

1.0 Year in review 2007–08

The Australia Council enriches our nation by supporting and promoting the practice and enjoyment of the arts.

The past year has seen Australians looking towards the future. Together, we have explored what our country could be like in a dozen years time and taken our first steps in tackling future challenges such as global warming and education.

For those of us who work in the arts, this future holds great opportunity.

The arts are at the heart of a healthy culture. They are a key part of the cultural industries that are major drivers of economic growth. They contribute to the ability of all Australians to innovate and conceive new possibilities.

The Australia Council has spent much of the past year examining ways to better support artists engage with the key challenges facing them. Our suite of six strategic priorities aims to focus our activities where they can really make a difference.

Whether it is identifying new income streams, finding new ways to connect with Australians' everyday lives, engaging with business and philanthropic support or connecting with new technologies, these priorities aim to help artists develop the tools essential to their future.

They reinforce our fundamental commitment to the two sides of the arts equation—supporting the inherent creativity of our artists and sparking community interest in the arts.

Our focus on artistic excellence and community engagement forms the bedrock of this annual report, which this year we have complemented with highlights of our six strategic priorities.

2007–08 was a year of artistic standouts. Many of these you will have heard about, some of them you may not.

From the blockbuster touring success of Company B's *Keating: The Musical!* to the thousands who took in Australia's first Indigenous art triennial *Culture Warriors*.

From Chunky Move's unique dance work *Glow* scooping two Helpmann Awards to Back to Back Theatre's *small metal objects* picking up a "Bessie" Award in New York and one of Switzerland's premier theatre awards.

From the million people who flocked to the Sydney Festival to the hundreds who celebrated their cultural renaissance at the Wadeye Community Cultural Festival in the Northern Territory.

Over the past year, the arts showed the myriad ways—large and small—they touch our lives, impact on our communities and define our culture. They deserve our recognition and support into the future.

Kathy Keele

Chief executive officer

Corporate overview

The Australia Council—and the arts sector as a whole—saw several important developments and milestones in 2007–08.

The Australia Council made some important steps in transforming itself into a more effective and efficient organisation during the financial year. A new Government was elected in November 2007, led by Prime Minister the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, and a new Minister for the Arts in the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP appointed—the first person in Australia's history to bring a professional artist's perspective to the role. The previous minister was Senator the Hon George Brandis SC.

Australia 2020 Summit

On the weekend of 19–20 April 2008, more than 1000 of Australia's best minds gathered at Parliament House in Canberra to discuss the big issues facing Australia's future. Fresh ideas for the future of Australia's culture and creativity was one of the 10 areas under discussion at the 'Towards a creative Australia: the future of the arts, film and design' session. It was co-chaired by the recently appointed co-artistic director of Sydney Theatre Company Cate Blanchett, academic Dr Julianne Schultz and Arts Minister the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP, with Australia Council chairman James Strong AO in attendance. A range of ideas were raised, including support for the Government's commitment to introducing an 'artist in residence' scheme into schools, creating a national endowment fund to increase arts philanthropy, and strengthening Indigenous culture through a national Indigenous cultural authority.

Australian Government 2008–09 Budget

The new Government's first Budget, handed down in May 2008, featured some significant wins for the arts. New funding initiatives for community arts, education and the arts, and young and emerging artists honoured election commitments. The creative communities initiative, worth \$10 million over four years, will support community arts and culture through the Australia Council's community partnerships section, helping to enhance existing programs and develop new initiatives. A package worth \$6.6 million over four years will provide support to develop young and emerging artists and take their works to new audiences. A new initiative for 'artists in residence' in schools and universities was also announced, worth \$5.2 million over four years. The Budget also included funding to establish a resale royalty scheme for Australia's visual artists.

Strategic priorities

The Australia Council placed the needs of the arts sector front and centre in a review of its business plans, commencing in April 2007. Following a series of consultations with arts sector representatives, the governing Council refocussed the organisation on six strategic priorities that were formally adopted in October 2007. The six priorities will frame the Australia Council's activities over the next three years—focussing on increasing artists' incomes, greater appreciation for the arts, knowledge centre for the arts, business and philanthropic support for the arts, arts content for the digital era and national impact of the Australia Council.

Business process review

The past 12 months also saw the Australia Council looking at organisational efficiencies that will result in more funding flowing to artists and arts organisations. In 2007, this resulted in an additional \$1 million in funding for its grants programs. Faced with a two per cent increase in the whole-of-government efficiency dividend from 2008–09, the organisation conducted a review of internal business process and systems to find further efficiencies. The review identified new ways to process grants, manage projects, and provide key services to the arts community. It also resulted in changes to the Australia Council's structure. From 1 July 2008, there are four core divisions—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts, arts development, arts funding and arts organisations—supported by the office of the chief executive officer and the corporate resources team. Three of these divisions are newly created from the review. Arts funding includes all the peer-review boards, committees and panels—including community partnerships and inter-arts—and ensures that applications, assessments and grants are efficiently managed. Artistic excellence is the focus for this area. Arts organisations manages and administers funding for the 28 major performing arts companies and some 140 key organisations, having an overview of the entire arts sector and providing focussed support to individual companies. Artistic vibrancy through organisational excellence is this group's focus. Arts development supports the sector in the fields of audience and market development, research and information, and strategic development. Sector development and excellence are this division's focus.

Funding overview

The Australia Council invested more than \$146.9 million in artists and organisations across the country in 2007–08, compared to \$156 million in the previous financial year.

We supported the full spectrum of arts activity during the year, from an \$11.7 million annual base grant to Opera Australia through to a \$1400 grant for emerging musician Tamas Wells to tour Japan.

This support included grants for creating new works; presenting, performing, publishing, distributing and exhibiting artistic works; developing new skills and professional development; residencies in Australia and abroad; fellowships and awards; financial and operational support for arts organisations; partnership opportunities; marketing and audience development initiatives; and strategic initiatives to build the capacity of the arts sector.

A number of trends are evident in the Australia Council's funding over the past five years. Support for arts organisations has increased significantly since 2003–04, alongside the Australia Council's total funding. This reflects significant Australian Government funding packages for the sector—arising from the 1999 Major

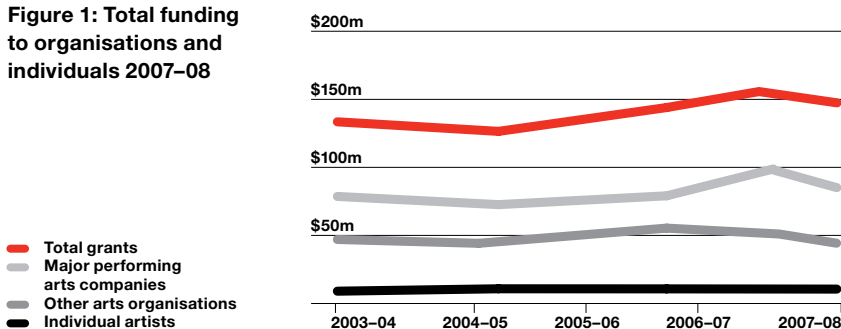
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Performing Arts Inquiry, 2003 Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, 2005 Orchestras Review and last year's funding boost for small to medium performing arts companies. Funding levels to individual artists and groups have remained steady during this period, with changes to the numbers of applications and grants awarded resulting from the consolidation of several grant categories.

The higher funding level in 2006–07 included the first round of additional funding as a result of the Australian Government's acceptance of the recommendations of the 2005 Orchestras Review.

