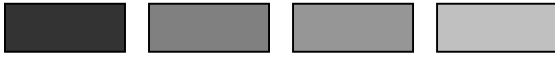




ASSESSMENT MEETING REPORT



LITERATURE BOARD

APPLICATION CLOSING DATE
15 March 2003

AUSTRALIA COUNCIL
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THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS EMBARGOED FROM PUBLIC
DISCUSSION UNTIL 24 JUNE 2003

ABOUT THIS REPORT

June 2003

This report provides a context to the assessment of applications submitted to the Literature Board on 15 March 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 **3-4 June 2003**. Applications were assessed in the Presentation and Promotion 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/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).

Judith Beveridge (NSW) has been writing poetry since 1974 and is highly respected nationally and internationally. She has published two volumes of poetry which have won between them, the Dame Mary Gilmore Award, the NSW and Victorian Premiers' Awards and the Wesley Michel Wright Award. 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* and *Distant Lights from Distant Places*. 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.

Robyn Sheahan-Bright (Qld) is a freelance writing and publishing consultant whose experience covers a wide range of literary activities including publishing, writing, editing, lecturing, manuscript appraisal and project management. In particular, Robyn has researched and written extensively on children's literature. Her many previous positions include director of Queensland Writers' Centre, founding director of Jam Roll Press, chair of the Writing Assessment Panel, Arts Queensland, vice-chair and board member of Brisbane Writers' Festival and president of the Children's Book Council Queensland Branch.

For this meeting the Board was assisted by **2 Participating Advisers** –

Stephen Grimwade, youth peer
Bruce Sims, freelance editor

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 –

Kevin Golding, Finance and Reporting Analyst, Arts Development
Keiran Creaven, IT Manager

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

This Board meeting was mainly concerned with funding decisions for festivals and other promotional events, and with publishing support for literary titles, both in Australia and overseas. During our discussion of applications a number of important issues were raised.

With regard to Australian literary festivals, we would like festival organisers to be much clearer about how their specific events are different in their aims and content to other similar events. This is in the context of the continuing proliferation of literary festivals in regional areas. The Board also encourages major festivals to focus more on content over form. There was a sense that the marketing of writers as 'talk fest' personalities is sometimes pursued at the cost of more rigorous and thought-provoking program content. We also felt that a smaller number of Australian writers at some events might allow each of them a higher exposure, and clearer focus on their work. We also noted a comparative lack of support for poetry by several festivals.

The Board continues to support the major Australian literary festivals but again noted that the increasing number of smaller festivals, both regional and niche, seeking assistance has necessitated a slight scaling back in some larger grants.



While we continue to strongly support the promotion of Australian writers overseas, we are especially supportive of the promotion of Australian literature in various Asian countries, an area which will continue to be encouraged through regular grant rounds. We have also undertaken a new Indian publishing initiative which is detailed elsewhere in this report.

The Board acknowledged the life and work of well-known Australian writer, Joan Phipson (Fitzhardinge), who sadly passed away recently and extended its sympathy to her family and friends. Ms Phipson was an early member of the Literature Board.

This Board meeting marked the completion of the term of Robyn Sheahan-Bright with the Board. Robyn has been a highly enthusiastic supporter of Australian writers and brought to her specific area, children's and young adult literature, a real breadth and depth of knowledge, empathy and appreciation which was of invaluable assistance to the Board in its deliberations over the past three years. We wish Robyn well in all her future endeavours in the certain knowledge she will continue to make a significant contribution to Australian children's and young adult literature.

Peter Goldsworthy



OUTCOMES

PROGRAM TITLE	APPLICATIONS (Number)		SUCCESS %	APPLICATIONS (Amounts - \$)	
	RECEIVED	APPROVED		REQUESTED	APPROVED
Presentation & Promotion (Promotion)	23	15	62.2%	\$409,433.00	\$195,200.00
Presentation & Promotion (Presentation)	40	27	67.5%	\$594,026.00	\$226,284.00
Totals	63	42	66.6%	\$1,003,459.00	\$421,484.00

A full list of approved grants is attached.



