



# GO into

Spreading the Gospel where it's thinnest

## Creative Arts & Global Mission

**“Wow, that was powerful!”** was the instant reaction by delegates to various dramatic presentations they saw. We were attending a conference, and Arts Release’s Birte Papenhausen (standing on right) was the drama specialist.

Drama makes us feel that characters, like Jeremiah or Peter, are standing there as real people, talking to us, looking into our eyes – seeking to know our reactions. No longer are these people remote and historical. They are ‘flesh and blood’ men and women, wrestling with the same issues we face.

Indeed, art makes deeply personal connections. Better still, it has the potential to transform, even redeem culture and society. In this edition, we highlight different WEC artists who serve as agents of this transformation.

We believe the creative arts are a God-ordained means of global mission, of ministry to the multicultural body of Christ, and worship of the Creator of all cultures. Read with amazement at God’s creativity, and with an open heart - for as always, opportunities abound!



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# The Rise of Ethno-Arts

A vital and increasingly recognised aspect of mission today is Ethno-Arts. Utilising the rhythms and arts of local people is crucial for multiple mission scenarios, from church planting to community health. At its heart, Ethno-Arts enables more effective communication and interaction between people and God in a manner that makes the most sense in their culture. It also helps people tell God’s story their way. So how does someone explore this and become involved? Here’s my story.

Fresh out of a UK Bible College, I was wondering what next. Possibly a longer short-term mission experience elsewhere. I was handed a GOinto publication and scoured the SitsVacant section there and online. A “mission mobiliser” opportunity among young adults in England stood out to me. The wonderful team at WEC NZ helped prepare and orientate me, and off I went to serve and to see what God had in store. While I enjoyed much of my role, it didn’t feel like a long term fit for me. Early on however, I met Ian Collinge and the team of Arts Release. My schedule allowed me to frequently join in with their multicultural worship band. Through conversations, ethnomusicology and song-writing courses, and a short-term trip with them I knew I had found my niche.



is doing and where he may lead me next! If you’re ever in town, I’d love to meet up and encourage you in your next mission step. Failing that, explore the many options with WEC NZ.

Bethany’s currently studying Anthropology, Linguistics and Ethnomusicology towards a long-term Ethno-Arts commitment. In tune with her new passion is her new favourite verse, 1 Cor. 14:7-8.

Bethany Waugh



I promptly reconnected with my Timaru church and family and prepared for my next step in Thailand, where I completed the SIL Ethno-Arts program. Beginning with my acceptance, through to completion, I knew God was leading me. From the classroom to the market place field trips, there were so many life-changing highlights. The staff not only taught me how to (and how not to) conduct ethnographic research, but also facilitated God’s work in me in wonderful ways. I learned a great deal about myself and the things I need to let go of in order to be a good facilitator. I cannot recommend this 3-month course enough!

Like many before me though, I realise how much more I need to learn in order to be effective in this field of ministry. In the past I’d avoided the ‘degree-long’ commitment, but now I see the value of investing into this long-term vision bursting within me. I’m one semester into a specialised BA at Otago and am already excited to see what God

WEC International



reaching people | planting churches | mobilising for mission

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## Arts Strike Home

Arts Release is a creative arts ministry of WEC International, a network of WEC workers who love Jesus and the peoples of the world. We exist to help followers of Jesus express their faith through artistic forms most meaningful to each person and culture.



Juan, a WEC worker in the Basque region of Spain agrees, saying that, 'One of the most effective ways to reach Basque hearts is to use elements of their unique culture. They have their own forms of dance and literature, and a special form of poetry in which a group of people get together and improvise a song around a theme.'

Arts Release also gives training in oral teaching methods, heart music, art for prayer and outreach, drama skills and so on. Just as drama adds impact, our visual artists find that images open up conversations of many kinds. Fiona Fung painted a surrealistic image (above) of the dying Christ lying on water, bleeding with passion for the world and God's redemptive purposes for all people. Another artist depicted the dynamic power of God's Holy Spirit in abstract, vibrant, swirling colours, giving opportunity to share how God isn't distant; he's here today - in power. Such images pose searching questions: do I know the presence, passion, purpose and power of God in my life?