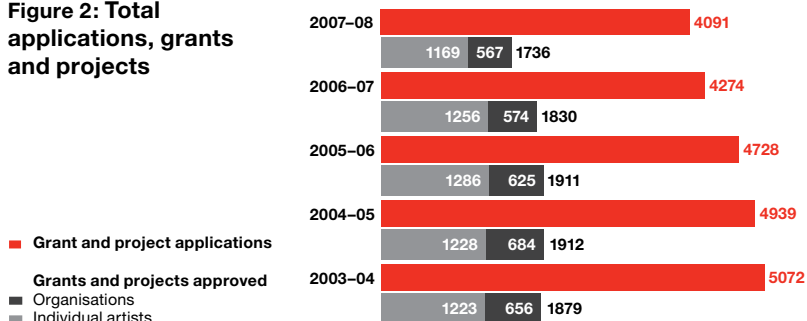
The Australia Council's \$146.9 million investment enabled artists to create 5215 new works, and to present, perform, publish or exhibit 5394 new works in 2007–08. It assisted almost 9.5 million attendances at arts events throughout the financial year. Of this, \$81.5 million went to major performing arts companies, \$55.6 million to other arts organisations, and \$9.9 million directly to individual artists (see figure 1).

Figure 1: Total funding to organisations and individuals 2007–08



In 2007–08, the Australia Council provided 1736 grant and projects, comprising 1169 grants to organisations and 567 grants to individual artists. These grants were awarded from 4091 applications to the various grant categories, down from 4274 in the previous financial year (see figure 2).

Figure 2: Total applications, grants and projects



The \$146.9 million total investment included \$36.7 million for the nation's orchestras; \$19.9 million for opera; \$12.5 million for other music artists and organisations; \$15.8 million for visual artists and organisations; \$20.8 million for theatre companies and artists; \$18.8 million for dance artists and companies; \$6.7 million for writers, publishers and literary organisations; \$10.4 million for multi-artform artists and organisations; and \$5.3 million in miscellaneous funding (see figure 3).

The Australia Council's total funding for 2007–08 also included:

- \$7 million for international activities by Australian artists and arts organisations, compared to \$7.7 million in the previous financial year.
- \$10.1 million for arts and cultural activities with a predominantly Indigenous focus, compared to \$8.7 million in the previous financial year.
- \$9.7 million for arts and cultural activities with a predominantly regional focus (excluding major performing arts companies' activities), compared to \$7.7 million in the previous financial year.

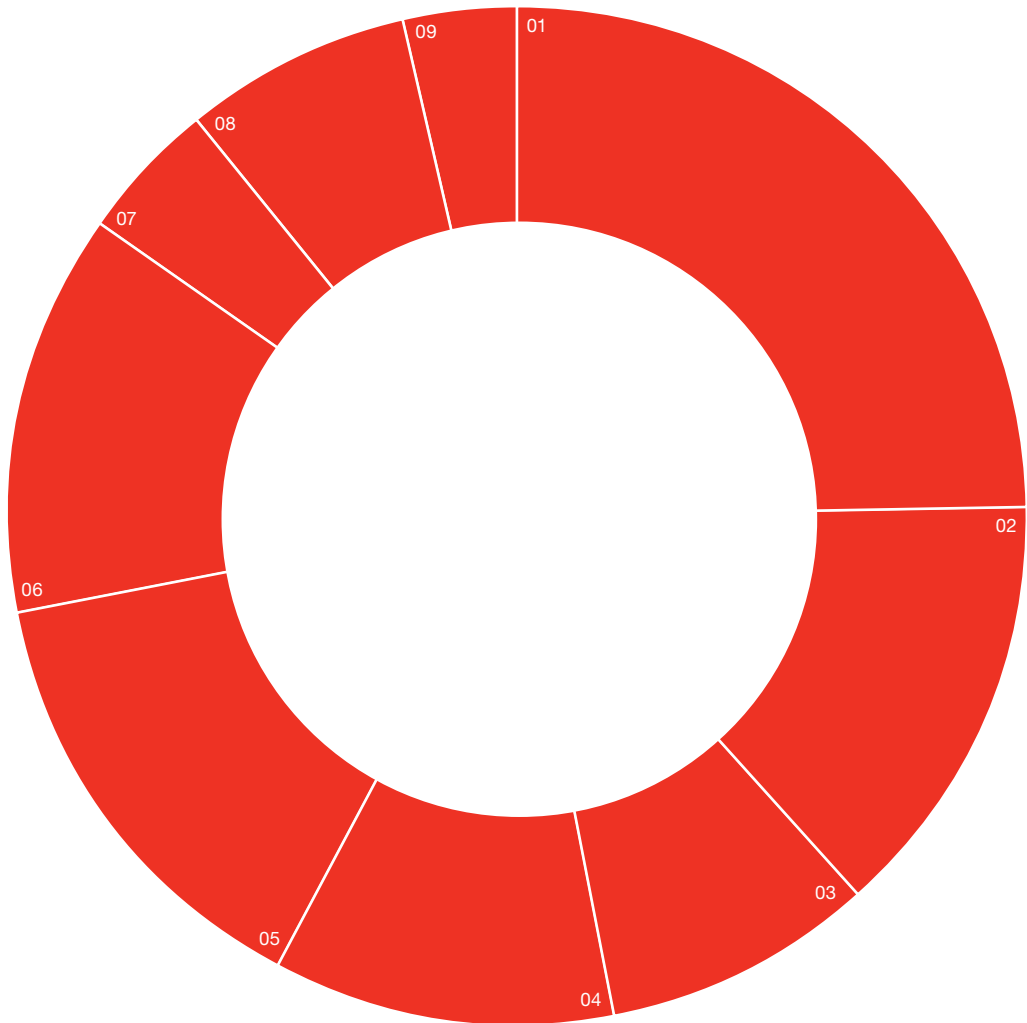


Figure 3: Funding by artform 2007-08:

01. Orchestras	\$36.7 million
02. Opera	\$19.9 million
03. Music	\$12.5 million
04. Visual arts	\$15.8 million
05. Theatre	\$20.8 million
06. Dance	\$18.8 million
07. Literature	\$6.7 million
08. Multi-artform	\$10.4 million
09. Other	\$5.3 million

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Figure 4: Australia Council's total funding by state and territory 2007-08

	CROSS-ARTFORM	DANCE	LITERATURE	MUSIC	OTHER	THEATRE	VISUAL ARTS	TOTAL
ACT	\$152,062	\$503,012	\$179,096	\$330,593	\$178,722	\$94,000	\$749,622	\$2,187,108
NSW	\$4,017,191	\$7,521,392	\$2,240,901	\$30,515,663	\$1,870,205	\$6,698,267	\$4,615,614	\$57,479,233
NT	\$535,709	\$304,450	\$285,397	\$556,894	\$549,421	\$220,320	\$543,235	\$2,995,426
Qld	\$1,267,572	\$1,072,818	\$332,239	\$6,331,053	\$170,131	\$1,586,683	\$1,612,091	\$12,372,587
SA	\$566,257	\$1,208,780	\$669,679	\$6,206,305	\$1,003,530	\$2,063,717	\$1,713,477	\$13,431,745
Tas.	\$459,700	\$130,000	\$273,730	\$4,400,558	\$248,580	\$535,814	\$524,269	\$6,572,650
Vic.	\$1,600,987	\$1,024,540	\$1,081,325	\$13,594,832	\$277,052	\$6,787,567	\$2,392,881	\$26,759,183
WA	\$233,015	\$635,915	\$448,522	\$5,100,332	\$286,329	\$1,521,153	\$756,872	\$8,982,138
Multi-state	\$1,268,981	\$5,663,615	\$512,339	\$1,347,755	\$603,436	\$630,119	\$240,000	\$10,266,244
Overseas	\$283,582	\$755,184	\$667,326	\$754,539	\$65,363	\$692,813	\$2,673,630	\$5,892,436
Total	\$10,385,056	\$18,819,706	\$6,690,552	\$69,138,524	\$5,252,769	\$20,830,454	\$15,821,690	\$146,938,750

NOTE: Table includes some rounding

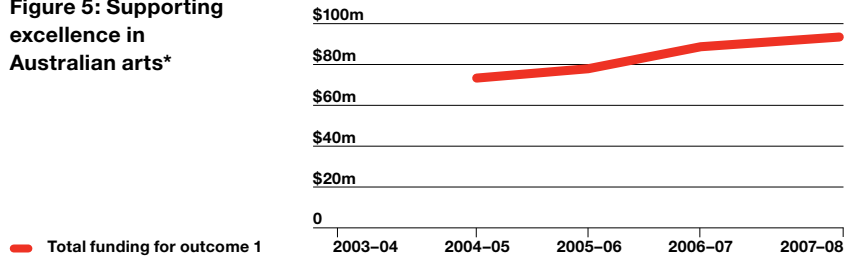
1.1 Outcome 1—Excellent and distinctive Australian art

The Australia Council assists Australian artists to create and present a body of distinctive cultural works characterised by the pursuit of excellence.

