

Through its Arts Funding Division, the Australia Council fosters excellence and diversity in the arts by providing support to allow artists, arts organisations and communities to create new work, to develop their artistic potential, and to make the arts accessible to wider audiences.

The Arts Funding Division is responsible for managing the grants programs for artform development and arts activities which are central to the Australia Council's activities. Australian literature, performing arts, visual arts and craft, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts, new media arts and community cultural development are supported by the grants offered by each artform Fund or Board.

Establishment of the Arts Funding Division has assisted in ensuring high standards of public accountability and service by enabling the rationalisation and centralisation of a number of administrative activities.

Financial reporting processes for commitments and returned grants have been standardised, and development of cross-Division policy, the processing of grant applications to all grant funding categories, and associated duties such as registration and file generation, and distribution of Grants Handbooks and application forms, have been streamlined in a new Operations Section with effect from 1 May 1997.

The Operations Section also manages the Register of Peers. The Register provides a resource for the Funds to draw on in ensuring that a range of suitably qualified peers are involved

in the decision-making process (see page 16 for more details).

The aims of the across-Council grants assessment process are to facilitate effective, well-informed and accountable decision-making and to allow Fund members more time for qualitative discussion and consideration of grant applications.

This process was developed taking into account:

- administrative law provisions;
- accountability requirements in documenting the process;
- the workloads of both peers and staff;
- the cost of the peer assessment process.

Staff and Fund members have been fully trained in this process which all Funds and Board now follow. There has been general consensus that this process has led to better documentation and more consistent decision-making.

Provision of timely advice and information to the arts community and the general public is an important role of the Arts Funding Division. As part of this role a communications strategy has been implemented to make arts organisations and State/Territory arts funding agencies aware of changes and refinements which have been made to grants categories and associated guidelines for submitting applications. A major change this year has been the introduction of a category purely for provision of triennial funding to a limited number of suitably qualified organisations. Briefings for organisations affected by this change were held in all capital cities. Separate briefings were held with State and Territory arts funding authority staff.

Outcomes

Examples of outcomes for each artform area are provided in the following sections. Grants lists and financial summaries are at the back of this report.

Through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board, the Australia Council assists Indigenous Australians to claim, control and enhance their cultural inheritance.

One of the seven goals of the Council's Corporate Plan is to promote the unique Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures as integral to Australia's national identity. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board (ATSIAB) aims to make these cultures a living part of the experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and a source of pride for all Australians.

The Minister for Communications and the Arts, Senator Richard Alston, at the launch of *Arts Yarn-Up On Radio*, with (from left) Cathy Craigie, General Manager, Gadigal Information Services, Hilary McPhee, then Chair, Australia Council, and Marjorie Anderson, Chair, Gadigal.

A major project for ATSIAB during the year in review was development of a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts policy. The first step was taken in June 1996 when Council agreed on the principles – respect, authority, rights and responsibilities, and diversity – that would guide development of the policy. The second step was to identify policy priorities. ATSIAB consulted widely with Indigenous communities around Australia, and built upon the Cultural Policy Framework created by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commis-

sion (ATSIC) in 1995 to ensure integration of arts and cultural expression and practice, and to highlight the relationship between these areas for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts.

The resulting policy was adopted by the Australia Council at its meeting in May 1997. It encompasses priorities for arts development, regional cultural development, intellectual property and moral rights, as well as increased exposure of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts in regional, national and international markets.

The Council's other Funds will continue their support of Indigenous artists, and new initiatives such as training for Indigenous editors, composers-in-residence and theatre directors will be supported. The Council also undertook to streamline the present three ATSIAB Committees (Performing Arts, Literature, and Visual Arts and Craft) to one Grants Committee.

As well as advising the Council on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts issues and administering grant programs for Indigenous artists and organisations, ATSIAB undertakes a number of its own initiatives to stimulate the development of Indigenous arts.

Highlights of these initiatives include:

- Production of *Arts Yarn-Up On Radio* by Gadigal Information Services (Koori Radio), broadcast via the radio networks of the National Indigenous Media Service (NIMAA) and the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA). The first series was launched by the Minister for Communications and the Arts, Senator Richard Alston, on 8 July 1996. Its success was recognised by the CBAA Best Aboriginal Program award, and the second 26-part series is now in production.
- \$270,000 in direct support for the Festival of the Dreaming, the first of the annual festivals leading up to the 2000 Sydney Olympic



Games, to maximise the opportunities for presentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. Several projects that are part of the Festival were also supported in the 1996-97 grant rounds.

- Assisting a delegation of Indigenous Australian artists to the Seventh Festival of Pacific Arts held in September 1996 in Samoa. Twenty-four nations participated in the two-week celebration, which is held every four years as a celebration of the richness of the Pacific Indigenous cultures.

As part of its ongoing commitment to the development of Indigenous arts networks, the Board had initiated an annual national meeting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Officers. Following successful meetings in Sydney in November 1995 and Melbourne in June 1996, the Board expanded the network and invited key organisations including Indigenous officers within State arts departments to the third meeting in Hobart in January 1997. Some thirty organisations have now formed into a National Indigenous Arts Network.

Encouraging artists in prisons to practice their art is a Board initiative, and is in keeping with recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. During 1996-97, the Board initiated a national pilot project involving artists working with inmates to develop their skills. Inside Art/Out is a partnership between the Australia Council and ATSIC. The target group for the pilot projects were prisoners in those States and Territories with the highest recorded incarceration levels.

Six projects were undertaken within the pilot program. The managing organisations were:

- Workskills Advancement Corporation, Qld;
- Far North Queensland Institute of TAFE;
- Koori Arts Collective, Vic;
- Faculty of Aboriginal and Islander Studies, University of SA, Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute;



- Dumbartung Aboriginal Corporation, WA;
- 24HR Art, Centre for Contemporary Art, NT.

This has been a highly successful project and the Board is committed to its continuation; to date it has involved some 200 inmates. In some cases, correctional institutions have instituted their own programs as a result.

Indigenous organisations which received substantial support from the Board during 1996-97 include triennially funded organisations: National Indigenous Arts Advocacy Association, Magabala Books, Woomera Aboriginal Corporation and the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre.

Queensland storyteller and performer Maureen Watson received the Australia Council Red Ochre Award for 1996-97. This \$50,000 award is the highest honour an Indigenous artist can receive from their peers. Born to a Kungalu mother and Birri Gubba father, Ms Watson has travelled the world performing her sensational one-woman shows. Her ability to communicate culture through a variety of art-forms captivates audiences of all kinds, from local school children to international adult audiences.

