

The Australia Council's strategic plan, *Directions 1999–2001*, is a framework for the Council to provide cultural benefits to the community at large: by direct and indirect support for individual artists and arts organisations, as well as by leadership, research and independent advocacy. This framework enables Council to provide a clear and concise account of:

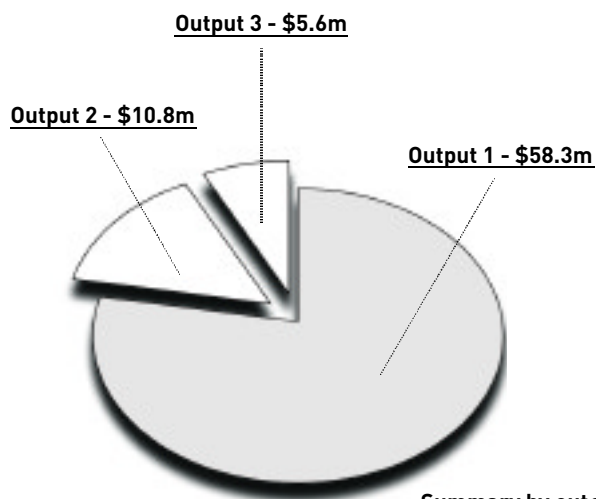
- what outcomes we are trying to achieve;
- what we are going to do to deliver these outcomes;
- the strategic priorities we have set across all our activities; and
- the steps we will take to provide a national stimulus to Australia's artistic and cultural life.

The format for Council's annual reporting is in a process of transition. This is partly due to the introduction of the Commonwealth's new budget framework and partly as a result of the move from Council's 1996–1999 *Corporate Plan to Directions 1999–2001* approved by Council in February 1999 and published in April 1999.

The Year in Review text corresponds with the outcome/output budget framework and the strategic plan's priorities. A small number of examples of activities are used here for illustration. More examples of Council's activities during 1998–99 are detailed by the sections of the organisation beginning on page 40. Details of grants paid are to be found in the lists beginning on page 130.

An 'output' refers to the products and services Council delivers. An 'outcome' refers to what has been achieved in carrying out the functions assigned to us by the *Australia Council Act*

## OPERATING EXPENSES BY OUTPUT 1998-99



### Summary by outcome 1998-99

Outcome 1 (Outputs 1 & 2)	<b>\$69.1 million</b>
Outcome 2 (Output 3)	<b>\$5.6 million</b>
	<b><u>\$74.7 million</u></b>

### OUTCOME 1

The first outcome Council pursues is a body of distinctive cultural works created and presented by Australian artists and characterised by:

- the pursuit of excellence;
- artistic integrity;
- engagement with audiences and communities;
- innovation;
- diversity;
- critical engagement;
- international recognition; and
- economic viability.

In pursuing this outcome the Australia Council produces two outputs: investments in artistic production and development of artistic practice; and industry development for Australia's creative arts.

### OUTPUT 1



Investments in artistic production and development of artistic practice are delivered by Council programs which support both artists and arts companies through: investments in the creation of new work; investments in the development of creative arts practice; investments in quality productions; investments in the presentation and promotion of Australian work; and leadership and a national overview of arts development.

The main strategy to achieve this output is a range of funding programs, managed by the Arts Funding Division and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board, and geared to support excellence and innovation in artistic practice and professional artistic development.

Information on Council's grants categories and how to apply is available on Council's web site and in the *Support for the Arts Handbook*. During the year in review, over 20,300 copies of the *Handbook* were distributed in response to requests. Some 4606 grant applications were made to Council.

During 1998–99 the Australia Council invested \$51.6 million in Australian literature, dance, theatre, music, visual arts/craft, new media arts, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and community cultural development projects and organisations.

Each of the artform Funds and the Board provide grants through a suite of generic funding categories which address the Australia Council's stated outcomes. These categories are New Work, Presentation and Promotion, Development, Triennial Grants, Fellowships, Partnerships and Commissions. Additionally, the Funds and the Board have developed a number of projects relating to a range of Government and Council special initiatives. The Government initiatives provided support for emerging and regional artists, while Council initiatives supported the further implementation of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Policy.

### Investments in the Creation of New Work

Across the Board and Funds a total of \$11.8 million was invested in the creation of new work under the New Work, Fellowships and Commissions grant categories.

The Dance Fund, for example, provided assistance to a number of organisations and individuals to create new works. Jennifer Newman-Preston, NSW, is producing her work *Young Woman Glass Soul* exposing the origins of *Cinderella*



Kim Gyngell and Josephine Byrnes in William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, July-August 1998, Melbourne Theatre Company. Photo: Jeff Busby

Garry Stewart's Thwack, NSW, will develop a new twist on the classical ballet *Swan Lake* with a work entitled *Birdbrain* and Tasdance received two grants allowing the Launceston-based company to create new works and to collaborate with local artists.

The Community Cultural Development Fund supported a significant partnership project with BHP, NSW. It involved the employment of a Creative Director to oversee *Ribbons of Steel*, a celebration of 84 years of steel making in the Hunter region and includes the development of up to 20 individual projects as part of the celebrations. An outcome of the project will be strategies and projects to sustain cultural activity in Newcastle after *Ribbons of Steel*

The Literature Fund awarded fellowships to art historian, Bernard Smith, fiction writer Christopher Koch; and fiction/non-fiction writer Roger McDonald, whose most recent novel, *Mr Darwin's Shadow*, has won international praise and various awards, including the NSW Premier's

Literary Award for fiction. Georgia Blain whose first novel, *Closed for Winter*, was shortlisted for the 1998 NSW Premier's Literary Awards, received a grant to write a Gothic horror novel.