Australia’s creative voices make people sit up and take notice. Our artists speak in many different tones, across many different media, but the message is loud and clear—Australian creativity punches above its weight.

The Australia Council invested more than \$92.4 million in supporting creative excellence in 2007–08, compared to \$86.8 million the previous year.* This investment has assisted Australian artists to create new visual artworks, dance and theatrical productions, literary works, musical compositions, and media works (see figure 5).

Figure 5: Supporting excellence in Australian arts*



*Funding levels for 2006–07 and 2007–08 reflect cash payments made during each year. This differs from the accrual based figures tabled in the financial statements and this reporting on outcome 2.

Australia Council support underpins much of the nation’s creativity. In total, the Australia Council supported the creation of 5215 new artistic works and the presentation, exhibition, performance and publication of 5394 new works (see figure 6).

Figure 6: Supporting the creation and presentation of new artistic works

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Total funding	\$132.3m	\$125.3m	\$142.8m	\$156m	\$146.9m
Number of grants and projects	1879	1912	1911	1799	1736
Number of new works created	3036	3072	4110	4476	5215
Number of new works exhibited, performed and published	3545	3502	3472	3636	5394

This investment included support for some of the nation’s most vibrant and unique artistic creations. Chunky Move’s digital tour-de-force *Glow* conquered Australia and the rest of the world (see page 29). Australia’s first national Indigenous art triennial—*Culture Warriors*—entranced visitors to the National Gallery of Australia and became the most popular Indigenous art exhibition ever staged (see page 28).

Artists supported by the Australia Council took out every Australian arts award imaginable: Helpmann awards, the Miles Franklin, premiers’ literary awards, dance awards, and all manner of visual arts prizes. Back to Back Theatre’s *small metal objects* wowed critics and judges around the world, taking out a coveted ‘Bessie’ award in New York and one of the premier Swiss theatre awards (see page 32).

And while Australia Council support helped some artists reach new heights, it helped others take off for more distant shores. We invested in taking more Australian art to the rest of the world than ever before—particularly in priority markets in western Europe, Asia and the Americas.

In 2007–08, the Australia Council supported the presentation of Australian arts activities in 66 countries around the world, with countries such as the USA, UK, Germany, Italy and France featuring prominently (see figure 7).

Figure 7: Supporting Australian arts around the world

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Total international funding	\$6.6m	\$6.8m	\$7.4m	\$7.7m	\$7.0m
Number of grants	319	365	423	449	392
Number of countries presented in	60	68	71	72	66

This support featured not only successful tours and exhibitions, such as the 2007 Venice Biennale, but a number of key international market development initiatives. The Australian Performing Arts Market brought more than 560 leading presenters to Adelaide to witness the best of Australia's performing arts (see page 31). The 2007 Frankfurt Book Fair also saw Australia's largest presence to date and resulted in deals worth more than \$1.1 million for Debra Adelaide's novel *The Household Guide to Dying* (see page 30).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts

The Australia Council invested more than \$10.1 million in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts in 2007–08.

This support comes from all the Australia Council's sections, and primarily through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts board. It takes the form of grants, residencies, fellowships, an annual award, and financial and operational support to arts organisations. A series of strategic initiatives aim to build the capacity of the sector, particularly in artist employment, intellectual property protection and international showcasing of Indigenous arts.

The following three activities are some examples of the Australia Council's support for excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts.

National Gallery of Australia—*Culture Warriors*

Australia's first national Indigenous art triennial *Culture Warriors* wowed visitors to the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra between October 2007 and February 2008. More than 82,300 people experienced works by 30 outstanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists—making it the most popular Indigenous art exhibition ever staged. It covered the full range of contemporary Indigenous art practice, with works ranging from new media installations through to bark paintings. *Culture Warriors* has since begun a national tour, starting at the Art Gallery of South Australia in June 2008 and travelling to other major galleries in the coming year. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts board supported *Culture Warriors* with \$75,000 in funding through its showcasing the best strategic initiative.

1

Artists' income levels

Red Ochre Award—Doris Pilkington Garimara

Author of *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* and a lifetime campaigner for reconciliation, Doris Pilkington Garimara AM was honoured with the 2008 Red Ochre Award. Ms Thérèse Rein presented the \$50,000 award, Australia's largest individual Indigenous arts prize, at a ceremony in Sydney in May 2008. The 2002 Philip Noyce film *Rabbit Proof Fence* was based on Doris' novel, with her other literary works including *Caprice: A Stockman's Daughter* and *Under the Wintamarra Tree*. The Red Ochre Award pays tribute to an Indigenous artist for his or her outstanding, life-long contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts at home and overseas.

Black Arm Band—*murundak*

An ambitious production featuring a 32-piece 'all-star' band playing songs of resistance and survival has been one of the most moving musical experiences of 2007–08. *murundak* has taken audiences on an inspiring journey at the Sydney Festival, Perth International Arts Festival, Adelaide Bank Festival of the Arts and the London International Festival of Theatre. Its performers, the Black Arm Band, are a rotating group featuring the cream of Indigenous musical talent including Archie Roach, Bart Willoughby, Rachel Maza Long, Shane Howard and Lou Bennett. *murundak* won the 2007 Helpmann award for best contemporary music concert. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts board supported the Black Arm Band with \$50,000.

Dance

The Australia Council invested more than \$18.8 million in Australian dance in 2007–08.

This support comes primarily from the dance board, major performing arts board and market development section. It takes the form of grants and fellowships to individual artists, financial and operational support to arts organisations, market and audience development initiatives and strategic initiatives to build the capacity of the sector. The following three activities are some examples of the Australia Council's support for excellence in Australian dance.

1

Artists' income levels

Shaun Parker—*This Show Is About People*

Premiering at the Melbourne International Arts Festival in September 2007, *This Show Is About People* took audiences on a high energy trip through the lives of a group of strangers who randomly intersect in a transit lounge. The part-musical, part-theatrical and all-dance work by Sydney-based choreographer and counter-tenor Shaun Parker combined diverse dance styles from contemporary to hip-hop with an eclectic mix of music including medieval European, pop, gospel and rap. *This Show Is About People* received a 2008 Australian Dance Award for outstanding achievement in independent dance. It travelled to the Sydney Festival as part of the Movers and Shakers program and was showcased at the Australian Performing Arts Market. The dance board supported Shaun Parker with a \$17,729 new work grant.

