

CREATIVE RESPONDERS

TRANSCRIPT

SEASON 2 EPISODE 1: GROWING NEW POSSIBILITIES IN THE SNOWY VALLEYS

Sulari: I mean, it can't be more than 100 years old, but it seems ancient, doesn't it?

Scotia: Writer Sulari Gentill is standing under a massive redwood tree, looking up into its canopy.

It's in the middle of a clearing which is surrounded by all sorts of trees, many of them planted a century ago, here on the lands of the Wiradjuari and Wolgalu people, the Traditional Owners of this land.

Sulari: It's like an entire forest of trees sort of condensed into one. [00:02:45][4.8]

Sulari: There seems to be the trunks. How many trunks are there? One, two, three, four, five, six. Coming out of a base trunk. [00:02:53][6.4]

Sulari: And it's just there's just something completely amazing about it. The moss grows all the way up.

Sulari: And so the mosses, this verdant green, that just sort of brings out the gorgeous reds in the bark.

Scotia: This incredible tree is in the Pilot Hill Arboretum in the foothills of the Snowy Mountains of New South Wales.

It's close to the towns of Tumbarumba, Batlow and Tumut.

Vanessa Keenan has a map on her phone, where each species of tree is and when it was planted.

Vanessa: Yeah, I think it is. I've got a map here. I can't see it down there, but I think it is. It looks like it. Absolutely.

Scotia: Vanessa and Sulari are using the map to plan an artwork for the upcoming Arbour Festival.

Sulari: I'm one of the the the featured artist in the in the Arbour Festival. And of course, being a writer, it doesn't necessarily lend yourself to a painting or a sculpture. But what I'm hoping to do is to make the forest talk. So it's not something I'm doing entirely by myself. I'm in the lucky position of having a lot of the writing community desperate to do something for this area. And what we've been doing is we've been allocating a tree to a writer and they are going to write a story from the perspective of that tree. And then we're going to use beacon technology so that people will be able to come into the forest, sit under a tree, the beacon, will connect with their device, and the tree will tell them a story.

Scotia: It's a few months out from the festival, and Sulari is mid-way through assigning trees.

Sulari: I gave the English elm to Robert Got because he has that air about him. I took the Californian redwood because I was greedy. It's gorgeous. The Japanese larch is in an area

where the trees around it are burnt. So I thought that suited a horror writer. So that went to Karen Warren. Angela Savage asked for a tree where there would be a great deal of birdlife because she wanted to write a story there. So I've hunted one down. So hopefully we should then have a forest full of stories all from the perspective of the actual trees, which will be lovely. So the the writer's voice will merge with the tree and disappear. So instead of you won't have Robert Got tell you a story, you'll have the English Elm tell you a whole story.

Scotia: The stories will each be performed by a community member from the surrounding towns.

Vanessa: I think that adds a connection for them to the project. And that connection, it also gives that opportunity as well for them to engage with the writers that are there and with Sulari acting as that conduit. And they have that buy in to the festival so it's as much about a community engagement aspect of it as well.

Scotia: Talking trees aren't the only way this Arboretum will be transformed this summer, when the fifty-day Arbour Festival fills the space.

Arbour is a one-time-only multi-arts festival marking one year since the Dunns Road Fire burned in this area.

I'm Scotia Monkivitch... and this is Creative Responders, a podcast from the Creative Recovery Network that explores how creativity and the Arts have a unique role to play in disaster management.

In this episode, we're looking at the role event-based arts initiatives play in reactivating place-based relationships and community engagement in the ritual of recovery.

The 2019 - 2020 bushfire season in Australia attracted global attention, and there are a lot of external and internal pressures on the process of recovery here.

Vanessa, who you heard from already, is working with regional arts organisation Eastern Riverina Arts to make the Arbour Festival happen.

Tim Kurylowicz is the organisation's Executive Director.

Tim: That place is going to be full of installation artworks that people can visit and look at and interact with. They'll also be a film festival held at one point. There'll be a beautiful big community concert at the end and a whole range of workshops and experiences that people can participate through all the way through those 50 days. So for 50 days, that little patch of paradise becomes a place for the community to focus on, to enjoy and experience beauty.

Scotia: The team behind the Arbour Festival are building and managing a large number of relationships and juggling the needs of many varied stakeholders.

You're going to hear how they've approached these competing needs, and used the Festival itself to solve problems faced by the agencies involved, as they arise.