### **Investments in the Development of Creative Arts Practice**

A total of \$5.4 million was invested in the development of creative arts practice under the Development and Partnerships categories.

For example, the New Media Arts Fund supported a range of residencies in Australia and overseas which offered new resources and opportunities for new media practitioners to forge creative partnerships with arts bodies and scientific institutions. Iain Mott received support as the 1999 CSIRO Artist in Residence, and Rodney Berry won a six-month residency with ATR Media Integration and Communications Research Laboratories, Japan.

The Literature Fund provides professional development opportunities, including overseas residencies, mentorships and other skills-development programs. This year, Vanessa Bates, NSW, and Amirah Inglis, ACT, undertook residencies at the Keesing Studio, France; and Selwyn Hughes, Vic, Lee Knowles, WA, and Thomas Petsinis, Vic, undertook residencies at the B R Whiting Library, Italy.

### **Investments in Quality Productions**

A total of \$25.8 million was invested in quality productions through the Major Organisations Fund and under the Board and Funds Triennial Grants category (and the final payments under the old Program Grants category).

For example, the Theatre Fund provided triennial support to Arena Theatre Company in Victoria which creates new

works targeted for young people in different age groups. They are well known for the 'anthropop' trilogy of *AutopsyMass* and *Panaea* - the latter performed as part of the 1998 Melbourne International Festival.

### **Investments in the Presentation and Promotion of Australian Work**

A total of \$4.7 million was invested in the presentation and promotion of Australian work under the Presentation and Promotion category.

The Visual Arts/Craft Fund supported major recurrent contemporary exhibitions, including the Melbourne International Biennial for 'Signs of Life'; the 2000 Adelaide Biennial of Art, which will focus on contemporary Indigenous art; as well as the world's foremost exhibition of contemporary Asia-Pacific art, the 3rd Asia Pacific Triennial to be held at the Queensland Art Gallery.

The Music Fund assisted a large number of ensembles, organisations and individuals to present and promote their work both at home and abroad. Examples include: the overseas tour by the Joe Chindamo Trio, performing at jazz festivals in Italy, Holland, Sweden, Denmark and Finland; and Red House Editions received assistance for the publication of two anthologies featuring new works by Australian composers, one devoted to duet and trio brass music and the other to percussion music.

### **Leadership and a National Overview of Arts Development**

The Australia Council provides a unique national overview of the arts in Australia. All applications for funding are assessed by artists and artworkers from around the country who are of high calibre. They bring with them their expert knowledge of the work being undertaken in their own State and elsewhere. This enables the work

to be benchmarked against work from the rest of the nation to ensure the best artists receive funding. The Council's national overview also provides artists and arts organisations with the ability to compare themselves with the best in the country.

During the year 78 people were members of the Funds and Board appointed by the Minister for the Arts and a further 28 were participating peers. The names of these peers are provided in the grants lists.

Through the reports written about each funding round, the lessons learnt about the state of the arts are channelled back into Council programs and the sector itself. These reports are sent to all applicants and interested bodies. In the year in review 18 reports were produced.

The Australia Council's support and contributions to the Major Performing Arts Inquiry is one example of Council's leadership work in addressing the strategic issues facing the arts industry.

## OUTPUT 2



Industry development for Australia's creative arts is characterised by initiatives to build the management and entrepreneurial capacity of artists and arts organisations; and market development initiatives for the benefit of Australia's artists and arts organisations.

These initiatives are geared to achieve business development results (improvements in markets, audiences and business practices) and are predominantly developed and implemented by the Audience Development Division.

### **Building Management and Entrepreneurial Capacity**

The Audience Development Division's strategies to develop marketing skills

includes publications and resources, such as *Who's My Market?*, *Access All Areas: Marketing the Arts to People with Disabilities* and *Marketing Strategies for Arts Organisations*. The first print run of *Marketing Strategies for Arts Organisations* (2,000) ran out in the year in review and over 800 pre-orders were made for the second edition published in April.

During the year in review, the Division assisted a range of arts organisations to access professional audience development expertise.

Programs in 1998–99 included export strategies, touring assistance to Major companies and attendance at international fairs. The Strategy and Policy Division also contributes to this output.

Much of the activity within the Arts Funding Division also contributes to building the management and entrepreneurial capacity of artists and arts organisations.

For example, the Major Organisations Fund made a range of grants to companies to assist and improve their strategic business planning. The Fund also met with each organisation to consider and discuss their strategic business plans for the next triennium.

### **Marketing Development Initiatives**

During the year in review, Audience Development Division's national series of 28 arts marketing workshops reached 500 arts workers across Australia, including over 260 regional arts workers and volunteers. Workshop participants consistently gave high ratings in evaluating the workshops, averaging approximately 3.7 on a scale of 1 to 4 for workshop quality and relevance overall.

The Division assisted arts organisations (such as Arts Around Adelaide and

artsMARK in Darwin) to more effectively market their artistic products and services through collaboration and pooling of resources. It also provided support for a range of organisations to develop their online activities.

