

Schizy Incorporated



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Presented at the Annual General Meeting at Ross House on
27 September 2023

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE CHAIR : Sandy Jeffs

Schizy Inc continues to go from strength to strength as we expand and develop into a cutting-edge organisation delivering life changing programmes for people living with schizophrenia and other mental health realities.

We have expanded enormously in the past two years with significant grants to allow us to reach a wider cohort of artists in the community. We hope to send Schizy Inc into orbit to change the lives of people; to liberate them with art and creativity. As we grow, it has been important to upgrade our governance and strategic planning. In October 2022 we developed a six-part Strategy Plan. Providing governance mentors for our Executive Members is one of our priorities. We are grateful for the support of Laura and Dave of Jumbuk Park who generously provided free accommodation and facilities in October 2022, enabling us to conduct our annual strategic review and fun weekend in a beautiful setting.

In June this year we marked the first year of our SIDAS studio at Abbotsford Convent. The studio is offering many people the opportunity to be mentored and empowered to create art and write in various genres that ultimately allows them to express who they are with great industry and with deep authenticity. The studio is well attended with 20 regular artists and writers utilising the studio, with more people dropping in and passing through. I thank Fiona Cook for her ongoing commitment to the studio and supporting the artists who use it. Thank you to Evan for producing a wonderful SIDAS Newsletter to keep us all updated on the artists and the studio's activities.



Grace Dance, Hannah Friebel's dance company, working in partnership with Schizy Inc. is also making waves and changing the lives of people. We have been happy to support this positive initiative.

In May 2023 we had an amazing Mojo Festival of Arts event at Trades Hall , a packed house of a very enthusiastic audience. All the acts were fantastic, and I thank all the mentors who helped the artists create their wonderful acts. In fact, thanks to all the mentors who have shared their wisdom and passion for creativity with the Schizy artists. Thanks to Mitchell, Felicity, Nelly, Dan, Cathy, Lyndel, Michel and Heidi.

For the month of June this year, we held an art exhibition at the Convent, which went very well. The art was fabbo and well received. We also had two afternoons of writers' events where the Schizy Inc writers had an opportunity to share their works with an audience. These were well received. Fiona was instrumental in organising these events.



I want to thank Heidi for her inspirational leadership of Schizy Inc. with her vision which I hope we, as a committee, are helping to realise. I thank all committee members for their ongoing commitment to Schizy Inc and for contributing their passion and expertise to make it all happen. I acknowledge and thank Tom, for his work as Treasurer, and Steph as Secretary. Both decided to step down from those positions. And I thank Chrissy for stepping in and taking on the Treasurer's role. Thank you to Helen for working away in the background to keep Schizy Inc. on the straight and narrow path of good governance.

It has been a pleasure to be Chair of this extraordinary little, but-getting-bigger-by-the-day, organisation. The future looks challenging but also hugely exciting.



Sandy Jeffs OAM
Chair

REPORT FROM THE CEO : Heidi Everett

There's a quiet mantra I breathe out whenever I'm busy with Schizy Inc and things are making me smile; *'we're doing the thing'*.

It's hard to believe with all the awesome things Schizy Inc are doing now, but ten or so years ago, Schizy Inc was just a little annual community event at Bar 303 in Northcote to celebrate World Schizophrenia Day. A bunch of musos got together and jammed along to Bob Marley's *'One Love'* song. The aim was to do something completely different from all the BBQs in the park offered by mental health services. There are only so many fried red hotdogs a psych patient can handle!

That cosy music gig at Bar 303 morphed into an international music jam involving seven different countries, and continues to grow into industry standard visual art exhibitions, filmmaking, comedy, theatre, literature and dance. We're venturing ever closer to a regional hub of activity. As an innovative organisation with a focus on social impact enterprise, Schizy Inc looks out for doors that aren't yet open, and we invent the key. This often means doing things that aren't popular, easy, or common. The reward is when major supporters like Creative Victoria, Creative Australia and City of Melbourne give their stamp of approval. We can be ultra-proud that we have their logos on our stuff. We also received some great media and publicity because of this.



I'm pleased to see studio SiDAS cantering into its second year with a vast range of opportunities for visual artists and writers. Our Performing Arts Collective at Ross House is going gangbusters including a rambunctious comedy collective. Workshops at both SiDAS and Ross House are facilitated by lovely arts people who love their craft and enjoy working with creatives brave and curious enough to enter their worlds. I'm so thankful to Fiona Cook who has contributed such expertise and belief in Schizy Inc, particularly SiDAS. The Ross House team just love Schizy Inc, and it's completely reciprocal.