Chunky Move—*Glow*

Exploring the connection between a human dancer and interactive video technology —giving light to the precise mathematics of movement—is the aim of Chunky Move's groundbreaking production *Glow*. Artistic director Gideon Obarzanek teamed up with German interactive software creator Frieder Weiss to develop the work that sees the movements of a solo dancer illuminated and interpreted in a digital landscape. In 2007–08, *Glow* was performed at the Melbourne and Adelaide arts festivals and toured to the United States, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Croatia and China. *Glow* took out two Helpmann awards, including best ballet or dance work. The dance board supported Chunky Move with \$238,417 in key organisations funding and an additional \$86,000 to tour *Glow*.

dancenorth—*roadkill*

A broken down car, an out-of-order phone booth and a relationship on the rocks are at the centre of a work that explores the isolation of outback Australia by Townsville's dancenorth, co-produced by the Brisbane Powerhouse and choreographed by Splintergoup. The production travelled from its tropical north Queensland premiere to a critically-acclaimed two-week run at the Barbican Centre in London as part of the Dance Umbrella festival in October 2007. The work was also showcased at the Australian Performing Arts Market and on an ABC-TV documentary produced as part of the artists@work series. The dance board supported dancenorth with \$280,565 in key organisations funding.

Inter-arts

The Australia Council invested more than \$1.25 million in interdisciplinary arts through the inter-arts office in 2007–08.

This support takes the form of grants to individual artists, financial and operational support to arts organisations, market and audience development initiatives and strategic initiatives to build the capacity of the sector.

The following three activities are some examples of the Australia Council's support for excellence in inter-disciplinary arts.

5

Arts content for the digital era

Babelswarm

Australia's first Second Life artists-in-residence launched their groundbreaking virtual arts installation *Babelswarm* in April 2008. The 3-D real-time project, a metaphor for the Tower of Babel, uses voice recognition software to convert the spoken words of virtual and real participants into three-dimensional letterform images in an evolving tower of words. The artwork, by writer Justin Clemens, visual artist Christopher Dodds, and musician/3D artist Adam Nash, was launched simultaneously in Second Life and in the real world at the Lismore Regional Gallery in northern NSW. The inter-arts office, literature board and music board supported *Babelswarm* with a \$20,000 virtual residency, the world's first government grant for an artwork in Second Life.

Sarah Last—WIRED Lab

Developing a uniquely Australian musical instrument—made of strings of fencing wire up to 300 metres long—is the ongoing focus of WIRED Lab, an audio research group initiated by artist and curator Sarah Last. WIRED Lab brings together scientists and sound artists to build on the work of Alan Lamb's pioneering *The Wires* audio installations. In May, Sarah won a \$10,000 ABC TV arts-science competition to develop a documentary based on the research. The inter-arts office supported Sarah Last with a \$66,000 ArtLab initiative grant.

Synapse—Kirsty Boyle

Giving the bionic woman an artistic twist, NSW artist Kirsty Boyle's latest project *girltron* creates an interactive character using the latest in artificial intelligence technologies. In 2007, Kirsty was invited to be artist-in-residence at the Artificial Intelligence Lab at the University of Zurich, Switzerland. The inter-arts office supported Kirsty Boyle with a \$12,000 Synapse residency, in partnership with the Australian Network for Art and Technology.

Literature

The Australia Council invested more than \$6.7 million in Australian literature in 2007–08.

This support comes primarily from the literature board, theatre board and market development section. It takes the form of grants, residencies, fellowships and awards to individual literary creators, financial and operational support to organisations that provide infrastructure for the sector, market and audience development initiatives, and strategic initiatives to build the capacity of the sector.

The following three activities are examples of the Australia Council's support for excellence in Australian literature.

Writers' Emeritus Awards—Christopher Koch AO and Gerald Murnane

Two of Australia's most eminent authors—Christopher Koch AO and Gerald Murnane—were honoured with Writers' Emeritus Awards at a ceremony in Melbourne in February 2008. The Writers' Emeritus Awards, each worth \$50,000, are the richest and most established career achievement prizes in Australian literature. Christopher Koch is the author of seven novels, and has been awarded the Miles Franklin Award twice for *The Doubleman* in 1985 and *Highways to War* in 1996. His novel *The Year of Living Dangerously* was made into an Academy Award-nominated film by Peter Weir. Gerald Murnane's eight fiction works have received critical acclaim in Australia and internationally. He received the Patrick White Literary Award in 1999 and has worked in several universities over the past two decades.

5

Arts content
for the
digital era

Story of the future

Taking Australian literature into new domains, story of the future is an Australia Council initiative to help the literary sector develop digital, interactive and cross-platform narratives. This has entailed developing the skills of writers to create digital content and developing the capacity of publishing in new technology platforms. The *Publishing the Story of the Future* seminar, held in July 2007, saw more than 100 publishers and industry representatives discuss the models, strategies, consumer trends and intellectual property implications of new technology, led by keynote speaker US publishing consultant Mike Shatzkin. The LAMP: Story of the future labs, held in Tasmania in May 2007 and Queensland in November 2007, saw sixteen teams develop and pitch digital projects with a strong narrative focus for broadband, mobile, advanced TV, game consoles, virtual environments and beyond. Project teams were mentored by new media professionals including US games writer Matt Costello, UK cross platform producer Paul Bennun and Canadian creative developer Tony Walsh. Further funding has been awarded to some of these teams to develop their ideas for commercial production. The literature board supported story of the future with a total budget of \$198,923.

Frankfurt Book Fair

Australia's largest-ever presence at the world's largest literary trade show saw more than 140 Australian publishing representatives attending the Frankfurt Book Fair between 10 and 14 October 2007. Sixty-nine Australian publishers exhibited at Frankfurt under the 'Australian Read' banner that included a clearly branded stall, a lunch-time presentation on the Australian book market and networking functions. One of the hottest deals was for Debra Adelaide's new novel *The Household Guide to Dying*, with rights to the moving tale of life and death worth more than \$1.1 million sold into the UK, USA, Canada, Holland, Germany, Italy, Israel, France and Spain. 'Australian Read' was developed by the Australian Publishers' Association with support from the Australia Council, Austrade and the Australian Embassy in Germany. The Australia Council supported 'Australian Read' with a total budget of \$148,232.

Music

The Australia Council invested more than \$69.1 million in Australian music-making in 2007–08, including \$36.7 million for the nation’s orchestras, \$19.9 million for opera and \$12.5 million for other music-making.

This support comes primarily from the major performing arts board, music board and market development section. It takes the form of grants, residencies, fellowships, an annual award, financial and operational support to music organisations, market and audience development initiatives and strategic initiatives to build capacity across the sector.

The following three activities are examples of the Australia Council’s support for excellence in Australian music.

2008 Don Banks Music Award—Bob Sedergreen

Jazz icon Bob Sedergreen received the 2008 Don Banks Music Award in March 2008. The award recognises the contribution that Bob has made to Australia’s musical and cultural identity over the course of a career spanning more than 50 years. He played a vital role in bringing a unique voice to Australian jazz music as a highly gifted pianist/composer and an inspiring music educator. The \$60,000 Don Banks Music Award is one of the highest accolades in Australian music, awarded annually to a distinguished artist who has made an outstanding and sustained contribution to the artform.

Devastations

Since erupting onto the rock scene with their self-titled debut in 2004, the Devastations have made their mark at home and abroad. Formed in Melbourne, the band has since moved to Berlin to take their career to the next level, winning fans and touring with indie legends Einstürzende Neubauten, the Tindersticks and Blonde Redhead. Two of their albums, *Coal* and *Yes, U*, have been nominated for the Australian Music Prize. The music board and market development section supported the Devastations on a 2007 tour through Germany, France, Scandinavia and the UK with a \$20,000 international pathways grant.

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Knowledge
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Digital downloads research

Digital technologies are revolutionising the music industry—as the stereo gives way to the home theatre and portable device, and the record shop moves online. A report commissioned by the music board and produced by Handshake Media examined some of these changes and new business models for the digital delivery of Australian music. It also looked at the ways that moving towards greater use of digital platforms can contribute to artists’ income levels. Following the report, the music board changed the focus of its presentation and promotion grant category to encourage the creation of websites and other online marketing initiatives.

