



Australian Government



ASSESSMENT MEETING REPORT

Visual Arts/Craft Board

Panel Meeting

Craft Design Initiative: ‘MMM’ Maker to Manufacturer to Market

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This report refers to applications received by 15 April 2005, assessed at a panel meeting of the Visual Arts/Craft Board of the Australia Council held 6 May 2005, and approved by the Board. Applications were assessed for the following Board initiative

Craft Design Initiative: 'MMM' Maker to Manufacturer to Market

ATTENDANCE

The Visual Arts/Craft Board supports the creation, presentation and interpretation of contemporary Australian visual arts and craft. The Board aims to provide direct and indirect support for Australian artists working in a wide range of artforms, and for contemporary art and craft organisations, by the provision of grants and the development of policy.

The role of the Board members is to assess and make decisions on grant applications. Board members are also advised by Peers selected from the Register of Peers. Nominations for the Register are called regularly and are open to all.

Board members in attendance at the meeting were:

Lesley Alway

Chair, Vic

Lesley Alway is an arts manager with experience in cultural organisations at all levels of government and special expertise in the visual arts. She was appointed the Director of Heide Museum of Modern Art in Melbourne in August 2003, was the Director of Arts Victoria from 1997-2000, and is a former Director of Artbank. Lesley has also worked for Sotheby's Melbourne, in local government cultural management, arts education, and has been a consultant in business planning and cultural policy to various state and federal arts organisations. She was appointed to the Board in November 2004.

Liz Williamson

Craftsperson, NSW (Deputy Chairperson and Community Representative)

Liz Williamson is a textile artist whose practice has achieved international standing. A committed educator she has held numerous workshops throughout the Asian region and the USA. Liz Williamson currently lectures at the College of Fine Arts, University of NSW. Her textiles are represented in most State and major textile collections in Australia. She was appointed to the Board in September 2002.

Barbara Heath

Craftsperson, Qld

Barbara Heath is a jeweller and metalsmith. In 1983 she won the Westpac Craft Award. Since 1987 she has received several public art and design industry commissions. She has exhibited in numerous group and solo exhibitions and is represented in public collections in several States including Powerhouse Museum, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery Launceston, Queensland Art Gallery and the Art Gallery of Western Australia. Barbara was appointed to the Board in October 2002.

The **Peers** in attendance at the meeting were:

Kathy Demos

Kathy Demos P/L (Vic)

Kathy Demos was the inaugural Director of Victoria's State of Design Festival and most recently, has established the National Design Centre, Federation Square, Melbourne.

Catrina Vignando

General Manager, Craft Australia (ACT)

Catrina Vignando is a former Director of Craft ACT, and is currently implementing a new vision for Craft Australia as the nation's peak industry body for contemporary crafts.

Staff in attendance at the meeting were:

Anna Waldmann (Manager)

Joe Pascoe (Senior Program Officer)

Susan Long (Assistant Program Officer)

Jenny Roper (Administration Assistant)

Robyn Chiles (Administration Assistant)

The role of staff is to provide information and advice to Council, Boards and advisory bodies to assist in their determination of policy and their assessment of applications. They also provide information and support to potential applicants for grants, and administer the Council's grant programs to ensure a simple fair and efficient assessment of applications. Program Officers have no decision-making role in relation to the allocation of grants.

CHAIR'S REPORT

'MMM' Maker to Manufacturer to Market

Introduction

During September 2004 the Visual Arts/Craft Board discussed the Throsby/Hollister report *Don't Give Up Your Day Job*. Professor Throsby's leading research, the fourth in a twenty year series, had plotted many significant changes in the creative artist sector, including changes to artists incomes.

The Visual Arts/Craft Board was invited by the Council to consider the findings of the report and the board, after discussion, framed a response that had as its intention looking across the 'craft/design continuum', from artist to product development, from manufacturer to market, and finally, from point of retail back to the artist. In particular, it was noted that the craft design area showed signs of being able to respond to a targeted stimulus that encouraged the development of best practice models, which in turn could be publicised.

In December 2004 the board hosted a national focus group of 15 makers, thinkers and entrepreneurs. Attendees were drawn from across Australia and included well known practitioners, senior academics and curators, and people involved in business.

The MMM Program

The 'MMM: Maker to Manufacturer to Market' strategic initiative was developed, and the assessment of applications was guided by following four selection criteria:

- High degree of artistic merit in the craft/design prototype and/or limited edition object
- High calibre of the artists and other professionals involved
- Evidence that the project is well planned and will be managed with expertise appropriate to the project
- Evidence of the commercial viability of the end-product.

The MMM program was released on 1 February 2005 through relevant state/territory craft organisations, makers, retailers/producers and education representatives.

I am pleased to say that by the 15 April closing date some 30 submissions were received. Proposals received covered furniture, jewellery, kitchenware, lighting, textiles, tiles and other special items. The overall standard of the applications was high and I was impressed by the ability of most of the proposals to cover all aspects of the rather demanding application requirements. Applications were received from virtually all parts of Australia.

Whilst there was a tendency in the applications to focus on niche markets, such as apartment living, tourism and the upper end of the gift market, some were impressively global in their approach.

An expert panel of three board members and two advisory peers drawn from the craft design sector met on 6 May at the Australia Council and discussed all the applications and viewed the support material .

The panel awarded the following three grants:

- **Rod Bamford** (NSW) \$30,000 to develop and market a high quality porcelain bowl that utilise photographic surface imagery, taking as its theme genetically modified fruit and flora.
- **Bianca Looney** (VIC) \$30,000 to develop and market 3D tiling systems under the brand name Z-Series, which takes as its starting point textures relating to the Australian landscape.
- **Oliver Smith** (ACT) \$30,000 to develop and market stainless steel production cutlery.

The timeframe for these projects is 9-12 months. The development of the projects will be progressively publicised, so that the learnings from these projects can be shared. We will be also evaluating the impact of the MMM program.

In closing, I would like to say that this has been a tremendously interesting experience for the Visual Arts/Craft Board and one that has the potential to more broadly inform the sector and the Australia Council into the future. I am grateful to the Peers, Kathy Demos, and Catrina Vignando, whose extensive knowledge was generously shared with us. Congratulations to the successful applicants.

Thank you once again for your involvement.

Lesley Alway
Chairperson
Visual Arts/Craft Board