

getting them...

and getting them back

REGIONAL GALLERIES' APPROACHES


REGIONAL GALLERIES ATTRACT MORE THAN TWO MILLION VISITORS EACH YEAR AND HOLD MORE THAN 1,600 EXHIBITIONS. THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL GALLERIES SUMMIT WAS HELD IN CAIRNS IN 1997, WHERE THE SHARING OF INFORMATION ON MARKETING AND AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES IN COMMUNITIES WAS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE AGENDA.

Alice-Ann McRobbie, Director of the Cairns Regional Gallery and organiser of the summit together with the Queensland Regional Galleries Association, was quoted in *The Australian* during the summit: "This is something of a crucial time for smaller galleries. We are all seeking to survive and to change personally and professionally."

The summit looked at issues including the definition of a regional gallery, its role and purpose; how to increase audiences; the nature and number of exhibitions; and how galleries embrace new technology.

In issue 7, 1997, of Ansett's glossy publication for business and first-class travellers, *The View Australia*, Peter Anderson writes: "Through the Regional Galleries Association of Queensland, regional galleries form a network that gives real state-wide support to the rapidly developing visual arts industry, and offers a route for the important cultural exchanges offered by touring exhibitions. As the network develops, we can expect it to become one of Queensland's key cultural tourism resources, opening the door to some of the state's hidden cultural treasures."

A greater understanding of demographics; close liaison with the community, including its youth, artists, multicultural groups and indigenous populations; and building and strengthening networks are some of the essential marketing activities for regional arts organisations. miles ahead found regional galleries actively engaged in growing their audiences. A small selection follows:

DESTINATION: Bendigo Vic	
COMPANY: Bendigo Art Gallery	

BENDIGO ART GALLERY IS ABOUT TO UNDERGO A MAJOR EXTENSION WITH CAPITAL FUNDING FROM LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS. THE NEXT STAGES OF THE GALLERY WILL SEE RETAIL AND MERCHANDISING PROGRAMS SET IN PLACE ON A FULL SCALE, AND VIGILANT MONITORING TO THE DETAILS OF THESE, PLUS AN ATTITUDE THAT VALUES CURATORIAL AND CONSERVATION ISSUES EQUALLY WITH THE COMMERCIAL ONES.

monitoring guides the way

“We will be able to reach high standards of programming and professionalism,” says director Tony Ellwood, who is spending the months leading up to the completion of the capital works program concentrating on the business of audience development. “Having this level of investment in the gallery is going to mean a new level of accountability for us, so we have been scrutinising our attendances very carefully.”

Having observed that the average visitor to the gallery matched the almost stereotypical art gallery goer demographic - female and over 50 - Tony and his staff devised a series of programs targeting youth and 30 to 40 year olds. Both age groups have been simultaneously - and efficiently - targeted through an after school program, which has been a roaring success.

An artist was contracted to run the program, which brought in thousands of children and dollars - and their parents. “The kids now come in, get their school bags, hurl them across the floor and bolt upstairs. They are very comfortable in the environment. And then we are saying to the parents, why don't you have a look at our latest temporary show; it's probably changed since you were last here.” The program has been simply and effectively promoted through school newsletters - hitting the target audience right on the spot, and cheaply too.

Overall, other attendances have risen dramatically - from 17,000 to 32,000 in a year - including a four-week closure while the collection was rehung in order to present both colonial paintings and contemporary works in a more accessible way.

“Service is traditionally not a big part of the Bendigo culture.” But Tony has made this a priority and is vigilant in monitoring numbers. His attention to the daily, weekly and monthly figures works to motivate everyone at the gallery's concern about customer service issues.

Market research commenced in 1997 and is ongoing. As Tony says, “it is practically based. We are able to assess what we really need to know. While the urban venues are our primary competitors, Melbourne audiences are coming in significant numbers”.

building relationships with the community

The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory attracts over 150,000 visitors a year to their venue at Fannie Bay in Darwin (pop. 78,100). As well as being a major tourist attraction in Darwin, director Jacqueline Healey acknowledges their role as an important community organisation, and says that they work hard at building good relationships with locals and local organisations.

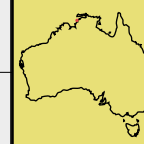
“We don't see us as being THE Museum; we see us as doing projects here with communities. But we also see ourselves going out and helping the communities achieve what they want to achieve in their own space, and that enhances our audience here.”

A sense of ownership is important to developing community support and growing audiences.

The Chinese community have become active in this museum and art gallery ever since *Sweet and Sour*, an exhibition of experiences of Chinese families in the Northern Territory. Having sought joint funding from the Australia Foundation; the Chinese community and the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory worked closely together, from sourcing genealogies and histories to employing a Chinese designer, to working until the early hours of the morning for five weeks before opening. Where once this community may have avoided the museum and art gallery, they now come to all openings.