Performing arts

The Australia Council supported Australia’s performing arts through a number of sector initiatives in 2007–08. These initiatives were managed by the major performing arts board and market development section.

The following three activities are examples of the Australia Council’s contribution to building the capacity of, and new markets for, the performing arts sector.

Australian Performing Arts Market

From Strange Fruit’s performers swaying in the breeze to Big hART’s floating art boat, the Australian Performing Arts Market (APAM) showcased the very best in Australian performance to more than 560 leading Australian and international presenters in February 2008. Sixty-two performing arts companies were set to impress the presenters, building contacts and negotiating tours, over one week during festival season in Adelaide. The eighth biennial APAM had a strong focus on promoting Australian arts in Asian markets, with approximately 75 delegates attending from Asian countries such as China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia and Singapore. Several major tours were being negotiated three months after APAM, with Australian Dance Theatre set to tour their latest production *G* to

25 venues across Europe, and Circa also taking *By the light of the stars that are no longer* to the continent. APAM was presented by the Australia Council and Arts SA, in partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Adelaide Festival Centre. The Australia Council supported APAM with a total budget of \$390,000.

Australia Festival

A slice of Australian culture cut a swathe through the steel city of Pittsburgh, USA between 10 October and 17 November 2007. The Australia Festival showcased Australia's cutting edge performing and visual arts, through 34 performances, four exhibitions and five special events over six weeks. The festival kicked off with four acrobatic shows from Circus Oz and concluded with the techno-wizardry of Chunky Move's *Glow*, with a smorgasbord of Australian art in between from Windmill Performing Arts latest work for children to *Workin Down Under*, a survey exhibition of contemporary video and installation artworks. The Australia Council supported the Australia Festival with a total budget of \$293,830.

4

Knowledge
centre on
the arts in
australia

Anticipating Change report

A new report on the future of the major performing arts predicted that economic and social trends—such as development in the Asian region, Australian demographic shifts and changing leisure options—will impact on the sector. *Anticipating Change in the Major Performing Arts* was released in June 2008, commissioned by the Australia Council and produced by international arts consulting firm AEA Consulting. The report highlighted a number of challenges and opportunities in the performing arts, including climate change, generational workforce succession, rising transport costs, an increasingly diverse society, a globalised marketplace for the performing arts and new technologies. It also emphasised the need for a healthy two-way exchange of ideas and personnel between larger performing arts institutions and smaller companies.

Theatre

The Australia Council invested more than \$20.8 million in Australian theatre in 2007–08.

This support comes primarily from the theatre board, major performing arts board, literature board and market development sections. It takes the form of grants to individual artists and groups, financial and operational support to arts organisations, market and audience development initiatives, and strategic initiatives to build capacity across the sector.

The following three activities are examples of the Australia Council's support for excellence in Australian theatre.

ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival for Young People

More than 30,000 young people went on an artistic rampage through Adelaide from 9 to 18 May 2008, led by festival ambassador Hugh Jackman and a two-headed goat mascot, as part of the 16th ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival for Young People. The festival saw more than 28 theatre companies and artists present works from 13 countries from South Korea to Sweden and South Africa. The festival was opened by a new work by the Snuff Puppets, *Nyet Nyet's Picnic*. The world congress of ASSITEJ, the global network of theatre practitioners, saw more than 500 delegates from 47 countries swap stories and discuss current issues during a UN-style general assembly, forums, 'play slams', showcases and awards events. The theatre board supported the event with \$48,130 and the market development section contributed \$98,130.

Back to Back Theatre—Arts Presenters Conference

Back to Back Theatre's frenetic year of international touring took their award-winning *small metal objects* to 13 different cities around the globe. One of the highlights was performing at the Under the Radar! public festival in New York connected to the world's largest performing arts trade show, the Arts Presenters Conference 2008, in January 2008. Their inventive tale of friendship in a consumer-driven society took over the Staten Island Ferry Terminal—a transit point for 60,000 passengers per day—and garnered rave reviews. In September 2008, *small metal objects* received a prestigious 'Bessie'—a New York Dance and Performance Award honouring their outstanding innovative performance. Back to Back's 'extraordinary achievement' also earned them the coveted ZKB Acknowledgement Prize from the Zurich Theatre Festival in August 2007. The eight-strong Australian delegation

to the Arts Presenters Conference featured dance, circus, outdoor performance and physical theatre companies under the banner OzArts: Australian Performance Now. The theatre board supported Back to Back Theatre with \$166,640 in key organisations funding. The market development section supported the Arts Presenters Conference delegation with a budget of \$40,000.

1

Artists' income levels

PlayWriting Australia

The creation of PlayWriting Australia, the national peak body for playwriting services, has paid dividends in its first year. Writing for performance was very firmly on the agenda at the National Play Festival, held in Brisbane in February 2008, where playwrights and the public took part in a series of workshops, presentations and forums over two weeks. The showcase program also staged eight new Australian plays. PlayWriting Australia also worked with the Australian Script Centre to develop a 'one-stop shop' for organisations looking for Australian plays—www.australianplays.org—an online database of scripts from Playlab, Currency Press and the Australian Script Centre. The theatre board supported PlayWriting Australia with \$390,454 in key organisations funding.

Visual arts

The Australia Council invested more than \$15.8 million in Australian visual arts in 2007–08.

This support comes primarily from the visual arts board and market development section. It takes the form of grants, residencies, fellowships and awards, support for contemporary art organisations, funding for national and international exhibitions and publications, market and audience development initiatives, and strategic initiatives to build capacity across the sector.

The following three activities are examples of the Australia Council's support for excellence in Australian visual arts.

Venice Biennale 2009

2009 will see the diversity of Australia's landscapes and cultures on show at the Venice Biennale. In May 2008, the Australia Council announced the delegation to attend the next edition of what is arguably the most prestigious event in the international visual arts calendar. It will be spearheaded by Shaun Gladwell's *MADDESTMAXIMVS*—an evocative suite of five thematically interrelated videos influenced by his own experiences of outback Australia and the seminal Mad Max films. An exhibition of emerging artists Vernon Ah Kee, Ken Yonetani, Claire Healy and Sean Cordeiro—curated by Felicity Fenner—will be shown at the same time. The selection was made by the Australia Council's visual arts board with advice from three senior curators—Linda Michael, Tony Ellwood and Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev—and the newly appointed Australian commissioner for Venice Biennale, Doug Hall AM. The Australia Council will contribute a budget of \$700,000 to the Venice Biennale 2009 in addition to managing a fundraising program.

1

Artists' income levels

Caroline Casey

One of Australia's leading designers, Caroline Casey's textile and furniture designs are included in the collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the National Gallery of Australia and The Powerhouse Museum. She received a \$30,000 maker to manufacturer to market (MMM) grant in 2007 to create and commercialise her unique *Featherlight* table designs. The prototype table uses the latest in advanced carbon fibre technologies, similar to materials used in the Boeing 787 Dreamliner aeroplane. The visual arts board supported 10 Australian designers with grants of \$30,000 each through the MMM initiative.

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art—Darwin with Tears

One of Australia's pioneering new media, video and performance artists, Lyndal Jones has forged a more than 20-year career on the cutting edge of contemporary art. Her provocative explorations of desire have taken her to the Venice Biennale in 2001 and the unique DMZ exhibition in 2005 in the demilitarised zone in South Korea. A major retrospective of her works—*Darwin with Tears*—was held at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art in Melbourne from May to July 2008. The exhibition featured three major series of her works, including her Venice Biennale work, and one installation especially commissioned for the retrospective. The visual arts board supported the exhibition with a \$37,700 presentation and promotion grant.

