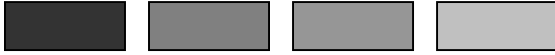




ASSESSMENT MEETING REPORT



LITERATURE BOARD

APPLICATION CLOSING DATE
15 May 2003

AUSTRALIA COUNCIL
372 ELIZABETH STREET SURRY HILLS NSW 2010
PO BOX 788 STRAWBERRY HILLS NSW 2012

Phone (02) 9215 9000
Toll-free (1800) 226 912
Fax (02) 9215 9111
www.ozco.gov.au

THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS EMBARGOED FROM PUBLIC
DISCUSSION UNTIL 24th OCTOBER 2003

ABOUT THIS REPORT

September 2003

This report provides a context to the assessment of applications submitted to the Literature Board on 15 May 2003. It provides some statistical analysis of the results of the grant round and more general comments made by the Board during the assessment of applications.

The Literature Board's Assessment meeting was held on **8-12 September 2003**. Applications were assessed in the New Work and Fellowship categories.

ATTENDANCE

All seven Board members attended the meeting. The membership of the Literature Board at the time of the meeting was as follows:

(Dr) Peter Goldsworthy (Chair) (SA) is a novelist, poet and librettist whose works have been translated into most major European and Asian languages. Among his many literary awards are the 1982 Commonwealth Poetry Prize and the Australian Bicentennial Literary Prize for Poetry (1988). Other major works include the novel *Maestro*, the novella, *Jesus wants me for a sunbeam* and libretti for the Richard Mills operas, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *Batavia* which recently won the Helpmann Award for Best New Australian Work (2002) His most recent novel is *Three Dog Night*.

Judith Beveridge (NSW) has been writing poetry since 1974 and is highly respected nationally and internationally. She has published two volumes of poetry, *The Domesticity of Giraffes* and *Accidental Grace*, which have won between them, the Dame Mary Gilmore Award, the NSW and Victorian Premiers' Awards and the Wesley Michel Wright Award. A third volume, *Wolf Notes*, is due in late 2003 or 2004. Her poetry has been translated into many languages and has been studied as part of the NSW high school syllabus.

Andrew Bovell (SA) writes for the stage and screen. His plays have been produced throughout Australia and in England, Ireland, New Zealand and Bulgaria. His numerous stage credits include *Who's Afraid of the Working Class*, *Confidentially Yours*, *Distant Lights from Distant Places* and *Holy Day*. He also wrote the screenplay for the highly acclaimed film, *Lantana*, based on his award-winning play, *Speaking in Tongues*.

John Emery (NSW) has published four novels and also written a number of screenplays, working with such directors as Philip Noyce and Scott Hicks. He has served as chair of Adelaide Writers' Week and the South Australian Writers' Centre and has also taught literature, film studies and creative writing at all of South Australia's major tertiary institutions. John is co-Head of Scriptwriting at the Australian Film Television and Radio School.

Kate Grenville (NSW) is an award-winning fiction writer whose novels include *Lilian's Story*, which won the Vogel Australian Award, *Dark Places*, winner of the Victorian Premier's Award and *The Idea of Perfection*, which won the Orange Prize in 2001. Two of her books have been made into successful feature films and all have been published to critical acclaim. She has a Masters degree in Creative Writing and her experience as a teacher of creative writing led to the publication of *The Writing Book: a workbook for fiction writers* and, most recently, *Writing from Start to Finish*. She also collaborated with Sue Woolfe on *Making Stories: How ten Australian novels were written*. Kate lives in Sydney with her husband, son and daughter.

Alan Gould (ACT) is a poet, novelist and essayist. He has published ten volumes of poetry, the latest of which is *A Fold in the Light* (Indigo), six novels, the latest of which is *The Schoonermaster's Dance* (Harper Collins) and one collection of essays, *The Totem Ship* (Duffy & Snellgrove). He has won a number of awards including the NSW Premier's Literary Award for Poetry in 1981, the National Book Council Award for Fiction in 1992, the Royal Blind Society Talking Book of the Year in 1998, the Philip Hodgins Medal and Prize for

services to Australian Literature in 1999 and *The Courier Mail* Book of the Year Award in 2001 for his novel *The Schoonermaster's Dance*. His fiction has been published in Britain, USA, France and the Netherlands. He has also been poetry editor for *The Canberra Times* and the National Library's *Voices* literary magazine.

