



ASSESSMENT MEETING REPORT



THEATRE BOARD

APPLICATION CLOSING DATE
15 NOVEMBER 2003

AUSTRALIA COUNCIL
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THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS EMBARGOED FROM PUBLIC
DISCUSSION UNTIL 31 MARCH 2004

ABOUT THIS REPORT

March 2004

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

This Assessment Meeting was held on 2 – 5 March 2004. Applications were assessed in the New Work, Skills and Arts Development and Fellowships categories.

ATTENDANCE

The membership of the Theatre Board at the time of the meeting was as follows:

Ian McRae (Chair) is based in Melbourne (Vic) and is a senior arts administrator.

Sally Beck (Vic) is the General Manager of the Geelong Performing Arts Centre.

Wojciech Pisarek (SA) is an independent theatre artist.

Sally Richardson (WA) is an independent theatre director.

Marion Potts (NSW) is an independent theatre director.

Kim Walker (NSW/Vic) is Artistic Director of The Flying Fruit Fly Circus in Albury/Wodonga.

Kate Fell (Qld) is the CEO of Youth Arts Queensland.

Note: Marion Potts was not able to attend this Assessment Meeting

In addition to the Board members, Rosemary Miller (Tas), Director Salamanca Arts Centre, Glenn Terry (NSW), Director Darlinghurst Theatre and Rachael Swain (NSW), Co Artistic Director Stalker Theatre attended the meeting as participating advisors to assist in discussions.

Staff attending this Assessment Meeting comprised:

John Baylis	Manager
Kim Hanna	Senior Program Officer
Antonietta Morgillo	Program Officer
Caroline Kenna	Assistant Program Officer
Fiona Sprott	Youth Arts Officer (Theatre)
Ingrid Mills	Administrator
Romany Peterson	Administrative Assistant

Kevin Golding, Finance & Reporting Analyst, attended part of the meeting.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

This meeting was mainly concerned with the assessment of applications in the New Work, Skills and Arts Development and Fellowships categories, though the Board also made other decisions, which we hope, will be of long-term benefit to theatre artists.

The most notable aspect of the New Work applications was their quality, particularly those for production. The cut-off point for funding has rarely been so high, and this is a testament to the creative energy within the theatre community. Unfortunately it also meant that quite a few applications that may have been funded in a less competitive environment were unsuccessful. Those who missed out might want to consider resubmitting their applications – but I advise you first to seek feedback from program staff.

Another interesting feature was that many proposals had a range of income sources and so were not overly dependent on Theatre Board support. While the Board understands the added pressure that seeking such additional income entails (especially for independent projects), it is in the end the most practical strategy, as the Board's funds alone are clearly unable to meet the field's expectations.

The Board also assessed proposals responding to the Theatre Export Investment Fund that it announced late last year. This is a pilot initiative that aims to give artists and companies with established international markets the opportunity to make strategic long-term decisions regarding their further development of these and other markets. It does this by offering three-year support for the successful applicants' international market development activities, with the proviso that at the end of that period the companies involved will need to be self-sufficient in these activities for the subsequent three years. We thank the Council's Audience and Market Development Division for partnering us in this initiative.

The Board decided to enter into a partnership with Young People and the Arts Australia (YPAA – formerly Youth Performing Arts Australia) to assist in the creation of an accessible 'how to' resource that is structured to speak specifically to professionals in the young people and the arts sector. It aims to encourage them to better advocate the value of the work they do, and the nature of support that is needed to sustain this work. The kit will be a guide to effective communication (and therefore influence) with governments, media and the community.

The sustainability of regional theatre is an issue that has concerned the Board recently. We are hosting a round table forum for regional theatre companies to come together and discuss the challenges and creative solutions for issues affecting them. It will be held in conjunction with Meeting Place, the national regional arts conference being held in Horsham on 22-24 October this year, and we have invited all regional companies receiving Key Organisations funding from the Board to attend.