FEEDBACK

- **General.** Overall, the Board was pleased with the quality of applicants to this grant round. As ever, the challenge was to spread the available funds as widely and equitably as possible across the wide range of activities this grant round encompassed.
- Unfortunately, a number of applications which scored highly against the selection criteria were unable to be supported due to budget constraints.
- **Festivals.** The Board welcomes the rich variety of festivals and other literary events emerging around the country, particularly those in regional Australia. It noted that the number of festivals is proliferating, especially in regional areas. In deciding which festivals to support and at what level, the Board again found it necessary to reduce amounts to some festivals in order to spread available funds equitably across areas of competing priority. Applicants whose funding is slightly lower this year should view this as a reflection not on any decrease in the quality of their application but rather on the competing pressures on the Board's limited budget.
- The Board continues to be concerned that it is not seeing more than a token number of writers from genres such as poetry, children's literature and writing for performance represented in the programming of a number of festivals.
- The Board would like to see more evidence in festival programs of invited interstate writers being used more than once thus ensuring that the expense of including them is more fully justified.
- The Board would like festival organisers to be much clearer in their applications about how their specific event makes a difference to Australian literary culture.
- The Board would like to see more programmed festival events which stimulate discussion and debate rather than merely presenting writers as personalities.
- **Overseas promotion.** The Board considers its support of the promotion of Australian writers overseas as an important aspect of its programs and the quality of many applications was high this year. However, some applications still did not satisfy the Board that the 'reach' of the proposed publication or promotional activity represented the best value for money in extending the readership of Australian writers in different world markets. Specifically, the Board was concerned that some overseas promotional tours being proposed by publishers were not clearly thought through and did not seem to make best use of available publicity and media avenues in the host country.
- **Publishing.** This year the Board encouraged Australian publishers to submit manuscript samples with their applications and a number did so. The Board would like to reiterate that this was helpful in making their assessments of the best publishing programs and/or titles to fund and encourages all publishers in future to provide such material, if at all possible.
- The Board was particularly concerned to direct its publishing subsidies towards high quality titles that were not necessarily assured of commercial success or were for genres, such as poetry, which were harder to market.
- The Board had a long discussion about the issues of editing Australian literature, partly brought about by recent publicity about editing standards. It decided that in future, preference for funding will be given to publishers who demonstrate a strong editorial process. The Board is also seeking further information from all stakeholders about the 'state of play' of literary editing.
- The Board found it hard to assess the efficacy of the distribution networks of some overseas publishers. It was decided that, in future rounds, distribution figures for previous comparable titles will be sought.



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

The Board's two programs supporting young and emerging writers were again offered for 2003. The programs, offered concurrently but with different aims, were assessed by the Board in separate teleconferences in April and May.

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

There were 15 submissions and, of these, 7 were funded. The majority were for mentorships of one kind or another. While still generally supporting the concept of mentorships, the Board found long-term mentorships, where a relationship between mentor and mentee can be established, preferable to programs with shorter-term aims. A list of funded applicants is attached to this report.

The Write in Your Face initiative 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. A separate assessment report for Write in Your Face 2003 is available on the Australia Council website at <http://www.ozco.gov.au/literature/index.htm>

LOTE publishing initiative

The Board has developed a publishing initiative aimed at introducing the work of outstanding Australian writers in languages other than English (LOTE) to an English speaking readership.

It was decided that the initiative should take the form of an anthology of writing by LOTE writers to be published in English

The Board issued a tender for the project. As a result, Ivor Indyk, editor of HEAT magazine, has been engaged as a consultant to develop a list of contributors. The resulting anthology will be published by Brandl & Schlesinger.

NT Writers' Train

The Northern Territory Writers Centre is developing a Writers Train project which will take Australian writers on a journey through a number of communities between Adelaide to Darwin in 2005, to celebrate the newly completed rail link. The project will be seeking the involvement of a number of partners and sponsors.