In 1998–99 Audience Development funded a range of research designed to provide arts organisations with data on audience trends.

Planning began in 1998–99 for the 4th Australian Performing Arts Market to be held in conjunction with the 2000 Telstra Adelaide Festival. It is estimated that approximately \$25 million has been returned to performing arts companies and artists through engagements arising from the markets held since 1994.

## OUTCOME 2

The second outcome Council pursues is that the Australian people's appreciation, participation in, enjoyment and celebration of the arts with and through our civic institutions is enhanced. To achieve this outcome the Australia Council delivers a range of policy, promotional and cultural relations services.

## OUTPUT 3



Council's policy, promotional and cultural relations services are delivered through: promotion of an understanding, enjoyment and appreciation of the arts by Australian citizens and civic institutions; promotion of an appreciation, understanding and respect for Australia's culture internationally; policy analysis and policy advice; and understanding of key issues and challenges facing artists and arts organisations that can fundamentally affect the ongoing development of the sector.

The four priorities this year have been:

- promoting the value of the arts;
- Youth and the Arts;
- building a greater international focus;
- ensuring the sustainability of the arts sector.

Council has maintained a range of strategic partnerships with a view to promoting the contribution made by the arts to community and economic development outcomes.

The Council's Public Affairs Section actively promotes Australia Council initiatives to achieve a greater awareness and appreciation of the arts.

A total of 36 publications were published during the year in review, including four editions of Council's newsletter, *Artforce* which had an average circulation of 7,800 per issue. In April 1999, Council's new strategic plan, *Directions 99–2001*, was published (2,000 copies).

Council's web site ([www.ozco.gov.au](http://www.ozco.gov.au)) contains information on Council's activities, priorities, policies, publications and links to a diverse range of arts organisations. The site receives an average of 366 unique visits per day. Each visitor spends an average of nine minutes on the site and requests an average of eight documents per visit.

Council research and policy advice to Government, the industry and the community contribute to this output. Examples include government briefings, program reviews, fact sheets, submissions to Government Inquiries, and reports to Government. Taxation reform was a main policy focus during the year.

Library services contribute to all aspects of this output. In addition to providing internal services, the Library also provided services to a total of 1221 external users.

Council staff across all the artform sections conducted a total of 57 client information sessions in 20 locations across all States, including many regional meetings. A total of 1,582 people attended the sessions, who generally gave positive feedback about the usefulness of the sessions, particularly with regard to the Council making an effort to 'connect away from Sydney'. The Community Cultural Development Fund reported that 26 per cent of those that had attended an information session were new applicants.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### Promoting the Value of the Arts

In setting its directions for 1999–2001, the Australia Council this year prioritised its role in enhancing community interest and engagement in the arts. Much of Council's policy and promotional work is aimed at enhancing community engagement with the arts. Promoting the value of the arts to all Australians has been a central activity for Council this year, with a strategy in development for implementation over the coming three years.

Council commissioned research in two principle areas - how the general community values the arts and how arts stakeholders see their role in promoting the value of the arts - as a first step in developing a campaign to promote the value of the arts to all Australians. Council sees its three-year promotional strategy as a crucial means to address emerging challenges for Australia's arts industry into the 21st century. Council believes it is essential to foster more positive attitudes towards the role of the arts in Australia's social, cultural and economic development.

During the first half of 1999, qualitative and quantitative research into the extent to which Australians value the arts was

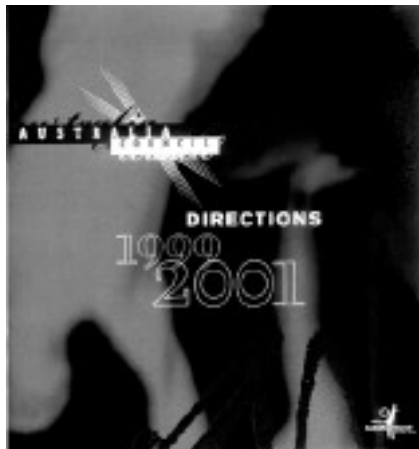
conducted by Saatchi and Saatchi on Council's behalf across three States in cities, outlying suburbs and regional and remote areas. Over 100 interviews and roundtable discussions with people involved in the arts were also held and 1,200 people in the general community were polled in an exploratory telephone survey. The research will be augmented by an extensive national survey with a view to developing and endorsing strategies in late 1999. Two issues of a newsletter, *Alert!* kept the sector up-to-date with progress.

### Youth and the Arts

'Youth and the arts' has been targeted by the Council as the second of its four key areas for development in its new strategic plan, *Directions 99–2001*.

Youth and the Arts policy also underwent extensive development. The Youth and the Arts Framework adopted by Council in April will provide the terms of reference for Council to use when it considers, and responds to, matters concerning young people and the arts.

The development of the Framework involved extensive research and consultation with the field. A total of seven information sheets and a discussion paper (translated into plain speech by a youth theatre workshop) were released.



*Directions 1999-2001*, the Australia Council's new strategic plan, published in April 1999.

The response to the Framework project was overwhelmingly positive. Some 18 focus groups including over 130 young people, 16 gateway organisations, 80 expert commentators, 2050 people on the consultation mailing list, and policy discussions by the Board and Funds were important ingredients in the process.