But as Vanessa says, the first stakeholder is the community, or rather the communities of Batlow, Tumbarumba, Tumut and areas surrounding these towns, and the Arboretum.

Sulari is part of that community -- she lives with her husband and two sons on a property between Batlow and Tumbarumba.

There's never been an arts Festival in the Arboretum before, but the locals have spent a lot of time there.

Sulari: Whenever there's snow when from the time my kids with this high we used to grab the toboggan and come out here and toboggan through these trees.

Scotia: During the fires she evacuated to Tumut, while her husband and eldest son fought on the frontlines with the RFS.

There were 48 hours where they thought their house was gone, but in the end the house itself survived, with everything around it destroyed.

Sulari: I've become particularly attached to trees since the fires and the they're much more - There is this this feeling of solidarity and sentience about them. And I think it's because we lost so many in the fires. And, you know, they're quiet sentinels of our life. They always sit in the background, but they there and always, always sort of overlooking.

Sulari: And when they're gone, you suddenly notice their absence in this vast hole that they leave. Whereas you might not have paid them a lot of attention in all the years that they were standing there. So I love the idea of actually giving them a voice and giving them a voice with some of the most talented writers in the country [00:06:52][18.3]

Scotia: When Sulari was evacuating her home, she posted what was happening on Facebook.

Sulari: [00:09:44] And mainly because, you know, I didn't want people saying Sulari why didn't you wish me a happy birthday. It's because I'm trying and trying to evacuate to and and I'd just go back and just keep people updated as to where we were. And it was it was in, you know, a few days down the track that I looked at it and realized that it was being followed by thousands.

Scotia: Tim watched the fire season unfold from nearby Wagga Wagga, and communications like Sulari's Facebook post were a large part of how he shared in the experience of his neighbours.

He saw the way Sulari and other local artists were communicating with the world via social media, and recognised the importance of their role.

Tim: it was fascinating how it was predominantly artists in the region who ended up becoming the accidental spokespeople for the community ...

Scotia: Many of these artists are now part of the Arbour Festival program.

Tim: And so it I think there's something really just right about putting those people, bringing them in to, again, actually have a role in telling some new stories in this in in this space. And it's really exciting to watch it unfold.

Scotia: Tim includes Vanessa in this, the lineup of local creatives who stepped up to try and help articulate the experience, with and for their communities.

Vanessa is curating the Arbour Festival.

Vanessa: I live in Wagga and I'm on the council there. But um about 12 years ago, my mom moved up and with her partner up to Maragle and since then, I've always obviously been visiting and spending more and more time up this way. A few years ago, about four years ago, I bought a place in town. But over the last four years, I've been spending more and more time up here as well. So my connection has been growing stronger. But it's relatively new. It's really in the last 10 years, but particularly the last four or five years that I've been really spending most weekends up here now. And and even since the fires, even more than that really. Yeah. That connection is quite strong.

Scotia: Like Sulari, Vanessa was here when the fires hit. She sheltered with her parents on their farm while it passed.

Vanessa: And so they've got a farm and was a vineyard growing wine grapes and, and cattle and so on. But obviously the vineyards go on now and it's just the cattle.

Vanessa hasn't found a word yet that really fits what it is she does.

Vanessa: Maybe curator is it. And it's that conduit, I think, between people. My background is museums. So that's how I started and in local government. So I kind of both of those have stuck with me ever since in the last nearly 20 years and now and ~~and through~~ and doing public programs, education programs at museums. And that really got me into that community engagement side of things. So a lot of what I do now is strategic planning in the arts as well as that curation and particularly around public art.

Scotia: Her introduction to disaster response and recovery came in 2012, when she got a job as engagement officer at Wagga Wagga City Council.

Vanessa: They brought me in a couple of weeks before I was due to start because there was a flood that - a major flood that had happened.

Scotia: A residential area of Wagga Wagga was completely underwater, the people who lived there evacuated.

Vanessa: And so my first day was going into this place with the Army, with the SES, with you know, with these, before the community was even allowed back in there. And spent the first six weeks of my job in the disaster recovery center and working with those communities.

Scotia: Tim was one of those evacuated residents. This was long before he headed up Eastern Riverina Arts. His home was under 10 feet of flood water.

Years later, when Vanessa had an idea for an arts festival in the Sugar Pine Walk and Arboretum near Batlow, she brought the idea to Tim.

Vanessa: And the sugar pines were lost, obviously, in the fire. And so I moved that folder for that project and put it in the ... I've got a folder for unsuccessful bids for when I'm bidding for different things. So I just popped it in there like it's it's in the archive.