With a key organisational objective of promoting itself within the community and the tourism industry and generating public participation and support for its activities, the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory is actively adding value to the arts in its community. Through marketing and promotional actions, it has increased national exposure of the Telstra Art Award through greater coverage in the print and electronic media; coordinated "Darwin's Path to Art", a collaborative venture between the private and public art galleries of Darwin to market their activities; and participated in "Top End Walkabout", a travel industry event arranged by the Northern Territory Tourist Commission, which attracted over 200 interstate travel agents and tour operators.

The Northern Territory's population is 25% indigenous. While the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory has a strong relationship with the Aboriginal community and presents the Telstra Aboriginal Art Award as part of the Festival of Darwin, Jacqueline Healey is excited by the prospect of *Life and Death Under the Pharaohs*, the Egyptian exhibition coming to Darwin. With the objective of its being seen by every school child in the Territory, Jacky believes that it is a significant cross-cultural opportunity for Aboriginal people in the Territory to see the exhibition on their own turf.

DESTINATION: Darwin NT	
COMPANY: The Museum & Art Gallery of the Northern Territory	

A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP IS IMPORTANT TO DEVELOPING COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND GROWING AUDIENCES.

developing community pride

WINNER OF THE 1997 NORTH COAST TOURISM AWARD IN THE CATEGORY HERITAGE AND CULTURAL TOURISM, GRAFTON REGIONAL GALLERY IS A POPULAR AND HIGHLY REGARDED CULTURAL ASSET OF THE CLARENCE VALLEY COMMUNITY.

Grafton (pop. 17,000) is, in the words of art critic of *The Australian*, Giles Auty, "... an appealing city with a wide river ... and attractive streets lined with venerable jacarandas and fig trees. It is the kind of Australian town that exudes charm and common sense and both factors, in turn, clearly contribute to the success of its annual art award."

The gallery is administered by the Grafton City Council and attracts 20,000 visits a year (up from 16,000 in 1995). Tourists account for 15.4% of visits, schools and children 13%. The gallery mounts two new exhibitions every five weeks in the beautifully proportioned rooms of an historic Pretice house. The gallery Director, Susi Muddiman, attributes much of the gallery's success to its public programs, a balanced exhibition program and its nationally recognised biennial acquisitive drawing award, which is held as part of the well-known Jacaranda Festival.

Volunteers are essential to the fortunes of this thriving gallery. Some of the gallery's volunteers undertake Gallery Guide Training in public speaking, communication and visual arts interpretation, while others train in exhibition changeovers, retail, reception and office duties. Grafton welcomes volunteers from its community and acknowledges the contribution of all of its 65-strong volunteer brigade to the gallery's operations and programs.

Their public programs are innovative and have a strong emphasis on youth. They include the outreach program *Gallery Goes to School*, which takes art works from the permanent collection out to the schools of the region, and a monthly program, *Art for Joeys*, for children aged four to eight years accompanied by a parent or guardian, which combines a tour of the exhibition and related arts activities. Each year, the gallery runs workshops as part of Youth Week. The day *miles ahead* visited the gallery a cluster of young people were working with an artist-in-residence - a new program funded by the Schools to Industry program, which meant five artists were able to work intensively with nearly 100 students for three weeks.

DESTINATION: Grafton NSW

COMPANY: Grafton Regional Gallery



Image Geoderma (Dave Carson and Brian McClave)

DESTINATION: Kalgoorlie WA

COMPANY: Goldfields Arts Centre Gallery



creating links with industry

Amy Barrett-Lennard, Curator of Goldfields Art Centre Gallery in the "frontier mining town" of Kalgoorlie (pop. 30,000), took off her curatorial hat to coordinate the Kalgoorlie Mine Project, an innovative project that has resulted in continuing relationships and spin-offs for the artists, including work with environmental groups. Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines (KCGM), the project's major sponsor, was awarded "most innovative sponsor" by the Western Australian State Arts Sponsorship Scheme in 1997. The artists also were asked to make a presentation as part of the awards night.

The use of technology provided a common ground upon which the Kalgoorlie Mine Project was developed, and helped to nurture new networks, partnerships and seeds for future projects. The local mining industry uses 3D image technology to produce 3D images in its determination of appropriate exploration and excavation paths. The artists used it to explore human perceptions and notions of reality within the framework of gold production and consumption at both a local and a global level.

The *Kalgoorlie Mine Project* was a unique collaboration between artists and sectors of the local mining industry. KCGM, a "superpit" conglomeration of large international mining companies; Paddington, a smaller Kalgoorlie mine; and Soft Copy Digital, a local-mapping company contributed both in-kind support and cash contributions of over \$15,000. The artists gained from having both large and small industry support through access to computer software and on-site interaction with mining companies.

The Goldfields Art Centre Gallery played an important role in helping to initiate and foster these partnerships, and actively developed others through interaction with the Kalgoorlie College Arts and Design Department via a series of 3D screenings during the annual international "Gold Conference" held at the Arts Centre. Artists Dave Carson and Brian McClave presented a series of screenings of the 3D video-in-progress to Gold conference delegates, which was followed by a lively exchange of ideas between artists and delegates. The video was later shown to guests at a dinner held in Perth for Mineral and Energy Week.

