



The conference that changes minds
16–18 November 2011 Melbourne, Australia



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Leading Australian social entrepreneur Tania de Jong AM is Founder and Executive Producer of the upcoming international event – Creative Innovation 2011 – which will look at the challenges and opportunities of a super-connected world.

Over 35 world class international and Australian speakers are involved. Tania has pulled together many of the world’s brightest minds. She warns it’s vital we focus much more on creativity as a strategic tool and says many organisations and our education system are simply not focused enough on being creative – which she says will cost us dearly.

Leading Australian social entrepreneur Tania de Jong AM – who founded Creativity Australia – will be one of the key speakers at Creative Innovation 2011...a major event that will look at “the challenges and opportunities of a super-connected world”.

Tania de Jong AM is passionate about creativity and innovation. Not surprising, given that she is the grand-daughter of Slawa Duldig (nee Horowitz), founder of the world’s first foldable umbrella in Vienna in 1929.

Tania will speak about the importance of inspiring people to find their voice and unlocking creative potential through diversity and social inclusion in her keynote speech on Friday 18th November at **Creative Innovation 2011**.

Tania is a soprano, social entrepreneur and the Founder of Creativity Australia. This innovative charity inspires people to find their voice and creates sustainable social and economic outcomes through unlocking creative potential, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds through its unique WITH ONE VOICE social inclusion choir programs. Currently there are thirteen major programs taking place around Victoria. The programs aim to build bridges of understanding and stronger communities in organizations and urban growth areas. When many diverse voices come together as "one voice", the outcomes are transformational. A number of migrants in the choir programs have secured jobs, new skills and a sense of belonging from their participation in these innovative programs.

“With the urban population explosion imminent, it will be more important than ever before to build social capital and strong communities, not just bricks and mortar”, she says. A percentage of any profits from Creative Innovation 2011 will be put towards Creativity Australia’s “With One Voice” program.

Tania believes that creativity is the strategic tool of the 21st Century, and, if we are to compete on a global stage we will need to unleash more of our innate creative potential as individuals, and more of the creative capital existing within organisations.

Tania refers to major companies such as ANZ, Telstra and IT company CSC who have recently appointed heads of innovation with strong briefs to think beyond the conventional and comfortable, and to encourage employees to do the same.

“Creativity must be a crucial part of leadership and management equations”, she says.

Tania is one of an impressive line-up of speakers in Melbourne from 16-18 November for **Creative Innovation 2011**. Tania is the Executive Producer of Creative Innovation 2011 which will see some of the biggest business and creative minds in the world gathering under one roof to look at how people can increase creativity and performance in an increasingly complex global environment.

Over 35 world class international and Australian speakers will address Creative Innovation 2011. Speakers at the event will include legendary futurist and inventor Raymond Kurzweil on his first visit to Australia. Raymond has been honoured by numerous US Presidents and believes computers will merge with humans in the coming decades. Remarkable global thinker Edward de Bono, philosopher Daniel Dennett, IDEO partner and Stanford Design Thinking expert Brendan Boyle and educational expert Stephen Heppell will also speak at the event.

Tania says that Australia needs to invest much more in a creative education and says it’s vital we re-think the future. She highlights a recent IBM study which revealed that creativity is seen by many corporate heads and public sector leaders as the most important leadership quality – above global thinking and integrity. Tania cautions that many organisations are not focused enough on developing these critical skills.

She says we are in danger of becoming a society where disengagement, self-centredness and alienation are entrenched because people fail to capitalise on building relationships that are creative.

Tania de Jong said, “Creativity helps find hidden patterns. It’s more important than Australia’s natural resources. Innovation is now a pre-requisite for business survival. We’re all creative. We don’t use those skills enough. Companies should encourage more risk taking. Failure is part of innovation. If people feel safe to try, they will do exactly that – and if they fail they will try again. It’s time for more rewards for innovation and brilliant ideas.”

“There needs to be more focus on diverse teams to solve big challenges. People need to be given more time at work to create new ideas. Major companies like Google have already clearly recognised this. According to futurists, creativity has become the most universally endangered species of the 21st Century.”

In addition to her roles as a keynote speaker, producer and social entrepreneur, Tania de Jong AM is a leading Australian soprano and has performed in over 40 countries and released 6 CDs with her acclaimed group Pot-Pourri. In 2012 Pot-Pourri will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary with a tour and CD entitled *SILVER*.

In 1999, de Jong created The Song Room, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing access to music and arts programs in Australian schools and communities. The Song Room has reached over 250,000 disadvantaged children, enhancing their education, personal development and community involvement and engaging them in a passion for creativity and lifelong learning. In 2006 de Jong received the Ernst and Young Australian Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

Tania de Jong said, *“The line up of speakers is amazing and it’s such a privilege to be sharing the stage with them. This is a huge opportunity to hear first-hand from some of the world’s brightest minds and take home strategies for implementing innovation in work and life.”*

“This event isn’t just for CEOs and directors. Small and medium business will benefit. If you are in finance, health, government, banking, the arts, education or the not-for-profit sector, there’s much to be learnt.”

Creative Universe and ANZ are presenting Creative Innovation 2011 to be held at the Sofitel Melbourne On Collins from November 16th to 18th, 2011. To find out more and register, just go to www.ci2011.com.au. You can also contact Baldwin Consulting Group on 03 9645 9858 or ring Creative Universe on 03 8679 6000.

Media enquiries to: Media Key on 03 9769 6488 – ask for either Homira Samadi or Ross Woodward

Below is a wider biography on Tania to give you more information on her remarkable background

Tania de Jong AM is the inspiration, co-founder and artistic director of Pot-Pourri, Creative Universe transformational leadership programs and of Music Theatre Australia entertainment and event production company. A graduate of the University of Melbourne with a Bachelor of Law with Honours and the Victorian College of the Arts, Tania is considered one of Australia's most talented sopranos.

She has performed with the Victoria State Opera, as a soloist with a number of orchestras and has performed in over 40 countries and released 7 CDs. She also attended college in the USA on a tennis scholarship and is the granddaughter of Slawa Duldig who invented the first foldable umbrella in 1929 in Vienna.

In 2006 Tania received the Ernst and Young Australian Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award as Founder of The Song Room. The Song Room has provided access to creative learning for over 250,000 disadvantaged Australian children. Tania's other awards include the "Outstanding Individual Contribution to Australian Culture", Churchill Fellowship and the Accessibility Award in The Melbourne Awards. She was a finalist in the Telstra Business Women's Awards and has recently been inducted into the AGSE Entrepreneurs Hall of Fame at Swinburne University. Tania was named Brainlink Woman of Achievement 2009.

She was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in June 2008 for service to the arts as a performer and entrepreneur and through the establishment and development of music and arts enrichment programs for schools and communities. She has recently founded Creativity Australia and Creative Universe to inspire people to find their voice and to bring greater wellbeing, engagement and innovation into organisations through creative thinking and leadership programs. She gives keynote speeches around the world and works with a number of disadvantaged migrants and communities, as well as developing and presenting unique leadership programs for organisations including BHP, Telstra, ANZ, Royal Children's Hospital and various universities.

Tania is working on a number of creative projects including Pot-Pourri's 25th Anniversary tour *SILVER*, *The Pianist and The Diva* and *ECHO* a new music theatre work with Stefan Cassomenos. She is Founder and Executive Producer of Creative Innovation 2010 and 2011.