

Editorial: *Spice*

Catherine Camden Pratt JoCAT Co-editor

Sheridan Linnell Western Sydney University, JoCAT Chief Editor

We write this on Darug and Gundungurra Country, land that has never been ceded, and we wish to offer respects to Elders past and present.

Covid-19 lockdown, both of us in our homes on Darug and Gundungurra Country in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney, we meet across Zoom, a familiar sp(l)ace now. Our subjectivities glimpsed in backgrounds of colour and artworks, jackets on the backs of doors, and windows that open into backyards. Mourning the loss of a shared writing place with scents and background chat of our local coffee place, we make our way, via the talk of lockdown and its impact on creative arts therapies practice and research, to the vibrant hawker centres of Singapore. We pause, each of us imagining into “the flavourful intermix of scents and noises from the spices...” (Choi, Y.C.M., Bhatia, R., Boo, X.N., & Lee, S., 2021. p.55), and delight in sharing the spices in our cupboards, the possibilities of a shared art response, creating connections with this volume of JoCAT.

Akin to the hawker centres evoked here by Choi and her colleagues, JoCAT is a social and cultural space that brings a ‘flavourful intermix’ of diverse locations and ethnicities together with a palette of professional cultures and research traditions.

This second issue of our journal to be badged as JoCAT emphasises collaboration and is particularly diverse in terms of methodologies.

As editors writing together, we smile with recognition at the power of collaboration. At how Catherine spoke into the JoCAT editorial team Zoom meeting as we discussed who would write this edition’s editorial, exclaiming, “I’d rather write with someone!”



Figure 1. Catherine Camden Pratt, *Spice in light and shade*, 2021, digital photograph.

Each iteration of interprofessionalism and interdisciplinarity has a particular flavour, dominant notes and undertones, an aftertaste that may linger on the reader's palate.

Perspectives from the disciplines of psychology and the arts therapies come together in the articles by Tavis Watt, Michelle Buggy and E. James Kehoe, and by Holly Bowen-Salter and their colleagues, to produce evidence of efficacy and suggestions for practice that may have persuasive power with public and private providers of clinical care. These are mixed-discipline as much as mixed-method approaches, in which the need to systematise and standardise approaches to research and practice so that they are measurable and publicly accountable sits in acknowledged tension with person-centred, emergent and creative approaches.

A dramatherapist and visual art therapist draw on their history of working together to co-conduct an intermodal workshop at the inaugural joint conference of ACATA and ANZATA, a precursor to the formation of ANZACATA. Joanna Jaaniste and Suzanne Perry take a grounded theory approach to the surveys filled out on the spot by the workshop participants. In doing so they discover that their trauma-informed approach may resonate with the participants' experience of being plunged into the uncertainty of a professional 'identity crisis,' at the same time that the movement of art-into-drama performatively catches new possibilities in the making.

Memories shared across Zoom of this conference in Perth 2018, and Catherine of this workshop: an overflowing room, smell of crayons and the rustle of papers, the gentle buzz of shared stories from our art, once-quiet corridors alive with small dramas as participants spilled out beyond the allocated space, colourful fabrics and props out of nowhere, together again, tender stories enacted. Delight in art and drama coming together, learning edges faced.

The works of emerging authors published in this issue also span a range of epistemological and methodological positions. The sensually and socially evocative work of the four Singaporean art therapists, Yoko Choi Chi Mei, Roshni Bhatia, Boo Xu Ning and Lee Shulian, working collaboratively with community, has become a touchstone for this editorial. Two articles from the same graduate cohort as each other typify the contemporary diversity of the arts therapies and the spectrum of relationships to its histories/herstories/theirstories. An art therapist of colour, Kirthana Selveraj puts herself personally and politically on the line with a searing and intellectually brilliant critique of the Eurocentricism of art therapy education. It was Selveraj's critical appropriation of the genre of self-portraiture that inspired the idea for the cover of this edition of *JoCAT*. Another graduate of the same art therapy program, Sylvia Marris, reminds us that the individual case study – once the dominant genre in the art therapy literature – can be taken up with humility to see beyond diagnostic labels and generate fresh insights. Returning to Japan from her studies at Whitecliffe, Ayaka Shima offers a creative response bracketed by the expression of gratitude to her teachers and a special memorial to her father. Shima embraces the philosophy and practice of kotodama in order to integrate her emergent sense of soulful connection through creativity into her life at home. As Jessie Brooks-Dowsett suggests, “we are/ formed and informed/ reframed, reordered and remade through/ experience” (p.92).