Glyn Parry (WA) was born in the north east of England and grew up in the town where *Billy Elliott* was filmed. When he was twelve, his family escaped to sunshine and surf. While best known as a writer of fiction for children and young adults, his short fiction for adults has also been widely published. His ten novels for children and teenagers include *LA Postcards*, which won the 1995 WA Premier's Prize and was commended in both the Australian Vogel and Children's Book Council Awards, *Monster Man*, *Radical Take-Offs*, *Spooking the Cows*, *Stoked* and *Scootberboy*, which won the 1999 WA Premier's Prize for Young Adult Books. Glyn serves on the State Library Board of WA and the National Advisory Council of the ABC. He is currently writing the memoir of his youth. His dream is to own a cottage by the sea.

For this meeting the Board was assisted by **6 Participating Advisers** –

May-Britt Akerholt, dramaturg and lecturer in writing for performance (NSW)

Jordie Albiston, poet (Vic)

Robert Dessaix, fiction and non-fiction writer (Tas)

Sonya Hartnett, young adult and adult fiction writer (Vic)

Greg Mackie, bookseller (SA)

Ann Spudvilas, children's book illustrator (Vic)

Participating adviser, Melissa Lucashenko (NSW) was unable to attend the meeting due to unforeseen circumstances.

The following Literature staff attended this meeting:

Gail Cork	Manager
Jill Jones	Senior Program Officer
Nicola Evans	Program Officer
Virginia Fay	Assistant Program Officer
Priscilla Gundelach	Assistant Program Officer
Maggie Joel	Administrator
Jane Gillespie	Administrative Assistant
Robyn Tooth	Administrative Assistant

The following Australia Council staff attended parts of this meeting –

Karilyn Brown, Executive Director, Audience and Market Development

Margaret Burke, Books Alive Co-ordinator

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

The Board was very pleased to welcome a new member, Glyn Parry, to this assessment meeting. Glyn's expertise in literature for children and young adults has already proved a great asset to the Board. It was also a pleasure to welcome the six participating advisers who assisted the Board's decision-making on this occasion. Participating advisers are invited to Board meetings on the basis of their specialist knowledge of particular genres. Their contribution to this meeting was, as always invaluable. I thank them all for their hard work, wisdom, insight, and their willingness to temper a necessary combativeness with an equally necessary spirit of compromise. All who attended showed a tremendous commitment to Australian literature.

It is at this meeting that the Board considers the largest grant round of the year: for the New Work and Fellowship grant categories. The meeting was held over five days and its agenda and pre-meeting reading totalled more than 4,500 pages, plus support material submitted by applicants. While the workload at this annual meeting is daunting for Board members and advisers, it is also a privilege and delight to witness the extraordinary range of literary endeavour in progress around our nation. The vitality and increasing community engagement in Australian creative writing is indeed cause for celebration.

This year 452 eligible applications for New Work grants and Fellowships were received, which represents a 16.5% decrease compared to last year's total of 543. The Board had reluctantly agreed after last year's dramatic rise in the number of applications that it was necessary to review eligibility guidelines and introduce more stringent requirements, in the hope of containing numbers to a more manageable level. The reduced number of applications this year allowed more time for discussion, not only about the applications themselves but also about issues of process and policy as they arose.

Although the number of Fellowship applications declined slightly from last year, the quality was high and the Board was very pleased to award three Fellowships after much lively debate.

Reflecting the diversity of Australian society, the Board encourages applications for projects in languages other than English (LOTE). In this grant round the 26 LOTE applications covered 13 languages, the dominant one this year being Chinese, in which there were 10 applications. The Board awarded three grants involving projects in Arabic, Greek and Spanish. In assessing LOTE applications, the Board draws on the expertise of at least two highly-qualified external assessors for each application. There are currently 62 languages represented on the Board's database of LOTE assessors.

Limited funds always mean tough decisions. Like most grant rounds, this one left behind its share of fine writers and excellent projects that the Board would have liked to support had funds allowed. At this time of year, it is always a difficult task to deliver disappointing news to so many applicants. I would urge many of those who missed out this year to keep writing and apply again – several writers who missed out last year were successful this year. To those whose applications succeeded in this hotly-contested grant round, on behalf of the Board I congratulate you and wish you every success with your project.

Peter Goldsworthy

OUTCOMES

PROGRAM TITLE	APPLICATIONS (Number)		SUCCESS %	APPLICATIONS (Amounts - \$)	
	RECEIVED*	APPROVED		REQUESTED	APPROVED
New Work (Emerging)	127	25	19.7%	\$1,630,000	\$270,000
New Work (Developing)	172	28	16.3%	\$3,595,000	\$595,000
New Work (Established)	142	24	16.8%	\$4,750,000	\$740,000
Fellowships	11	3	27.3%	\$960,000	\$240,000
Totals	452	80	17.7%	\$10,855,000	\$1,845,000

*These figures refer to eligible applications only.

