

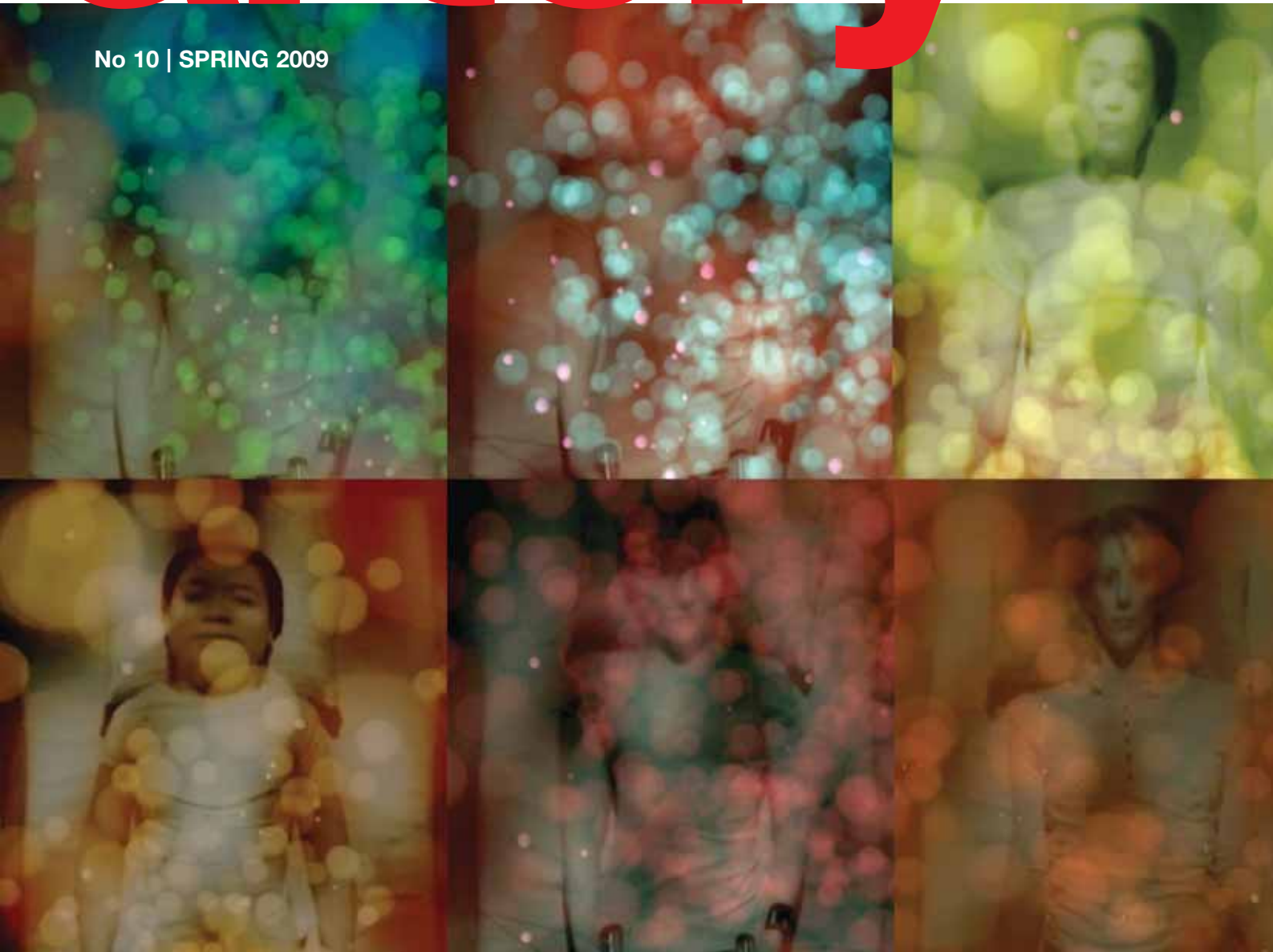


Australian Government



# artery

No 10 | SPRING 2009



**Art in a heart beat**

## FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



PHOTO: STU SPENCE

### Australians love the arts, but not everyone knows it.

Here at the Australia Council, we're fully aware of those very practical factors which inhibit Australians engaging more with the arts, like cost and distance, and social perceptions such as elitism. These barriers desperately need to be broken down to make sure all Australians can experience the diversity and vibrancy of Australian arts, and the many, many opportunities there are to engage with them.

The Australia Council plays a key role in promoting Australia's engagement with the arts and our shared culture. And with our help, the arts sector is now reaching out to new audiences by getting out of the galleries and arts centres and into communities around Australia.

In this edition of *artery* we look at some of the innovative projects our arts organisations are pursuing to break down these barriers. From Critical Stages (page 12) bringing cutting edge theatre productions like *The Kursk* to regional areas across the country to the Splendid project (page 11), bringing the work of our most exciting new visual and performing artists to music festival revelers at the annual Splendour in the Grass Festival. Seeing contemporary music and art collide in such a grand way is very inspiring – I can't wait to see the results in July.