Members of the Australian contingent at Sydney airport bound for the Festival of Pacific Arts in Samoa. The delegation included artists and dancers from Thursday Island, Mornington Island, Yirrkala and Utopia; singers Rita Mills (Torres Strait) and Robyn Green (Darwin); rock band Footprince (Broome); Owen Love and Julie d'Lima from Mainstreet Theatre Company (Mt Gambier); storytellers Pauline McLeod and Maureen Watson; sculptors Barry Bellotti (Carnarvon), Ken Thaiday and Ricardo Idagi (Torres Strait); and the Bapu National Dancers from the ACT. ATSIAB Director Lydia Miller and Australia Council General Manager Michael Lynch accompanied the delegation. Photo: Monique March

Fellowships, each worth \$80,000 paid over two years, were awarded to visual artist Ginger Riley Munduwalawala; singer, songwriter and actor Leah Purcell; and playwright John Harding.

Other highlights for 1996-97 include:

- funding to allow continued activity at 38 remote area arts and crafts centres in Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia;
- expansion of the Indigenous internships program in Australian museums;



This large acrylic painting by Walpiri artists depicts several Dreamings which pass through Cockatoo Creek country. Commissioned by the South Australian Museum, the 4x3 metre canvas will form a spectacular centrepiece within the redeveloped Aboriginal Cultures Gallery at the Museum, due to open in 1999.

Photo: Trevor Peters

- \$25,000 for a Songlines tour to Asia by Archie Roach, Ruby Hunter, Naroo Dancers and Blackfire;
- \$7,000 towards recording and production of a CD for the talented young Aboriginal band, Aim 4 More;
- \$35,000 for production of *Stolen*, an original work born out of a collaboration with the Melbourne Workers Theatre Company and staged by the Ilbijerri Aboriginal Theatre Co-op;
- \$39,882 for a partnership with Forbes Employment and Training Service and Murrin Bridge Land Council to run a 12-month art development program involving workshops by visiting Aboriginal artists and craftspeople, with the ultimate aim of achieving economic independence for the participants;
- \$31,500 to support a year's work by Edgar (Weemba) Harris in preparing for two solo exhibitions, drawing inspiration from his traditional background to create contemporary works on canvas;
- \$16,536 to Black Duck Music Aboriginal Corporation for a program which aims to provide education through entertainment and includes touring remote WA communities with the Brown Sugar Band.

- \$28,753 for the Art Gallery of South Australia to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Papunya art movement that dramatically changed the way the world perceived Aboriginal art;
- \$19,297 for Ernabella women artists to participate in a demonstration and workshop of their new printmaking techniques at an exhibition at the National Museum of Australia;
- \$18,500 for Melville Island artists to learn how to adapt their distinctive designs to gold and silver jewellery;

Through its Community Cultural Development Fund, the Australia Council assists communities to participate in and appreciate the arts, and to explore and express their cultural identity.

The Community Cultural Development Fund (CCDF) encourages artists and communities to work together through locally determined, community-based arts and cultural activities. Community cultural development enables communities to advance their artistic, social, and economic aspirations and provides opportunities for artists to expand their arts practice through innovative collaborations with community groups.

As part of its role in encouraging excellence in, and stimulating debate about, community cultural development practice the Fund finalised negotiations for a National Community Cultural Development Conference, DARE, to be held in Brisbane on 17-19 November 1997. Significant support for this event has come from the Brisbane City Council. The conference, the first in 12 years, will play an important role in ensuring that community cultural development practice remains dynamic in the current artistic, cultural and social environment, and will provide professional development opportunities for workers in the field.

A review of the Fund's support for community cultural development training was undertaken during 1996 so as to ensure that this support is targeted to needs. Detailed consultation was held with key stakeholders and a survey undertaken of relevant services offered and resources available. As an outcome of the review, Culture Recreation Education and Training Enterprise Australia (CREATE) is undertaking a national audit of training resources and hosting a series of workshop for the field. The results of the audit will be published in the second half of 1997.

The Fund also supported a range of innovative one-off projects with the aim of building productive partnerships in the public and private sectors which deliver community cultural development aims. Examples include:

- \$38,000 to Sydney's Westmead Hospital for a commission involving artists Peter McGregor and Marie Stucci working with staff and patients to design and produce artworks for an outdoor courtyard space located in the Acute Adolescent Unit. The Hospital is contributing \$20,000 to the project.
- \$30,000 to the City of Fremantle, WA, for a partnership with bodies such as the Fremantle Port Authority and Arts WA, for a public artwork project celebrating the centenary of the Port of Fremantle's inner harbour in 1997. Artists are creating public artworks which capture the rich heritage of the Port, and which will help promote it to the local community and national and international tourists.
- \$9,000 to St George Leagues Club, NSW, matched by an equivalent amount from the Club, for a partnership with Shopfront Theatre. Artists will teach young people theatre, circus and performance skills, and work towards a series of half-time performances during the games.

The CCDF has a strong interest in providing opportunities for artists in regional areas to express their cultural identity through the arts. Some examples of projects funded include:

- \$10,000 to the Silhouette Band, WA, for a music and songwriting project with isolated Aboriginal youth, involving a concert and workshop tour by an Aboriginal band through a number of remote communities.
- A community writing project devised by the Deniliquin Council for Social Development which used a \$7,000 grant to support geographically isolated writers through a series of workshops. Forty-five writers contributed to the anthology which resulted from the workshops.



On the Day you were Born, an innovative project by Preston Creative Living Centre in Melbourne, explored the ways childbirth and babies are celebrated in different communities. Participants included childcare workers, new parents and very pregnant women.
Photo: Preston Creative Living Centre

The Fund is keenly interested in promoting awareness and understanding of cultural diversity in the arts. An example of activity supported in this area is funding provided to the African Communities Council of Victoria (ACC) for a traditional performing arts project involving recently arrived communities from Ghana, Nigeria, Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Oromo. The project culminated in a major African cultural festival open to the wider community, the success of which has convinced the ACC to make it an annual event.

In order to promote artists, artworks and projects of excellence and to increase awareness of cultural development in the broader community, the Fund supported a number of research and promotional projects.

Festival of Fire 1997, a community event organised by Kulcha Multicultural Arts for WA that combined huge sculptures (pictured), music, puppetry and fire at the Sorrento Quay in Wanneroo.
Photo: Kevin O'Brien

Through an initiative called the National Model Project a consultant was engaged to work with eleven community-based organisations across the country to raise their profile nationally as well as within their own community and the wider arts field. The project involved the development of sponsorship packages, marketing materials and publicity plans, and the location of potential funding sources (other than the CCDF). A publication focusing on the eleven agencies and the work they have undertaken will be released later in 1997.