"Geoderma", the final stage of the project, was held at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts as part of the Festival of Perth in 1998 - with enthusiastic response from the audience to the 3D imagery of the Kalgoorlie region. "Geoderma" returns to the Goldfields Arts Centre Gallery in 1998 to coincide with the "Diggers and Dealers" conference.

DESTINATION: Mt Gambier SA
 COMPANY: Riddoch Art Gallery Inc



reaching out to new audiences

"IT IS IMPORTANT TO FORGE NEW FRIENDS AND SEEK THE INVOLVEMENT OF VARIOUS COMMUNITY GROUPS. THE COMMITTEE FROM THE LOCAL ANGLICAN PARISH HAS WORKED EXTREMELY HARD - THEY ARE A VERY POSITIVE, FRIENDLY GROUP. THIS HAS BEEN A MOST SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION WITH THE GALLERY."

responding to community interest

The Riddoch Art Gallery reopened in December 1996. After renovations of three galleries and the development of a new shop, the gallery now has access from the main street via a laneway, rather than via a series of double doors through a coffee shop.

Still recovering and now concentrating on getting school groups back to the gallery, in March 1998, it presented the inaugural "Needham Religious Art Prize" exhibition in partnership with a local committee spearheaded by the Anglican Church.

In response to an article on the need to see more "life enhancing art" by Giles Auty, art critic for *The Australian*, local resident Roz Hodson approached the Riddoch Art Gallery to seek their involvement in this exhibition and prize.

A committee of local residents was formed and they worked for a year towards raising revenue for gallery hire costs, the prize and air travel. The collaboration between the committee and the Riddoch Art Gallery raised financial support from the South Australian Country Arts Trust, the CSR Blue Lake Festival and O'Connor Airlines. The Riddoch Gallery advertised nationally for entries and a South Australian, Mark Pearse, from Yankalilla, won the inaugural prize (selected by Giles Auty) of \$2,000.

In less than a week, the exhibition attracted over 750 visitors to the gallery, which is more than three times the average weekly figure. Director Louise Haigh says

the exhibition has been an "icebreaker", and that many new faces from Mount Gambier's population of 26,000 were seen in the gallery when the exhibition was opened by the Archbishop of Adelaide, Rt. Reverend Dr Ian George.

The local media was very supportive, with stories on SES8 television and in *The Border Watch*, Mount Gambier's local newspaper. Regional ABC radio-5MG interviewed Louise for the gallery's response to the exhibition. Louise was very positive about the gallery's growing audiences from its own community:

"It is important to forge new friends and seek the involvement of various community groups. The committee from the local Anglican Parish has worked extremely hard - they are a very positive, friendly group. This has been a most successful collaboration with the gallery."

OPENED IN JULY 1995, THE CAIRNS REGIONAL GALLERY WELCOMED ITS 100,000TH VISITOR TWO YEARS LATER. DURING THIS TIME, IT DEVELOPED STRONG LINKS WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANISATIONS, TOURIST BODIES AND JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY.

Located in a sparsely populated region with a large indigenous community, Marketing Manager Robert Heather says the gallery took great pleasure in its involvement with the *Laura Aboriginal Dance and Cultural Festival* in 1997. The gallery saw this as an important audience development initiative to expand participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and a way to increase the cultural tourism potential of the entire region. The gallery's presence at this important biannual cultural festival is part of an ongoing program aimed at "increasing the accessibility of the visual arts throughout the region to various communities".

Working closely with the Ang-Gnarra Corporation, the gallery initiated an artist-in-residence for their 12th Festival with funding support from the Arts Office of Queensland. Rea, a Sydney-based indigenous artist, documented her impressions using a digital camera.

The festival organisers asked the gallery to take responsibility for the inaugural Cape York Art Awards. Sponsorship was secured from the Chevron Gas South Pacific Pipeline Project.

A temporary "bush gallery" was set up to display over 80 paintings, drawings and sculptures by artists from communities including Aurukun, Mornington Island, Doomadgee and Lockhart River.

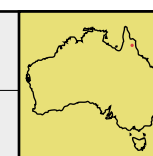
With the assistance of QANTM Indigenet, they also created a homepage on the world wide web to promote the festival and awards. The festival was attended by over 5,000 people, most of whom saw the exhibition.

The artworks were then transported to Cairns and displayed at the Tanks Art Centre during NAIDOC week.

Cairns Regional Gallery looks at opportunities to achieve broad-based community support and to be a major international showcase for Australian art. Its reputation for being at the forefront of gallery management practices in Australia has resulted in a consultancy for Price Waterhouse in Wellington New Zealand, to assist them with a strategic review of the Petone Settlers Museum and Dowse Art Museum in Hutt City, a suburb of Wellington.