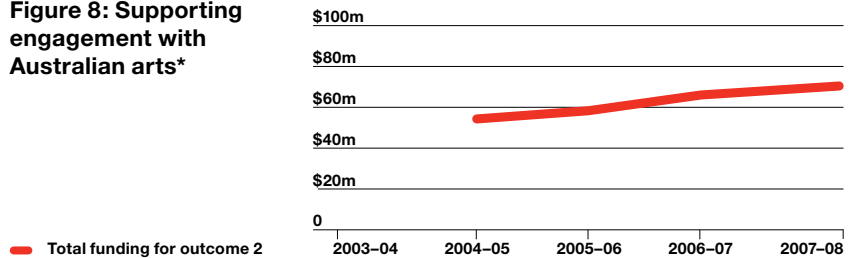
1.2 Outcome 2—Access for all Australians

The Australia Council assists Australian citizens and civic institutions to appreciate, understand, participate in, enjoy and celebrate the arts.

All Australians engage with the arts—even when they don't realise it. From simply buying a book to downloading an album, the arts are an intrinsic part of our lives. The Australia Council plays a large role in breaking down some of the barriers that prevent Australians from recognising the important role that the arts play in their lives.

The Australia Council invested more than \$70.3 million in supporting community engagement in 2007–08, compared to \$66 million the previous year.* This investment has assisted Australians to experience arts festivals, community arts and culture, arts films and broadcasts, education programs, national and regional touring, and exhibitions.

Figure 8: Supporting engagement with Australian arts*



*Funding levels for 2006–07 and 2007–08 reflect cash payments made during each year. This differs from the accrual based figures tabled in the financial statements and this reporting on outcome 2.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, approximately 85 per cent of all Australians over the age of 15 attended a cultural event or venue in 2005–06. Approximately 6 million adult Australians attend performing arts events and 3.6 million attend visual arts events each year.

Australia Council support underpins many of these arts experiences. In 2007–08, there were approximately 9.5 million attendances at Australia Council-supported arts activities. This included funding through project grant programs, small-to-medium arts organisations and major performing arts companies (see figure 9).

Figure 9: Attendances at Australia Council-supported activities

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total audiences	8,773,000	7,142,000	7,987,000	9,310,000	9,498,193
Project grants	4,241,000	2,416,000	2,953,000	2,199,000	1,451,663
Key organisations	2,259,000	2,562,000	2,867,000	3,878,000	4,704,991
Major performing arts companies	2,273,000	2,164,000	2,167,000	3,233,000	3,341,539

The Australia Council's increased focus on greater appreciation for the arts has already supported key projects to engage more Australians with the arts. Movers & Shakers attracted new audiences to contemporary dance during the Sydney Festival (see page 38). A new partnership with the ABC resulted in a landmark screening of The Australian Ballet's performance of *Swan Lake* in living rooms and cinemas across the country (see page 38).

More and more Australians are also actively participating in the arts. Approximately 3.5 million Australians—or around 22 per cent of people over the age of 15—make paid or voluntary work in the arts a major part of their lives (see figure 10).

Figure 10: Number of people involved in selected cultural activities

	2001	2004	2007
Visual arts	503,200	789,900	1,411,700
Craft	396,400	542,700	960,800
Writing	536,900	556,500	606,5000
Performing arts	364,600	423,900	506,300
Music	281,900	305,200	335,110

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Work in Selected Culture and Leisure Activities 6281.0, 2007*. See the report for an explanation of variance between surveys.

Community partnerships

The Australia Council invested more than \$4.7 million in community arts and cultural development in 2007–08.

This support comes primarily from the community partnerships section. It takes the form of grants and an award for individual artists, financial and operational support to community arts and community organisations, support for key producer companies and community partnership support services, and strategic initiatives to build capacity across the sector.

The following six activities are examples of Australia Council's support for community arts and cultural development.

2

Greater
appreciation
for the arts

Big hART—*Ngapartji, Ngapartji*

With seven sold-out seasons across the country, bucket loads of critical acclaim and standing ovations at almost every performance, *Ngapartji, Ngapartji* was one of the highlights of Australian theatre in 2007–08. The production, taking its name from the Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara 'I give you something, you give me something', is the tip of the iceberg of a larger community engagement project by leading community arts organisation Big hART. Working across several Indigenous communities, the project involves an online Pitjantjatjara language and culture website, a literacy-based crime prevention project and a busy office in Alice Springs. It was devised and created by a three person team—Big hART artistic director Scott Rankin, performer Trevor Jamieson and creative producer Alex Kelly. The community partnerships section supported Big hART with \$41,500 in funding and creative producer Alex Kelly was awarded the Australia Council's \$10,000 Kirk Robson award in 2008.

Ros Bower Award—Richard Frankland

The Australia Council's 2007 Ros Bower award was presented to the multi-talented Aboriginal artist Richard Frankland by the Minister for the Arts the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP at a ceremony in Sydney in March 2008. The \$50,000 award recognised Richard's innovative leadership, outstanding artistic talent and contribution to reconciliation and social justice. A Gunditjmara man from Victoria, he has worked as a playwright, filmmaker, stage and screen director, novelist and musician. His award-winning works have included the short film *No Way to Forget* and the play *Conversations with the Dead*.

Somebody's Daughter Theatre—*She's Landed at the Gatwick*

Somebody's Daughter Theatre has worked with women and young people over the past 20 years, proving that the arts have the power to change lives. Their latest production *She's Landed at the Gatwick* was developed and performed by 15 women who had been incarcerated in Victorian prisons, and developed with the help of writer/director Kharen Harper. The story, about a band of residents battling to save their St Kilda boarding house, had a six-night run at the Chapel off Chapel in Melbourne in November 2007. The community partnerships section supported Somebody's Daughter with \$125,000 in key organisations funding.

DADAAWA—*The Proper Shoes*

A radio play about a feisty group of people living with mental illness entranced audiences in the town of Kilkenny, Ireland in October 2007. *The Proper Shoes*, interweaving a series of stories written by young women with a disability, was first broadcast nationally on ABC Radio National in October 2006. Disability in the Arts/Disadvantage in the Arts WA (DADAAWA) was then invited to tour the play as part of the TRASNA Festival of Inclusive Theatre. Four crew members installed the play in the Irish village, where audience members were invited to experience the work as they walked through town for the critically acclaimed production. The community partnerships section supported DADAAWA with \$180,000 in key organisations funding.

Mix It Up

Celebrating Victoria's cultural diversity, Mix It Up is an annual nine-month program that showcases the best in multicultural arts. It is a unique partnership between Multicultural Arts Victoria and Melbourne's The Arts Centre. The 2007 program built on the outstanding success of the previous year, which saw more than 800 artists of 23 nationalities present at 96 events to more than 160,000 visitors. Highlights in 2007 included the *Visible* concert, with performances by Indigenous and emerging

African communities who had been mentored by professional musicians, and *Indonesia Rocks*, a performance by the gamelan ensemble Kua Etnika. The community partnerships section supported The Arts Centre with \$90,000 for Mix It Up and Multicultural Arts Victoria with a \$70,000 program grant.

3

Business and philanthropic involvement in the arts

Feral Arts—www.placestories.com

Providing a place for local communities to tell their stories is the aim of a new digital media project by Queensland community organisation Feral Arts. *PlaceStories* is an online database which has focussed on stories relating to regional arts, environment, landcare and rural communities from Queensland and the United States. A visit to the United States in late 2007 saw the Ferals spending three weeks working with their sister organisation, the Centre for Rural Strategies, in meeting with community organisations to develop and workshop the model for *PlaceStories*. The community partnerships section supported Feral Arts with \$180,000 in key organisations funding. Artsupport Australia mentored the organisation through their successful application to the Westpac Foundation, which saw them awarded \$372,000 over three years.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts

The Australia Council invested more than \$10.1 million in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts in 2007–08.