In March, Arts Release musician Tim Fung led song-writing workshops in Burkina Faso. When Arts Release worship bands play songs from various countries and in diverse languages, people who originate from those places are visibly touched. Familiar sounds connect to their upbringing at a very deep level. As a Tibetan song says, 'the sound of the Tibetan lute is like my mother's voice.'

As a result of a song writing workshop, young Basque musicians wrote and recorded nine songs onto CD. Later,

at an evangelistic outreach, a Basque woman asked the team for a CD of the songs the band had played. She wanted to hear and share the songs, and acknowledged her need of Jesus. These are just a few examples of the capacity God has given the arts to speak, to heal, and to motivate. Yes, the arts really do strike home!

We continue to expand geographically, with members in four European countries and ministry on multiple continents. Also artistically, our skills now include music, drama, storytelling, painting, collage and writing.

Our collective passion is to see the arts have an increasing impact in helping people move towards Christ, grow in their faith, and express their love for him and his purposes. Interested? Check out the sites below and don't hesitate to get in touch!

Web: <https://artsrelease.org/en/intro>  
Social media @loveartsrelease

As an ethnomusicologist, Ian teaches cross-cultural and multicultural worship at All Nations College and London School of Theology, UK. Together with his wife Helen, he leads Arts Release, aiming to raise up more artists for cross-cultural ministry.

Ian Collinge



## EthnoDoxology: Worshipful Witness

Different music speaks to different people. And that's okay! God made us incredibly diverse! He created a huge variety of rocks, trees, animals, pretty much everything. Why would he then insist that his creation only utilize one or two styles of music in worship of Him? Instead of conforming the Jesus-worshipping world into one universal (read Western) musical style, wouldn't he prefer his people celebrate that diversity and worship him in hugely diverse ways?

That's the crux of the relatively new field of EthnoDoxology: ethno = cultures, doxology = praise to God. It encourages the body of Christ worldwide to worship God with the music that best speaks to their own hearts.

EthnoDoxology is our family's focus in South Asia, and we've discovered that God can even use our family worship time evangelistically! During the day the weather is hot, so we keep the windows open. For around 30 minutes daily, we sit together worshipping God. As our cultural and linguistic fluency increased, we used more and more songs in the local language. In time, we began to notice people on nearby verandahs or rooftops - sitting, watching, listening.

We asked if we were being too loud. They said, "No. We're enjoying listening. Please continue, even louder if you want!" We now sing truths about God to our neighbours through the window - things that they'd never let us sit down and preach to them. Yet because they appreciate the form, they happily listen, and even sing it back to us later!



Incredibly, this has led to our Hindu neighbours actually requesting a concert of our Jesus songs be performed for them! We now do this several times each year; small-scale Hindu-requested worship concerts in our neighbourhood! Some may ask, "Was this some kind of fluke, particular to your locality?" It turns out not. We've moved since then, and found a nearly identical response in our new apartment complex. Except that now, if we leave the door a bit ajar, neighbours will occasionally even come inside and sit for a song or two of our worship time!

Let's be clear. This isn't using music as a tool, but rather the genuine worship of God being used evangelistically! Pray for more worshippers of God to come to South Asia, to live the Jesus-worshipping life in front of non-believing neighbours, in such a way that others long for what they hear and see expressed. If you're a musician, or even a non-musically trained worshipper, and are willing to learn local expressions of joy and devotion, we'd love for you to come join us!

Mark and Aimee (pseudonyms) have been in South Asia, with a focus on EthnoDoxology and church planting, for six years. They say moving to Asia with a young baby opens up so many conversational doors - more people should do it!

Mark & Aimee (pseudonyms)



# TACO & Creative Arts

They say music is the universal language. This is true on the streets of Turkey, where earphones protrude from the ears of both teenage skateboarders and head covered carpet weavers. But as God has raised up artists with varying gifts, we're increasingly using a diversity of art forms to attract people to his message; theatre, dance, mime, visual arts, martial arts, unicycling, clowning, illusion and even yo-yo tricks! We embrace creativity and excellence through whichever medium to see Muslims attracted to Christ.