As an editorial team across Australia and Aotearoa, Zoom is our usual meeting sp(l)ace, with perhaps an in-person meeting once a year or at conferences. In and out of different Covid-19 lockdowns, we too are at home yet slightly estranged from ourselves and our communities; we too are looking for soulful and material connections. The



Figure 2. Sheridan Linnell, *Radiant spices*, digital photographs, triptych, each 101×152mm. (Interior of ceramic bowl by Constance Ellwood.)

thread of responses to the pandemic that linked many of the contributions to the 2020 issue is not especially evident in this iteration of *JoCAT*, something that surprised us as editors introducing this edition, and meeting by Zoom in the middle of greater Sydney's lockdown. Across our submitting authors and readership these in-and-out-of-lockdowns are a way of life – sometimes coinciding, other times, not, slipping across each other and remaining distinct, like Natalie Kang's coloured sands. Perhaps, creative arts therapists have begun to live with Covid-19 in ways that no longer invite its consideration onto the centre stage?

*It is to this editorial location we re-turn. Despite living barely five kilometres from each other on Darug and Gundungurra Country, in neighbouring Blue Mountains villages linked by a winding backroad, we could not sit together to savour the feast of possibilities provided by our authors. No wonder we are attracted to the materiality and metaphor of kitchen spices – the textures, perfumes and colours of the domestic-turned-work spaces where we are obliged – and also blessed – to spend these moments. We invite you now into the richly perfumed flavourful feast of *JoCAT* 16(1) 2021, and perhaps into your spice cupboards.*

References

- Brooks-Dowsett, J. (2021). Time dilates. *Journal of Creative Arts Therapies*, 16(1), 92–93.
- Choi, Y.C.M., Bhatia, R., Boo, X.N., & Lee, S. (2021). Project memories: A community-based arts project from an art therapy perspective in Singapore. *Journal of Creative Arts Therapies*, 16(1), 55–65.

Editorial team

Chief Editor Sheridan Linnell

Co-Editors Stacey Bush, Catherine Camden Pratt, Deborah Green

Arts Editor and Journal Coordinator Vic Segedin

Copy Editors/Proofreaders Belinda Nemec, Marie Shannon, Anne Gordon

Peer review

The editorial team wishes to thank all the peer reviewers who have generously contributed their time and expertise to this edition of *JoCAT*. Accepted submissions are reviewed by people well-versed and respected in the subject or methodology of the submission. Articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and creative contribution 11 were double anonymously peer-reviewed.

Volume 16, Number 1, 2021

Published by The Journal of Creative Arts Therapies

Online and open access at <https://www.jocat-online.org/vol16no1page>

© The Journal of Creative Arts Therapies, 2021.

JoCAT is a Gold Open Access journal. Due to the funding provided by ANZACATA, *JoCAT* is freely available, and contributors are not charged open access fees. Individual authors and creators retain copyright of their work and grant access under a Creative Commons licence. The contributions published in *JoCAT* can be downloaded, reproduced, displayed, performed and/or shared, for non-commercial purposes only, without prior permission, on the express condition that the content is not altered in any way and is properly and fully attributed to individual authors, creators and the journal. Other rights such as publicity, privacy or moral rights may also limit how you use the material. Our authors and creators, and the integrity of their scholarly and creative work, must always be acknowledged and respected.

Opinions of contributors are not necessarily those of the publisher. The publisher expects authors to comply, makes no representation or warranty that the information contained in articles is accurate, nor accepts liability or responsibility for any action arising out of information contained in this journal.

ISSN: 2652-9459

Design and production Vic Segedin

JoCAT is produced by the School of Social Sciences, Western Sydney University on behalf of the Australian, New Zealand and Asian Creative Arts Therapy Association.

