



A COMMUNITY-CENTRED MODEL FOR TOURISM

Frank Panucci and Nat Trimarchi, Rainwater Productions

'We need to think about cultural tourism because really there is no other kind of tourism. It's what tourism is... People don't come to America for our airports, people don't come to America for our hotels, or the recreation facilities.... They come for our culture: high culture, low culture, middle culture, right, left, real or imagined – they come here to see America.'

Garrison Keillor, 1995 Partners In Tourism Conference, Washington.

...'Basically the model shows a method of reconciling 'community-centred' needs with 'tourism-centred' needs. It shows how taking a community cultural development approach can produce best practice in cultural tourism and resolve the often competing community, artistic and commercial interests. The arguments that often surface ... indicate the need for setting out a framework for the proper development of cultural tourism products. Products that benefit communities culturally and economically. From a community perspective, it is essential to have management and control of cultural material that can be used commercially and for longer-term cultural sustainability. From a tourism perspective, products need to be high quality, authentic and marketable preferably en masse, as well as meet a whole range of industry related requirements. Cultural tourism that doesn't work has negatives for both communities and tourism, and represents a missed opportunity. This community-centred model puts forward a perspective that competes with purely commercial approaches and interests, approaches that account for what I think is, currently, a severely limited scope of products.'...

Nat Trimarchi, fuel4arts September 2003 Forum: Cultural Renewal and Tourism

In 2000 Nat Trimarchi travelled to the USA (under a Fulbright Foundation Scholarship) and undertook research on best practice cultural tourism. What he found was that Australia was about 10 years behind in world's best practice and this was partly because the arts sector here, unlike the US, has not effectively engaged with the topic. However, the Americans were (in 2000) probably five years behind us in community cultural development best practice. The Americans developed a national strategy in 1995 led by the tourism sector and key government agencies like the NEA and Americans for the Arts. The Partners in Tourism initiative has achieved great results – both economic and cultural - and this approach should be of interest to Australian governments, and the tourism, arts and heritage sectors in particular.

In 2001, Nat presented his findings at Museums Australia's national conference and has since published several papers on the topic. With the assistance of the Australia Council, Rainwater Productions has now developed and is currently promoting a model that should be of interest to policy makers and to people working in all three key sectors: arts, heritage and tourism, all of whom have much to gain.

The model shows:

- a) how to blueprint the relevant aspects of the US approach in the Australian context, and
- b) how to utilise Australia's leading edge experience in community cultural development to achieve best practice cultural tourism and resolve the often competing community, artistic and commercial interests.

The model has the potential to expand work and business opportunities for people employed in all sectors that engage with tourism. It is applicable to, and has potential to produce economic benefits for all communities and has particular relevance in regional areas.

Seminar presentations are being targeted at:

1. Communities and community organisations wishing to engage in cultural tourism product development for the first time (or who need advice and direction);
2. Local (particularly regional) tourism business enterprises who wish to expand in order to build mutually beneficial local community links and partnerships; and Selected Tourism, Heritage and Arts sector organisations and networks;
3. Selected Tourism, Heritage and Arts sector organisations and networks.

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Frank Panucci is a cultural and arts consultant with a wide range of experience covering community cultural development, multi arts and writers' festivals, and strategic planning for theatre and community cultural development organisations. Frank has held senior roles within the Australia Council including Manager of the Community Development Board, Manager of the Torres Strait Islander Board, Director of Policy, Communications and Planning. He has also been General Manager of Carnivale, Director of the Race Discrimination Unity at HREOC and worked as a principal policy officer at the Ethnic Affairs Commission. Frank is the new CEO of CCD NSW (Community Cultural Development NSW).

Nat Trimarchi (Principal Consultant, Rainwater Productions, Mackay, QLD) is a community cultural development specialist who has worked for over 20 years in the areas of community development, ethnic affairs, education and arts. Prior to establishing Rainwater Productions, he was a Senior Policy and Research Officer at the Australia Council where his responsibilities covered several program funding areas including Arts for a Multicultural Australia and Community Cultural Development. In 2000, Nat travelled to the USA on a Fulbright Foundation scholarship to conduct research on current best practice approaches to cultural tourism. He has recently completed a major cultural tourism venture with the Australian South Sea Islander community of Mackay, and is currently promoting Rainwater's unique community-centred model for cultural tourism.