This year's recipient of the prestigious Ros Bower Memorial Award was Margaret Fisher from South Australia. Ms Fisher's involvement in community arts has extended into many areas of Australia. Her work in Sydney led to the first Surry Hills Community Festival, and an award for services to the community by the University of New South Wales Alumni Association. She was a founding member of Pipi Storm Children's Circus, and Vitalstatistix Theatre Company, and has worked in many rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

Fellowships in recognition of outstanding achievement were awarded to designer and community artist Carmen Grostal; performer and community arts director Mishline Jammal; musician, psychologist and member of Somebody's Daughter Theatre Company Helen Barnacle; playwright Graham Pitts; and community artist Meme McDonald.

The CCDF's vigorous and strategic pursuit of Council's objectives throughout the year has ensured its wide-reaching success in achieving significant community cultural development outcomes and in assisting individuals and organisations in many parts of Australia to contribute to the cultural life of their communities.



COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENT, ART AND DESIGN (CEAD)



Through its CEAD program, the Australia Council provides opportunities for communities to express their cultural identity through the arts by encouraging artists, designers and communities to work together developing links between the cultural life of communities and the quality of their physical environment. In 1997 the CEAD program was extended to include grant categories offered by both the Community Cultural Development Fund and the Visual Arts/Craft Fund.

CEAD projects provide tangible evidence at a local community level of the benefits of arts and cultural development. Many projects result in increased opportunities for tourism, local employment and regional arts.

Twenty-six grants totalling nearly half a million dollars were distributed in 1996-97. Highlights include:

- \$25,000 to the City of Melville, WA, for the planning and design of a sensory playground suitable for children and adults with disabilities.
- \$25,000 to the Wonthella Progress Association, in mid-west WA, for local artists and the community, mainly third and fourth generation rural Australians, to develop plans for a park and streetscape.
- \$18,613 to Victorian sculptor, Robert Mangion, to create an extensive and unique sculpture garden to enhance the surrounding industrialised area of western Melbourne.

The CEAD program has highly visible public results with benefits flowing to communities, artists, local government and the environment (see page 52).

The Memory Line:

Restoring the Waters, a project about restoration and conservation by artists Jennifer Turpin and Michelle Crawford for the Australian Conservation Foundation, involved planting a 2.7km band of ryecorn to trace the natural watercourse of Clear Paddock Creek in Fairfield, Sydney.

Photo: Jennifer Turpin

Through the Dance Fund, the Australia Council contributes to the diversity and originality of Australian performing arts by supporting the creation and presentation of the highest quality dance and movement work.

The Dance Fund supports companies, ensembles, freelance artists and independent initiatives. In all cases the focus is on innovation, creativity and the artistic rationale for the work.

During the year the Fund has supported a number of projects which reflect diversity in form and content in the creation of new work. Examples include:

- A three-year program entitled *The Oaks Cafe*, to be undertaken by Dance Exchange, one of Australia's most innovative dance research and performance centres. The work is centred on a cafe built on an isolated beach in central Queensland by US military forces during World War II as a dance hall for a nearby camp of American servicemen. *The Oaks Cafe* will range through different disciplines, between cities and across cultures.

Chunky Move Dance Company's *Bonehead*, choreographed by Gideon Obarzanek. *Bonehead* proved to be one of the most successful events at the 1997 Sydney Festival and subsequently toured to Canberra and Melbourne as part of the Playing Australia-funded Made to Move dance touring program.
Photo: Kiren Chang



- Chunky Move's *Bonehead*, by Gideon Obarzanek, which premiered at the 1997 Sydney Festival with support from the Dance Fund and a sound score commissioned through a Music Fund grant.
- Perth-based Fieldworks Performance Group to undertake a major site-specific work in the Perth Central Business District, employing eight performers working in pairs in and around architecturally interesting city locations.
- Leah Grycewicz, Qld, to perform *Traversing Sense* in a cross-artform collaboration with north Queensland artists.
- Diana Reyes Flamenco, NSW, to perform *Mosaico*, a new flamenco work inspired by Picasso's paintings and the poetry of Federico Garcia Lorca.

The Fund also supported a number of regional, national and international initiatives aimed at increasing resources, opportunities and audiences for Australian dance and movement arts, including:

- Expressions, a dance theatre company based in Brisbane, to tour to Wales and Singapore. In touring to Wales, the company will take part in the British Council's *newImages '97* exchange program, and a Welsh company, Diversions, will tour to Queensland.
- Lucy Guerin, Vic, to take *Incarnadine* and *Courtabie* to New York, Paris and London.
- Kate Champion, NSW, to remount and tour *Face Value* to Perth and Melbourne.
- Nikki Heywood, NSW, to remount *Burn Sonata* for an Adelaide season.
- Margie Medlin, Vic, to tour a dance/video installation, *Mobility in an Artificial City*, to the Asian International Contemporary Dance Festival in New York, and to Hong Kong, Berlin, Perth and Sydney.

The Fund acknowledges the importance of professional development activities in encouraging excellence in dance and movement arts. An example of a project funded in this area is Arts Access, Victoria, who engaged the



Danceworks' *Descansos...*
Resting Places,
choreographed by
Helen Herbertson with
the assistance of
Jenny Kemp and
Trevor Patrick.
Photo: David Simmonds

Dancer Tammy
Meeuwissen performing
Under Her Breath,
choreographed by Maggi
Sietsma, part of
Expressions Queensland
Dance Company's
current repertoire.
Photo: Andrew Pine

acclaimed British Cando Co Dance Company to conduct workshops and masterclasses on integrating professional dancers and people with disabilities.

Partnerships with both public and private sector organisations have resulted in new and exciting resources and opportunities for Australian dance and movement arts. Microdance, an initiative of the Australia Council, the Australian Film Commission and the Australian Broadcasting Commission, was a three-stage dance-on-screen project recognising the emergence of choreography for the screen as a new and dynamic artform. Thirteen creative teams received development support, with four teams going into production. The four now completed works will be screened nationally on ABC-TV later in 1997.

A two-year project by the National Film and Sound Archive in association with the National Library of Australia and the national secretariat of Ausdance, will collect film and video recordings of Australian dance works. This will both preserve irreplaceable material and allow it to be electronically accessed for research and documentation purposes.

In promoting excellence the Fund is keenly aware of the cultural diversity of practice within Australian dance and movement arts. The Fund has also aimed to ensure that artists in regional areas as well as those of diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to develop their art. A Fellowship awarded to Nyirlpirr Spider Snell combines both aims in a unique and exciting project which will enable him to develop, perform and teach Kurtal dances from the Great Sandy Desert, WA, to the young people in his community.

Through its Literature Fund, the Australia Council encourages the creation, development, publication, critical appraisal and awareness of high quality contemporary Australian literature.