The Board has also decided to partner the Victorian College of the Arts in holding another training retreat for artistic directors following on from the event held in Ballarat in October 2002. It will be called AD2004 and will take place in Victoria on 14-19 November. While the emphasis will be on issues of creative practice and artistic planning, general managers are also invited to attend in recognition of crucial creative partnership between them and artistic directors. There will also be places for aspiring artistic directors. Please contact Colleen Wait for further information on 03 9696 5085, email: colleen@paxinos.com.au

We appreciated the valuable input of three advisors at our meetings: Rosemary Miller, Rachael Swain and Glenn Terry. I would like to thank them all for their contribution.

Ian McRae
Chair

OUTCOMES

PROGRAM TITLE	APPLICATIONS (Number)		SUCCESS %	APPLICATIONS (Amounts - \$)	
	RECEIVED	APPROVED		REQUESTED	APPROVED
NEW WORK: COMMISSION DEVELOPMENT	74	11	15%	\$2,684,948	\$214,615
NEW WORK: PRODUCTION	70	12	17%	\$1,335,320	\$465,000
NEW WORK: YOUNG ARTISTS INITIATIVE	16	4	25%	\$217,264	\$53,325
SKILLS AND ARTS DEVELOPMENT – SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	26	5	19%	\$205,968	\$26,012
SKILLS AND ARTS DEVELOPMENT – ARTFORM DEVELOPMENT	8	3	37%	\$158,181	\$46,272
FELLOWSHIPS	13	3	23%	\$1,040,000	\$240,000*
TOTAL	207	38	18%	\$5,641,681	\$1,049,010

* Includes total amount for three 2-year Fellowship grants.

The following grants were awarded prior to this assessment meeting but are recorded here for your information.

PROGRAM TITLE	APPLICATIONS (Number)		SUCCESS %	APPLICATIONS (Amounts - \$)	
	RECEIVED	APPROVED		REQUESTED	APPROVED
Out of Time since September Meeting	4	2	50%	\$18,820	\$9,980
Playing the World since September meeting	6	3	50%	\$132,183	\$90,023
TOTAL	10	5	50%	\$151,003	\$100,003

A full list of approved grants from this meeting and all approved Out of Time grants and Playing the World grants since the September meeting is attached.

FEEDBACK

- Overall the Board were impressed with the high calibre of applications at this meeting. This led to a highly competitive round.
- Where past creative development activity has been undertaken and video documentation of a suitable quality exists, applicants are encouraged to include this as support material.
- Applicants are reminded to submit biographies for all key artists and that these artists must be confirmed.
- The name of the intended venue for applications with production outcomes should always be included.
- In New Work Production, applicants are requested to provide a breakdown of their box office. (Number of performances X number of audience X average ticket price.)
- On the whole budgeting was realistic and the Board noted the attempt to diversify income from a number of sources.
- The Board was disappointed with the low number of applications from some states.
- Applicants are encouraged to articulate content and process of their project without hyperbole. The vision should be clearly articulated, details as to how the project will be undertaken should be included and an explanation as to how the key artists will contribute to the project should be made clear. Applications that read like press releases are rarely successful.
- Whilst Board members cannot attend all showings of creative development they do encourage early notification of such events by email to Theatre Board staff so that the information can be forwarded well in advance.

PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

CURRENT INITIATIVES

Playing the World

This is an initiative of the Theatre Board and the Audience and Market Development Division. *Playing the World* aims to provide a flexible funding process to assist theatre artists and companies with exportable work to develop sustainable international markets and audiences.

For further information contact Terese Casu on 02 9215 9117 or email: t.casu@ozco.gov.au

Flying Start Initiative

This initiative allows new Artistic Directors to prepare themselves for their role. It is available to newly appointed Artistic Directors of companies supported through the Key Organisations category of the Theatre Board.

For further information contact Fiona Sprott on 02 9215 9301 or email: f.sprott@ozco.gov.au

Theatre Export Assessment Fund

This is a pilot initiative that aims to give artists and companies with established international markets the opportunity to make strategic long-term decisions regarding their further development of these and other markets. The initiative is co-funded by the Theatre Board and the Council's Audience and Market Development Division.