Scotia: But watching these artists communicating their experience of the fire online, Tim was already thinking about how to engage them in a creative recovery project.

Vanessa: and then Tim convinced me to pull it out and and with looking at what we do still have there in relation to the arboretum and the potential for it to be instead of this focus on bringing tourists in. It was about bringing community and bringing locals in and giving them that chance to connect with each other.

Scotia: In this new form, the Arbour Festival became a vehicle that allowed for a community focused recovery program. One that's inclusive of the strong local arts community.

Tim: I'm just amazed that you look at the artists that we had in our network already that, you know, even before the fires were finished, we'd identified which artists we wanted to be supporting through this project even before we knew what the project was.

Scotia: Artists like Sulari and musician Fanny Lumsden.

Tim: A thing that I'm really hopeful of in that we're sort of committed to with this project was about working with local artists, you know, most of whom were bushfire affected themselves, but using local artists to extend their practices take on a bigger challenge than what they might have been used to doing in some cases. You know, you've got the terrific singer Fanny Lumsden, who, you know, she can deliver a concert like that with no trouble. But for her, she's she can see that this is a bit different, the fires are going to be the present thought in people's minds. And she's approaching it differently. And then, you know, we've got visual artists who have never done a large site specific installation who suddenly got a forest as their palette. And they they you know, I think one of the artists said the other day on Facebook, she said, this is the this is the green shoot on the horizon for me and I And I just thought, like, yes, this is super exciting to see, you know, artists having a gig to focus on and to grow their practice and whatever. But it's also so important to say for the community to

see that they actually have within their number these brilliant minds, these brilliant skills, these brilliant practices and you know they don't need to be looking out, out side or beyond themselves for for that, here it is.

Scotia: Tim and Vanessa want the project to be approachable, no matter what your relationship to art is.

There'll be talking trees and sculptural work among the mountain ash and sugar pines, but there'll also be a film festival, workshops that bring the community into the space, and a big concert at the end.

Vanessa and Tim see this diversity in programming as essential to the role Arbour plays in recovery.

Vanessa: I can talk about it and what happened and and that's okay. But a lot of people can't talk about it and they're still really quite traumatized. And and people respond and heal in such different ways that sitting down and having one on one conversations is not something a lot of people can do. So the ability to potentially be just an audience member or engage in a public program or just stand there and look at some art or listen, listen to the trees, talk to you is, you know, it's so it will in its own way. It's part of that that it's just one little piece of that puzzle for when it comes to sort of that that recovery for people.

Scotia: The idea is to provide a variety of ways for people to participate, with the arts as the conduit to come together, share stories and make meaning of their experience.

Vanessa: It's about know all these other, you know, parallel, I suppose, all these parallel paths that you can take to to to your own recovery and in itself guided as well, that that people can immerse themselves as much or as little as they want. And even just the practical thing of the on the anniversary of whatever somebodies anniversary is for her for this fire, that they can keep themselves busy and just go, yeah, let's just let's go down and check that out and day and not even really necessarily talk much about it, but at least it's taking their mind off what otherwise they'd be dwelling on for for. Yeah. For quite a while.

Scotia: While many of the artworks won't specifically reference the fires themselves, the container of the festival allows the community to approach more complex tensions with a softer lens.

It centres the role of the arts to provide opportunities to engage with deeper long-term conversations.

Tim: I think by people participating in the experience, there's lots of different ways to participate in this one they're going to you can't not gently confront some of the tensions. You're gonna be sitting there, you know, experiencing a workshop where national parks people talk about the sensitive ecology while you're sitting in the middle of one of the largest monoculture forestry areas. And you've got to embrace that tension that that's also the economic powerhouse of the region. You can't you can't ignore that.

Tim: These and you're going to be looking at a green, verdant patch of heaven that's surrounded by you, that you have to drive through 20 kilometers of just like blasted devastation. It's just so confronting that drive. So each of those opportunities, to, to, for people even just come into look at the artworks and have a picnic, are going to through their participation, I think gently come into contact with all of those tensions that this region has to live with.

Scotia: Vanessa feels strongly about having community engagement in her work.

She uses the term authentic engagement to talk about projects like this one.