The following three activities are examples of the Australia Council's support for community engagement with Indigenous arts.

PACT Theatre/Redfern Community Centre—*Block Side Story*

Redfern was chock-a-block for three nights in May 2008, when more than 2000 people came along to the second instalment of a unique cultural event put together by PACT Theatre and the Redfern Community Centre. A team of 60 elders and young people from Redfern and the Waterloo Girls Centre rehearsed for six weeks to present *Block Side Story: A roam around the Block*, following on from the first *Gathering Ground* event held in 2006. Two Sydney arts companies—Legs on the Wall and EARTH—ran skills workshops in puppetry, stilt walking, gymnastics and aerial work leading up to the performances. Performances over the three nights explored themes of family, friendship and local history in an event that was part performance, part cultural tour, part festival and all heart. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts board supported *Block Side Story* with an \$18,000 skills and arts development grant.

3

Business and philanthropic involvement in the arts

Wadeye Community Cultural Festival

An exciting week of music, dance, theatre and community events culminated in a concert by Indigenous rockers Wildflower and Narbalek at the Wadeye Community Cultural Festival in June 2008. The festival program aimed for a 'cultural renaissance' in the community, reviving traditional cultural practices and restoring local arts, music and dance that has been in decline for the past decade. The Wadeye community in the north of the Northern Territory is home to approximately 2500 people comprising 23 tribal and seven language groups. Artsupport Australia helped to broker a philanthropic grant of \$240,000 over three years from the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund.

Mulka Project

A groundbreaking multimedia archive and production centre of Yolngu culture was launched at the 2007 Garma Festival in August 2007. Bridging traditional knowledge and digital media, the Mulka Project is managed by Yolngu people and trains young people in the Yirrkala community to research, interpret and archive cultural material from north-east Arnhem Land. The project is creating a valuable archive of cultural heritage that is being drawn on by local Yolngu people to tell their own stories. In August 2008, an artwork produced by the Mulka Project—Nyapanyapa Yunupingu's bark painting and multimedia work *Incident at Mutpi 1975*—took out the Wandjuk Marika Memorial 3D Work Award at the 25th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards. Artsupport Australia has helped the Mulka Project secure major philanthropic contributions from the Westpac Foundation, the Christensen Fund and an anonymous private donor.

Dance

The Australia Council invested more than \$18.8 million in Australian dance in 2007–08.

The following three activities are some examples of the Australia Council's support for community engagement with Australian dance.

2

Greater appreciation for the arts

Sydney Festival—Movers & Shakers

Affordable \$25 tickets and a program of eight outstanding Australian contemporary dance works, each running for about an hour, got Sydneysiders moving along to the Sydney Festival's groundbreaking Movers & Shakers program. It was the first time that an Australian arts festival had featured a program dedicated exclusively to Australian contemporary dance. The program featured a who's who of Australian choreographic talent—including Stephen Page, Lucy Guerin, Gideon Obarzanek, Kate Champion, Frances Rings, Narelle Benjamin, Shaun Parker and a work by the late Tanja Liedtke—at the Sydney Opera House and Parramatta Riverside Theatre. It also featured screenings of the dance film works and discussions about Australian dance. More than 16,000 tickets were sold to performances over the course of the three-week program. The dance board supported Movers & Shakers with \$200,000.

Tracks Dance Company—Milpirri 2

The red earth of the remote Tanami Desert in the Northern Territory was the venue for a unique community event that featured more than 260 Walpiri dancers and 300 spectators in October 2007. *Milpirri 2* was based on the Kurdiji, the mothers' dreaming, and honoured the role that women play in community life through a fusion of traditional dance and contemporary choreography. The event was coordinated by Darwin's Tracks Dance Company, with its artistic directors collaborating with Walpiri elders, and brought together the entire Lajamanu community, midway between Alice Springs and Darwin. The term 'Milpirri' means storm cloud in Walpiri language and refers to desert convergence of hot and cold air that brings rain and growth. The dance board supported Tracks with \$259,450 in key organisations funding.

5

Arts content for the digital era

Major performing arts digital broadcasts

Dance lovers as far afield as Katherine, Devonport and Hervey Bay got front row seats to a performance by The Australian Ballet of Graeme Murphy's *Swan Lake* on 9 March 2008. The performance was simulcast on ABC2, beamed to big screens in the Sydney Opera House forecourt and Federation Square in Melbourne, and patched in to 2000 people watching in eight regional centres through the Australian Film Commission's Regional Digital Screen Network. The Australian Ballet's multiple award-winning production of *Swan Lake* also toured to Japan in July 2007. The broadcast was part of a strategic partnership between the Australia Council and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) to deliver more arts content across the ABC's digital delivery platforms. A broadcast of Opera Australia's production of *Carmen* was made in March 2008. The major performing arts board supported The Australian Ballet with a \$4,414,091 annual base grant.

Inter-arts

The Australia Council invested more than \$1.25 million in interdisciplinary arts through the inter-arts office in 2007–08.

The following three activities are some examples of the Australia Council's support for community engagement with inter-disciplinary arts.

5

Arts content for the digital era

Australian Network for Art and Technology—*Portable Worlds*

An entire art gallery fitting in your pocket may not be as far fetched as it seems. An exhibition of nine bold artworks for the mobile screen, the Australian Network for Art and Technology (ANAT)'s *Portable Worlds* began a national tour in March 2008 in South Australia and has since travelled to regional Tasmania and Victoria. The exhibition encourages school children and young media producers to contribute their artworks through a free Bluetooth interface, with activities designed to facilitate the development of small screen literacy skills and creative practice. The visual arts board supported ANAT with \$317,910 in key organisations funding.

Khaled Sabsabi—*Ali or Eli*

An installation of streamed sound and video challenging stereotypes of the Middle East, Khaled Sabsabi's *Ali or Eli* opened in two places at once in October 2005 before touring to Victoria in September 2007. The work was presented at both the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre and the Campbelltown Arts Centre in western Sydney, containing dual representations of almost identical content—the sun, architecture and the sounds of Lebanon and Palestine. Khaled Sabsabi is a multimedia sound artist, community cultural development practitioner and hip-hop artist who has performed in Australia, Europe and the Middle East. *Ali and Eli* was presented by the Australia Council-supported kultour network.

Hellen Sky

A founding member of Circus Oz, The Australian Performing Group and dancehouse, Hellen Sky made a name for herself as an innovative physical performer. Her recent work uses technology to bridge the gap between performers and their audiences, exploring new techniques for using biometric data to trigger visual and sound artworks. Her latest work develops this further still, sensing a range of stimuli including spoken word, movement, sound, moving image, spatial design, virtual worlds and realtime interactivity. The inter-arts office supported Hellen Sky with a \$75,000 ArtLab initiative grant.

Literature

The Australia Council invested more than \$6.7 million in Australian literature in 2007–08.

The following three activities are examples of the Australia Council's support for community engagement with Australian literature.

Books Alive 2007

Australia's largest annual promotion of books and reading, Books Alive encouraged more Australians to discover the joys of reading in August 2007. The month-long campaign included the distribution of 2.5 million copies of the *Great Read Guide*, a free brochure featuring a list of 50 recommended reads, and the giveaway of 213,000 copies of *The Ballad of Les Darcy* by popular author and commentator Peter FitzSimons for free with the purchase of any book in the guide. The guide was inserted into the August edition of the *Australian Women's Weekly*. Books Alive was backed by a series of participating author tours, a national advertising campaign, bookseller initiatives, a website and e-newsletter. An estimated 150,000 additional copies of books in the *Great Read Guide* were sold during the campaign compared to their baseline sales. Books Alive is an Australian Government initiative worth \$2 million per year.