During the year, Council agreed to set aside \$470,000 to pursue various strategies during 1998–99 and 1999–2000 to increase recognition and support for youth participation in the arts both external and internal to the Council itself. The first will be the publication of the Framework. The other strategies will include:

- establishment of an Australia Council Youth Panel;
- research and case studies of exemplary practice;
- greater engagement with education issues and organisations;
- an advocacy and awareness campaign to upgrade young people's understanding of the Council and its functions.

The development of each of these strategies is to be informed by consultations with the field about the Framework.

During the year in review, support for Youth and the Arts practice was provided across the Council. The Audience Development Division undertook various youth audience development projects in association with a number of key arts organisations.

The Dance Fund initiated a number of special projects this year, including an opportunity for the professional development of eight youth dance practitioners by setting up a choreographic workshop in Melbourne in November 1998.

The Funds and Board supported youth activity through the general grants rounds of the Council. The Federal Government's Emerging Artists' Initiatives are described below.

### **Building a Greater International Focus**

The Council has a long history in developing an international dimension for the country's artists and artistic products. In the early 1970s there was already recognition of the importance of this in the body of work of the organisation. Since that time the Council has continued to develop and manage relevant programs of assistance and initiatives designed to boost international opportunities. Since 1996, the Council has intensified its focus on the area with particular concern for the expansion of export opportunities. In the last year, a coordinated International Framework was completed as a tool to make evident the full scope of the Council's international areas - artistic, market focussed, cultural relations and cultural promotions. This work is central to building a greater international focus.

Funding for continuing development of the arts is a key function of the Council's work. Without that responsibility, it would lose its central purpose. However, in responding to the changing environment, the Council has adapted its role to stimulate greater demand for the products made by our artists.

Australia is perceived as a country offering unique and fresh arts perspectives, somewhat unaffected by the complex relationships and rivalries to be found in the intense trans-Atlantic and Northern Hemisphere scenes. The near future promises much to our artistic and creative sectors. Now Australians can more easily participate in global markets and debates. The Australia Council believes in identifying international opportunities, and encouraging our artists to take

advantage of them. It also recognises the fact that our country is now more than ever visited by foreign arts presenters who see it as a place to explore and to discover the new with the intention of introducing it to wider markets.

Through the Arts Funding Division and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board, Council has supported a wide range of innovative projects that will continue to excite international audiences with exchanges, collaborations and touring. Examples include: three senior Aboriginal artists, Thomas Jangala Rice, Jack Jakamarra Ross and Paddy Japaljarri Stewart from Yuendumu, Central Australia, will create a sand painting at the Fine Arts Museum, San Francisco, in September 1999; seven Yolngu artists from Elcho Island Galiwinku Community Incorporated, NT, will take *My Island Home* an exhibition of performances to USA and Canada; Sydney based Barry Gamba will undertake research and production skills development in NSW, Italy and New York; the Dance Fund linked up with the NSW Ministry for the Arts' program of cultural exchange between Wales and New South Wales; 'Australia Day' at the 1999 Prague Writers' Festival; David Carson to present *Geo-derma* as part of the Pandemonium Festival for the London Electronic Arts Festival; Denis-Paul Beaubois to present *Amnesid* (1998 Grand Prize Winner of the Videonale 8, in Bonn, Germany) at the Impakt Festival, Netherlands, and in Germany at the European Media Arts Festival and Oberhausen Film Festival; and young visual artist Dean Golga to present *The Door in the Wall* at the 20th Music Biennale of Zagreb, Croatia.

The Australia Council recognises that it can not effectively manage the increasing demands of both the established and new potential international markets on its own. True growth in this area can only be fostered within a new system fuelled by

partnerships across governments and industry bodies. The Council is an active promoter of cooperative partnerships, and will strive to ensure that future international development for the arts is a shared responsibility amongst federal and State agencies. To this end, the Council strongly applauds the initiative of the Foreign Minister in establishing the Australia International Cultural Council of which both Council Chair, Dr Margaret Seares, and General Manager, Mrs Jennifer Bott, are members.

The Audience Development Division of Council made substantial progress towards building a greater international focus. Activities during the year in review, included a partnership with Asialink which supports more than 30 Asian arts residencies annually, covering visual and performing arts, new media arts, literature and arts management.

The Australian exhibition at the 48th Venice Biennale opened in June 1999. An Australia Council project, coordinated by Global Art Projects, *The Home Show* comprised the work of the late Howard Arkley and received much critical acclaim and attracted large audiences.

Audience Development's first 1998–99 Visiting International Publishers (VIP) Program ran concurrently with the Sydney Writers Festival (May 1999) and involved nine international publishers and agents from the UK, USA, Germany and Switzerland meeting with their counterparts in the Australian publishing industry, as well as writers and media.

In order to support international market development for Australian arts, the Audience Development Division established a pilot program of one-year placements for experienced arts managers in countries which are key markets for Australian arts companies and artists.

Dr Margaret Seares, Chair of the Australia Council, welcomes the new Minister for the Arts and the Centenary of Federation the Hon. Peter McGauran, MP, at the launch of the Australia Council video, *Arts for Australians*.  
Photo: Mathew Deller



The role of the Intern is to support key arts market development initiatives, create new opportunities for the Australian arts, and gather market information to feed-back to Australian arts organisations.

