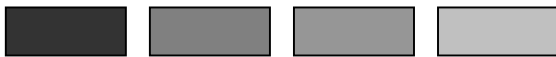




Australian Government



## ASSESSMENT MEETING REPORT



### Dance Board

APPLICATION CLOSING DATE  
15 June 2006

AUSTRALIA COUNCIL  
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THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS EMBARGOED FROM PUBLIC  
DISCUSSION UNTIL Thursday 5 October 2006



### September 2006

The Dance Board met to assess Key Organisations and Program Grant applications on 11-12 September 2006 and took the opportunity to move through some policy discussion in the afternoon of the 12<sup>th</sup>. A total of 9 applications were assessed. This report provides context to the assessment, some statistical analysis of the results of the grant rounds and more general comments made by the Board during the assessment of the applications submitted at the 15 June 2006 closing date.

#### **Key Organisations**

Key Organisations Triennial Grants provide funding to a limited number of outstanding organisations to assist the development and advancement of dance in Australia. Applicants should be leading exponents or advocates of dance. They must have a substantial record of achievement and be able to demonstrate that they have enriched Australian dance both by their work and through the development of artists, ideas and process. They must also be able to demonstrate that triennial funding will enhance their ability to continue to develop and fulfil this role in the future.

The Board is seeking to support organisations that have a national impact or are models of excellence in their particular area of dance, or are outstanding dance companies. At this level of operation the Board expects organisations to understand and articulate their position in the dance community and to outwardly engage with the broader community.

#### **Program Grants**

Program Grants provide one-year funding to a limited number of significant organisations to enrich the diversity of dance practice. They are for organisations that are testing boundaries and demonstrate creative thinking and innovation in both artistic programming and administrative processes. Small dance companies and other structures that support dance practice are a priority.

Please note that receipt of a Program Grant in one year gives no guarantee of funding levels beyond that year. Each year all applications must compete on their merits for available funding.

Applicants should demonstrate their ability to implement a program of well-planned, interconnected activities in a year, or an activity that occurs over the greater part of a year.

**All applications** were read, viewed and assessed by all participating members except in the case of members declaring **conflicts of interest**. As per Australia Council procedure, members leave the room for discussion and are unable to score applications for which they had **actual or perceived** conflicts (as assessed by the Director).



**Dominique Fisher, Chair (Vic)** was a student at the Australian Ballet School and has served five years as a Board member of the Sydney Opera House Trust and six years as a director of the Malthouse Theatre. Dominique is currently chairperson of Circadian Technologies Limited, and is one of few Australian women chairing a listed public company. She is also chairperson of two other technology companies; a director of a Malaysian property company operating in Malaysia and Australia; director of several private companies and principal and managing Director of her own business which undertakes substantial commercial transactions in communications, telecommunications and information technology industries. Previously, Dominique had nine years experience as a non-executive director on the Board of Australia's largest general insurer, IAG Limited and NRMA. She is also a member of the ICT Advisory Board to the Hon. Senator Helen Coonan, Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts.

**Steven Richardson, Deputy Chair (Vic)** has worked for a number of arts festivals and other organisations and has a broad experience in the arts spanning more than twenty years as a creative producer and director in the small to medium arts company sector. In 2002 he produced the 2002 Next Wave Festival and as executive producer and CEO was responsible for the creative, organisational and strategic direction of the most successful festival in its 16-year history. Steven also currently holds honorary positions with a number of groups. Steven has a strong interest in developing innovative approaches to arts and cultural engagement. Steven is currently Artistic Director of Arts House, Melbourne.

**Rebecca Hilton (Vic)** is a Victorian College of the Arts graduate who has performed with Dance Exchange and Dance Works before moving to New York in 1987. There Rebecca performed and toured extensively with the Stephen Petronio Company and has appeared in the works of many international artists. Rebecca was a founding member of the Lucy Guerin Dance Company. She teaches extensively for companies, schools and in festivals worldwide and her choreography has been presented worldwide. She has had commissions from Dance Works, Chunky Move, Balletlab, Laborgras (Berlin), the Victorian College of the Arts, The Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts and New York State University. In 1998 Rebecca received a Green Room award.

**Jeff Meiners (SA)** has worked widely in dance for 20 years, teaching all ages and running programs with artists, teachers and community workers to support development in metropolitan and rural regions. He has taught extensively in schools, as leader of a dance education team, as a university lecturer and guest tutor in Australia and overseas. Jeff's work has included projects with young children, youth dance and people with disability, plus a range of partnerships with local government areas, the NSW Department of Education and Training and NAISDA. He has written for the NSW Board of Studies and BBC Radio's Dance Education workshops. Jeff is currently a lecturer at the University of South Australia's School of Education and has recently worked with projects at the Dance Xchange, Birmingham, England, and with Forum Dança in Portugal.