The Fund provides direct and indirect financial support to writers. Direct support for the creation of new work was granted to 38 writers in 1996-97.



Next Wave Festival's innovative national project, Flightpaths: Writing Journeys, placed writers in five airports around Australia to write and workshop with students, writing groups and local writers.
Photo: C.D. Blowfield

Of these writers, six were recipients of two-year Fellowships, awarded in recognition of outstanding achievement. The new Fellows are Jack Hibberd, prolific author of plays, poetry and fiction; children's writer Allan Baillie; fiction writers Carmel Bird, Brian Castro and Nicholas Jose; and poet John Kinsella.

Grants for the creation of new work by emerging writers, that is, writers who have some publication record but have not yet had a full-

length work published, were awarded to eleven writers in 1996-97. Eleven developing writers, who have had a minimum of one and a maximum of two full-length works published or performed, were also successful. They include poets Adam Aitken and Hoang Tien Nguyen, playwright Alison Lyssa, and fiction writers Judith Fox and Shane Maloney.

Of the established writers who applied, ten were awarded grants. These ten include Gillian Mears, Alan Wearne, Marion Campbell, Venero Armano, Tegan Bennett and playwright Hilary Bell.

In line with increasing opportunities and resources available to writers, the Fund provided twelve grants to book and magazine publishers to provide income-generating commissions for writers. Among the grants approved for book publishers was \$40,000 to the Text Publishing Company to commission four new full-length titles by Australian writers, and a grant to the University of Queensland Press to commission a biography of Xavier Herbert. Eight magazines were among the successful applicants under this grant category, including the *Adelaide Review*, which will commission writing by Frank Moorhouse and Matthew Condon, *Eureka Street*, and *Voiceworks*, which commissions work by young writers aged 16-24 years.

The presentation of the work of Australian writers and writing to wider audiences is a major focus of the Literature Fund. By supporting the publication of Australian literature in books and magazines within Australia and overseas, the Fund encourages the presentation of the work of Australian writers in as diverse a range of publications as possible.

Subsidies to 29 Australian book publishers, totalling \$263,674, were approved in 1996-97 for the publication of poetry, drama, anthologies and first or second works of fiction or literary non-fiction. These subsidies will allow

approximately 100 Australian writers, early in their creative lives, to see their work in print.

Some of the titles for which subsidies were approved include:

- Richard King's *Kindling does for Firewood*, the winner of the 1995 Australian Vogel Award;
- *Vamp* by Tracy Ryan, published by Fremantle Arts Centre Press;
- Random House's publication of David Foster's *The Ballad of Erinungarah*;
- *The Optimist*, a work of fiction by John Stephenson, based on the life of Australian poet Christopher Brennan, published by the Text Publishing Company;
- Sekai Nzenza-Shand's *Songs to an African Sunset*, travel writing published by Lonely Planet;
- *Warrigal's Way*, a non-fiction title by Warrigal Anderson, winner of the David Unaipon award, published by the University of Queensland Press.

To enable Australian literature to be presented to an audience outside Australia, the Literature Fund also provides subsidies to overseas publishers to assist with the translation and publication of the work of living Australian writers. Among the overseas publishers receiving grants were Chongqing Publishing House in China to publish a Chinese edition of Peter Carey's *Oscar and Lucinda*; Columna Edicions of Spain to translate and publish Beth Yahp's *Crocodile Fury*; *Poetry* magazine (USA) to pay Australian writers contributing to a special double issue in 1996; and *Chung-Wai Literary Monthly* (Taiwan) to publish a special Australian issue of the magazine.

The Literature Fund also provides funding for Australian literary magazines and among the 1996-97 grants was a two-year grant of \$75,000 per annum to *Australian Book Review* and \$25,000 per annum for two years to *Overland*.

The Fund also approved its first ever foundation grant of \$25,000 to the literary magazine,

Heat, edited by Ivor Indyk. The Fund's literary magazines policy is to encourage applications by new and adventurous literary magazines and editors.



Beth Yahp's award-winning first novel, *The Crocodile Fury*, was translated and published in Spanish with assistance from the Literature Fund, which also assisted the writer to travel to Spain to promote the newly published Spanish edition.

Photo: Stuart Davidson

The Fund regards the promotion of Australian writing to a wider reading audience as extremely important. To this end, it supports a variety of projects, both nationally and internationally, from writers' festivals to overseas promotional visits by Australian writers.

Examples of events and activities supported in 1996-97 include:

- flagship writers' festivals in Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Canberra and Sydney;
- a program of lectures, readings and book signings at the Australian Bookshop in Paris, a new enterprise selling and promoting the work of Australian writers;
- financial support for the fees and fares of Australian writers appearing on the television program 'Between the Lines';
- assistance for a number of individual writers whose work had recently been published overseas to travel to and promote their work in that country, including Robert Drewe in the United Kingdom and Beth Yahp in Spain;

- assistance for the establishment and updating of the Aurora Australis Web site, which promotes Australian writers and writing on-line and globally.



Workshopping of *Gottforsakendonga* by South Australian playwright and musician Peter Doley, whose play was one of six presented at the 1996 National Playwrights' Conference. Photo: Australian National Playwrights' Centre

The development of literary talent and skills is supported in a number of ways. For the first time in 1996-97, a Writers' Centre or Literature Officer was co-funded with the relevant arts department in every State and Territory. Professional development opportunities also include residencies of 3-6 months for Australian writers at overseas studios in Paris, Rome or Eire.

Other 1996-97 funded projects and organisations involved in professional development include:

- a masterclass at the Canberra Centre for Writing where six young fiction writers, selected from the shortlists for the A&R Bookworld and Australian Vogel awards, were offered the combined expertise of writer Amanda Lohrey, editor Carl Harrison Ford and literary agent Rose Cresswell;
- the annual conference staged by the Australian National Playwrights' Centre where new plays are workshopped;
- the International Festival for Young Playwrights, which gives 12 young Australian playwrights the opportunity to interact with 100 delegates from 30 countries.

The Fund also offers new development opportunities for Australian writers through partnerships, particularly with non-arts organisations. Eight such partnerships were funded in 1996-97 including university residencies, the Victorian Federation of Community Writing's Words on Wheels workshops, and Next Wave Festival's Flightpaths program based at five Australian airports.