A full list of approved grants is attached.

FEEDBACK

- **General.** As ever, the challenge at the meeting was to decide among many worthwhile applications over a number of literary genres. Unfortunately, a number of applications which scored highly against the selection criteria were unable to be supported due to budget constraints. In some cases, smaller than requested grants were awarded. In reaching their decisions about awarding lesser amounts, the Board took into account the applicant's scores against the selection criteria and the relative scale of proposed projects.
 - This year the Board was pleased to see more applications from Indigenous writers. Six authors identifying as Indigenous or having an Indigenous background were funded in this round.
 - **Project descriptions (general)** The Board noted that a number of project descriptions tended to tell rather than show in what way the writer's project addressed the selection criteria.
 - Applicants need to take into consideration that the project description enables the Board to assess whether the writer has the capacity and, where applicable, the resources to complete the project. Project descriptions should engage with the imaginative and creative elements of the project rather than simply theorising about it.
 - In addition to the above, the Board encourages applicants, particularly poets, to provide information on how they see themselves as writers, how they understand their own writing processes and where they place themselves within their genre.
 - Eligibility requirements do not need to be addressed in the project description as this information is already provided separately on the application form.
 - Descriptions need to be appropriate to the project, eg, first draft, rewrite, a full work or only part thereof, and make a case for needing the grant of a specific amount for the time frame specified
- A number of applications were deemed ineligible this year due to the applicants' failure to provide a project description.
 - **Project descriptions (poetry)** Although poets have the option to provide details of their poetic directions rather than submit a specific poetry project, some poets did not address this issue sufficiently or specifically. Others did not link their poetic direction either to their support material or to the creation of new work. Poets should note that the project description is a significant factor in the Board's decision-making.
 - **Support material** Once again this year, the Board noted frequent discrepancies of quality between projects and support material to the extent that the support material sometimes undermined confidence in an otherwise excellent project.
 - Support material should be carefully selected to ensure it both showcases the applicant's best work and also relates, as far as possible, to the intended project in terms of genre or theme. Applicants should note that applications will be deemed ineligible if there is no support material in the genre for which funding is requested.
 - Applicants should attempt to provide examples of recent work as part of their support material, as far as this is possible.
 - **Selection criteria** As a result of general discussion about this year's applications, the Board has decided to change one of the selection criteria for next year. The criterion of "originality and significance of the project" will be changed to "creative substance of the project". The Board felt that a number of applicants were misinterpreting the concept of "originality" and also wanted to acknowledge that many writers see themselves as making a contribution to a long tradition of writing.

PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

NEW LITERATURE BOARD PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

The Board is actively pursuing several initiatives and collaborative projects which advance current priorities. They are:

Young and Emerging Writers 2003-4

The Board decided once again to offer two separate initiatives under the Young and Emerging Artists' Initiative.

The **Young and Emerging Writers' Initiative** will be offered via invitation to organisations providing mentorships or similar development programs, or presentation and promotion activities for young and emerging writers.

The **Write in Your Face** initiative is for young writers aged between 16 and 30 who are working either individually or collaboratively. It is aimed at one-off projects which do not fit within the Board's eligibility guidelines. It is intended to foster young writers' engagement with the creative process. Submissions are being invited in October and will be advertised on the Australia Council website.

Knot@Home - Big hArt strategic partnership

The Literature Board has approved \$19,700 towards the cross-council funding of the Knot@Home multi-arts project proposed by Big hArt, a community arts organisation working with disadvantaged young people in regional and remote areas of Australia. The project consists of art made by 500 people who are living on the fringe of society.

The literature component involves the editing and production of a book of true stories from Australian family life.

Asialink tours

The Literature Board and the Audience and Market Development Division of the Australia Council have again agreed to fund the second year of a joint initiative with Asialink for a literary tours program of Asia for Australia.

As a part of this project the Board is pursuing an Indian publishing initiative which aims to publish a number of titles in the Indian market and to support this with author tours. This decision is a result of a successful tour of India by writers Peter Carey and Kim Scott in 2002. It was felt that there was considerable scope for building up a more solid push into this vital Asian market.

Bilingual poetry anthology

The Board approved \$10,000 towards the production of an anthology of Australian poets translated by German poets, to be edited by Ivor Indyk and published in Germany, Austria and Switzerland by leading German publisher, DuMont Literatur und Kunst Verlag.