**Suzan Williams (Qld)** is a graduate of the Queensland Dance School of Excellence (1986) and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Dance from Queensland University of Technology (1989). For 10 years, Suzan specialised in performing and producing dance works for young audiences with Darc Swan Contemporary Dance Company, Queensland Ballet and her own company, PointeBlank Productions. She toured extensively with Queensland Arts Council's School Touring Program and has worked with choreographers including Harold Collins, Jonothan Taylor and Natalie Weir.



## ATTENDANCE / OUTCOMES

Retiring from performing in 1999, Suzan joined Brisbane-based production and graphic design company, ToadShow, coordinator of their web division. In 2005, Suzan was appointed Regional Touring Coordinator at ARTS at Queensland Arts Council where she is responsible for developing and coordinating national tours of Queensland's major performing arts companies.

For this meeting the Board was assisted by one **Participating Advisor**:

**Nanette Hassall (WA)** has performed, taught and choreographed in both Australia and overseas. Graduating from the Juillard School in New York she joined the Merce Cunningham Dance Company touring extensively in the USA and Europe. She performed, taught and choreographed for major companies in both Europe and Australia before founding and directing Danceworks, a full-time professional dance company in Melbourne between 1983 and 1990. Nanette has choreographed over forty works. She is currently the Head of the Dance Department at the W.A. Academy of Performing Arts, a position she was appointed to in 1995. As a dance advocate Nanette has been a member of the council for the Australia Council. She is currently chair of the Committee for Creation and Presentation (World Dance Alliance – Asia Pacific) and chair of the Tertiary Dance Council of Australia. She was recognised nationally through an award for her Services to Dance Education in 2002.

## OUTCOMES

CATEGORY Title	APPLICATIONS		%	APPLICANTS	
	Received	Approved		Requested	Approved
Key Organisations	3	2	66.7%	\$1,340,000	\$928,032
Program Grants	6	4	66.7%	\$609,977	\$341,660
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>\$1,949,977</b>	<b>\$1,269,692</b>

Triennial Grants 2006-08 – Funding for 2007	
Ausdance (National)	\$194,560
Buzz Dance Theatre (WA)	\$125,706
Chunky Move (Vic)	\$168,960
Dancehouse (Vic)	\$130,944
Expressions Dance Company (Qld)	\$125,706
Leigh Warren & Dancers (SA)	\$209,510
Lucy Guerin Inc. (Vic)	\$104,755
Restless Dance Company (SA)	\$87,040
Stompin Youth Dance Company (Tas)	\$91,630
Tracks (NT)	\$189,440
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,428,251</b>

**A full list of approved grants is attached.**

It is also important to note that in addition to the assessed applications at this meeting, the following organisations are in receipt of Triennial Key Organisations Grants for 2006 to 2008.



The Dance Board met in September to discuss and assess applications for what may be called the infrastructure of the Australian dance sector. This year, the Board has been committed to refining its activity and the way that it resources the sector – both financially and through non-financial means. To provide some context, the Dance Board's commitment through its Program and Key Organisations in the 2005-06 financial year represented 65% of direct spending. This is by far the most strategic way that the Board can resource the dance community in its many forms and show leadership and encourage its supported organisations to be of best benefit to the sector. To provide further context, the Dance Board's support of these organisations in the same period reflected 18% of total Australia Council spending to dance in Australia.

With these considerations at the forefront of the Board's mind we further interrogated statistical information brought together by the analysts of the Key Organisations section to gain a detailed and updated overview of the sector and how it has been performing in the last few years. Although many of the statistics and trends represent very real challenges to the sector there was evidence of exceptional financial and artistic management, albeit within tight margins and in some areas of activity, audience growth. This analysis will be presented to the Board every year to strengthen our knowledge and understanding of the pressures and achievements of our sector.

The Board itself continues to face extreme financial pressure and, like many of our organisations, needs to make very tough decisions that have both short and long term consequences. Our discussion was rigorous, ethical, focused and above all difficult.

In addition to the assessment of the applications, the Board discussed its Action Plan for 2006-08 (soon to be published online), changes to the 2007 Support for the Arts Handbook and decisions around the Board's Young and Emerging Artists allocation from Government. The Board also had discussions with Frank Panucci, Director of Community Partnerships and Cathy Brown-Watt, Executive Director of the Major Performing Arts Board. Both these sections of Council represent different ways that our sector is serviced and the Board looks forward to growing our already healthy relationships with these Divisions of Council and their respective sectors.

I need to acknowledge the invaluable input by our Peer Advisor for the meeting Nanette Hassall who brought her working knowledge; her involvement in the tertiary sector and her respected international status to the Board meeting. Finally it is with huge disappointment I have to note that Rebecca Hilton's term as Dance Board member ends in November. This was therefore her last meeting. Even in my short time as Chair I realise what a loss Becky will be to the Board but thank her sincerely for her service and look forward to working with her again in the future.

