

Featuring

Marni Jackson

General Manager, Renew Newcastle

Marni Jackson has wielded the safety pins, the spreadsheets, the gaffa tape and the handkerchiefs for a number of Newcastle-based creative projects.

Marni completed a BA (Hons) First Class, at University of Newcastle in 2003.

Marni worked as the Festival Co-ordinator for **This Is Not Art** from 2005 – 2008, and has been involved as an organiser, committee member, editor, writer, costumier and performer in a number of Newcastle's favourite creative and community collectives including The Lovelorn Living Party's Bohemian Love Theatre; Urchin Magazine; Beanstalk Organic Food Co-op and University of Newcastle's Sustenance Food Co-op.

Marni was a Founding Director of Renew Newcastle Limited in October 2008, and in April 2009 was appointed as the General Manager for **Renew Newcastle** operations.

Coralie Winn

Director, Gap Filler (NZ)

Coralie Winn has a mixed and varied background in the creative arts. In recent years she has been involved in the arts scene in Christchurch running a gallery, running and developing an Artist in Residence programme, working for festivals and performing with **Free Theatre Christchurch**. After being made redundant as a result of the September 4, 2010 earthquake in Christchurch, Coralie and two others created **Gap Filler** to bring creativity, positive energy, opportunity and life to Christchurch's vacant spaces. Revised and expanded in light of the February 22, 2011 quake, Coralie is a co-founder of **Gap Filler** and now runs the initiative full-time as its Director.

Ryan Reynolds

Co-Founder, Gap Filler (NZ)

Ryan Reynolds is a Lecturer in Theatre & Film Studies at the **University of Canterbury** and Chief Evangelist of Life in Vacant Spaces. A combination of theory and practice is important to him, with degrees in both Engineering and the Liberal Arts. He has a history of voluntary service, as long-standing President of **Canterbury Film Society**, President of the **NZ Federation of Film Societies**, Australasian Group Secretary of the **International Federation of Film Societies** and Trustee of the **NZ Film Festival**. He has also been a member of the **Free Theatre Company** since 2001, as Intermedial Designer, Musician, Actor and Director. Ryan is one of the co-founders of **Gap Filler** and Chair of the Gap Filler Trust.

Christopher Saunders

Property Co-ordinator, Renew Newcastle

Christopher has worked as a Creative Producer for 20 years with national arts and social change organisation, **Big hART**. This work has involved diverse communities and individuals around Australia in participatory arts practice.

His most publicised work is with the Northcott Public Housing community in Sydney. Here he produced the site-specific performance event StickybrickS and photographic exhibition tenant by tenant for the 2006 Sydney Festival as well as the ABC TV documentary 900 Neighbours. He was instrumental in facilitating the World Health Organisation's Accreditation for Northcott as a Safe Community in 2007.

Christopher moved with his family to Newcastle in 2011 and is currently producer and project manager for the **Regal Cinema restoration and re-imagination** in Birmingham Gardens.

Kris Leck

Board Member, Renew Newcastle

As a child and adult Kris has had the fortune to live in many towns and cities throughout Australia, and drawn by the lifestyle and unrealised potential of Newcastle has chosen to remain here with the aim of being part of Newcastle's rebirth. His unique background involving both construction experience as well as commercial interest allows him to bring a fresh perspective to supporting this regrowth. Kris is actively engaged in the Newcastle community with key roles on the board of the [Newcastle Business Club](#), [Renew Newcastle](#) and [Newcastle Now](#).

His construction experience is varied, providing him with expertise and understanding of the many WHS processes, regulations and legislation required to bring the Renew projects to safely fruition. Currently a Senior Project Manager managing the \$32 million [Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources](#) (NIER) project, Kris has over 15 years' experience in the construction industry, both as a Project Manager and also as a business owner.

Currently completing his MBA with a specialisation in marketing, he has also completed a Bachelor of Construction Management (Honours), providing him with the sound knowledge of processes, regulations and legislation that underpin his role at Renew Newcastle.

Roderick Smith

Principal, Evescourt Legal

Roderick Smith is Chairperson of [Renew Newcastle](#) and Principal of Evescourt Legal.

Rod has specialised in General Corporate Commercial and Intellectual Property Law for 9+ years and has chaired Renew Newcastle for 2+ years.

Prior to establishing Evescourt Legal, Rod was a member of the Corporate & Commercial Team at [Sparke Helmore Lawyers](#) from 2006 until 2011.

It was during his time at Sparke Helmore that Rod assisted Marcus Westbury on a pro bono basis (as part of the firm's [SHARE Scheme](#)) in setting up Renew Newcastle and devising the legal framework underpinning the organisation.

Rod has also worked, in-house, for [Lion Nathan](#) practicing in the area of General Corporate Commercial Law and at the [Crown Solicitor's Office](#), practicing in the area of Civil Litigation.

Now principal of Evescourt Legal, Rod provides contracting and other legal advice to clients in a range of industries including IT, marketing, tourism, manufacturing, wholesale trade, construction, property, business services and government.

Outside of the law, Rod is a keen musician and founding member of [Firekites](#). Rod also dabbles in the [visual arts](#) working with oil, acrylic and mixed media.

Rod is also a volunteer lawyer for the Arts Law Centre of Australia.

