

The Wizard, The Professor and The Jellyfish: Balancing Artist and Subject in Art Therapy



Key Presenter: John Brookes

- Manager, Canberry Communications
- Affiliate, ACT Inclusion Council
- Affiliate, Volunteering ACT
- Member, ACT Diversity Register
- Exhibiting artist, Belconnen Arts Centre

Project Support: John Hyatt

- Professor of Contemporary Art, Liverpool John Moores University
- Research Leader for the School and Director of ART LABS
- Exhibiting artist

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Traditional art therapy:

- Provided by **professional** (often with no artistic experience) as part of healthcare system model
- Short term, often abstract, ***inward-looking and non-collaborative***
- ***Lack of consistency*** of outputs and outcomes
- Individual focus / specific issues can be ***lost in group settings***
- ***Focus on issue*** through healthcare setting - rather than positive expression of activity within consumer's wider lived environment



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Proposed alternative model:

Match consumer with ***trained and empathetic artist*** - via online site & direct consumer contact / referral by care giver

Establish 1-2-1 rapport to allow ***consumer/artist collaboration*** to interpret self. Use model to produce a 'true' consumer-focused portrait that:

- a) Gives true holistic expression of consumer – ***not just issue***
- b) Portrait provides ***shorthand representation*** of consumer— rather than attempting long verbal explanation of Self to others
- c) Provides consumer with empathetic representation of Self; turning “issue” into a ***positive to be shared*** (finished portrait) not hidden

Minimal outlay: matching via web; ongoing process via F2F or online media (Zoom etc); promotion to primary care givers & consumers, and artist costs (grant bid potential identified)



Successfully piloted in 2020 with John Hyatt, Professor of Contemporary Art, Liverpool John Moores University (see image to right, entitled: “The Wizard, The Professor and The Jellyfish”)

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