around Aotearoa New Zealand and the world.

Dance-O-Mat

Gap Filler created this project to respond to the lack of spaces for dance post-quake and bring people, life and energy back to the central city.

The Dance-O-Mat is a coin operated dance floor that anyone can use. A coin-operated ex-laundromat washing machine powers four speakers which surround a custom-made, sprung dance floor. The idea for the Dance-O-Mat was born at a cafe with a laundromat out the front. Laundromat... Dance-O-Mat.

To use the Dance-O-Mat, any device can be plugged in with a headphone jack or Bluetooth to connect to the converted washing machine, \$2 is then inserted to activate the power and 30 minutes of lighting and sound.

Thousands of people have used the Dance-O-Mat, even Prince Charles and Camilla in November 2012 on their Royal Jubilee tour. And the King of the Netherlands. With dancing ranging from salsa to flamenco, break dance, swing, ceroc, belly dancing, random all-ages discos and the SUPERHERO DANCE SQUAD, Dance-O-Mat has brought many smiles to people's faces, right up against the red zone and beyond. Local choreographers, social dance groups and teachers also use the floor to work out in the open with their students first due to necessity and later, just for the fun of it.

²⁹ Gapfiller - <https://gapfiller.org.nz/about/>

³⁰ Christchurch City Council Strategic Framework, 2018 - <https://gapfiller.org.nz/about/>

The Dance-O-Mat was first located on a vacant site (a former car rental place) on St Asaph Street in 2012 and has occupied three different gaps in the city since then. This project in its first iteration was extremely successful, getting around approximately 600 hours of use across 3 months. It currently lives on the vacant site on the corner of Gloucester and Colombo Street with views to Tūranga, Christchurch's public library.³¹

Photos courtesy of <https://gapfiller.org.nz/project/dance-o-mat/>



³¹ Dance-O-Mat - <https://gapfiller.org.nz/project/dance-o-mat/>

Sound Sky

Sound Sky is a location-sensitive audio-visual artwork for Christchurch constructed from and inspired by spoken and recorded contributions from residents. Using smartphones (iOS and Android), the work allows people to listen to and share memories of the past, create playfulness in the present, and plant visions for the future. In this way the audioscape is growing as the city grows and emerges over many years following the tragic events of 2010-2011.³²

Questions in the iOS app allow residents to share personal stories or memories, make recordings of what is going on around them, or add visions and moments from possible futures. Audio recordings created are geo-located and can only be heard where they are recorded.

As the audioscape grows over time, listener/participants are able to experience a continuous weaving together of location-specific voice content and musical composition, all related to the city, and its people in this transitional time.

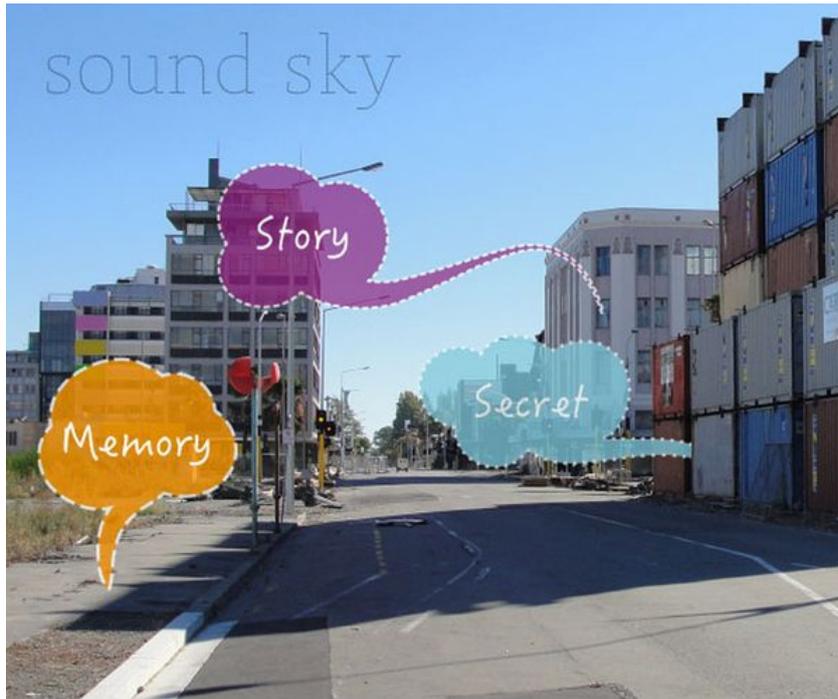
Local visual or performance artists, sound artists, and musicians are invited to play in this space and 'adopt' areas of the city or aspects of the audioscape. All kinds of local knowledges and histories are welcomed.