This year we enjoyed an outdoors program providing people with spaces for healing, including trips to the country in the City of Yarra community bus. We enjoyed an intriguing adventure into forest 'bathing' with Catherine Marty and their nature-music healing experience, and an invigorating dip in the ocean at Anglesea. We have a new art course and farming program starting at Collingwood Farm soon.



I'm proud and deeply thankful that some of the original Bar 303 'jammers' are still on the Committee today. It makes me joyous that you're keen to keep the vision of Schizy Inc steady, while new people come in the doors embarking on the exhilarating journey that we believe in. We're definitely doing the '*thing*' - running a viable and professional arts organisation, respected by the

arts sector, but also defying so much of society that believes we shouldn't, or couldn't, be doing. It all makes it so much fun!

Some highlights of the past year:

You - First and foremost, you are the ultimate highlights of Schizy Inc. Without you I'm just sat here twiddling my thumbs thinking about awful red hotdog sausages. Thank you for being fabulous and generous artists, creatives, SiDAS peer leads, mentors, and Committee members. Please keep doing the thing.

SiDAS Studio at Abbotsford Convent – residencies with a roster of visual artists and writers. This year saw regular painting and drawing classes with Felicity Gordon, writing workshops with Lyndel Caffrey, writing mentoring with Sandy Jeffs, playwriting mentoring with Michel Toumy, animation with Mitchell Fairbank. SiDAS newsletter by Evan Douglas-Smith. Exhibitions at St Helier Street Gallery, Ross House and Flinders Laneway. Excursions to NGV. SiDAS studio brilliantly co-ordinated by Fiona Cook, upkeep by Steph Yianakelis and kindly supported by the ACF staff.

Performing Arts Collective at Ross House – theatre/acting, Comedy and Songwriting. Live gig excursions and meetups in Melbourne. Artist profile development and industry networking. Lived Experience creative advocacy mentoring and opportunities.

Mojo Festival of Arts – four months of creative development workshops (Jan-May) in comedy, theatre, music and dance culminating in a spectacular live performance event at Trades Hall, Carlton (May). 20 x artists, capacity audience. Art exhibition at Abbotsford Convent and Writers events.

Dance project with Grace Dance supported by The Ducas Paul Foundation.

Cool Stuff – Shaun Tan guest artist, emerging Writers Festival, Big Anxiety Festival, KIN Festival commission, Ross House main window artwork display.

Workshop Facilitators - Felicity Gordon, Nelly Thomas, Cathy Hunt, Dan Flynn Mitchell Fairbank and Hannah Friebel thank you for your ongoing commitment to art and to people.

Supporters – thank you Creative Victoria, Creative Australia, Department of Social Services, Ducas Paul Foundation, Auspicious Arts Projects (special mention Patrick and Selene), Ross House, Jumbuk Park, PayPal Giving Foundation, Benevity and our greatly appreciated private donors.

A special mention of thanks to my and Schizy Inc mentor, Helen Morris. Schizy Inc has a deep woven thread through its fabric that is uniquely Helen. Our organisation is successful because Helen is such a skilled backseat driver.

Final note: After this 2023 AGM, I won't be on the Schizy Inc Committee for the first time since the first Schizy Week event back in 2008 (a 'hot-dog' fashion parade of companion dogs, of course). I'll be continuing with the title Chief Executive Officer. The Schizy Inc. committee will be steered by Directors and General Members. I'm excited to see this story unfold. I have confidence in the Committee and supporters, as I know you have exactly the right level of 'Schizy-ness' in your veins.



Heidi Everett
Chief Executive Officer



Heidi speaking at National NDIS Mental Health Forum in Brisbane.

MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Flinders Lane art installation in Ross House main window.

By Tom Polachek

Thank you for stopping by to check out our Schizy Inc. display. Our SIDAS (Schizy Inc Dedicated Art Studio) at the Abbotsford Convent is where these works were created. This display is our expression of Mental Health through the arts.

Ross House is our wonderful, vibrant and creative headquarters. Here we conduct workshops such as drama, songwriting, comedy, animation and songwriting. The workshops are led by excellent facilitators who encourage and mentor our members. The culmination is the Mojo Festival Of Arts which showcases our talents. We hope to see you there!

Pls. take some time here and enjoy the art display by Schizy Inc.



www.schizy.org
Level 3 Ross House

Got your attention?

**World Schizophrenia Day
24 May 2023**

Mental illness - it's not your fault.

*Good
vibes*