Vanessa: I often don't say engagement without the word authentic in front of it. Don't don't go down a path of engaging a community if you're not prepared to accept what they're going to tell you, otherwise you're just your consulting or you're informing them that if you're if you if you want to say, here's this new playground and, you know, what do you want? If they come back and say, we want this nature-based play space and all that kind of thing, whereas what you had in mind was just out of the catalog, then, you know, you're not engaging them authentically. And if you're not prepared to take on what they're what they going to come back, it's it's almost like this respectful, equal partnership. [00:17:57][46.6]

Vanessa: If people are being engaged, they want to they have expectations of what's going to happen as as a part of it, that it's quite often you can you can go and see how we want we want this to involve involve the community. But then you just go on and develop. If it's a it's a festival, you want to involve the community, but you end up just curating something that, you know, just works for yourself because you know what's best. That's not authentically engaging them.

Scotia: It's especially important when the project looks to contribute to recovery.

Vanessa: Yeah, it's so important that because particularly if this is a community that's impacted by disaster, that their tolerance, I think is is a lot lower. And but also they're they're a lot sharper in terms of they can they can see I can see bullshit. [00:19:23][20.5]

Scotia: In programming the Festival, Vanessa's own experience of the fires were key.

Vanessa: I wouldn't have felt that I was the right person to be involved in this. I wouldn't have felt that it was authentic engagement. The fact that I that I've got that shared experience with the community makes such a difference.

Scotia: It's connected her to this community and to the purpose of the Festival.

Through sheltering herself with her parents on their farm, making the decision to leave or stay, and dealing with the response and recovery effort at the vineyard, she feels she can better relate to the needs and drives of the community.

Vanessa: I've found that when people know that I've gone through that same experience, it's all these barriers that would normally be there naturally just go. They just disappear because it's like oh ok that, you know, it's not we're not we're not blow ins into town to come and make ourselves feel good about what we're doing

Vanessa: And and knowing, you know, knowing all the all the experiences that everyone's gone through since as well in terms of the recovery, in terms of the support that is available, that isn't available, the you know, the politics of it, the the difficulty of accessing funding, not accessing funding all those kinds of things, the the rebuilding, the fence repairs. And, you know, the neighbors lost his house that, you know, going through that experience with him in the rebuilding is all you know, this is what the community, this is a day to day since the fires, the year that that most people don't know unless they've seen the snippets on the news every now and again in terms of what people are still dealing with.

Scotia: For Tim, a lot of the community engagement has happened by approaching stakeholders early in the project, as it was being developed, and shaping it around what they need.

Tim: it's been about engaging with a number of different stakeholders from councils to different government agencies, in this case, forestry, as well is a really big player. And just go, how, what, what problem have you got? You know. What do you reckon if we tried to help you with that problem in this way and people saying, oh, could you please? They have. So, you know, it's been a wonderful experience of engaging with our stakeholders who we've always tried to look after it, but really simply be you trying to make ourselves useful. Which is, I suppose, all anybody wants to do after a disaster.

Scotia: One of these stakeholders is the Forestry Corporation, where Charlie Taylor is head of Forestry Operations.

Charlie: So in my day to day job, I'm a forestry manager and part of my responsibility is fire management and fire control. And in this area here, a main forestry activity relates to, to pine plantations, and they are a very important part of the local economy.

Scotia: When the fires approached, he was one of the leaders in the response effort, using his incredible knowledge of the plantation forests in this region to fight the fires.

Pointing with the end of a whiteboard marker, he shows us how the fire moved through the area, on a map that spans floor to ceiling here at the Forestry offices.

Charlie: So the fire started in within an area of pine plantation, which is to the north, to the west of Tumut. It's believed the fire actually started in our area of eucalypt forest, within that pine plantation.

Scotia: The fire was hard to access, and stayed relatively controlled for the first couple of days.

But on day three, when the temperature was very high and relative humidity was low right through the night, this changed.

Charlie: And the fire I made a major run out of the forest hill country across farmland, started to get into pine plantation through some pine plantations through orchard country and then back into Pine Plantation and native forest to the east of Tumbarumba and down to an area called Maragle.

Scotia: Maragle is where Vanessa was sheltering on her parent's farm.

Charlie: Initially, a relatively narrow band of fire.

Vanessa: It was a finger wasn't it.

Charlie: Was a finger, that through the night and subsequent days spread east and west. Then on January the 4th, it had spread east through some areas we've been talking about. And as those were days that weren't quite so bad. But was still active fire, particularly in the northern end of our pine plantations and right down east of Tumbarumba, east and around Batlow. And on January the Fourth that all blew up and again went off to the south east, major impact on the township of Talbingo, major impact on Batlow, although the main brunt of the fire was probably to the north of Batlow fortuitously.