By developing an infrastructure within which residents can create something together in public spaces around the city in an evolving way, it is hoped that Christchurch is celebrated emphasising the creativity and knowledge of its people and places, and by recording the past as a way of creatively moving into the future.³³



³² Soundsky - <http://soundsky.org/about/>

³³ Ibid



Photos courtesy of - <http://soundsky.org/>

Bringing residents and visitors back into cities and towns

The arts play an important role in attracting visitors, creating jobs and developing skills. Additionally, arts and culture activities can have spillover impacts into other sectors (such as tourism).³⁴

There won't be a return to travel as it was in the past and the new normal will take some time to bed in. It is estimated that there will be a five year recovery for international travel. New Zealand will have to have much more focus on domestic travel and that's where the industry has turned to first.³⁵

The fact that artists are proficient and experienced at trying new things, make them well positioned to think of new and innovative ways of enticing domestic consumers as well as residents to their towns and to reimagine their place anew.

³⁴ 'Gauging the Impacts of Post-Disaster Arts and Culture Initiatives in Christchurch' -

<https://www.eqrecoverylearning.org/assets/downloads/2045-Gauging-the-Impacts-of-Post-Disaster-Arts-and-Culture-Initiatives-in-Christchurch-main-document.PDF>

³⁵ RNZ 'Tourism eyes post lockdown rebound - <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/412966/tourism-eyes-post-lockdown-rebound>

Christchurch regeneration project, May 2017 to current

Placemaking At One Central is a partnership between Gap Filler and Fletcher Living to help create great central city residential communities. It's the first time in New Zealand that a major developer is partnering with community and social innovators to run a programme of community-building activities at the pre-development stage. The programme was rolled out over 2.5 years and was largely funded by Fletcher Living. This initiative is a big win for many Christchurch civic groups, who have been advocating for years for more community involvement in and alongside long-term developments.³⁶

Gap Filler's primary role is to facilitate other groups to realise temporary, community-minded projects on the East Frame land, and then to 'fill in the gaps' with some of Gap Filler's own original projects. These projects are specifically trying to explore how the temporary activations can help foster long-term community outcomes in the new development.

Placemaking at One Central became a reality in November 2017, with the first projects going live, and will run until at least November 2019. The final East Frame apartments are due to begin construction in 2022.

Gap Filler has been experimenting for a long time now with ways our (and other) temporary projects can have long-term community outcomes. Placemaking at One Central is a logical leap forward, growing community over the course of several years before, around and within a major residential development. A couple of Placemaking at One Central projects are shown below.

Giant Spray Cans

An evolving art space for emerging street artists to get legitimate practice, and for established artists to create prominent works (a partnership between OiYOU!, Gap Filler, and DTR crew).



Photo courtesy of - <https://gapfiller.org.nz/project/placemaking-at-one-central/>

³⁶ Gapfiller - <https://gapfiller.org.nz/project/placemaking-at-one-central/>

Detour Snake Run

An alternative path for commuters to travel along different terrain. To mix up their normally flat route around the city a fun, exciting and playful detour was created from the linear pathway running through Rauora Park. Designed for all wheels and age of rider, the asphalted route is made up of several sections of exciting bumps, banked turns and curves suitable for bikes and wheeled contraptions of all sizes.



Photo courtesy of - <https://gapfiller.org.nz/project/placemaking-at-one-central/>

Moving forward

The Waikato region is well-placed to provide a meaningful arts response in that most districts have already agreed that the Waikato Arts Navigator is a framework they wish to implement. What is now required is a realisation of how this strategy can activate an arts response which is unique to each individual district. Local and international examples show what can be achieved if artists can engage with communities to create a response that not only embeds their sense of belonging, but also helps to shape what their towns and cities will look like.

While the impact of a major shift on skills, wages and the nature of our jobs is hard to estimate, creative skills are essential to evolving and adapting local provision in this new environment. The creative economy will likely become one of the leading sectors for job creation in the future, as a vehicle to facilitate economic transition. Culture can be the engine for recovery.³⁷

Recovery also runs on social capital; the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively. There is no doubt that the recovery has to begin by helping those affected to restore their faith in the continuity of their lives. Social scientists use the concept of 'ontological security' to describe this sense of continuity, but it is similar to the Māori notion of Tūrangawaewae (having a physical home and the sense of belonging and continuity that being anchored in a place provides).

Successful recovery is about defining clearly, focusing locally, spending social capital and creative compelling narratives. It is first and foremost about people and places, not processes and policies.³⁸ The arts can serve as an antidote to times of chaos. It can be a route to clarity, and it can be a force of resistance and repair, providing new registers, new languages in which to think.³⁹ The arts can be the catalyst to effect such change.

³⁷ Unesco ResiliArt Debate - <http://svarcstream3a.unesco.org/ksastream/video/ResiliArt-Debate.mp4>

³⁸ Lessons for the Covid-19 recovery - <https://www.researchfirst.co.nz/blog/lessons-for-the-covid-19-recovery>

³⁹ Laing, O 'Feeling overwhelmed? How are can help in an emergency' <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/mar/21/feeling-overwhelmed-how-art-can-help-in-an-emergency-by-olivia-laing>