In addition to its core programs, the Literature Fund also supports three devolved programs which are aimed at providing professional development opportunities for writers and support for other forms of literary creativity. These programs are for picture book illustrators (administered by the Australian Society of Authors), screenwriting attachments (administered by the Australian Film Television and Radio School), and translators (administered by the National Book Council). The Translations Program, the largest in dollar terms of the three devolved programs, awarded grants totalling \$100,000 in 1996-97. The fifteen successful applicants will translate work into or from Chinese, Czech, Dutch, French, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Finally, in recognition of the major contributions to the field of literature made by eminent Australian writers, Emeritus Awards were granted to Rosemary Dobson and David Martin. Both award recipients have published numerous collections of verse, received many high-profile literary awards, including the Patrick White Award, and received the Order of Australia for their outstanding contributions to Australian literature.

Through the Major Organisations Fund, the Australia Council promotes the effective delivery of artistic excellence by Australian arts organisations of national standing.

Organisations are selected for inclusion in the Fund on the basis of their significant cultural role, their size (annual turnover of more than \$1 million), the scope of their programs and their financial viability. They are expected to have demonstrated a high profile nationally or internationally and must show a commitment to developing the professional skills of Australian artists.

Roxanne McDonald as Mae, Deborah Mailman as Nona and Lisa McDonald as Cressie in the Queensland Theatre Company's co-production with Kooemba Jdarra Indigenous Performing Arts of Louis Nowra's *Radiance*.
Photo: Rob MacColl



The seventeen companies supported by the Major Organisations Fund are the Australian Ballet, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Bangarra Dance Theatre, Bell Shakespeare Company, Black Swan Theatre Company, Circus Australia, Melbourne Theatre Company, Meryl Tankard Australian Dance Theatre, Musica

Viva, Playbox Theatre Centre, Queensland Ballet, Queensland Theatre Company, State Theatre Company of South Australia, Sydney Dance Company, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Theatre Company and the West Australian Ballet Company.

Between them, in 1996, these major companies presented more than seven and a half thousand performances to over 2.35 million people, in urban and regional Australia, to regular subscribers, new audiences and students, at their home bases and on tour in Australia and overseas.

These companies face complex business and planning needs, and a central element in facilitating improvement of planning processes and financial management is stability of funding. The Major Organisations Fund has provided three-year base-grant funding for its companies, covering 1996 to 1998. Ninety-five percent of the Fund's budget is expended through these grants.

A major constituent of the 1996-98 funding agreements between the Major Organisations Fund and the companies is the development of broadly costed business plans, including benchmarks, forward targets and key performance indicators, together with appropriate systems for measuring achievements against these indicators and targets. The Fund is now working with the companies to assist them to achieve best practice processes in all areas of their business plans.

The majority of the companies receive significant funding from the States as well as from the Australia Council. The Fund, therefore, ensures that it works closely with the States and liaises with State representatives on a regular basis.

In addition to multiyear base-grant funding, the Major Organisations Fund also provides support through Partnership grants to encour-

age risk-taking in artistic programs and collaborative ventures, engagement with technology, and to address training needs. Examples of projects supported in pursuit of these aims include:

- \$18,667 to Playbox Theatre Centre for a playwrights development program with Ilbjerri Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Theatre Co-operative;
- \$50,000 to Queensland Theatre Company for a joint project with Kooemba Jdarra Indigenous Performing Arts to produce and present Louis Nowra's *Radiance* in the company's 1997 mainstage season;
- \$58,000 to Bangarra Dance Theatre to develop *Rites*, a new work to Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* with the Australian Ballet, in partnership with Melbourne International Festival of the Arts;
- \$40,000 to Circus Oz to run a major creative development and training project in partnership with the National Institute of Circus Arts (NICA) project, Swinburne University.

The Australian Chamber Orchestra, founded in 1975, is a colourful and vibrant ensemble composed of some of the finest young musicians in Australia. In addition to subscription series in all capital cities, the Orchestra tours to regional centres and overseas on a regular basis.

Photo: Greg Barrett



Through its Music Fund, the Australia Council supports the highest quality work by encouraging artistic innovation in content, development and presentation across the broad range of Australian music practice.

The Music Fund supports music, music theatre and sound art at many stages – composition, performance, development, recording, broadcast, touring, promotion, electronic distribution and publication. It also supports the development of professional artists and the stimulation of critical debate on contemporary issues in Australian music.

Chamber Made Opera's *The Two Executioners* is an adaptation of a work by Spanish-born playwright

Fernando Arrabal.

Chamber Made's production, adapted and directed by Douglas Horton with music composed by David Chesworth, was presented

at the CUB Malthouse in Melbourne in August 1996.

Photo: Ponch Hawkes

The Fund recognises that the development of new and more adventurous audiences for music is a vital adjunct to the creation of new work. It also recognises the potential of partnerships, co-funding arrangements and networking on the part of artists, organisations and the Australia Council itself to further the interests of the Australian music community. Artists are therefore encouraged to explore effective strategies for the marketing and distribution of their work.

The prestigious Don Banks Music Award was awarded to Dr Richard Meale. Composer, pianist, conductor, lecturer and broadcaster, Dr Meale has played a crucial role in developing avant garde music in Australia and in raising the profile of younger generations of Australian composers. His reputation as a composer of the first rank has included such operatic works as *Voss*, premiered by The Australian Opera at the 1986 Adelaide Festival, and *Mer de Glace*.

Funding highlights for 1996-97 included:

- a commission by the English Chamber Orchestra for a new work by Peter Sculthorpe;

- engagement by the Salt Water People's Festival of Robert Lloyd as composer-director to develop, rehearse and perform an outdoor performance work, *Sticks*, with Darwin-based percussion group, Drum Drum;
- assistance for the Darwin International Guitar Festival to commission composer Gerard Brophy to write a guitar concerto and Peter Sculthorpe a chamber work for the festival in July 1997;
- support for the Tura Events Company Ltd to hold the inaugural Festival of New Music which aims to significantly increase new music audiences in Western Australia, to strengthen ties with cultural organisations in Asia and facilitate cultural exchange between Asian and Australian artists;
- assistance to the Wangaratta Jazz Festival, Victoria;



- assistance to the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) for the recording and promotion (locally and internationally) of Indigenous artists.

These highlights demonstrate the range of Australian music practice, and the Music Fund's commitment to recognising cultural diversity and promoting excellence in the arts, supporting the creation of new work, and providing opportunities for artists to practise their art.

Support for international touring increases opportunities and audiences for Australian artists. The Music Fund supported a number of artists and groups to present their work overseas. Highlights included:

- Victorian New Orleans-influenced jazz band the Hoodangas to tour Russia and Scandinavia and perform at the Montreux Jazz Festival and Edinburgh Fringe Festival;
- NSW folk-jazz ensemble Mara to tour Europe, North America and South East Asia;
- the Australian String Quartet to tour Italy and Germany;
- contemporary jazz ensemble Wanderlust to tour Europe;
- the Gai Bryant Quartet to tour China, Taiwan, Indonesia and South Korea;
- a return tour to Edinburgh Fringe Festival by Victorian band My Friend the Chocolate Cake, which will also take in London and Ireland;
- Bernie McGann Trio to tour to the Chicago Jazz Festival;
- Sensitive New Age Cowpersons to tour to the UK and Ireland.

