



## Art & Dementia Programs, NSW, 2015 Red Room Education, with Candy Royale

In a special collaboration with Sculpture by the Sea, The Red Room Company hosted a series of poetic tours through Sculpture by the Sea's Mark's Park, Tamarama venue. We were joined by Fort Street High School, Barker College Junior, and members of the Art & Dementia Program Led by acclaimed poet Candy Royale, the workshops used a series of quick response frameworks and activities, prompting personal student responses to the sculptures and their gorgeous sea side setting.

Red Room Poetry Education inspires students and teachers to create, perform and publish poetry. We enliven experiences with poetry by bringing contemporary poets into classrooms across Australia to run intensive writing workshops that awaken imaginations, support creative opportunities and curriculum outcomes.



The Red Room Company at Art & Dementia Programs NSW, 2016  
[redroomcompany.org/education/](http://redroomcompany.org/education/)



## The piece of perception

Sea blue,  
sky blue,  
through to the view,  
transferring thoughts  
of jealousy and anger,  
violence within  
violence without,  
looking through time,  
smooth and rough,  
like life  
- don't we need both?

Looking up towards the horizon,  
someone cracked  
through stone to find it,  
beautiful smoothness  
like my sister Rosita  
or my sister Margarita  
more human than me,  
avoid the witches  
tunnelling holes

Could put it on  
many beaches,  
or my beach  
Manly.  
Let's fall into the hole,  
and go on into,  
infinity.

- A group poem by participants from Yaralla House with poet Candy Royalle in response to Oushi Zokei a sculpture by Keizo Ushio, Sculpture

This year, in partnership with Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi we piloted a Tactile Tour with six people with early-onset dementia from Yaralla House, Concord Repatriation Hospital. The session included a partnership with poet Candy Royalle who worked with the participants to create a poem in situ, using the words they related in response to one sculpture.

The participants collaboratively worked to create a poem as an enjoyable experience as was hearing the poet recite the poem - from observing the facial responses it was clear that participants were delighted when they recognised their words and comments.

The Yaralla House art therapist will use the poem that was completed during the tour as a reflection piece during their reminiscing sessions. The poem will also be displayed in their monthly newsletter along with photos of the day. In addition, they will use photographs of the sculpture that they experienced during the Tactile Tour to develop and create their own sculpture.

Strategies to promote a sense of ease and safety, working together and group confidence included; seating arranged in a semi circle to facilitate inclusive conversation individually and as a group; nametags so all group participants could refer to each other by name. The seating helped in preventing participants from wandering, which is a concern for this organisation. The Tactile Tour and their poetry session gave the participants the opportunity to think creatively and develop their personal responses to the sculpture they encountered through sensory experience. They enjoyed being outside on a beautiful day overlooking the iconic coastline.



**Candy Royale** is an award-winning performing writing, performance artist, poet, storyteller, activist, educator and vulnerability advocate who fuses cinematic storytelling, poetry and unique vocal rhythms with confronting, political and heart-thumping content seeking to break open closed hearts. She tackles topics ranging from sexual obsession to social injustice, exploring the human condition and illuminating the darker areas of the human psyche for her audiences.

### **About Us**

The Red Room Company creates unusual and useful poetry projects that transform expectations of, and experiences with, poetry. We aspire to make poetry accessible to all, especially those who face the greatest barriers to creative opportunities.