Dominique Fisher  
**Chair, Dance Board**



### **SCOPE for Dancers**

The Australian Sports Commission in consultation with the steering committee of SCOPE is in the process of recruitment and selection for a national manager for the program to begin in February 2007.

The 'Securing Career Opportunities for Professional Employment' (SCOPE) project combines arts, sport and education resources to advance career opportunities for dance artists as part of their professional life. Information will be available on the Australia Council website in the coming months.

### **Indigenous Dance Infrastructure**

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Arts Division and the Dance Board of Council are working with Ausdance National in the coordination of a National Dance Coordinator within the Ausdance network. A national reference group will be established to assist and provide network support for the role. This level of infrastructure support is part of the Treading the Pathways program to provide improved service and to build greater support and networks for Indigenous dancers.

### **2007 Support for the Arts Handbook**

The 2007 Support for the Arts Handbook is currently in development for next year. The Council will be refining this document into a more specific publication suitable for each artform. To coincide with this transition, the Board will be refining its grant categories and selection criteria for applications being lodged on closing dates in 2007. The Support for the Arts Handbook will be available in hardcopy and online in late 2006.

### **Support Material Preparation Guide**

With the move to newer technologies being accepted as support material by Council, the Inter-Arts Office has prepared a guide for potential applicants to assist them in preparing support material to be best viewed by Board members and to adhere to eligibility requirements. The guide is available online and can be downloaded at:

[http://www.ozco.gov.au/arts\\_resources/other/how\\_to\\_prepare\\_digital\\_support\\_material/](http://www.ozco.gov.au/arts_resources/other/how_to_prepare_digital_support_material/)

### **Young & Emerging Artists**

The Dance Board considered its 2-year allocation of Young & Emerging funding which is directly allocated from the Federal Government for the purpose of supporting artists up to the age of 30.

- The Board committed \$78,000 to the continuance of its commitment to the SPARK initiative, run by Youth Arts Queensland that will provide 3 mentorships a year for the next 2 years.
- The Board committed \$77,789 'in principle' as a 2 year commitment to EPIC2, a cross Council initiative providing mentorships for emerging producers, project managers and artists and artswokers working with and in communities.
- The Board committed \$190,000 to its New Work, Skills and Artform Development categories for 2007/08 specifically for Y&E artists.



# 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 fulfil its obligations of accountability as well as allowing us to learn about the success or otherwise of your project. These reports are a valuable way for you to contribute to the policy development work at the Australia Council.

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



## Key Organisations 2007-08

<b>Australian Dance Theatre (ADT)</b>	SA	Formed in Adelaide in 1965, ADT has been led by Artistic Director and Choreographer Garry Stewart since 1999. The program of work over the next two years will include the development of new work as well as the presentation of <i>Held</i> and <i>Devolution</i> in national and international tours. In 2007 <i>Held</i> will be toured to large scale venues in the United Kingdom following a season at Sadler's Wells, London.	<b>\$508,032</b>
<b>Dance North</b>	QLD	The origins of dancenorth australia date back to 1969 with establishment of the amateur North Queensland Ballet Company. The professional company was formed in 1985 and has been led since 2005 by Artistic Director Gavin Webber who has brought to Townsville a new focus on innovative and athletic dance theatre. Over the next two years dancenorth australia will consolidate key partnerships with the Brisbane Powerhouse and QUT and will tour new and extant work in Australia and Europe.	<b>\$420,000</b>

## 2007 Program Grants

<b>Critical Path</b>	NSW	Established in 2003, Critical Path delivers programs of new research opportunities to choreographers, nurturing diversity and excellence in a supportive critical environment that fosters risk-taking. This grant is a contribution to the organisations' 2007 program of activity.	<b>\$50,000</b>
<b>Force Majeure</b>	NSW	Force Majeure is a Sydney based dance-theatre company led by Kate Champion. The company was formed in 2002 and is based around a collective of artists from varying disciplines who are committed to creating stimulating movement-based theatre. This grant is a contribution to the organisations' 2007 program of activity including the creative development of <i>Snapshot</i> .	<b>\$115,443</b>
<b>Strut Dance Inc</b>	WA	STRUT was founded in 2002 in Perth with the aim to support and facilitate the development needs of contemporary dance artists, in particular in Western Australia. The organisation is membership driven with over 50 independent dancers. This grant is a contribution to the organisations' 2007 program of activity including workshops with Carol Brown and Thomas Lehmen.	<b>\$86,217</b>
<b>TasDance</b>	TAS	Founded in 1981 and based in Launceston, TasDance is a repertory-based company that provides opportunities for choreographers and dancers to produce work. The organisation is also a leader in audience development and regional touring. This grant is a contribution to the organisations' 2007 program of activity including the production of <i>Mercy... a dance for the forgotten</i> choreographed by Raewyn Hill.	<b>\$90,000</b>