A pilot internship began in Japan in February 1999 as a joint initiative with the Australian Embassy in Tokyo and the Australia Japan Foundation. The Division is finalising the establishment of a similar internship in Germany, a key market for Australian arts.

Audience Development Division assisted international tours of a number of Australia's high-profile performing arts companies, including Circus Oz; Meryl Tankard Australian Dance Theatre; Bangarra Dance Theatre; Sydney Dance Company; The Australian Ballet; and the Australian Chamber Orchestra. A particularly successful outcome of the 3rd Australian Performing Arts Market, where Australian arts are promoted to overseas presenters and producers, is the tour of *Cloudstreet* by Company B Belvoir in association with Black Swan Theatre Company. *Cloudstreet* will take in the Zuercher Theater Spektakel (Zurich Theatre Festival); the Riverside Studios in London, co-presented by the Royal

National Theatre; and the Dublin Theatre Festival.

### **Ensuring the Sustainability of the Arts Sector**

Ensuring the sustainability of the arts sector, is supported by several Council initiatives. In the year in review the issues of taxation reform and the status of the major performing arts sector have been the chief foci.

In the area of taxation reform, Council published new research and analysis by KPMG and Econtech about the proposed tax package. Council provided ongoing advice to the Government about the potential impacts and made two submissions to the Senate Inquiry into a New Tax System.

Council representatives met with the Federal Arts Ministers and senior staff in Treasury, the Australian Taxation Office and the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts on this subject. The first of a series of Taxation Bulletins was issued to the arts field in May 1999.

In April, Council applauded the Government's reforms in relation to tax



Sir John Gorton and Dr Jean Battersby, the first Chief Executive Officer of the Australia Council, at Council's 30th Anniversary celebration, Sydney Theatre Company, Pier 4, Walsh Bay.  
Photo: Patrick Rivier

incentives for philanthropy. This coincided with a Council-sponsored tour to Australia of prominent US philanthropist, Charles Bergman, Executive Vice-President of the Pollock Krasner Foundation.

The design and delivery of all grant categories contributes to artform sustainability. This is particularly true of the Triennial Grants category, and the Partnerships and Commissions categories which aim to bring new resources and new players into supporting the arts. An evaluation of the Partnerships and Commissions Grant Categories was completed in the year in review.

The Major Organisations Fund report, *Managing for the Future* analysed and articulated the series of pressures which the major performing arts sector faces and which were jeopardising its long-term viability. In the year in review, presentations of the report's findings by Fund Chair, Dr Helen Nugent, brought together all major performing arts organisations, major venues and State and federal funding agencies in the country in

what effectively constituted the first 'summit' of the key stakeholders in the industry.

The report and these meetings led to the establishment by the Minister of an independent Inquiry into the Major Performing Arts, announced in November 1998. Dr Helen Nugent, was appointed to head the Inquiry. The Inquiry is a concerted effort to investigate sustainability issues in the performing arts sector. The Australia Council contributed financially and with staff secondment to the Review.

The Australia Council's long-term plan with the Triennial Grant category includes a shift in the balance between long-term funding commitments to nationally significant organisations on the one hand and flexibility in a Board or Fund's remaining budget on the other. This year the Council has agreed that the areas of Theatre, Music and Dance could aim for a relatively greater degree of long-term commitments to assist sustainability for those sectors.

The strategy of funding the Arts Law Centre, the Australian Copyright Council and research in areas such as taxation is to provide people in the arts community with information, advice and direction which they would not otherwise be able to afford or access. This information enables artists and organisations to make the best decisions they can to sustain their practice and their business.

Volunteers in the arts are an often overlooked resource, and a critical link between customer or community and company, especially in a regional context. As there is no consolidated program of training for the many thousands of volunteers who comprise this vital part of Australia's arts industry, Audience Development funded Regional Arts Australia, the peak regional arts organisation in Australia, to research, develop and design a training framework for this purpose. The program will provide a foundation for other regional arts initiatives in 1999–2000.

## POLICIES

### Regional Arts

The Australia Council is keen to ensure increased recognition of the distinctive qualities which characterise regional arts practice and to demonstrate to the Australian community the quality, extent and diversity of the artistic life which flourishes in our regions. Council also aims to encourage new partners and supporters for arts activity in regional areas. We recognise that the cultural sector can learn from the resourcefulness demonstrated and cooperative approach adopted in many regions.

Three further goals inform the development and implementation of our regional arts programs. Council seeks to:

- increase opportunities for regional

artists to undertake professional development;

- support projects at the national level which have significance for all regional artists and communities; and
- promote the value of the arts to all Australians, wherever they live.

The Australia Council supports regional arts development through both its mainstream programs and through special initiatives which seek to address the above goals. These funded activities and initiatives cover all artform areas and have taken place across regional Australia throughout the year in review.

In 1998–99 the Audience Development Division's national series of arts marketing workshops included over 260 regional arts workers and volunteers.

Other regional audience development initiatives this year included:

- *Miles Ahead* which highlights 45 examples of innovative arts marketing gathered through research across regional Australia in 1997.
- Regional performing arts audience research involving thirty regional venues - sponsored by Pacific Micro Marketing, the Asia Pacific licensee of the MOSAIC geo-demographic profiling system. The project builds on an earlier pilot study involving the South Australian Country Arts Trust's four regional venues and the Geelong Performing Arts Centre and compiled a detailed audience profile, as well as identifying the potential for building new audiences.