Alice-Ann McRobbie, Gallery Director, believes that "this consultancy indicates opportunities for other arts organisations to utilise their expertise in arts marketing, management and cultural tourism in the growth markets of the wider region of Oceania and the Asia Pacific".

DESTINATION: Cairns Qld
 COMPANY: Cairns Regional Art Gallery



'The Voyage First Day' Alan Oldfield from Escape Artists: Modernists in the Tropics Exhibition

BEGONIAS HAVE BEEN SYNONYMOUS WITH BALLARAT SINCE THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, AND BALLARAT'S BEGONIA FESTIVAL IS A 46 YEAR-OLD COMMUNITY FESTIVAL WITH HORTICULTURE AT ITS CORE, IN PARTICULAR, A WORLD-FAMOUS COLLECTION OF BEGONIAS HOUSED IN THE ROBERT CLARK CONSERVATORY IN BALLARAT'S HISTORIC BOTANICAL GARDENS. OVER 100,000 PEOPLE VISIT BALLARAT DURING THE TEN DAY PERIOD OF THIS FESTIVAL, WHICH HAS EVOLVED AS A MAJOR SHOWCASE EVENT FOR THE CITY.

taking the community with you

A partnership theatre production

Ronald Egeberg was appointed Festival Manager when Ballarat City Council took over its administration under a special committee and took on the task of expanding the festival's program. Although not specifically an arts festival, alliances with arts and cultural organisations have emerged as a key strategy in its development. "We realised that we needed to form partnerships with other organisations in Ballarat that could share in the many opportunities that the festival presents." A joint partnership between the Performing Arts Unit of the University of Ballarat, Her Majesty's Theatre, Sovereign Hill and the Hugh Williamson Foundation was formed to put on a production of *Lola Montez* during the 1997 festival.

"It worked very well all round: The university met its requirement to perform in our unique lyric theatre; the theatre had an event that related to our theme for that year's festival. The production went into a modest surplus. Sovereign Hill assisted enormously to produce it as authentically as possible. And the foundation provided our base funding." The same partners will

come together again in 1998: Ronald Egeberg says "it's an ongoing opportunity for everyone to share in the promotional and marketing aspects that present themselves".

An innovative multi-ticket initiative

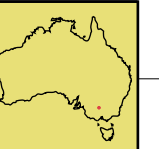
In 1997, the festival also trialed a multi-ticket, which aimed to give people value for money and encourage both locals and visitors to see as much as possible. The \$9 ticket holders gained access to attractions valued at \$40, including entry to The Robert Clark Conservatory, the Craft Exhibition, the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, the Gold Museum and *Lola Montez*.

Ballarat Begonia Festival poster Ross Adams



DESTINATION: Ballarat Vic

COMPANY: Ballarat Begonia Festival



"We produced new audiences for the gallery, the theatre and the museum. It was a chance to get people through their doors who wouldn't normally go, and they have figures to show that." There is no doubt that the multi-ticket, with its new angle on linking the arts to a community event, will run again in 1998

Working with volunteers

"When we took a close look at what the festival is all about and what it is meant to do, we recognised that, as a community festival, it had to have community involvement. And we also had to harness skilled volunteers to assist with many aspects of running the festival." Ron has set in place a very strong volunteer program that keeps volunteers involved and gives them a sense of ownership of the event.

Interestingly, although 35-plus has traditionally been considered the core audience for the Begonia Festival, with volunteer ages reflecting that (many volunteers have been with the festival since the start, 46 years ago), a new, younger audience and volunteer profile is starting to enter the picture. As Ron says, "it wasn't cool to be seen to part of the Begonia Festival, but I think we are breaking down some of that attitude".

The Begonia Festival brings three to five million dollars into Ballarat's economy each year, with 60% of the 100,000 visitors coming from outside the Ballarat region - from Melbourne, interstate or overseas. In 1997, two thirds of those visitors have said they'll be back. A strong response, and one the arts can only benefit from.

using a community's profile to support the arts

THE BYRON BAY WRITERS' FESTIVAL IS A NEW EVENT FIRST HELD IN 1997 AND MANAGED BY THE NORTHERN RIVERS WRITERS' CENTRE (FOR WRITERS AND READERS).

The Northern Rivers Writers' Centre, based in Lismore, has 250 members from as far away as the Gold Coast and Nambucca. Its membership provides annual revenue from membership fees and attendance at regular workshops with experts in various genres, ranging from writing for television to writing for children.

In addition to monthly members' meetings, there are visits from authors, literary dinners and the one-to-two day events that can attract up to 700 people. These events are real income generators and subsidise other activities. The centre also runs developmental programs helping their writers with skills such as presentation, finding a publisher, etc.

The Northern Rivers Writers' Centre publishes eight newsletters a year, extending the mailing list to a further 200 organisations, media people, writers and readers nationwide. Director Peter Barclay says "it's worth every cent of the postage. It keeps prospective authors and people aware of what you are doing. People in Melbourne will hear Frank Moorhouse is doing a workshop, plan a short holiday and come on up to be part of it".