Scotia: You likely saw aerial graphics of this fire, and an almost identical one further south on the news over the summer. Two fingers of fire, burning across the landscape for kilometres.

Charlie: And those fires and the other very significant fires in New South Wales and southern New South Wales meant that the resources that we normally expect to be out to apply to fires just were not available.

Scotia: The fire had a devastating impact on the plantations in the area. This is significant in all sorts of ways -- there's climate impact, loss of habitat for wildlife, and cultural significance in the loss of celebrated community spaces within the state forest.

But forestry is also a major source of employment and a huge part of the local economy. The impact of that will be felt for years to come. This year though, there's more work than usual.

Charlie: One of the recovery things we would do as a as an industry in the plantation forests, we actually go out and harvest trees that are being burnt so they can actually be utilized. And so we've actually had a. Since fire our - the timber harvests doubled in this area.

Scotia: This is because trees can be killed by fire but still be suitable for harvesting.

Charlie: It's a very short term thing. And it'll, you know, for a year or so, you've got the opportunity to harvest significant quantities of timber, which is important to keep the local industry going. Because you one, the impacts of the fire will be less timber available for harvesting and processing. And there'll be a significant economic impact in the longer run.

Scotia: They've also been busy planting new trees.

Charlie: So this year we've planted another 50 percent of more area than what we would have expected to for 2020. And in fact, that will double for oncoming years.

Scotia: This planting, though, is part of the long term recovery, especially when talking about plantations of public interest, like the Sugar Pine Walk which was destroyed.

Charlie: And that was an area that a lot of people related to both locally and it was a I guess, a point of interest here that people would visit on their way past, it was easy to access that. And often if it was snowfall in the forest, then it was quite an attractive sight to the point where last winter before the fire, there was an occasion where it was essentially a traffic jam in the area because of people coming to visit it.

Scotia: These sites of interest aren't regularly harvested for wood, but preserved by Forestry to encourage community interaction with the State Forests.

Charlie: So in our forestry management system, we do identify areas that have some sort of significance like that and so in this case, that area was being preserved. Now obviously, it's unfortunate that the fires destroyed it to a point. So basically, you know, the fire killed the trees. So it wasn't viable to to have a site for the future because essentially be dead, dangerous trees that would eventually start to decay and fall down and be dangerous.

Charlie: One of the challenges we face is that reestablishing a, an equivalent feature like tall, mature trees is a long term project. It will take 50 years to have something akin to what we had.

Scotia: This is one of the reasons Charlie and the Forestry Corporation are so supportive of the Arbour Festival.

The community remains devastated by the loss of the Sugar Pine Walk, but it was softened by the revelation earlier in the year that the arboretum had survived.

Arbour will be the first time they've engaged with an arts festival.

Charlie: The interaction with artistic projects in forestry environments probably a relatively new sphere to us. Which I guess was prompted by the bushfires earlier on in the year.

Charlie: [00:24:29] having an event that brings people together as best we can in the current situation, that is certainly part of rebuilding and and and providing opportunity. And I guess a comfort in getting back into the forest.

Scotia: Charlie, Tim and Vanessa are all reaching for the same goal - for the community to acknowledge what was lost, but also recognise and celebrate what survived, like the Arboretum.

Forestry and the arts are not a traditional partnership, but Vanessa seems to have a talent for finding these common aims with a variety of stakeholders, and finding creative solutions.

Charlie: as part of the recognition of the value of of particular the sugar pines to the to the local community. We've actually undertaken a process of doing so because the trees were killed and effectively their future was destroyed, they were actually harvested. And we've actually retained a reasonable quantity of timber that's actually at a local sawmill. And we'll be working through a process of cutting some of that timber up and and making it available to members of the public who may want to use it for a particular purpose. And there'll also be logs and timber available for projects. For example, artistic projects would be a very good candidate for some of that.

Scotia: Charlie and Forestry aren't the only ones thinking about how to recognise the value lost in the Sugar Pines, and the grief the community still has. It's a big part of the Arbour Festival program, too.

In the arboretum there is a small grove of sugar pines, planted around the same time as those that were lost.

They're incredibly tall, grey trees, with thick trunks that shoot up, almost identical, and with distant foliage branching out at the tops of the trees.