Partnerships and commissions, which provide new opportunities for the professional employment of individual artists and build partnerships with organisations both within and outside the arts sector, included:

- Tasmanian-based composer Raffaele Marcellino commissioned to develop *Thirst*, a multimedia installation, for the Australian Museum;
- composers Antony Partos and Andrew Lancaster commissioned to create music for choreographer Gideon Obarzanek's new production of *Bonehead*;
- Penrith City Council's commissioning of a soundscape from Michael Whiticker;
- the premiere of a new work by Queensland composer Kent Farbach at the XIIth International Congress of Mathematical Physics.

In recognition of outstanding achievement, Fellowships were awarded to composers Dr Martin Wesley-Smith and Michael Smetanin, and jazz pianist and composer Mark Isaacs.

As part of stimulating informed critical debate among artists, the former Music Committee and the Literature Board jointly funded the *words and music* seminar, convened by Keith Gallasch, held as part of the 1996 Adelaide Festival. Papers and discussion from this seminar, which was attended by some of Australia's most established composers and librettists, were published in the Australian Music Centre's *Sounds Australian* journal in January 1997, ensuring wide distribution across the music field.

Australian folk/jazz ensemble Mara, photographed in Sydney's Ultimo: (left to right) Tony Gorman, Steve Elphick, Mara Kiek, Llew Kiek and Sandy Evans (Sandy has now been replaced by Paul Cutlan).
Photo: Tracey Schramm





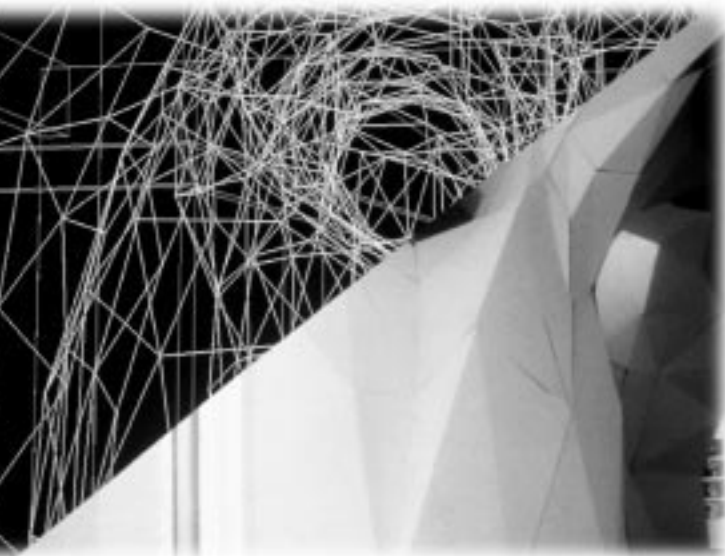
Satsuki Odamura,
Sydney-based exponent of
the Japanese koto,
performing at the 1996
Festival of Asian Music
and Dance, organised by
the Australian Institute of
Eastern Music.

Photo: David Brazil

The Music Fund granted \$20,000 and Council approved \$80,000 for Australia's inaugural Composers' Week, held in May 1997 as part of the 4th Biennial Festival of Music. Composers' Week highlighted the talents of Australian and international composers in all musical genres ranging from classical to popular music, jazz and Indigenous music, thereby increasing awareness and knowledge of contemporary arts in the broad community and promoting awareness of the plurality of Australian arts practice. Over 45 Australian works and more than 30 works by international composers were performed, with 45 of these composers in attendance.

Through the New Media Arts Fund, the Australia Council supports interdisciplinary arts practice which displays a critical and innovative approach to art and its place in society.

The New Media Arts Fund provides funding for artists whose work is not confined to a single artform, or who are collaborating with other artists across disciplines. New technologies and other emerging media are often employed by such artists in their investigation of new forms of practice.



An installation by Horst Kiechle, inaugural recipient of an art and technology residency at the CSIRO.
Photo: Kenneth Pleban

The New Media Arts Fund supports the creation of new work often in partnership with public and private sector organisations. Significant projects funded include:

- A six-month residency at lighting and special events company Peter Barry and Associates for visual artist Wendy Mills, to create a light, water and sound event on the Brisbane River.
- A partnership between Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines and new media artist David Carson to develop a multimedia exhibit on gold production in Western Australia.
- A three-way partnership between Griffith Artworks at Queensland's Griffith University, multimedia artist Wayne Stamp, and Deception Bay Community Youth to develop an interactive on-line book telling the stories of 'at risk' kids from Deception Bay.
- An art and technology residency in partnership with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) for Victorian multimedia artist, Daniel Crooks. A multi-award winning artist, Mr Crooks will create kinetic images or '4D movies'. This partnership will enable him to utilise RMIT's state of the art technology and industrial design workshops.
- A six-month fellowship with ABC Radio's *The Listening Room* for Damian Castaldi, a Sydney-based sound designer and composer. His residency will include a 45 minute three-dimensional digital sound piece for radio broadcast, the construction of a new musical instrument, and an interactive on-line sound installation.

The Australia Council values partnerships like these with the ABC, RMIT and CSIRO as they give artists working across a range of disciplines increased opportunities to develop new audiences and widen the impact of artistic life in Australia. The Council is working to develop other such joint enterprises with industry, tertiary institutions and business.

Negotiations to involve the information technology industry in Art and Technology placements continued through the year. Horst Kiechle is the inaugural recipient of the artist-in-residency at CSIRO Mathematical and Information Sciences. The residency will enable Mr Kiechle to work with the Canberra-based virtual environments research program at CSIRO. Firmware, a distributor and publish-

er of multimedia products, has had to postpone their offer of an artist-in-residence placement in 1997.

During the year the Fund has supported a number of projects which will provide professional development opportunities for new media artists. As a complementary aim the Fund has also supported a number of projects which will increase audiences nationally and internationally for new media arts. Examples of these projects are:

- \$25,000 to enable Street Level Incorporated, an artist initiative operating in western Sydney, to mount a *Cyber Cultures* exhibition in the dramatic industrial architecture of the Casula Powerhouse.
- \$60,000 for SBS-TV to commission sound artists, photographers and digital artists to work with filmmakers to create a new work for national presentation on *eat carpet*, a one hour show of the best short film and video from around the world.
- \$20,000 to enable leading Australian virtual art gallery Urban Exile to expand its activities in authoring VRML (Virtual Reality Mark-up Language) exhibition spaces, document performance art, and initiate live chat projects.
- \$113,500 to collaborative performance group skadada for the creation of new work to tour to Asia and New Zealand, using interactive technologies with image making, video and sound design. The work will also be presented at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts and the Adelaide Festival in 1998.

