

ARTSWORK 2:

A Report on

Australians Working in the Arts

Prepared for the **Australia Council for the Arts**



Australian Government



by the
Australian Bureau of Statistics
National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics



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Tel: +61 2 9215 9000
Toll-free: 1800 226 912
Fax: +61 2 9215 9111
Email: mail@ozco.gov.au
Web: www.ozco.gov.au

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Dedication

This report is dedicated to the late Jane Spring.

Jane Spring was a long-serving staff member of the Australia Council for the Arts, first with the Music Board, then the Community Arts Board, and later with the Policy and Planning Division. She was awarded the Public Service Medal in June 1997 for services to the arts.

Jane had a passion for the arts and a strong commitment to arts policy development. During her time with the Council, she undertook many program evaluations and research projects. Jane had a widespread reputation—nationally and internationally—for her dedication, tenacity, meticulous attention to detail and especially her passionate advocacy of the role of the Australia Council for the Arts in the cultural life of Australians.

This dedication, the first by the Australia Council for the Arts, is made in recognition of Jane's extraordinary contribution to the public understanding of the arts in Australia.

Preface

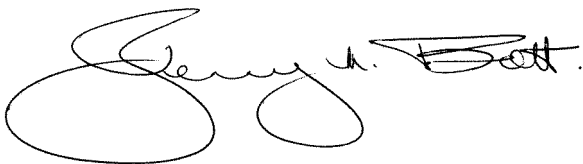
The arts are a valuable source of creativity, cultural identity, recreation and employment for many people in Australia. This report illustrates the extent, nature and diversity of the 2.9 million artswriters involved in this important sector.

A very large number of Australians now have paid work as artists. And as author David Malouf has noted, these artists 'constitute a national resource of talent [and] experience that is valuable in itself for what it produces to reflect and delight us and essential for the guidance and training of those who come after'.

The Australia Council for the Arts seeks to foster a strong artistic life across Australia. One of the functions of the Council, specified for it under the *Australia Council Act*, is 'to provide, and encourage provision of, opportunities for persons to practise the arts'. Monitoring and knowing about employment in the arts, and the employment of artists in parts of the economy outside the cultural sector, is of crucial importance to the Council.

It is also important for us to promote an understanding of the issues affecting arts employment to the many other government agencies, and community and arts organisations throughout Australia who affect the work opportunities of artswriters.

On behalf of the Australia Council, I thank the staff of the National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics in the Adelaide office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics who compiled this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer Bott', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jennifer Bott
Chief Executive Officer
Australia Council for the Arts

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Symbols and abbreviations used in tables and figures

ASCO	Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (for background see Appendix A)
. .	Not applicable
na	Not available
n.e.c.	Not elsewhere classified
n.f.d.	Not further defined
PAO	Principal artistic occupations
*	Relative standard error between 25 per cent and 50 per cent and should be used with caution
**	Relative standard error greater than 50 per cent and is considered too unreliable for general use

Introduction

In 1997, Australian Bureau of Statistics National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics prepared a report for the Australia Council for the arts, which provided an overview of arts employment in Australia. The data in that report, entitled *Artswork: A Report on Australians Working in the Arts*, related to the early 1990s and is no longer current. The Australia Council has commissioned the Australian Bureau of Statistics to update that report to present a picture of arts employment in Australia one decade on. The result is *Artswork2: A Report on Australians Working in the Arts* (hereafter referred to as *Artswork2*).

The bulk of the data contained in *Artswork2* has been derived from three primary sources: the 2001 Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics); the 2002 Artists Survey (Australia Council); and the Survey of Work in Selected Culture and Leisure Activities, 2004 (Australian Bureau of Statistics). As will be discussed, these collections differ in purpose, definition of an artist, as well as the scope of artistic activities included, and therefore do not lend themselves to direct comparison. However, together their information provides a broad overview of Australia's artistic environment.

Following a brief description of the three main data sources this report provides statistical information on the number of artists in Australia, their demographic characteristics, educational qualifications, financial characteristics and employment characteristics. Where possible these characteristics are provided from all three sources. Historical comparisons are also made between data from different iterations of the same collection, where valid. In order to present a complete picture, details on the stages of an artist's career have been included. These are drawn from a recent Australia Council publication; *Don't give up your day job: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia*, by David Throsby and Virginia Hollister.

Data in this report is presented in text, tables and figures. Appendix D presents more detailed tables.