3

**Business
and
philanthropic
involvement
in the arts**

Red Room Company—*Papercuts*

The Red Room Company has been promoting poetry on radio, online, on billboards, on walls and behind toilet doors since 2001. Their schools education program, *Papercuts*, places writers in schools to discuss poetry using the Red Room's successful *Cabinet of Lost and Found*, a series of objects that provide creative inspiration for the students. The pilot of the program was successfully trialled in four schools in 2007, and *Papercuts* took words and objects into a further five schools in NSW and Victoria in the first half of 2008. The literature board supported *Papercuts* with \$4000. Artsupport Australia mentored the Red Room Company over three years, resulting in funding from the Keir Foundation and Ian Potter Foundation.

Australian literature in education

Getting more Australian literature taught in schools and universities was top of the agenda when the Australia Council hosted a roundtable of 20 distinguished authors, publishers, teachers and academics in Canberra on 7 August 2007. The roundtable and subsequent communiqué sparked a national conversation around the issue, coinciding with the Australian Government's announcement of a new chair of Australian literature. Since the roundtable, the NSW and WA state governments have been examining ways to increase the amount of Australian literature taught in their state school systems. A panel entitled 'Writers as Readers' at the Sydney Writers Festival further discussed issues relating to literary education, with eminent writers such as Helen Garner, Luke Davies, Christos Tsiolkas and Sam Wagan Watson talking about their literary influences.

2

Greater appreciation for the arts

Music

The Australia Council invested more than \$69.1 million in Australian music-making in 2007–08.

The following three activities are examples of the Australia Council's support for community engagement with Australian music.

Queensland Music Festival—2007 Regional Program

The town of Longreach in central Queensland hosted a posse of rodeo riders, boxers, choristers, four musical groups and the town's brass band over three nights in July 2007, when *The Greatest Show on Earth* came to town. The show was one of the highlights of the biennial Queensland Music Festival (QMF) which brought together the best of Australian and international music. More than 100,000 people flocked to the festival's popular regional program, which over the course of 17 jam-packed days took more than 40 live performances and 16 new works to 21 communities across regional Queensland. Under the artistic direction of Paul Grabowsky, the 2007 festival's theme explored music as a language of transformation. The community partnerships section supported the QMF's regional program with \$100,000.

Musica Viva Australia—Sweet Tonic

Musica Viva's *Sweet Tonic*—a two-year project being run at the Campbelltown Arts Centre in Sydney—highlights the positive benefits of music to the health and well-being of seniors. Over the course of a year, 30 participants aged between 51 and 83 from 15 suburbs across western Sydney sung to their heart's content in workshops across a range of vocal styles. Participants with a medical history of chronic illness and asthma recorded increased lung capacity and remarkable improvements in fitness levels since the start of the project. The medical benefits of the program were researched by the Macarthur Division of General Practitioners and the social benefits by the University of Western Sydney. The major performing arts board supported Musica Viva with a \$1,441,088 annual base grant. The music board supported Sweet Tonic with \$110,000.

WA Music Industry Association—schools program

An innovative program of songwriting and recording workshops in 12 Western Australian primary and secondary schools was run by the WA Music Industry Association (WAM) throughout 2007–08. The music created by the students at the workshops was then uploaded onto the WAM website and put onto CDs for each school. Performances by professional musicians side-by-side with the students then got the students rocking. The music board supported the program with a \$30,000 skills and arts development grant.

Theatre

The Australia Council invested more than \$20.8 million in Australian theatre in 2007–08.

The following three activities are examples of the Australia Council's support for community engagement with Australian theatre.

Company B—*Keating! The Musical*

'The musical we had to have', about the former prime minister with sharp suits and rapier wit, has been one of the most talked about stage shows in recent years. Written by Casey Bennetto and directed by Neil Armfield, *Keating! The Musical* was seen by 166,874 people in 126 performances over 2007 in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Canberra, Wollongong and Albany. Further dates in eight metropolitan and regional centres followed in the first half of 2008. The production took out three Helpmann Awards in 2007 and one in 2008, including best musical, best direction in a musical, best supporting actor and best regional touring production. The major performing arts board supported Company B with a \$572,927 annual base grant.

Milk Crate Theatre

Australia's only theatre company dedicated solely to homeless people, Milk Crate Theatre knows how to make a big impact on a shoestring budget. They run more than 50 workshops and six public performances each year on the streets of inner-city Sydney that bring together professional theatremakers with homeless people. Milk Crate Theatre is a partnership between Darlinghurst Theatre Company

and Wesley Mission's Edward Eagar Lodge. The community partnerships section also supported Milk Crate Theatre with a \$15,000 grant. Artsupport Australia has mentored Milk Crate Theatre resulting in them securing a major individual donation worth \$150,000 over three years as well as grants from Perpetual Trustees and the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation.

3

Business
and
philanthropic
involvement
in the arts

Kurruru Indigenous Youth Performing Arts—*Second to None*

A bus tour led by three shonky property developers spirals wildly out of control in a unique theatrical experience staged by Kurruru Indigenous Performing Arts and Vitalstatistix Theatre Company in November 2007. *Second to None* took in four sites across Port Adelaide (Yerta Bulti), with more than 140 performers exploring the many layers of local and Kaurna history when the bus is 'hijacked' by three Aboriginal women. The production sold out all four performances and garnered rave reviews. The theatre board supported Vitalstatistix with \$164,507 in key organisations funding. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts board supported Kurruru with \$140,981 in key organisations funding. Artsupport Australia also mentored Kurruru's fundraising activities.

Visual arts

The Australia Council invested more than \$15.8 million in Australian visual arts in 2007–08.

The following three activities are examples of the Australia Council's support for community engagement with Australian visual arts.

Fremantle Arts Centre—*Bon Scott Project*

A celebration of Australia's most iconic rocker, the *Bon Scott Project* was a multimedia retrospective on the life and times of Bon Scott, lead singer of AC/DC from 1974 to 1980. The exhibition was presented by Fremantle Arts Centre in May 2008, bringing together the stories of fans, friends and fanatics who played important roles in his life and music. Painting, sculpture, drawing, collage, photography, video, an online blog and an obligatory AC/DC cover band were featured in the project, curated by Jasmin Stephens. Nineteen artists took part in the six-week celebration. The visual arts board supported the *Bon Scott Project* with a \$20,000 presentation and promotion grant.

Experimenta—*Experimenta Playground*

A selection of cutting-edge artworks—featuring underwater worlds, a table-top city and giant multi-coloured tea cups—invited audiences to come out and play in five centres across the country from August 2007. *Experimenta Playground* toured interactive artworks, video installations, short films and extreme art to venues in Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Adelaide and Bendigo. Twenty-nine artists from Australia and around the world were featured, including Shaun Gladwell, Stelarc, Daniel Crooks, June Bum Park and Shu Lea Cheang. The visual arts board supported Experimenta with \$42,066 in key organisations funding and an additional \$50,000 in Visual Arts and Craft Strategy funding.

2

Greater
appreciation
for the arts

Biennale of Sydney

Sydney comes alive every two years when the Biennale of Sydney bursts onto the city, as the largest and best-attended contemporary visual arts event in Australia. The 2008 Biennale, themed *Revolutions—Forms That Turn*, featured more than 180 artists from 42 countries with 65 new art works, presented alongside a selection of international avant-garde works from last century. From June to September 2008, the Biennale was exhibited in seven venues across the city including the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Cockatoo Island and the Sydney Opera House. The Biennale attracted more than 430,000 visitors over the three months. For the first time ever, it featured an additional virtual venue at www.bos2008.com/revolutionsonline/. The visual arts board supported the Biennale of Sydney with \$213,959 in key organisations funding and an additional \$360,000 in Visual Arts and Craft Strategy funding.