Organisations receiving support for a program of activity include the Adelaide-based Australian Network for Art and Technology (ANAT). ANAT's projects include sending three multi-skilled artists, their computers and satellite links to the Internet, to regional youth organisations in NSW and Queensland; increasing on-line access to their extensive



database of artists' work; and providing various training opportunities for artists working with science and technology.

Fellowships to both recognise and encourage outstanding achievement were awarded to Ross Gibson, Jon McCormack and Josephine Starrs.

Dr Gibson will create a sound and slide show and CD-ROM *Life after Wartime* drawn from thousands of forensic photographs in the archive of the Justice and Police Museum in Sydney. Gibson will also work on a storytelling project on the Internet with the Flying Arts organisation in Queensland and will tap into isolated communities and use new technologies to create art from everyday life in the bush – the gossip on the 'wire'.

Internalised Cities by Anna Sabiel, Sarah Waterson and Shane Fahey, part of the *Cyber Cultures* exhibition at Casula Powerhouse in western Sydney. Photo: Heidrun Löhr

Jon McCormack produces new media artworks using software developed for creating virtual environments. His work examines the aesthetic relationship between computer-mediated and natural biological forms, using artificial life programming techniques.

Josephine Starrs will undertake a six-month residency in Xerox Park, California, researching and developing new media technologies. Her multimedia work explores everyday relationships between humans and computers, such as ATM machines and computer dating services.



An interactive virtual environment created by New Media Arts Fellowship recipient Jon McCormack.

Through the Theatre Fund, the Australia Council encourages innovation and diversity in the creation and presentation of Australian theatre work. It encourages exploration of new content as well as new processes, forms, and audiences.

The Fund fosters a wide range of approaches to the creation of theatre including text-based theatre, devised work, contemporary performance, puppetry, visual theatre, youth theatre, circus and physical theatre.

Examples of new Australian work staged with the support of the Theatre Fund include:

Wake Baby is stunningly visual theatre which combines puppetry, acrobats, objects and ropes. It was commissioned by the Queensland Performing Arts Trust for the 1996 Out of the Box Festival. Following a successful season at the Australian Festival for Young People in Adelaide in March-April 1997, the production toured to North America and Europe.
Photo: Rob MacColl



- Company B (Belvoir Street Theatre), continuing its commitment to staging new Australian plays, presented the 1997 premiere of Beatrix Christian's *The Governor's Family*, set in NSW Government House at the turn of the 20th century; and the epic restaging of Julie Janson's *Black Mary*, chronicling the true story of Mary Anne Ward, Aboriginal bushranger and companion to the infamous Captain Thunderbolt.

- Deckchair Theatre, based in Fremantle, WA, produced Sally Richardson's *I Am Nijinsky* and has commissioned distinguished playwright, John Romeril, who is exploring the story of one of Fremantle's most notorious underground figures, Shiner Ryan, for a new stage musical.

During the year the Theatre Fund provided grants for a number of innovative proposals which explored diverse and new forms. An example is Arena Theatre Company which received \$181,800 for its 1997 program which includes the production of a second 'exploration in anthroPOP' *Panacea* and the development of a third anthroPOP production, *Mass*. 'AnthroPOP' is a fusion of theatre forms, devised by Arena with Australia Council support, which explores the intersection of theatre with popular music and culture.

A number of projects explored the diversity of cultural identities within Australia including:

- Kooemba Jdarra Indigenous Performing Arts in Queensland to undertake workshops and training opportunities; the commissioning of new works *Bethel and Maude* by Roxanne McDonald and Jo-Ann Close and *Blak Story*, a community show; plus local and international tours of the highly successful *The 7 Stages of Grieving*.
- Gilgul Theatre to develop and produce *The Operated Jew*. Artistic Director Barrie Kosky will weave together two remarkable stories in this new production: Isaac Steinberg (Lenin's former comrade) envisaged a new Jewish homeland for European Jews in the Australian desert and spent four years from 1939 lobbying the governments of the day to establish a settlement in the Kimberleys; in 1893 Oskar Panizza published a chilling novella *The Operated Jew* in which a Jew undergoes disfiguring operations that transform him into a 'European'.

Partnerships with private and public sectors organisations play an important role in provid-

Albury's Flying Fruit Fly Circus continues to work with young artists in regional areas. They performed *Totally Wicked* at the 1996 Performing Arts Market in Canberra.
Photo: Ian Beck

ing new resources and opportunities for artists. During the year the Fund supported a number of partnerships including:

- Macquarie University and Theatre of Image to underwrite artists' fees in the development of three new works in 1997 and 1998. The University will contribute staff and technical resources from the Institute of Early Childhood, the Department of Mass Communications, and the Design and Visual Production Unit. This applies multimedia and film expertise and resources to the creation of new stage works, particularly for young audiences.
- Melbourne-based Zeal Theatre to tour *Tatau: Rites of Passage* to the Pacific Wave Festival in Sydney in November 1996. Zeal Theatre collaborated with New Zealand company Pacific Underground to create the work, which combines true stories of Pacific Island migration with a presentation of a Samoan ritual tattooing, performed nightly during the show by world-famous body artist, Su'a Paulo Suluape II.
- The shires of Campaspe, Urana, Towong and Albury City Council, Hothouse Theatre and local community groups to look at the



significance of water to landlocked rural Australian communities. *In the Deep End* will be performed at the Albury Swim Centre using circus rigging, irrigation systems, walls of water and compressed air flotation to create a spectacular theatrical event.

The Fund supports projects which provide professional development opportunities for theatre artists as well as those which stimulate debate about Australian theatre. An example of these is a grant given to the Blue Room, Perth's foremost venue for supporting and presenting new theatre works, which received \$35,000 to allow theatre artists a forum in which to try out new ideas in a supportive environment.

Theatre Fund grants have also supported script development programs by the Multicultural Theatre Alliance (NSW), Playlab (Qld), and Stages (WA), and the engagement of dramaturgs by both the Melbourne Writers Theatre Inc and La Mama.

Some examples of grants provided to assist young artists in regional areas to develop their art are:

Jodie Buzza as Jean Johnson in Deckchair Theatre's production of *Voices*. Photo: Ashley de Prazer



- The Flying Fruit Fly Circus to conduct circus workshops for the young people of Albury and Wodonga, to develop and tour a main-stage show *Outburst*, and conduct the annual National Circus Training Project.
- Riverland Youth Theatre, based in Barmera, SA, to co-commission (with Unley Youth Theatre) a new play by Andrea Lemon exploring the relationship between young people and their cars, as well as offering a range of workshops for young people in the Riverland area including an Indigenous youth dance workshop program.