The Byron Bay Writers' Festival grew naturally from the activities already in place. Over a considerable period of time, Peter canvassed authors participating in his longer events and got plenty of advice, including:

- be egalitarian; don't create stars out of certain authors
- reduce the stress and responsibilities of the authors, so that the weekend is pleasurable
- don't create a theme - work out who you want and take it from there
- expect a one in three success rate from the authors invited (Peter achieved a two in three success rate)
- make the event intimate so you avoid "the eight minute question to which the answer is yes or no" - in other words, avoid creating a platform on which the audience is scoring off the author."
- find influential advocates and supporters for the festival

The result is 50 writers and presenters who read like the Who's Who of Australian literature - Kate Grenville, David Malouf, Robert Drewe, Helen Garner and Rodney Hall among them. The festival returned a profit in the region of \$11,000 (acquittals were not completed at the time of the *miles ahead* visit).

"We decided on Byron Bay rather than Lismore because the infrastructure is there. They attract around 300,000 bed nights annually. We chose a dead time so that we were able to book the Byron Bay Beach Club at 50% of the usual going rate. That meant that when you added the cost of the festival to your accommodation - it was about what it would usually cost for a weekend in Byron. Equally, the locals are behind it because it extends Byron's reputation beyond that of a great beach culture. For those living outside the region, it's an attractive destination in its own right."

Early on, a steering committee was established, comprising the centre's President, Chris Hanley, Caroline Baum, Robert Drewe, Linley Jones and Neil James.

The festival cost \$70,000 and sponsorship exceeded the budgeted target of \$50,000. A local committee raised in-kind sponsorship from local businesses. Participation costs, excluding accommodation, ranged from \$75 (for one day) to \$250 for the whole shebang, including dinner. Concessions and membership rates were available. In all, the festival generated 7,200 in attendances (on a session-by-session basis). Approximately 50% were locals, with the remainder coming from all states in Australia.

The marketing, including the cost of print, cost \$7,000. Peter was amazed to receive 1,000 phone calls from an advertisement the size of a cigarette packet in *The Australian*. This shows not simply the power of advertising, but the potency of a well-designed event held in the right place at the right time.

Many of the writers arrived the day prior, and had only around four hours work to do over the four day period, so they enjoyed themselves. Because they were staying "on site", there was a lot of intermingling and exchange between writers and participants.

Outside, a tent provided talks and workshops for about 400 young people, and Peter would like to extend the concept to a Young Readers' Program for the next festival.

Now that the festival's credentials are established, Peter believes they are in a better position to attract national editorial coverage. He also plans to add a day to allow longer breaks between sessions ("the sheer speed was terrifying"), delegate the ticketing and financial management to the hotel, and upgrade internal office computer systems to assist with networking, attracting past attenders and sponsorship.

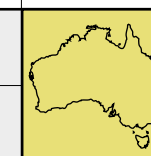
Peter's advice to others contemplating setting up a writers' festival is:

- think nationally - have writers and a destination of national significance
- have a large roster of writers (each has their own fan club)
- set up networks with peak writing organisations, writers, media and readers
- have opinion leaders onsite
- keep the event intimate and informal
- budget conservatively


The Northern Rivers Writers' Centre's long term goal is to establish a Residential Writers' Centre in Byron Bay, where writers can come and work. For the 1998 festival, they already had ten advance bookings and two new sponsors. The prospects look good for the centre's vision.

DESTINATION: Lismore NSW

COMPANY: Byron Bay Writers' Festival



MAGABALA IS THE YAWURU WORD, A MAJOR ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE OF THE AREA, FOR THE REGIONAL BUSH BANANA FRUIT. LIKE THE BUSH BANANA, MAGABALA SPREADS THE SEEDS OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES BY RECORDING, PUBLISHING AND PROMOTING ITS LITERATURE IN AUSTRALIA AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

DESTINATION: Broome WA	
COMPANY: Magabala Books	

distribution in far flung territories

Let's establish an indigenous publishing house in the Kimberley.

Jill Walsh, Magabala's Administrative Manager, a former ABC executive producer of features, is earnest when she talks about the foresight of people in the region.

"The idea behind Magabala came out of a cultural festival in the Kimberley in 1984, where a lot of the old people were expressing concern that people were coming into the Kimberley and they were taking people's stories away, promising them the world and then they were never heard of again. They didn't know what was happening to their stories. So, as a good Marxist principle, they said let's take the means of production into our own hands and establish an indigenous publishing house that gives greater protection of indigenous copyrights, would also promote indigenous literature and culture, and train and employ indigenous people so that they could be economically better off."

Its first publication came out in 1987, before Magabala was constituted in 1990.

In 1997, Magabala Books celebrated its tenth anniversary with its fiftieth title. With an average of five books a year, some new titles, some new editions, some previously published works, its quality books reflect the cultural integrity that informs their work.