Ianto Ware

Sounds Australia

Ianto Ware was appointed National Live Music Coordinator with [Sounds Australia](#) in January 2013.

He was previously the CEO of [Renew Adelaide](#) and the founding director of [Format](#), a not-for-profit arts venue hosting a yearly festival. He also holds a PhD in Cultural Studies and has worked as a researcher, consultant and policy advisor on urban renewal, regulatory reform, media and social inclusion.

Moreover, he has been playing in bands since 1995, and continued performing, touring and recording on a regular basis up until 2012.

Marcus Westbury

Renew Australia

Marcus Westbury has been responsible for some of Australia's more innovative, unconventional and successful cultural events; as founder of Newcastle's *This Is Not Art* festival, one of the largest media arts events in the world, Artistic Director of Melbourne's *Next Wave Festival*, director of the Cultural Program of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games, co-founder of *Free Play*, Australia's largest independent computer games developer's conference and the inaugural Creative Manager of the youth media initiative *Noise*.

Born in Newcastle, Marcus has long been obsessed with the problem of Newcastle's decay and vacant buildings. Marcus wrote and produced ABC TV series, *Not Quite Art*, which inspired the *Renew Newcastle* project. Marcus has co-written an arts guidebook for the Australia Council, a love-hate tourist guide to Newcastle and his writings have appeared in the *Griffith REVIEW*, *Crikey*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Australian*, *Spinach7* magazine, several anthologies, journals, and countless web sites. He has sat on Committees of The Australia Council, Arts Victoria, NSW Ministry for the Arts, The Australian Film Commission and numerous agencies and was a delegate to the 2020 Summit Arts panel.

Dan Thompson

Empty Shops Network (UK)

Dan Thompson is an artist and writer based in the UK. He is the director of *Revolutionary Arts* and author of *Pop Up Business For Dummies*. In 2012, he was included in *Time Out's Culture 100*, a list of the most inspiring and influential people in the UK's creative industries. Dan is a recognised expert on the reuse of empty shops, and on how to create a pop up shop, and runs the *Empty Shops Network*. He also started *#riotcleanup*. For this, he was *singled out by David Cameron* as an example of great British leadership. That project inspired his current work with *#wewillgather*, which uses social media for social good. w: mrdanthompson.wordpress.com t: [@artistsmakers](https://twitter.com/artistsmakers) f: facebook.com/artists.makers

Timothy Horton

Architect

Timothy is an architect with experience spanning the public and private sector. Common throughout has been a deep interest in civic space and the role for design in shaping human-centred urban policy.

In 2010, Tim was appointed Australia's first *Commissioner for Integrated Design*, advising the governments of Mike Rann and Jay Weatherill in design, planning and development across local, state and national policy, programs and projects.

The Commission's flagship project was an urban pilot bringing together 3 levels of government, university research and over 70 professional peak bodies and community groups.

He has held positions as state President and National Director of the *Australian Institute of Architects*, and advised the Australian Government as a member of the editorial board for the *Australian Urban Design Protocol* and the *Built Environment Industry Innovation Council*.

Tim holds Board positions on the *Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network*, the *CRC for Low Carbon Living*, the *Australian Design Alliance* and South Australia's leading craft and design body, *Jam Factory*.

Merryn Spencer

Creative Broker, Parramatta City Council

Merryn manages projects involving the intersection of the arts and business communities within **Parramatta City Council** area including **Pop Up Parramatta**.

Previously, Merryn was an elected representative with **Gilgandra Shire Council** and concurrently a Regional Arts Development Officer.

She holds undergraduate qualifications in sculpture, Australian National University and Masters of Management from the University of South Australia.

Merryn is the online facilitator for **Connecting You in the Regions** course for the National Association for the Visual Arts (**NAVA**) and also an **Arts NSW** funding panel peer assessment member. Merryn is currently on the Industry Advisory Committee for the **Associate Degree in Creative Industries**, University of Western Sydney and has previously held board appointments across a range of regional development, conservatorium, library and gallery organisations.

Chloe Beevers

Project Manager - Arts & Culture, Local Government & Shires Association of NSW (LGSA)

As Project Manager Arts & Culture with the **Local Government & Shires Associations of NSW**, Chloe advises 152 councils across the State and represents their arts & cultural policy interests to peak bodies & government at State and Federal levels. In 2012 Chloe managed the **Local Government Arts and Culture Summit** including the **Local Government Arts and Culture Awards** which recognise progressive Council initiatives.

As Community Planner Cultural Development with **Port Stephens Council**, Chloe integrated cultural priorities into Council policy, planning & decision making frameworks and developed the **Mezzanine Gallery** in the foyer of Council's Administration Building.

At **Great Lakes Council** Chloe established the Community Development Team and instigated Council's Community Grants Program.

Chloe utilised an arts in health approach in Health Promotion and in Child and Adolescent Mental Health roles with the **Mid North Coast Area Health Service**, producing **The MoodSwell**, an award-winning, interactive CD-ROM for young people with 24,000 copies distributed through community services & schools.

Chloe has been an exhibiting visual artist and is a musician having performed the flute with various bands, orchestras and ensembles. She has post graduate qualifications in Local Government Management, and undergraduate qualifications in Community Services (Service Coordination) and Interactive Multimedia and Business (Advertising).