Vanessa: So the the sugar pine plantation that was lost was a stand of trees that they planted and and they were all in lines and they cut down at one point they'd cut down the middle to create an avenue that you could walk up. And yeah talk about Instagram factor. It was amazing. The other thing is and you probably get it here, if you if you go and stand underneath them and look up, you get a bit dizzy and you see the tops of them just swaying gently in the breeze. When there's when there's a strong breeze, it's, they're creaking and really bending.

Scotia: Knowing that the Sugar Pine plantation had gone was a key moment of fear and grief within the community.

Sulari and Vanessa both remember it.

Sulari: It was the most stark memory of the fires for me, knowing that the sugar pines had gone.

Vanessa: And when we went into the bunker, that was one of the things that we heard was the fire was was was at the Pines. So it'd come from the pines and went and like we're probably a 50 minute drive from here. And it was and and it was and it was on us within half an hour. And that too to know exactly with what you said too. Like what how how can that they be gone? Yeah. And and what took them out is is now on us. Yeah. And it's yeah. It's just it just changed everything didn't it.

Vanessa: All these other things being lost is still, still horrible and still so sad and and but it's, it's the gravity of the loss of them for, for people because they were symbolic of of all of the environment.

Scotia: But like Charlie, Tim and Vanessa are trying to get the right balance of grieving what's lost and celebrating what survived.

Tim: I still remember the you know, it must have been really early in February that forestry put up a Facebook post saying, hey, the arboretum still here. And it was like, oh, my God, there's the opportunity, you know, and this is this place that is not it's not all over Instagram. It's not a sort of a tourist attraction, but it's a place that I think every every mountains person I talked to has childhood memories of tobogganing here. And, you know, they they know it and love it. And it's like, there's the opportunity for the community to come. And I mean as these guys have said it now, actually kind of it actually symbolizes exactly all those feelings that people are going to be having, which is about loss, but also about what remains in these incredible things that we still have.

Scotia: A creative way they're doing this within the Arbour Festival is through Bitter/Sweet, a community-only event linking the two spaces.

A requiem will be played at the now-felled Sugar Pine site, and locals will share photographs of their own taken within the pines.

Then community members will carry saplings to a new site, where they'll be planted and hopefully in decades bring as much joy as the original.

It's one of the only parts of the fifty-day event that's not open to people from out of town.

This highlights an ongoing tension in recovery projects like Arbour - that a singular focus on tourism can often leave communities behind.

How can event-based projects balance the luring of tourist dollars to support small business recovery, with community focused events like Bittersweet?

Vanessa says that for the Arbour team, this tourist-audience is secondary to the local audience.

Vanessa: I see tourism as being a secondary audience, a secondary market for what we're trying to do. Before the fire it was the primary market. But this is about. And this is so why so much about that that focus on on the community involvement in this. Because this is not about building something or creating something that that people that to do it to attract people from out of town, it's creating something that resonates with locals.

Scotia: The focus on community recovery brings with it a diverse range of stakeholders to manage.

And with a lot of stakeholders comes a lot of responsibility, and competing needs and problems to solve.

But Vanessa says that bringing people on board with a common goal, and being clear about their intentions with the project is key to this epic collaboration of recovery, celebration and hope.

Vanessa: We're all trying to achieve the same thing. So it's getting them and they're not reinventing the wheel. We all want we all want the community to recover.

Scotia: Creative Responders is an initiative of the Creative Recovery Network hosted by me, Scotia Monkivitch.

We'd like to thank Vanessa, Tim, Sulari and Charlie for being part of this episode.

The Arbour Festival is taking place from 28 December 2020 to 15 February 2021. If you'd like to join in nurturing and celebrating the Snowy Valleys region, find out more at [arbour festival dot com](http://arbourfestival.com).

Creative Responders is produced by me and my Creative Recovery Network colleague, Jill Robson

in collaboration with Audiocraft, with Executive Producer Jess O'Callaghan and Sound Engineer Tiffany Dimmack.

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If you are interested in supporting your community in challenging times, you can find out more about what we do at our website [Creative Recovery dot net dot au](http://CreativeRecovery.net.au) or connect with us on facebook, twitter and instagram.

The Creative Recovery Network is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

In our next episode we look at community-led recovery in a time of cascading disasters.

Linda Duffy: Also on a very much broader scale, a broader level, we would need to consider that anyone that lives in Gippsland, you know, for the last 10 years is going to already have some of their own trauma that, you know, is brought up any time there's smoke in the atmosphere. And there's this pandemic has not helped at all. You know, this is a community that's been severely impact by far over the years with the Black Saturday fires. You know, they've been under duress for quite some time.

Scotia: Thanks for listening.