In ten years, it has been able to establish a stable enterprise and provide royalties of 10% to its artists. In 1997, they sold 25,000 products. It receives funding from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts division of

the Australia Council, Arts WA and ATSIIC. Seven people are employed, two of whom are in administration; one of whom bridges administration, sales and marketing; and the rest are dedicated to in-house editorials and design.

Magabala, as an independent corporation, is unique in Australia, in that it is not under the umbrella of education or research institutions. It is one of two publishers in Australia that employ full-time indigenous staff such as editors and designers. Operating under the auspices of an Aboriginal Management Committee, Jill Walsh and Bruce Sims (Publishing Manager), who are not indigenous, plan to make themselves redundant sooner rather than later. The corporation aspires to be totally in Aboriginal hands.

Broome is an ideal location (pop. 10,200) for Magabala Books, even though when Australia breaks into five time zones staff feel like they are "hanging onto the edge of the world by their fingernails". But the remoteness of being in Broome is offset by its strong community links throughout the Kimberley. Cultural protocols need to be observed and being in Broome makes this easier.

Magabala distributes directly from Broome to the Kimberley and Pilbarra region. Its national distribution is segmented through several distributors with whom they develop marketing strategies in concert with their needs.

Magabala prides itself on the level of consultation with its authors. Working with a lot of first-time authors and potentially once-only authors, they try to make the publishing process as undaunting as possible.

"The Australia-wide book publishing market is a relatively large and highly-competitive market. However, Magabala Books is not competing in this market, as the nature of its products is so specialised that it may be considered to be in a separate niche publishing market in Indigenous books.

Although Magabala Books therefore only addresses a fairly small niche market in the total publishing market, it is affected by general industry conditions. For retailing books, the general market has been very depressed over the last three years and so . . ."

Magabala Books Aboriginal Corporation Business Plan, 1996

In publishing, the type of product determines distribution channels, and it is important to look at different networks and integrated marketing techniques, such as links with documentaries or galleries, that can develop partnerships with access to direct mail.

Several years ago, Magabala joined a group of independent publishers, Publish Australia Group Enterprises (PAGE). Established, with the assistance of the Department of Communications and the Arts, to meet the need for small and niche publishing groups to come together and work on collaborative solutions, it is an affiliation of 45 independent publishers under the Australian Publishers Association, the peak industry body. Jill says that, while they might be sitting next to somebody who publishes books on horses, they have discovered that there are a lot of common problems, the most significant being marketing with limited financial and human resources.

Most of Magabala's distributors are trade distributors, which means they sell primarily into bookshops. Magabala recognises that distribution needs to include the educational market.

One of the current initiatives of PAGE is to engage an educational marketing expert for three to six months to assess the marketability of their list in the educational sector and to provide them with the means to embark aggressively on this market or markets.

Their experience also shows that a trade distributor with the means to sell to the tourist and gift outlets can increase sales dramatically.

The challenge to any small organisation is to find the wherewithal to identify where the hub of any network is, so that they can purchase the services of that network centre.

Magabala has an agent in Germany and is currently looking at possible distribution arrangements in the United States. An e-mail address helps with communication, and plans for a home page on the world wide web are underway. Their designer will be trained in the actual design of the home page by a group at Imago in Perth and will return to Broome with the necessary skills.

Working with competitors in joint publishing

Magabala Books, the Institute for Aboriginal Development Press in Alice Springs and Aboriginal Studies Press in Canberra celebrated birthdays in various forms during 1997. An approach was successfully made to the Australia Council to support the three publishing houses in joint ventures during the year.

A joint celebration at the State Library in Sydney launched their collaborative catalogue. It is the first Australian attempt at any compendium of indigenous literary resources from independent publishers. Fifteen thousand catalogues were produced at a cost of one dollar each. Mailed to every primary and secondary school in Australia, the catalogue will be put on Publish Australia's web site in 1998. The catalogue offers buyers the opportunity to consolidate their orders. The bulk of the titles in the catalogue are from these three indigenous publishers, although other independents were invited, at a fee, to list their indigenous titles. Magabala intends to use their entries in the catalogue for their own template, using run-on sheets that can be mailed out selectively.

Jill says "A competitive edge is healthy; but, on the other hand, if we can say our goals are similar, our difficulties are similar and we actually can join forces, the net result is going to be a better rather than worse".

A price can make you or break you

In recognition of the fact that the market has changed and has become more competitive, Magabala attempts to bring the books in at a price that will actually sell.

As a marketing exercise, they have a policy that automatically discounts any sales directly from Magabala into educational institutions or into communities. This strategy reflects their aim to make books accessible to Aboriginal communities and to schools and libraries. The option is given to have either a discount or free postage.

Ten years down the track, Magabala Books now has more competitors and must remember not to be too naive in thinking that because they are convinced of their value the rest of Australia is as well.