In recognition of outstanding achievement, Fellowships were awarded to playwright Noelle Janaczewska, theatre designer Mary Moore, and senior actor June Jago.

As part of the Fund's encouragement of international initiatives Theatre Physical Productions will undertake their first overseas tour, taking *Miss Havisham's Dream* to Europe. The Marrugeku Company, a collaboration between the Kunbarljinaja Community from northern Australia, urban Aboriginals and the Stalker Theatre Company, was assisted to tour *Mimi* to European festivals in June-July 1997 before appearing at the Festival of the Dreaming in Sydney.



Melbourne group Strange Fruit presented *The Field*, inspired by ears of wheat swaying in a field, at the 1996 Australian Performing Arts Market and has been funded to tour European Festivals.
Photo: Rick Martin

Through its Visual Arts/Craft Fund, the Australia Council supports the creation, presentation and interpretation of contemporary Australian visual art and craft.

The Visual Arts/Craft Fund supports individual artists to create new work and develop through professional opportunities both nationally and internationally.



Glassware, 1997, by Bettina Visentin, who travelled to Venice in 1996 to work in Murano with master glassblowers.
Phott: Ian Hobbs

The Fund supported proposals from 83 artists to create new work. Individual projects included Robyn Stacey's proposal to develop large scale images using 3D technology and animation; upgrading of studio equipment by jeweller Elizabeth Fotiadis; research by Hou Leong into differences between Western and Asian art; and the development of new ceramic works by Sandra Black.

Opportunities for professional development and artform debate were provided through a number of grants. Examples include:

- \$10,000 to the International Artists Workshop, WA, enabling an unprecedented collaboration of 20 artists from Australia, Africa, Europe and the Caribbean. The pro-

ject played a significant role in the development of the visual arts in Western Australia through broadening the experience of artists, raising public awareness and creating new international links.

- \$103,000 over two years to Victoria's 200 Gertrude Street for a program of exhibitions and associated activities, designed to provide professional opportunities and support for contemporary artists in the early stages of their careers.

Twenty-five Australian artists were offered professional development opportunities during four to twelve month residencies at VACF studios in cities including Barcelona, Milan, Paris, Manila, Los Angeles and Tokyo. In addition to these, several self-organised residencies were assisted.

The Fund also assisted a national network of organisations to increase the scope for artists to exhibit new and experimental work and improve opportunities for the public to view, understand and enjoy contemporary art and craft. These organisations include contemporary art spaces, crafts councils, advocacy bodies and exhibitions touring support agencies. They offer professional advice to artists, develop interstate and regional exhibition touring, exhibit and promote the work of Australia's emerging and established artists and craftspeople, and publish research, reviews and critical writing.

A number of specific projects aimed at increasing audiences for and improving access to the work of visual artists and craftspeople are:

- \$33,000 to the Crafts Council of Queensland, part of which funded research, consultation and the development of a touring exhibition of Indigenous craft;
- \$15,000 to the Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre to produce the exhibition *Relations*, showcasing the work of artists from within one of the most diverse multicultural communities in Australia;

- multiyear funding of \$431,000 over three years to Contemporary Art Services Tasmania for contemporary art exhibitions and touring activities;
- \$20,000 to Arts Access Victoria to produce an exhibition, *Body Suits*, involving artists with and without disabilities;
- \$25,000 for the exhibition, *The Eloquent Object*, curated by the University of NSW College of Fine Arts, shown in Taiwan and Sydney.

Major exhibitions supported by the VACF in 1996-97 include the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art at the Queensland Art Gallery and the International Craft Triennial at the Art Gallery of Western Australia.

The Fund also encouraged a number of international initiatives through support of Australian participation at prominent international events. Sara Lindsay, John Corbett and Liz Jeneid represented Australia at the 9th International Triennale of Tapestry in Lodz, Poland during May to July 1998. Visual artist Mike Parr attended the 6th Havana Biennial during May 1997 and, from June 1997, Matthew Ngui participated in documenta X, in Kassel, one of the most important international exhibitions of contemporary art. Tracey Moffatt participated in the XXIII Biennial of Sao Paolo during October to December 1996, and the DIA Foundation, New York, was assisted to present an exhibition of her work from October 1997.

The Fund also assisted Craft Australia towards Australian representation in the prestigious Concorso della Ceramica d'Arte, Faenza, for which works by Lynda Draper, Fiona Hiscock and Fiona Murphy were selected.

A number of projects which broaden opportunities for creative links between the arts and other sectors, and assist artists in gaining access to resources or skills normally unavailable to them, were supported. Such projects included a proposal for a mentorship at the



Centre for Contemporary Craft in Sydney by the Union Street Ceramic Studio, an artist-run craft workshop based in Lismore, and assistance for electricity supplier Loy Yang Power Ltd to employ Clive Murray-White as company artist.

The Fund aims to increase indirect support for individual artists by encouraging organisations both within and outside the arts sector to support and present artists' work. Projects supported included a commission by the University of Ballarat and the City of Ballarat for artist Ken Searle to paint a portrait of the city.

Outstanding achievements in visual arts and craft were acknowledged through the award of Fellowships to ceramicist Les Blakebrough; painter Tim Johnson; visual artists Aleksander Danko, Fiona Foley and Janet Laurence; writer Ewen McDonald; installation artist Domenico de Clario; and metalsmith Johannes Kuhnen.

Senior artists honoured with Emeritus Awards in 1996 were sculptor and jeweller Matcham Skipper, and ceramicists Gwyn Hanssen Pigott and the late Joan Campbell.

To assist in evaluating the efficacy of its funding strategies the VACF, through the Strategy and Policy Division, commissioned Professor David Throsby and Claire Bardez to undertake

Untitled (detail), 1996
acrylic on canvas, by
Sydney-based artist
Zhiyuan Wang.
Photo: Zhiyuan Wang

an analysis of visual artists' and craftspeople's career patterns, income and expectations of the Australia Council. The resulting report, *Similarity and Difference: Craftspeople and Visual Artists in Australia*, was published in June 1997.



Kyoto flower, 1996, porcelain bowl by Les Blakebrough, who was awarded a Visual Arts/Craft Fund Fellowship in 1996. Photo: Concept Creditgraphics



Under the Pier, 1996, an installation at Artspace, Sydney, of plaster, sand, wool, water vapour and dye by project grant recipient Sue Pedley. Photo: Chris Fortescue