The Board and Funds provided valuable support to artists and arts organisations in regional Australia - from Albany on the West Coast to Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait. The regional projects described on pages 33-34 were amongst the many funded in 1998–99.

One of the most significant aspects of regional arts activity is the administration of the Federal Government's Regional Arts Fund, details of which are provided on pages 32-34.

### **National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts**

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts (NATSIA) Policy had its first full year of operation in 1998–99. The Policy confers upon the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board a leading role in Indigenous cultural policy and programming. The Policy also applies to every section of the Council. The Board will actively coordinate the facilitation, implementation, monitoring and reporting on the policy objectives.

As part of the NATSIA policy, Council provided Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training for all staff during 1998–1999. The training was facilitated by Fay Nelson, Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts, and staff from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

The NATSIA Policy was launched by the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Reconciliation, the Hon. Philip Ruddock, MP, at the Sydney Opera House on 11 December 1998 and has been given an enthusiastic reception from the field.

Council allocated funds for projects to implement policy priorities in the areas of: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community advocacy and consultation; editor training; curator's training and marketing and distribution.

The Board has sought to maintain and improve networking opportunities

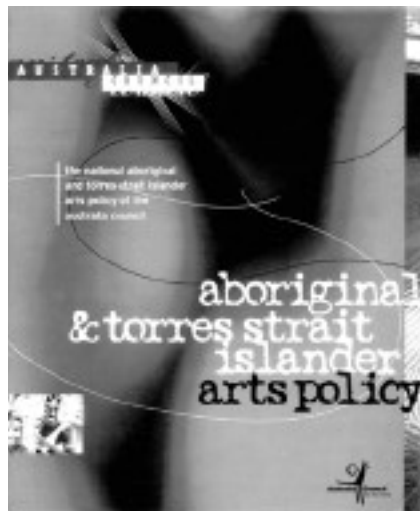
through community advocacy and consultation. The Indigenous Editor Training Program involved partnerships with relevant organisations and research about existing programs for trainee editors.

The Indigenous Curators Training Program focused on regional galleries and researching any existing program for trainee curators.

The Marketing and Distribution Strategy will establish Marketing or Audience Development Specialists placements with Indigenous arts organisations. It will encourage a collaborative approaches to marketing Indigenous Australian arts.

Strategic initiatives of the Board addressing policy priorities are either complete or nearing completion.

The Inside Art/Out Initiatives have been most successful and achieved successful partnerships between Corrective Services in Queensland, New South Wales, West Australia and Tasmania.



The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Policy brochure, launched by the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Reconciliation, the Hon. Philip Ruddock, MP, at the Sydney Opera House on 11 December 1998.

A mentoring scheme to assist in the professional training and development of Indigenous writers from the Queensland Writers' Centre has been established.

The Board and Council is supporting the 8th Festival of Pacific Arts in Noumea scheduled for October 2000.

The *Arts Yarn*  $\Psi$  newsletter is the major communication strategy for the Board to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It was published in December 1998 and May 1999.

In addition to Board and Council projects, the Funds of the Australia Council have supported a wide range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts organisations.

The National Label of Authenticity (a registered trade mark) being developed by the National Indigenous Arts Advocacy Association will secure the ownership and control of Indigenous cultural property in the market. The Label will guarantee that goods and services are either authentic or made under licence from their Indigenous owners.

### Arts for a Multicultural Australia

The year in review saw the Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee (ACMAC) undertake long-term strategic planning in light of feedback from the field, discussions and recommendations released by the National Multicultural Advisory Council's (NMAC) report, *Australian multiculturalism for a new century: Towards inclusiveness* and the Australia Council's strategic plan, *Directions 999–2001*.

The areas identified by the Committee for consideration were:

- artistic content which reflects Australian multiculturalism;

- infrastructure needs and supports;
- attitudinal change in the arts and cultural sectors towards increased inclusiveness;
- the work of the Council itself.

Council recognised the importance of supporting the Arts for a Multicultural Australia (AMA) policy by the allocation of \$250,000 to be invested in strategic initiatives.

The Council endorsed the goal and objectives developed by ACMAC this year. The overall goal is to value the diversity and capacity for innovation that exists in Australian multicultural and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander society and encourage its creative expression across all artforms.

The objectives include:

- providing a leadership role in cultural diversity of the Australia Council, both within and externally;
- identifying barriers to art production which expresses cultural diversity;
- facilitating feedback from individuals and organisations in the arts at a community level about Council's policies and programs;
- assisting major and middle ranking arts organisations to understand the value of cultural diversity;
- facilitating individuals and organisations to access the Australia Council and develop their art practice in relation to AMA;
- ensuring that access and equity principles are applied to NESB people who apply to and receive support from Council;
- to increase awareness through discourse;
- to look for ways to identify (and support) artistic work which arises from the unique Australian multicultural environment.

The Divisions have continued to implement the AMA policy in ways appropriate for each artform area. Some examples include:

The Literature Fund continues to invest in the use of qualified translators with literary expertise to assist in assessing applications received in many languages. This is managed through the Insearch Language Centre and has proved to be an effective and efficient mechanism for the Fund.