"With many calculations, one can win. With few, one cannot"

*Chinese general Sun Tzu, Art of War
Cira 4th Century B.C.*



Traversing Sense Sublime performance. Leah Grycewicz and collaborators. Photo Gen OMalley



Lifesaver and Fish at Party. Lenore Howard



Skyrail Tourist Stiletto. Catherine Jacoby

expanding horizons

“THE PROJECT WAS CHALLENGING FOR GADENS’ CLIENTS AS THE COCKTAIL PARTY LAUNCHING *WINDOWSPACE* EXPOSED OVER 300 OF THEIR CLIENTS TO CONTEMPORARY ART OTHER THAN LANDSCAPE AND ARCHITECTURAL PAINTINGS”.

Formed in 1992, Kick Arts Collective’s 1997 operations and project budget of approximately \$110,000 was sourced from Arts Queensland, the Australia Council, the Queensland Regional Arts Development Fund the Regional Galleries Association of Queensland, Cairns City Council and self-generated income. Members’ contribution in volunteer hours and support-in-kind reached approximately \$70,000 during the year.

One of the organisational goals in its strategic plan is “to develop strategies for the promotion and marketing of Kick Arts Collective on a local, national and international level”. Their web site development (by Kick Arts members) is an important part of their overall strategy “to raise the profile of regional contemporary art by means of electronic media”.

Kick Arts is a high-profile, contemporary arts organisation based in Cairns that has a commitment to developing sustainability for the artists it represents - recently expanded from the visual arts to cover artists working in all artforms in the region. Interesting partnerships with local business and industry, which are changing perceptions of local artists and impacting on their income, characterise Kick Arts’ approach, implemented by a committee drawn from its 190 members and a part-time administrator.

Windowspace, a 1996 partnership project with Cairns Regional Gallery and Gadens Lawyers Cairns, placed art work in the streetfront windows of the gallery and was curated by Kick Arts over 12 months with sponsorship by Gadens.

Kick Arts member Sharon Pacey says “the project was challenging for Gadens’ clients as the cocktail party launching *Windowspace* exposed over 300 of their clients to contemporary art other than landscape and architectural paintings”. As a lasting outcome of the collaboration, the firm offered Kick Arts members 40% reduction in legal fees. They have also signed on to assist with legal arrangements for another of Kick Arts Collective’s innovative projects - *Baggage*.

Kick Arts already has developed links and relationships with the Cairns Port Authority and Qantas, and *Baggage#2* was viewed by many of the delegates attending the First Australian Regional Galleries Summit in Cairns in September 1997.

Sharon says that the exhibition is intended to create an interface, in a high-profile public location, between tourists, as well as locals travelling to and from the airport, and local contemporary art - without having to go into an art gallery. Artworks go around on the carousel, and visitors are given a Cultural Sample Bag that contains information about the works they are seeing, as well as about events and activities in the area that they are about to visit.

Visions Australia has granted Kick Arts \$15,000 towards exhibition development and research, and development funding has also been received from Arts Queensland. They have been invited to resubmit the touring proposal to take *Baggage - Transfer/Tranship* from Cairns to Darwin and Brisbane. The inaugural touring exhibition presentation at Alice Springs Airport on June 27-28 1998 was an enormous success. Plans include workshops in communities for local artists to develop multi-artform works, including performances, digital media, objects and supporting text, for the onsite presentation at their local airport.

“Baggage has generated interest and positive response from artists, arts organisations, statutory bodies, airport personnel, the tourism industry and the media. QANTM NT has offered in-kind support to the project. Already, there is a groundswell of enthusiasm for *Transfer/Tranship*, the project’s travelling trademark, in Darwin, with various offers of support and assistance from, 24 Hour Art, Northern Territory University, Browns Mart Community Arts, Festival of Darwin and QANTM NT. Qantas Brisbane is also excited by the project and the negotiations continue.”

Fasten your seat belts . . .

DESTINATION: Cairns Qld	
COMPANY: Kick Arts Collective Inc	

“As travel transcends boundaries, so too does baggage”
Gaye Scott, Marketing Manager, Cairns Port Authority

“You Australians sure have a sense of humour”
Tourist arriving at Cairns Airport

“Innovative, exciting and simply enjoyable to observe”
Brian Willis, Gadens Lawyers Cairns

“The concept of moving the project around Australia will enable a vast audience to participate with artists and to interact with much of the exhibition content”
Peter Denham Deputy Director, Cairns Regional Gallery

Baggage - “a pastiche of portable art”, created as an exhibition/installation on baggage carousels at airports, is an exciting new concept incorporating performance

and multimedia. Curated and conceptualised by Sharon Pacey, *Baggage* was first presented in 1996 at the Cairns Airport, as a Kick Arts Collective Member show to trial the logistics of utilising the baggage carousel in an airport environment with a view to a national touring program.



Russell Milledge Leahjet on the tarmac, Photo David Campbell Curated by Sharon Pacey



tapping into networks and sponsorship opportunities

DESTINATION: Perth WA

COMPANY: Art on the Move



ART ON THE MOVE IS THE NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS TOURING SUPPORT (NETS) FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA. LIKE NETS COUNTERPARTS IN OTHER STATES, IT PLAYS A CRITICAL ROLE IN EXHIBITION DEVELOPMENT AND TOURING, AND PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THEM IN GROWING AUDIENCES.