## Who we are

TACO's mission is to creatively proclaim the gospel of Jesus to Muslim peoples everywhere. That's it. Our three strand cord. Our non-negotiables. We are uncompromising about Jesus. We are unshakeable in our love for Muslims, and our desire to see them in the Kingdom. And we introduce the latter to the former by using the creative arts, and by enabling and training others to do the same.

And when we're not doing arts outreaches, we're trying to live for the gospel, share Christ however we can, and make disciples. It takes creativity to find inroads for the gospel in such cultures, and it's vital to have a team of encouraging brothers and sisters to pray and persevere with. TACO is such a ministry family, made up of workers from different agencies, including WEC.



## Training nationals

One of our principles is to empower local (in this case Turkish) churches to use their own artistic gifts to share their faith. A recent search for national participants began with a creative pitch to 150 believers at a national youth gathering. From these and a few other contacts we were able to start rehearsing a band, a dance team, and a drama group in Istanbul.

Every year on 23 April, tens of thousands of people visit an old Orthodox monastery on an island close to Istanbul in search of a blessing from God. Very few of these people are Christian in any sense of the word. It's a great opportunity to share with people about the God we believe in.

On this occasion we had around 15 national believers sharing their faith using the arts – as well as our normal TACO team. Despite poor weather, the team were able to perform five times to the large crowds visiting the island. When they weren't performing, they handed out brochures, prayed and shared with many other people. Following such a positive experience, many want to join us again in different arts outreaches.

Working with nationals has a different dynamic to working with foreigners. To start with, all rehearsals have to be run in Turkish – which really encourages our team members to up their language skills. We also have to fit rehearsals into their very busy work and study schedules. But it's been great to see the TACO team developing these skills, as well as increasing numbers of nationals participating with, even outnumbering us. We trust we'll be able to maintain this momentum going forwards.



## How we do it

We've now performed in over 14 countries, from small street gatherings to large concert-type crowds. The venues are diverse: nightclubs/bars, discos, cafes, open-air theatres, parks, fairs, camps, city squares, shopping malls, cultural centers, ships, and churches. Whatever the context, our goal is that every spectator sees a quality performance that glorifies Christ and challenges people with his claims.

Performers, often with the help of translators, are able to share their testimonies and the gospel from the stage, as well as one-on-one, after performances. Song lyrics are translated and distributed to the audience, who are offered different options for additional information. We are fanatical about follow-up and only partner with churches or groups who commit to pursuing interested contacts.

## Our team

TACO is a creative, dynamic, talented and organic collection of people. The musicians on our team form the core of a "house" band that has recorded two albums and continues to expand its repertoire of Turkish materials for Turkish gigs. Others on our team are dancers, visual artists, puppeteers, drivers, sound engineers, techies, and/or provide backstage support such as; hospitality, logistics, administration and intercessory prayer. We also regularly host established bands who join us for outreach tours.



## Joining Us

Some join our team for one tour, some for a few months, some as an internship or for the long term. Most people new to TACO join us first on a single tour - going to one place for a set amount of time, normally between one and three weeks. We're so grateful to the many who've come to join us – anything from instrumentalists to illusionists!

You too might have a skill, and a passion to use it among Muslims for Jesus. We have an established internship programme, and a great group of people to minister with. But be warned - you won't return as the same person who came!

So if you're passionate about putting your gift on the altar for Jesus, contact the Mobilisers at WEC NZ for details. We hope to see you on an upcoming TACO tour!

The authors, a Kiwi and Canuck, have been serving with TACO for around 20 years as creative directors, musicians, actors and trainers. Together with their young family they also encourage and equip the Turkish church.

Kiwi & Canuck



# SITsvacant

## Ethnomusicologist – East Asia

Could you be involved in Applied Ethnomusicology projects to develop local worship leaders? Carry out audio-visual projects, hymnal projects, and...

## Dance Instructor – East Asia

Teach various dance forms including ballet, modern, jazz, ethnic dance, and ballroom. Have experience in working with all ages including small...

## Music Instructor – East Asia

Take this opportunity to research and study of local instruments and musical systems. Come and coach music students in piano, guitar, voice, and string...

## Ethnodoxologist – South Asia

Are you an experienced musician? Come for a few months to learn a bit of the local music, some of the local language, and observe and get involved in...

