

‘Gleaning, foraging, gardening for survival & joy’.

Dr Charlie Brennan & Bridget O’Brien

**Urban Agriculture Forum. Melbourne, 23-24 Feb 2018
From Resilience to Livability. Edible cities for a thriving future.**

We report on, and draw learnings from, our journeys between projects in our traveling working lives. From community gardens of Madison, Wisconsin, local food initiatives in Detroit, to conservation orchards of Brighton UK, Edible Streetscapes of Bellingen, NSW, to Permaculture projects near Hyderabad, India.

The courageous work of the 10’s of millions people around the world imagining and practicing sustainable ways of living can only be lauded. But for the visible majority in the West the multiple crises of ecology, climate, finance, health, farming, community, purpose, place and even being, at best, seem far away; the subject matter of documentaries, select journalism & Netflix dramas.

Living in what are effectively gentrified enclaves there seems little embodied awareness that outside, in the shadow places, the world is unraveling at a newly vigorous pace. We have moved well past any notional tipping point. The almost complete incapability of Western governments to deal with planetary & international policy challenges speaks volumes. Even warriors of the alternate often confess to a loss of morale as long standing projects fail to deliver required outcomes.

It’s time for radical redesign. The approach needed for survival now has to include nomadic approaches of gleaning, foraging and gardening. Mobility, often forced by circumstances, is the reality for many people and stable domesticated spaces, homes, suburbs, cities are far from guaranteed for the majority of the future world population.

The work needed is to re-inhabit the land, value people and projects, share skills and energy and enjoy the abundance, shifting to regenerative practices away from the current mining of everything. This approach is driven by deepest desires for livabilities, social justice and responsibility to be ready for the future.

But make no mistake, a life of nomadism, foraging, gleaning and gardening can be beautiful thing!

About Bridget O'Brien. As a caring steward of life Bridget strives to explore resilience through many pathways. Her studies and work focus on self-care, social, and land-use design. While utilizing her diverse skills, experiences, and trainings in horticulture, floristry, fermentation, Permaculture, Yoga, nutrition, education & marketing to provide a holistic approach to culture repair. Bridget shares her passion for impactful loving service through her work as an educator and designer with Resilient Spirals LLC & Sacred Places PL. She travels offering design, consultation & a range of workshops & is the creative inspiration of 'Adapt' - A Design Game, in collaboration with PermaculturePrinciples.com. PlayAdapt.com <http://resilientspirals.com>