Their goal is "to boldly take art and craft where it has never gone before". Every year, they organise and tour up to seventeen travelling exhibitions of art, craft and design to sixty venues across Western Australia. Last year, Art on the Move crates travelled 100,000 kilometres, taking in venues from Kununurra to Esperance.

Katherine Wilkinson, former Executive Director of Art on the Move, reported that she had seen more of regional Western Australia than most 'sandgroppers' - opening exhibitions, judging awards, and giving workshops and advice.

Since 1986, they have been developing, managing and touring exhibitions of painting, sculpture, photography and other arts and crafts around the one million square kilometres of Western Australia. Their highly successful exhibitions are seen everywhere from local community centres and libraries to professional galleries.

The Art on the Move committee has five regional and four metropolitan representatives. They're an incorporated association, with metropolitan and regional galleries, exhibition venues, organisations and individuals as members. The organisation is funded through the Western Australian Department for the Arts and the Visual Arts and Craft Fund of the Australia Council. Their exhibition program is also sponsored by private and public organisations.

Each year, Art on the Move creates a fresh mix of audience development strategies to complement its range of touring exhibitions. Some of these strategies have included:

- **Be Smoke Free Art Bus**
- **Gallery Guides for a Day** - toured workshops for school children to develop their skills with the visiting artist/curator and conduct their school mates, friends and family around the exhibition on the special Guides day
- **roving Vox Pop Video** - taped the responses of students of all ages to an interactive exhibition, which was then viewed at the next venue

- **Art Music Gig** - distributed sponsored event tickets from the exhibition venue only, encouraging attendance by audiences who may not have been inclined to visit a gallery

Outcomes:

- annual schools attendance increased 60% in 1996
- art centres and galleries have a strong injection of funds and ideas with which to devise relevant local activities
- locals contracted to undertake the coordination of these new public programs, sometimes for the first time - developing of professional skills with guidance and assistance from Art on the Move Education and Public Programs Officer
- increased enjoyment of the exhibitions by visitors
- raised the level of confidence children have in expressing their ideas and opinions on art
- considered very successful promotional vehicle by the sponsor

Former Education and Public Programs Officer, Fiona Kalaf, says that sponsorship planning needs to be long-term. Art on the Move has begun holding small functions for potential sponsors, informing them about the arts and their organisation, but initially not asking for anything. Rather than the cold-call approach, a follow-up call is made at a later date to invite them to lunch to further discuss the potential of a sponsorship arrangement.

Maintaining a tight focus on their database is important, and records are kept of contacts, the special interests of senior staff and any other information that contributes to a better understanding of a potential sponsor.

Art on the Move recognises the value of providing benefits for their sponsors. Key Transport, their primary freight company, has come on board as a valuable sponsor who appreciates the advantage of being known as an exclusive carrier of art. If they can carry fragile items like artworks, then they can be recognised as being a reliable and quality transport company.

Healthway, a major sponsor, provides valuable contributions to market research and with a much larger budget than Art on the Move, conducts research on who is attending, interest in the exhibitions, etc. Their valuable support enables Art on the Move to work with venue organisers in the development of more community programs that add value to an exhibition.

Sponsorship

Successful partnerships between businesses and the arts can occur when both sectors recognise the value of cooperation. Arts and business working closely together in a region can result in great benefits by increasing exposure of both parties in the local market. Encouraging businesses to get involved in supporting the arts through financial investment and/or provision of skills can help to shape the future of a community and region.

Marketing is a vital part of any strategy to attract new audiences. A marketing-oriented approach to raising sponsorship is essential. Sponsorship should not be confused with philanthropy. Corporate sponsors want assurance that exposure will result in a positive return on their investment. The arts community needs to examine what it can offer the corporate community. It needs to look for the best methods of presenting its case if its innovative ideas are to be realised.

There are no guarantees for success in obtaining corporate sponsorship, but careful planning and presentation are crucial. Clear communication of artistic objectives and potential benefits to the sponsor are the key factors in securing and maintaining corporate support. The better informed both the arts organisation and the company are about the objectives, the greater the chances of achieving mutual rewards and satisfaction.

'Grassroots' sponsorship has been found to be an effective way for companies and industries to reach communities and promote their own products. Finding companies with an interest in your community can pull in investment in local events. It is important not to feel intimidated by the fact that you may not be able to offer the same amount of exposure that larger events can afford with their larger marketing budgets. The match can be just as important. Local networks can be offered as a way for companies, large and small, to add value to and create interest among their own markets. Being able to demonstrate that sponsorship can reach people directly in a local community through a local event is a key element of 'grassroots' sponsorship. This is one of best benefits you can offer a sponsor.



Cover of Crate News December 1997; Peggy Patrick, Waringarri Arts, Kununurra. Womens Meeting Place at Pompeii's Pillar © Penny Tweedie photographer and Northern Territory University School of Fine Art.