Two proposals were received by 18 February and both were successful. Stalker Theatre (NSW) and Primary Source trading as Strange Fruit (Vic) will each receive \$150,000 for the next three years to realise their international strategies.

For further information contact John Baylis on 02 9215 9192 or email: j.baylis@ozco.gov.au

FUTURE INITIATIVES

Dramaturgy Fellowship

The Theatre Board has agreed to provide an opportunity for the consolidation of professional dramaturgical practice for two experienced dramaturgs.

Two fellowships to the value of \$25,000 for each will be offered in 2004 and again in 2005.

For further information contact Antonietta Morgillo on 02 9215 9107 or email: a.morgillo@ozco.gov.au

Advocacy Resource Kit

With Theatre Board support, YPAA (Young People and the Arts Australia) will create an accessible 'how to' resource for artists and organisations working with the young people and the arts sector. The resource will help them to better advocate the value of the work they do to governments, the media and the community in general.

For further information contact John Baylis on 02 9215 9192 or email: j.baylis@ozco.gov.au

MOBILE STATES: Touring Contemporary Performance, Australia

Mobile States is a national touring initiative of the Theatre Board. Its first touring production will be *Still Angela* by Jenny Kemp, which was originally produced by Playbox Theatre in Melbourne. The presenting partners for this tour are Performance Space (Sydney), Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (Perth), Brisbane Powerhouse (Brisbane), Salamanca Arts (Hobart) and Vitalstatistix (Adelaide) with tour management by Performing Lines. The tour is also receiving support from Playing Australia, the Australian Government's national touring program.

For further information contact John Baylis on 02 9215 9192 or email: j.baylis@ozco.gov.au

STEPS IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

BEFORE THE MEETING

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

AT THE MEETING

ASSESSMENT

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

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

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

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

NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision by mail during the month indicated in the Handbook and the application forms. Information about grant decisions will not be released over the phone.

IF YOUR APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL

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

ACQUITTAL OF GRANTS

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

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

GRANTS LIST

**THEATRE BOARD
APPROVED GRANTS LIST
Closing Date: 15 November 2003**

NEW WORK- Creative Development Only

Recipient	Project Description	AMOUNT	STATE
Bladel, Richard	Commission and Creative Development of 'The Bone Orchard'	\$10,000	TAS
Bromilow, Mark	Commission and Creative Development of 'The Josephine Machine'	\$24,025	QLD
Cronin, Patrick	Creative Development of 'The Ennio Morricone Experience – The Session'	\$5,000	VIC
Desoxy Theatre Incorporated	Creative Development of 'Waves of Useful Intensity'	\$7,002	VIC
Freewheels Theatre in Education Company	Creative Development of 'Speedcity'	\$35,300	NSW
Green Room Music	Commission and Creative Development of 'The Hanging of Jean Lee'	\$20,192	NSW
Illawarra Performing Arts Centre	Creative Development of 'My Big Idea'	\$20,167	NSW
Museum of Modern Oddities	Creative Development of 'The MoMO Lectures'	\$11,000	VIC
RecLink Inc	Commission and Creative Development of new script by P P Craney	\$24,230	NSW
skadada (trading under Alpha Corp Pty Ltd)	Creative Development of 'In Excelsis'	\$38,257	WA
Yang, William	Creative Development of 'Objects for Meditation'	\$19,442	NSW

THEATRE BOARD
APPROVED GRANTS LIST
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NEW WORK- Development and/or Production Stages