This project marks the culmination of the participation of Australian poets in the 2003 Poesiefestival, held in Berlin. Australia's participation was funded through the Australia Council's Audience and Market Development Division as part of Australia's presence in **artsaustralia berlin 03**, a program of contemporary Australian performance, literature and visual arts.

Pilot Residency, Ledig House, New York

The Board noted that its pilot residency at Ledig House, Art Omi, New York, involving the writer Rosie Scott, was highly successful. As a result, the Board has continued its collaboration with Ledig House by incorporating Ledig House residencies into its Skills and Arts Development program from 2004.

STEPS IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

BEFORE THE MEETING

Staff check eligibility and register applications on Council's computer database. You will receive a letter acknowledging your application with an application number and staff contact for your reference. Staff analyse the statistical information provided by applicants to help Council measure the effectiveness of its grant programs. Staff prepare applications and support material for the Board assessment meeting. Applications are made into booklets and sent to Board members. Peers are invited to participate as advisers to the Board at the meeting bringing additional expertise and perspectives to the assessment process. Staff also check and manage any conflicts of interest that Board members and peers have with applications and study the applications in order to provide information to the Board as required (see below *).

AT THE MEETING

ASSESSMENT

Board members assess your application against the published selection criteria. Board members may examine support material at the meeting or by prior arrangement.

Board members may also take into account information from other sources such as:

- their attendance at performances and other events;
- reports from members of the Register of Peers who may be asked to provide formal assessments of designated works;
- reviews, videos and recordings, referee reports and other material;
- any previous Australia Council grant acquittal reports and performance agreements you may have had; and
- communication with State and Territory agencies.

Boards may decide not to fund the application at the level requested. While your application may meet the stated selection criteria, this does not guarantee you a grant. The Australia Council receives many more applications than it can support. The success of your application must rest ultimately on the merits of your proposal against published criteria and in competition with all the other applications considered for funding.

NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

A letter notifying you of the decision will be posted to you during the month indicated in the Handbook and the application forms. Information about grant decisions will not be released over the phone.

IF YOUR APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL

If your application is successful, you will receive a letter offering you a grant. This letter of agreement outlines the terms and conditions of the offer. Payment of a grant will not be made until you have accepted the conditions by signing and returning the letter of agreement.

ACQUITTAL OF GRANTS

Acquittals are the artistic and financial reports that you must provide after completing your project. Acquittal reports enable the Council to fulfil its obligations of accountability as well as allowing us to learn about the success or otherwise of your project. These reports are a valuable way for you to contribute to the policy development work at the Australia Council.

**Staff do not make funding decisions. Staff provide information and advice to Council, Boards and advisory bodies to assist their determination of policy and assessment of grant applications. Staff also provide information to potential grant applicants and administer the Australia Council's grant programs to enable a simple, fair and efficient assessment of applications.*

Literature Board
NEW WORK - EMERGING WRITERS
Grant Round Id : 12850 Closing Date : 15-MAY-2003

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Bryant, Brad	Fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Campbell, Elizabeth	Poetry	VIC	\$10,000.00
Croome, Rodney	Literary non-fiction	TAS	\$15,000.00
Fisher, Carolyn	Poetry	TAS	\$5,000.00
Gallacher, Lynette (Lyn)	Literary non-fiction	VIC	\$5,000.00
Garrido-Salgado, Juan	Poetry (in Spanish and English)	SA	\$5,000.00
Gibson, Adam	Fiction	NSW	\$15,000.00
Howell, Simone	Fiction/young adult literature	VIC	\$15,000.00
Howlett, Chris	Writing for performance	VIC	\$10,000.00
Huppatz, Daniel	Poetry	VIC	\$15,000.00
Kneen, Kris	Fiction	QLD	\$10,000.00
Knox, Sara	Fiction	NSW	\$15,000.00
Lynch, Anthony	Fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Macdonald, Gabrielle	Writing for performance	VIC	\$7,500.00
Mahemoff, Mark	Poetry	NSW	\$15,000.00
McKimmie, Mal	Poetry	WA	\$5,000.00
Megarrity, David	Children's literature	QLD	\$5,000.00
Mellor, Maxine	Writing for performance	QLD	\$5,000.00

Literature Board

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Moritorisz, Sacha	Fiction	NSW	\$5,000.00
Murdoch, Shannon	Writing for performance	QLD	\$15,000.00
Reeves, Lynette	Poetry	TAS	\$15,000.00
Sprite, Natalie	Fiction	NSW	\$15,000.00
Stewart, Lola	Fiction	VIC	\$10,000.00
Weigh, Anthony	Writing for performance	NSW	\$15,000.00
Zajkowski, Maria	Poetry	VIC	\$7,500.00
		Total No. of Grants: 25	
		Total Amount Approved:	\$270,000.00