## Ethnomusicologist – France

Play a part in the development of WEC's ArtsRelease programme, based in Normandy. This project encourages the development of heart worship music for...

## Performing Artists & Crew – West Asia

Join a creative arts ministry based in West Asia, using the performing arts for evangelism and church planting. If you are a musician, dancer, actor...

## Handicrafts Design Trainer – East Asia

We are looking for handicraft designers to help with a Tibetan community project. Use local resources to design handicrafts and useful accessories...

## Music Teacher and Art Teacher – Senegal

Bourofaye Christian School provides a safe, inspiring, Christian environment for children of missionaries, enabling their parents to fulfil their...

## Visual Arts Trainer – East Asia

Do you have a passion for visual arts and a heart for evangelism? Join an arts studio, being set up in a pioneering situation. Teach various forms of...

Visit [www.wecnz.org](http://www.wecnz.org) to check out the full Opportunities Database, or call us on 0800 46 46 86 to explore the options.

More Info

# NZoutlook

## Healing to children at-risk via the arts

Creativity in play and self expression, including music, dance, drama, role play, drawing and storytelling are part of a child's world. Play can tell us how children think, feel, believe and can tell us of pain, conflict and insecurity. Children in trauma, however, usually lose that special creativity – the very thing that could bring them healing and a restoration of childhood joys and hope. Music, drama and dance are powerful ways to help children recapture what was taken from them during trauma – control, power, safety and hope.

Through various forms of the arts and play, traumatised children can learn about themselves and others in a safe space and discover healing from physical, mental and emotional wounds.

Following the referendum for Independence for East Timor in 2000, amid the bloodshed and destabilisation of the country, a WEC ministry, Esperanca ('Hope' in Portuguese) was established. Traumatized children gradually overcame fears and began coming to children's clubs, music, dance, language, drama and art activities. As we returned to East Timor year by year we were amazed by the transformation in the lives of the children. Even schoolteachers commented that they could tell which children attended Esperanca. They were more responsible, attentive and resilient than other children. And happier! The arts became a key to unlocking and healing these ones so traumatised by war.

Each year Eastwest College offers a week long, interactive intensive course on children in crisis. The next will be mid-2019.

Graham and Becky Bee have served WEC in many roles, overseas and in Australia and NZ. From 2000-2016 they gave pastoral care to the leaders and WEC team in East Timor. Becky facilitates a Children in Crisis course each year at Eastwest College.



Graham & Becky Bee

# My TACO Experience



What began with a WEC workshop at my church, resulted in me seriously out of my comfort zone; providing logistical support to TACO, a creative arts ministry based in Turkey. I'm Hayley from Auckland, an introvert who joined a team of street-bound extroverts!

My ministry however, was not an upfront one, which really suited me. I enjoyed the admin work, keeping track of enquirers and those who receive Bible correspondence materials. I also helped provide hospitality to teams before and after tours. The hospitality of the Turkish people though, never ceased to amaze me.

It was a fantastic experience to go on tour with the TACO team. On one occasion in a beautiful park, the team started playing instruments. Three sisters came and chatted and one took a New Testament. We did three performances later in this park and many folk took literature and had meaningful conversations. It was a joy to witness many other divine encounters. I love seeing God at work!

My short-term mission was one of the most challenging, yet worthwhile experiences of my life. It clarified significant things for me and changed the trajectory of my future. I encourage you too, to chart your mission course with WEC Trek.

Hayley is a food technologist with a love of music, food, travelling and netball. Hayley applied to WEC Trek looking for God to lead her into something new.



Hayley



# Block Courses

## Huia Come Home

Date: 30th July – 3rd August

Trainer: Jay Ruka  
(5 credits • NZQF level 5)

NZ\$390 including lunch & morning tea

## Church Planting Across Cultures

Date: 13th – 26th September

Trainer: Dr Ron Barber, PhD. TEAM  
(10 credits • NZQF level 6)

NZ\$780 including lunch & morning tea

For more information:

[www.eastwest.ac.nz/programmes/block-courses/](http://www.eastwest.ac.nz/programmes/block-courses/)

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