

Salvos Community Arts engagement Conference

Session One- Engaging People in Communities.

And so we begin, and what a fitting way to **begin**,
With a choir of voices that **sing** a song of family,
And a commission from the commissioner,
to **begin** **obsessing** again, **giving** ourselves
to that which is worthy of obsessing over.

Still, I never thought I would come to a salvos conference and be told to
STOP HELPING PEOPLE.

I can just see the next salvos ad on the tv...

The Salvation Army- We don't help people.

Indeed friends, let us stop doing things FOR the people,
Let us do things WITH them.

Do things Of them

Do things by the people.

Stop servicing and start strengthening.

Stop feeding folks without getting to know them.

Friends, it is time to step down from the being the heroes who help.

Let us, instead, begin to sit in the rubble with those who sit in the rubble.

The artist is a builder.

Not of the shiny new and polished perfect.

We wit sit rather amongst the rubble of this social reality around us.

Even if there are still standing buildings worthy of a prime-minister to have a perve
on.

Still, when the earthquake comes and the buildings have fallen,

And the people are lonely and the community is missing.

This friends is the place where we place ourselves.

It reminds me of a Celiist. A man named Vedran.

who in the rubble of Sarajevo,

In the bombed out buildings of a broken city,

He sat dressed in evening tails and perched on a fire-scorched chair,

And there he sat in the crater left over by the bombing

and he played an adagio out into the night and

he let his song sound out into the silence,

In defiance of the war mongers

and the destruction of his city.

his music echoed amongst the buildings.

Friends let your music echo amongst the buildings

Of the broken city we find ourselves within.

Sit in the crater with Your cello.

Sit in the crater with the people.

Like the man seated in a town here in Australia
decimated by disease and dysfunction.

A man come not to help, but to sit with Mark and listen to stories of horses.
To sit with a people who gathered and created a strategic plan that is a piece of art,
The construction of a vision built out of who they are, Not what they lack,

Sit in the crater with each and every person
who, like you, is created in the image of this creative God.

We are blessed to be a blessing.

So look around, and see the image of God
expressed in the rubble of our city.

For here, even here,

God saw all that God had made and said that it was good.

And this God invites us to see the same.

To join in the grand adventure of Gods mission in the world.

To build the kingdom.

First this, God created

God spoke

God made

And we now in God's image,

We are made to create.