The Board acknowledged that developing such a project needed specific planning expertise and, therefore, approved initial funding of \$13,500 to the Centre for a consultancy to assess the viability of the project and develop a business plan.

Indian publishing initiative

The Board has agreed to fund an initiative with Indian publishers to publish, and translate if necessary, works by Australian writers. It is intended the initiative will be developed in conjunction with the Asialink Literature Touring Program which is jointly funded by the Literature Board and Audience & Market Development Division of Council.

Digital Ink

The Board's collaborative project with the New Media Arts Board, designed to develop and showcase excellence in digital writing, is now in progress. This pilot project is hosted by the State Library of Victoria's Experimedia Centre. After nationwide advertising, two writers, a digital and a print-based writer, Lisa Gye (Vic) and Adam Ford (Vic), were selected to work in a collaborative residency-style venture designed to extend the current parameters around contemporary writing and its engagement with technology and digital media. The project concludes in late July and the outcomes will be assessed by both Boards at future meetings



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.*



APPROVED GRANT LIST
Literature Board
PRESENTATION AND PROMOTION (PRESENTATION)
 Grant Round Id : 12844 Closing Date : 15-MAR-2003

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Allen and Unwin Australia Pty Ltd	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	NSW	\$16,000.00
Australian Institute of Aboriginal & Torres	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	ACT	\$8,000.00
Brandl and Schlesinger Pty Limited	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	NSW	\$7,500.00
Casa Editrice Le Lettere S.r.l.	Towards the translation and publication of "Wild Cat Falling" by Mudrooroo Nyoongah (Italian)	OS	\$784.00
Chongqing Publishing House	Towards the translation and publication in China of "Benang" by Kim Scott	OS	\$5,000.00
Currency Press Pty Ltd	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	NSW	\$20,000.00
Editora Schwarz Ltda	Translation and publication of "Gould's Book of Fish" by Richard Flanagan (Portuguese)	OS	\$5,000.00
Edizioni Frassinelli	Towards the publication of "Gould's Book of Fish" by Richard Flanagan (Italian)	OS	\$5,000.00
Fazi Editore srl	Towards translation and publication of "Love and Vertigo" by Hsu-Ming Teo (Italian)	OS	\$6,000.00
Five Islands Press Pty Ltd	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	NSW	\$10,000.00
Fraktaly Publishers	Towards the translation and publication of "The Children's Bach" by Helen Garner (Czech)	OS	\$8,000.00
Fremantle Arts Centre Press	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	WA	\$10,000.00
Giramondo Publishing Company Pty Ltd	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	NSW	\$13,000.00
Hardie Grant Publishing Pty Ltd	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	VIC	\$8,000.00
Houtekiet N.V	Towards publication of "Mahalia" by Joanne Horniman & "Of A Boy" by Sonya Hartnett (Dutch)	OS	\$8,000.00
Interactive Publications Pty Ltd	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	QLD	\$5,000.00
Island Press Co-operative Ltd	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	NSW	\$5,000.00
Naklada MD d.o.o	Towards the publication of "There is no Aphrodisiac Like Loneliness" (Croatian)	OS	\$6,000.00



APPROVED GRANT LIST
Literature Board

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Penguin Books Australia Limited	Book publishing grant 2003 - 2004	VIC	\$10,000.00
Playlab Inc	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	QLD	\$4,000.00
Random House Australia Pty Ltd	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	NSW	\$4,000.00
Spinifex Press Pty Ltd	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	VIC	\$6,500.00
The Text Publishing Company Pty Ltd	Book Publishing grant 2003-2004	VIC	\$12,000.00
The University of Queensland	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	QLD	\$16,000.00
Vulgar Press	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	VIC	\$12,000.00
Wakefield Press (Aust) Pty Ltd	Book publishing grant 2003-2004	SA	\$10,000.00
Yilin Press	Towards the translation and publication of "Robert Gray's 110 Poems" by Robert Gray (Chinese)	OS	\$5,500.00
Total No. of Grants: 27		Total Amount Approved:	\$226,284.00