Recipient	Project Description	AMOUNT	STATE
Business Unusual Theatre	Production of 'The Pearler'	\$54,218	NT
Chamber Made Opera	Production of 'The Charcoal Club'	\$45,000	VIC
Critical Mass Theatre	Production of 'Surface Tension'	\$20,020	NSW
Darwin Theatre Company	Production of 'Tin Hotel'	\$70,000	NT
East Coast Theatre Company	Production of 'Death Variations'	\$38,000	NSW
Finucane, Moira	Production of 'The Burlesque Hour'	\$15,000	VIC
IRAA Theatre, IRAA	Development & Production of 'The Diary Project'	\$33,100	VIC
Liminal Theatre & Performance Inc	Production of 'Sotoba Komachi & Kantan'	\$39,670	NSW
Next Wave Festival Inc	Development & Production of 'Primetime'	\$50,000	VIC
Popov, Bagryana	Production of 'Subclass 26A'	\$48,778	VIC
Westside Circus Inc	Production of 'Five Rivers'	\$15,000	VIC
Wilson, Lee	Production of 'Plaza Real'	\$40,000	NSW

**THEATRE BOARD
APPROVED GRANTS LIST
Closing Date: 15 November 2003**

NEW WORK- Young and Emerging Artists

Recipient	Project Description	AMOUNT	STATE
Clare Britton & Halycon Macleod	Young Artists Initiative – Production of 'Politely Savage'	\$15,000	NSW
Festival Fringe Society of Perth Inc	Young Artists Initiative – Production of 'Abductions'	\$14,555	WA
LAMP	Young Artists Initiative – Production of 'LAMP'	\$8,900	TAS
Sista She	Young Artists Initiative – Production of 'Inna Thigh The Sista She Story'	\$14,870	VIC

**THEATRE BOARD
APPROVED GRANTS LIST
Closing Date: 15 November 2003**

SKILLS AND ARTS DEVELOPMENT- Skills Development

Recipient	Project Description	AMOUNT	STATE
Harkin, Benjamin	To undertake a 6 month Artistic Directing Fellowship with MTC	\$7,295	VIC
Mead, Christopher	To participate in INTERPLAY, Europe	\$3,500	NSW
Mitchell, Phillip	To participate in the 19 th UNIMA World Puppetry Festival and Congress	\$2,631	WA
Schlusser, Daniel	To observe rehearsal of "Der Volkfeind" at Frankfurt Schauspielhaus	\$2,586	VIC
Valentine, Alana	Towards development of professional skills in Museum Theatre	\$10,000	NSW

**THEATRE BOARD
APPROVED GRANTS LIST
Closing Date: 15 November 2003**

SKILLS AND ARTS DEVELOPMENT- Artform Development

Recipient	Project Description	AMOUNT	STATE
Auspicious Arts Projects Inc	Towards national puppetry and animatronics summit	\$15,000	VIC
Dramaturgies	Towards DRAMATURGIES III	\$19,500	VIC
International Festival of Young Playwrights Ltd	Towards Interplay Artist in Residence	\$11,772	QLD

**THEATRE BOARD
APPROVED GRANTS LIST
Closing Date: 15 November 2003**

FELLOWSHIPS

Recipient	Project Description	AMOUNT	STATE
Cameron, Margaret	2004 –2006 Fellowship	\$80,000*	VIC
Kellaway, Nigel	2004 –2006 Fellowship	\$80,000*	NSW
Tate, Jennie	2004 –2006 Fellowship	\$80,000*	NSW

* Includes total amount for three 2 year Fellowship grant

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**THEATRE BOARD
OUT OF TIME
September 2003 – February 2004**

RECIPIENT	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	AMOUNT
Newton-Broad, Caitlin	Professional development - contribution toward a residency with 'Blast Theory' in the UK	\$ 6,480	NSW
Sewell, Stephen	Professional development - to travel to New York for a series of readings of his latest play	\$3,500	NSW

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THEATRE BOARD
PLAYING THE WORLD
A JOINT INITIATIVE WITH THE AUDIENCE AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
September 2003 – February 2004

RECIPIENT	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	STATE
Australian Children's Performing Arts	Tour of 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Fish' to Asia (Tokyo, Japan, Hong Kong)	\$18,000	SA
Primary Source	Tour of 'The Spheres' to Toronto, Canada	\$20,000	VIC
Stalker Theatre	Tour of 'Incognita' to Italy, The Netherlands, France and Belgium	\$52,023	NSW