The New Media Arts Fund has joined with the Strategy and Policy Division in support for the development of a conference and forum to be held in October 2000, which will discuss where and how multiculturalism and its discourses will be positioned post the millennium.

The Music Fund has increased the triennial support to include a range of organisations and centres, many of which have strong multicultural programs, such as Brisbane Ethnic Music and Arts Centre, the Song Company, and Kulcha - Multicultural Arts of WA.

The Visual Arts/Craft Fund (VACF) continues to receive and support many applications from artists of non-English speaking backgrounds, many investigating diversity in cultural background and this year awarded a Fellowship to Hossien Valamanesh who will produce work engaging with his culture of origin. The VACF also supported participation in a day-long session managed by Nexus Multicultural Arts Centre, SA, enlarging the debates around multiculturalism and the visual arts and crafts.

Audience Development Division increased the support of five multicultural audience development specialist positions by extending the period to two years

following inclusive feedback from the first group to be supported through this initiative.

Strategy and Policy Division continues to provide the support and advice for the implementation of the AMA policy. The year in review saw a number of further highlights, including the launch of *The World Is Your Audience* during the Arts Marketing conference in July 1998; meetings with Philip Ruddock, the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs; Randolph Alwis, President of the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia and the NMAC Chair, Neville Roach.

## **BUDGET**

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The Council's appropriation in the 1998–99 budget, in the first year of its second triennial funding period, 1998–99 to 2001–02, was \$72.3 million compared to \$69.8 million in 1997–98. The increase was due principally to funding totalling \$6.8 million for the Government policy initiatives, namely Regional Arts, Emerging Artists, Contemporary Music Export Development, and Major Festivals. Each of these is outlined below.

The triennial funding agreement provides the Australia Council with greater funding certainty to provide secure longer-term commitments to a larger number of organisations, thereby giving them the opportunity to enhance their forward planning and management process.

## **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES**

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On behalf of the Federal Government, the Australia Council administered the following initiatives:

## REGIONAL ARTS FUND

The Commonwealth Regional Arts Fund was established in 1996 to provide financial contributions for significant and sustainable arts development in regional areas, in recognition of the special needs of artists and communities in regional, rural and remote Australia.

The Commonwealth Government allocated \$7.5 million for the Regional Arts Fund over three years commencing in 1996–97.

At their meeting in December 1996, the Cultural Ministers' Council agreed to devolve the majority of the funding available for 1997–98 and 1998–99 directly to the States and Territories. A total of \$6 million was allocated over the two years under this arrangement as follows: New South Wales, \$900,000; Victoria, \$900,000; Queensland, \$900,000; Western Australia, \$900,000; South Australia, \$750,000; Tasmania, \$400,000; ACT, \$100,000; Northern Territory, \$500,000; and national initiatives, \$650,000.

Over 250 projects have been funded across regional Australia through the Regional Arts Fund in 1998–99, with the Commonwealth's investment being more than doubled by State and Territory Governments and other funding partners. Funds administered by the Australia Council were generally implemented in partnership with other national agencies, such as the Department of Primary Industries and Energy and the Australian Local Government Association.

The following projects are some highlights of the year in review:

- Six regional arts organisations were funded through the Community Cultural Development Fund to assist visual arts and craft organisations work

within a community cultural development context. A diverse range of activity has been supported by the initiative, enabling organisations to work in ways appropriate to their communities and levels of understanding of community cultural development practice.

- The publication, *The Great Yarn Event and other stories from regional Australia*, was launched at Regional Arts Australia's Mt Gambier National Conference in October. Journalists were commissioned to develop high-quality reportage in the work of a number of nationally significant regional arts companies and projects.
- The first National Conference of Regional Art Australia was held in October in Mt Gambier and was attended by over 350 delegates. The funding provided assistance to volunteer delegates, and to commission speakers and presenters. Dr Margaret Seares and Don Baxter, Director, Arts Funding, gave keynote addresses to the Conference.
- The Northern Rivers Performing Arts group in Lismore, New South Wales, were funded in 1997 for the training and employment of local actors in the production *Conversations at the Ryan Hotel*, a theatre piece with music about the many changes of role the people of the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales have undergone during the past 120 years.
- Arts Out West ran mime and theatre workshops with two youth theatre companies in central western New South Wales - That's It! Theatre Company in Orange and the Bathurst Youth Arts Collective. Iraqi refugee, Nazar Jabur, an experienced theatre and mime artist, ran the workshops and was able to provide new theatrical experiences and skills development opportunities for young people.

- The critical social issue of suicide for young people in rural areas was jointly addressed in a project from the Riverina Young Peoples Theatre and the Wagga Wagga City Council, and in consultation with Lifeline and Big hArt (Australia's premier organisation for arts and cultural activities for working with young people at risk). A four-person team comprised of two community arts workers, one community youth worker, and a trainee arts worker, developed workshops for local Riverina youth participants where issues surrounding 'at risk' behaviour and teen suicide were explored to develop a framework for a performance. This was subsequently refined, and culminated in the production of Pandora's Shed presented at the Riverina Playhouse in Wagga Wagga, and toured to regional centres and schools. The work exploring risk behaviour and teen suicide was accompanied by a workshop package from Big hArt and resource material provided by Lifeline.

The Australia Council and State and Territory Arts Agencies have reached agreement on overarching principles for the extension of the Fund for July 1999 to June 2001.