APPROVED GRANT LIST
Literature Board
PRESENTATION AND PROMOTION (PROMOTION)
Grant Round Id : 12845 Closing Date : 15-MAR-2003

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Adelaide Festival Corporation	Towards expenses for Australian writers to participate in Adelaide Writers' Week 2004	SA	\$50,000.00
Australian Literary Management (T/U Transcripser PTY Limited)	Towards costs of creating an online repository of 20th century poetry for research and public access	NSW	\$11,000.00
Brisbane Writers Festival Association	Towards expenses for Australian writers to participate in Brisbane Writers' Festival, 2-5 Oct. 2003	QLD	\$25,000.00
Children's Book Council of Australia (Executive Branch)	Towards costs of establishing an author/illustrator database on the CBCA's website	SA	\$3,000.00
Express Media Inc	Towards expenses for Australian writers to participate in Emerging Writers' Festival, November 2003	VIC	\$10,700.00
Fremantle Children's Literature Centre	Towards expenses for writers/illustrators to participate in Interstate Artists-in-Residence Program	WA	\$25,000.00
Ipswich East State School	Towards expenses for Australian writers to participate in 2003 Ipswich Fest. of Children's Lit.	QLD	\$6,000.00
Just Us Theatre Ensemble	Towards expenses for Australian theatre professionals to participate in JUTE Playwrights' Conference	QLD	\$7,800.00
Kulturenheten	Towards travel expenses for an Australian poet to participate in 2003 Nassjo Poesifestival in Sweden	OS	\$3,300.00
Melbourne Writers' Festival Inc	Towards expenses for Australian writers to participate in the 2003 Age Melbourne Writers' Festival	VIC	\$25,000.00
Poets Union Incorporated	Towards expenses for Australian poets participating in Sydney Poetry Network readings/seminars	NSW	\$5,000.00
Projectes Poetics Sense Titol - Propost Poetry	Towards expenses for Amanda Stewart to participate in Proposta 2003 International Festival of Poetry	OS	\$2,500.00
Vancouver International Writers Festival	Towards expenses for Joan London to participate in 2003 Vancouver International Writers' Festival	OS	\$3,500.00
Vibewire Youth Services Inc	Towards contributors' fees & production costs for online youth journal "Vibewire"	VIC	\$5,000.00
Women Playwrights International Philippines	Towards expenses for 4 Australian playwrights to participate in 6th Intl. Women Playwrights' Conf.	OS	\$12,400.00
Total No. of Grants: 15			Total Amount Approved: \$195,200.00



APPROVED GRANT LIST
 Literature Board
YOUNG AND EMERGING ARTISTS
 Grant Round Id : 12742 Closing Date : 14-FEB-2003

Client Name	Application Title	State	Amount
Australian Society of Authors Ltd (The)	Towards 15 mentorships for young & emerging writers	NSW	\$12,000.00
Australian Writers Guild Ltd	Towards ten mentorships for young and emerging theatre writers	NSW	\$12,000.00
Eleanor Dark Foundation Ltd (The)	Towards intensive 5-day masterclass on craft and technique	NSW	\$6,500.00
Institute for Aboriginal Development	Towards writing and editorial mentorship for Indigenous writer, Yaritji Green	NT	\$4,500.00
Just Us Theatre Ensemble	Towards module of Enter Stage Write Program for young & emerging writers	QLD	\$4,900.00
NT Writers' Centre Inc	Towards 9-10 mentorships for young and emerging writers plus workshop	NT	\$7,500.00
Poets Union Incorporated	Towards 2003 Young Poets Fellowships	NSW	\$5,610.00
Queensland Writers Centre	Towards residential mentorship program	QLD	\$12,000.00
Total No. of Grants: 8			Total Amount Approved: \$65,010.00

