



death & diversity

newsletter update

This is the second in a series of newsletters to keep you informed about the project

contents

Death & Diversity Project

Content development

Public Programmes

Odette Dulce

New Zealand Police

Death & Diversity

Content development for the exhibition is moving along steadily. We have identified six themes that enable us to explore the exhibition topic - water, earth, fire, food, colour and prayer or song. Our exhibition designer has begun to work on the layout and is in the process of considering materials for the build. In addition to the six themes relating to ritual – an area for community and visitor participation is planned as a central component.

We are also now at the stage, where we are beginning to consider in more detail, the kind of public programmes that could be scheduled over the duration of the exhibition. Additionally, Voice Arts has begun to recruit interested participants for the theatre component of the Death & Diversity project. There are only eighteen places available, so if you know of someone who would be interested in taking part – please contact either Pitsch Leiser or Nicola Pauling. Ideally, they would be aged between 18-30.

Pitsch Leiser
494 5768 mobile 027 283 0265
pitsch.leiser@dia.govt.nz

Nicola Pauling
973 0022 mobile 021 404 615
nicola@voice-arts.org.nz

Public Programmes: an invitation to participate

The size of the gallery at the Museum of Wellington necessarily limits what can be included in the exhibition. From the beginning, it was obvious that it was going to be impossible to describe the complete range of experiences offered by the individuals of each community. However, we hope that the community will participate in public programmes in order to extend and explore topics of interest and importance to them.

We invite you to contribute to the content and scheduling of these public programmes.

What is a public programme?

Programmes can be informative but they can also entertain. They can be created specifically for your community or for a wider audience. What would be of interest to your community? For example, is there an event, discussion or workshop you would like to take place?

Public Programme Ideas

Art workshops or installations. These have the ability to be visually arresting and also thought-provoking. Showcasing an artist or cultural tradition in order to encourage visitor participation

Films. Documentary and/or drama, which show insights into rituals or culture

Food. Cooking demonstrations. Is there a special dish or type of food associated with funerals that you would like to inform the public about?

Discussion around community questions e.g. funerals, burial and cemeteries. How to organise a burial. Who can make and install headstones? What decorations are allowed? Do you need to use a casket? Did you know that many cemeteries provide plots grouped according to ethnic grouping?

Museums Wellington


THE OFFICE OF
ethnic affairs
Te Tari Matawaka



death&diversity

Public Programme Ideas *continued*

Interfaith interaction. Discussion and visits to temples, mosques and churches.

Medical/Scientific discussion around donation of organs and bodies to science. How does this impact on the ethnic culture and religious belief?

Community response to deaths caused in circumstances such as the Christchurch & Japanese earthquakes, etc.

Funeral directors. Talking about the different groups they work with and what has changed in their practice over the past 20 years.

Hospital and Hospice. Would you like agencies to have a better awareness of your community's needs and beliefs?

How to make a will? Making a will is something that a lot of us put off. Where should one begin and how do you go about making your own will?

Death in art and literature. Explore themes in poetry, painting, theatre, music, books and dance.

Other. Are there other agencies who you want to be involved in public programmes? For example: Refugee Settlement, Police, Immigration/Law Commission, Council and Government Departments, Coroner, Hospitals/ hospices.

We are very interested to hear back from you about any ideas or suggestions you may have. After all, the shape and size of the public programme will be largely determined by the communities.

Contact Jaqui Knowles with your suggestions:
04 496 1944

jaqui.knowles@wmt.org.nz

Odette Dulce shared a story with us during a discussion with other members from the Filipino community.

When I first arrived in New Zealand, there was a couple who were really good to me and eventually became my friends. As we shared a common love for music, the husband invited me to join his band. Just a few months later, he was diagnosed with a brain tumour. He told his wife that he didn't want people to cry, and that he didn't want a very melancholic funeral. Instead, he wanted the band to perform his favourite music during his funeral, which we did in a Catholic church in Johnsonville on the day of this burial. That probably wouldn't have happened in the Philippines where rituals and traditions are usually conservative and very strictly observed.

Odette Dulce





death&diversity

The New Zealand Police are the main sponsors of Death & Diversity. Earlier this year, they played a key role in operations after the Christchurch earthquake.

The Christchurch earthquake affected nationals from more than 20 different countries. This provided the New Zealand Police and a wide range of support agencies with a unique perspective on dealing with death and diversity. Specific cultural and religious practices needed to be carefully observed while operating within the legal framework required for the identification process. New Zealand Police appointed a cultural representative to sit on the Reconciliation Board to ensure the appropriate protocols for each national were observed during this process.

Religious texts for each faith community were made available. Trained liaison officers with the appropriate language and cultural skills worked with the families to provide support, arrange detailed briefings and assist with specific requirements.

This unique cultural engagement was acknowledged and appreciated for helping families during a difficult time. Superintendent Wallace Haumaha, National Manager of Police Maori Pacific and Ethnic Services, commented "Respecting the beliefs of the communities we engage with is very important to Police. Observance of 'tikanga' is a key consideration in our work and we therefore apply this practice when dealing with the families affected."



Japanese Search and Rescue team member lays flowers at the CTV site in Christchurch.

websites of participants

Museums Wellington

<http://www.museumswellington.org.nz>

Office of Ethnic Affairs

<http://www.ethnicaffairs.govt.nz/>

Voice Arts

<http://www.voice-arts.org.nz>

Meena Kadri

<http://www.randomspecific.com/lifes-inevitable-transition>

New Zealand Police

<http://www.police.govt.nz/>

Funeral Directors Association of New Zealand

<http://www.funeralsnewzealand.co.nz/>



Caring Funeral Professionals