### EMERGING ARTISTS INITIATIVE

The Emerging Artists Initiative was allocated \$1.5 million in the year in review.

In 1998–99 27 grants were provided to individuals and organisations under the Emerging Artists Initiative.

The Initiative's strategic focus on initiatives fashioned to address key artform issues and opportunities showed major outcomes in 1998–99. By using the national overview and artform expertise

of the Board and Funds, the work supported is designed not only to make a critical difference to the artists and organisations involved, but also to contribute to artform development in Australia.

Some examples of the work supported this year include:

- A Mentor and Secondment Matching Service for theatre artists across Tasmania;
- Extension of the pilot Literature Mentoring Scheme from Western Australia to national reach involving the Australian Society of Authors, Playworks, the Australian Writers Guild, and Varuna, Northern Territory, South Australian, Tasmanian, New South Wales and Victorian Writers' Centres;
- The National Emerging Crafts Tour Past Tense, Future Perfect with the support of all the Craft Councils in the country;
- Emerging artists working with flagship arts companies, including Circus Oz, The Queensland Theatre Company, State Theatre of South Australia, the West Australian Ballet and the Australian Ballet;
- A range of projects that fostered the creation of new work, including Newcastle-based Arts Hunter to develop and tour a song and dance performance entitled *Routes of Ausidia*, and Robyn Caughlan of NSW to produce a collection of Indigenous designs for New York pret-a-porter shows;
- The Theatre Fund supported Emerging Artist development programs in Hobart, Canberra, Newcastle, Wollongong and Townsville;
- The Dance Fund assisted emerging performers to work with companies and new works by emerging choreographers;

- The Literature Fund supported eight mentorships for West Australian prose writers and poets aged between 17–30 and the Allwrite! Festival for young writers;
- The Music Fund supported thirteen music festivals across regional and metropolitan Australia, incorporating many musical styles and genres including jazz, folk, world music, rock/pop, blues and contemporary experimental music; and
- The Visual Arts/Craft Fund supported 15 Artist Run Initiatives across Australia which included many young artists.

The Australia Council was particularly pleased that the Commonwealth Government decided to renew the Initiative as the Young and Emerging Artists Fund for the next two years. Planning for the extended Fund began in June.

### **CONTEMPORARY MUSIC EXPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (CMEDP)**

In 1996–97 the Federal Government allocated \$2 million to the Australia Council to market contemporary Australian music overseas. It currently comprises fully repayable Export Marketing Advances and funding for cooperative international marketing strategies and collaborative events. Administered by the Audience Development Division, it provides opportunities for Australian independent record labels and bands to break into international markets.

Advances have been awarded to independent record labels and managers who have demonstrated significant research and groundwork in target overseas markets on behalf of bands and artists. During 1998–99 a total of 15 Advances were approved.

Along with the Independent Managers' Forum, other key projects supported through the cooperative international marketing strategies and collaborative events stream include:

- Pacific Circle Music (PCM), a major music industry international convention and market held in Sydney. 145 delegates attended from the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Oceania. In 1998 over 40 Australian artists gained increased exposure as a result of PCM with four groups signing deals in excess of \$600,000.
- Association of Independent Record labels (AIR) to present a strong Australian presence at Popkomm, Germany (August 1998) and at MIDEM in Cannes, France (January 1999).
- The Big Backyard, which made radio programs for distribution to more than 900 stations in the USA and key countries in Europe, Asia, and South America.

In 1998 the Federal Government announced a \$10 million package over three years to support music industry development. Three components are being researched and managed by Audience Development: continuation and expansion of the Contemporary Music Export Development Program; online promotion and marketing of contemporary Australian music; and business planning within the music industry. From January 1999, the Division held wide-ranging consultations with the music industry to assess needs and determine practical strategies relevant to these.

### **MAJOR FESTIVALS INITIATIVE**

In 1996–97 the Federal Government provided \$1.5 million to enable Australia's major international festivals to co-commission and develop large-scale

works. Prior to this initiative, limited resources made it difficult for Australian artists to spend sufficient time developing and refining new productions to match the high standards of imported overseas productions. This new resource has meant that productions such as *Cloudstreet*, produced by Company B Belvoir (NSW) and Black Swan Theatre (WA), and *Possession*, produced by Meryl Tankard's Australian Dance Theatre (SA) with the Balanescu Quartet (UK), have found immediate success with Australian audiences and secured major international tours.

Projects supported during 1998 include: *The Ghost Wife* at the 1999 Melbourne Festival, Adelaide Festival 2000 and Sydney Festival 2001; *Yue Ling Ji* (Moon Spirit Feasting) at the Adelaide Festival 2000 and the 2000 Melbourne Festival; *Ochre* and *Dust* at the Adelaide Festival 2000 and the Festival of Perth 2000; *Night and Dreams: The Death of Sigmund Freud* at the Sydney Festival 2000 and 2000 Melbourne Festival; and *The Theft of St* at Adelaide Festival 2000 and the 2001 Melbourne Festival.

The Federal Government has committed a further \$1.5 million over the next two financial years to continue this initiative.

## LOUDER

In May 1999 the Federal Government confirmed its commitment of \$1.5 million towards LOUDER, a second national youth and the arts festival, to be presented in 2001 and managed for the Council through the Audience Development Division.

Preliminary planning for the event began in June 1999.