Literature Board
NEW WORK - DEVELOPING WRITERS
Grant Round Id : 12849 Closing Date : 15-MAY-2003

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Attwood, Alan	Fiction	VIC	\$25,000.00
Bates, Vanessa	Writing for performance (theatre or radio)	NSW	\$15,000.00
Broekstra, Lorette	Children's literature	VIC	\$25,000.00
Cyrill, Christopher	Fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Eberhard, Adrienne	Poetry	TAS	\$25,000.00
Elliott, Timothy	Non-fiction	NSW	\$10,000.00
Falconer, Delia	Fiction, non-fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Glastonbury, Kerrie	Poetry	NSW	\$10,000.00
Grant, Neil	Young adult literature	VIC	\$25,000.00
Habib, Nejmeah	Literary non-fiction (in Arabic)	NSW	\$15,000.00
Hampton, Susan	Poetry	ACT	\$25,000.00
Harrison, Jane	Writing for performance (theatre or radio)	VIC	\$15,000.00
Hurst, Elise	Children's literature	VIC	\$25,000.00
Johnson, Judy	Poetry	NSW	\$25,000.00
Juchau, Mireille	Fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Kelly, Aileen	Poetry	VIC	\$10,000.00
Lawrinson, Julia	Young adult literature	WA	\$25,000.00
Lomer, Kathryn	Poetry	TAS	\$25,000.00

Literature Board

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Macgregor, John	Non-fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Mahood, Kim	Fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Malone (Hammond), Angela	Fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Preston, Edwina	Fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Reed-Gilbert, Kerry	Fiction, poetry, non-fiction	ACT	\$15,000.00
Riel, Robert	Poetry	NSW	\$15,000.00
Scott, Kim	Non-fiction	WA	\$25,000.00
Tolhurst, Hugh	Poetry	VIC	\$25,000.00
Vuletich, Emma	Writing for performance (theatre or radio)	NSW	\$25,000.00
Wright, Alexis	Fiction	NT	\$25,000.00
Total No. of Grants: 28			Total Amount Approved: \$595,000.00

Literature Board
NEW WORK - ESTABLISHED WRITERS
 Grant Round Id : 12851 Closing Date : 15-MAY-2003

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Caesar, Adrian	Literary non-fiction	ACT	\$50,000.00
Condon, Sean	Fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Croggon, Alison	Fiction, poetry	VIC	\$50,000.00
Edgar, Stephen	Poetry	TAS	\$50,000.00
Fleming, Justin	Writing for performance	NSW	\$15,000.00
Godwin, Jane	Children's literature	VIC	\$15,000.00
Harris, Christine	Children's literature	SA	\$15,000.00
Heiss, Anita	Children's literature, literary non-fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Henderson, Graham	Fiction	VIC	\$25,000.00
Jaivin, Linda	Fiction	NSW	\$15,000.00
Kelen, Stephen	Poetry	ACT	\$25,000.00
Kissane, Andrew	Fiction, poetry	NSW	\$25,000.00
Larkin, John	Young adult literature	NSW	\$50,000.00
Maloney, Shane	Fiction	VIC	\$50,000.00
Nemeth, Kevin	Writing for performance	VIC	\$15,000.00
Niall, Brenda	Literary non-fiction	VIC	\$50,000.00
Ottley, Matthew	Young adult literature	NSW	\$25,000.00
Riley, Sean	Writing for performance (theatre or radio)	SA	\$25,000.00

Literature Board

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Rippin, Sally	Children's literature	VIC	\$25,000.00
Rogers, Gregory	Children's literature	QLD	\$50,000.00
Sallis, Eva	Fiction	SA	\$50,000.00
Skovron, Alex	Poetry	VIC	\$25,000.00
Tsiolkas, Christos	Fiction	VIC	\$25,000.00
Vassiliou, Erma	Literary non-fiction (in Greek)	VIC	\$25,000.00
Total No. of Grants: 24		Total Amount Approved:	\$740,000.00

**Literature Board
FELLOWSHIPS
Grant Round Id : 12848 Closing Date : 15-MAY-2003**

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Broderick, Damien	Fiction	VIC	\$80,000.00
Romeril, John	Writing for performance	VIC	\$80,000.00
Stewart, Kathleen	Fiction	NSW	\$80,000.00
Total No. of Grants: 3			Total Amount Approved: \$240,000.00