George Khut's captivating *Heart Library Project* (page 5) took high tech art into a very public and emotionally charged space – a hospital. Visitors interacted with the intriguing work through bio-feedback and produced some powerful results. This melding of art and science always fascinates, especially when it expresses powerful human experiences.

Building arts content like this in new digital mediums is a top priority for us at the Australia Council, and another way we can reach out to new audiences. In October, the Australia Council and the ABC partnered up to present a two-day forum at the ABC studios in Ultimo, Sydney, titled *Revealing the Arts*. Over 250 arts leaders from across the country took part, debating the issues and opportunities faced by artists working in the digital era.

By partnering with the ABC, the Australia Council is looking to the better distribution of that digital content and, I hope, inspiring other agreements between content providers and pathways.

Our Digital Content Strategy recognises that all of us in the arts sector must improve our understanding of the myriad of digital platforms; and the way audiences will interact with, participate in and consume art in the future. In this edition of *artery*, our Director of Literature Susan Hayes picks this up by examining the impact of digital platforms on the publishing industry, and offers her insight on the future of the conventional book versus the e-book (page 8).

I'd like to finish by welcoming our new Deputy Chair, John Denton, who brings a wealth of experience and commitment to his new role at Council. In this *artery*, John discusses how he sees business and arts running in parallel and his plans for his new role.

Enjoy the read!

Kathy Keele  
Chief Executive

## INSIDE



Art in a heart beat

5



Writing for the digital age

8



Splendour mentors young artists

11



From Arnhem Land to Copenhagen

15

### FRONT COVER

Still image taken from George Khut's *Heart Library Project* capturing audience biofeedback. PHOTO: COURTESY GEORGE KHUT

# Grant amplifies Holly's call to world



Holly Throsby

PHOTO: YANNI KRONENBERG

Two-time ARIA-nominated singer/songwriter Holly Throsby is one of 10 recipients of the latest International Pathway grants from the Australia Council.

The indie songstress is using her International Pathways support to tour New Zealand, Japan and Europe – where Holly has been able to perform with a key collaborator and play in larger venues.

## Did you always want to be a singer/songwriter?

I think I always wanted to be a writer of some sort. I was never good at science or maths; I just burnt myself on the Bunsen burner. I loved working in the little video store I worked in for eight years though. Maybe if I wasn't a musician I'd open my own little art house video store where I could organise the films into little categories like I used to.

## Your current record, *A Loud Call*, has been critically acclaimed. Did you feel it was a special record when you were working on it?

I think so, but then all my records felt special to me when I was working on them. There were some songs on *A Loud Call* which I was really excited to record though, like *Now I Love Someone* and *Would You?* I knew in my head that they could be beautiful and when they started to sound how I wanted them to, then I got very excited and closed my eyes a bit listening to them. That is a really nice feeling.

## How have you enjoyed the tour?

This tour has been a fantastic experience so far. We just arrived in Italy to do some shows with The Drones which I am really excited about because they're one of my favourite bands. The shows we did in London were all great, especially our headline show at the Slaughtered Lamb and playing Bush Hall with the Handsome Family. And The Netherlands, particularly Amsterdam and Utrecht, was amazing. Such attentive audiences. Bree van Rey (who plays drums, accordion, glockenspiel, samples etc) and I sell our own merchandise afterwards and we printed some of my comics and people seem to like them, even though they are kind of un-funny and abstract, even in English.

## Do European audiences perceive you any differently to Australian ones?

Well I guess it's like when a little international band comes to play in Australia – people might be more willing to check them out because they seem a bit exotic. We have done a lot of support shows here, like for The Tallest Man On Earth, and people really come early to see us because it says Australia in brackets after my name on the posters. Then they seem excited to talk to us after the show and to buy CDs. They ask us about crocodiles and kangaroos.

## Have you written new songs and will there be a new record soon?

I have been writing quite a lot over here actually. It is all the moving around I think, I always start writing when I am moving around. I am not sure when I'll record them though.

## How important was it to get the Australia Council's International Pathways grant?

It has been incredibly important. For this European tour it enabled me to bring Bree along with me. Bree is a percussionist/multi-instrumentalist who I've been playing with for a number of years. (She also plays with Synergy & the AOBO and some other rock 'n' roll stuff.) She played a lot of the parts on *A Loud Call* so it is really important to have her here so we can recreate the record quite faithfully.

She is also just an incredible player and really wows people, playing all these different instruments at the same time. So we worked out this nifty little double act which means we can get out of always playing little indie folk venues and do these bigger festivals also, like End of the Road. It is really ideal.

The grant has also enabled me to accept a lot more shows in so many different countries, which I wouldn't have been able to do without that financial support.

The closing date for the next set of International Pathways grants is 7 December 2009. [www.australiacouncil.gov.au/grants](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/grants)

## profiles

PHOTO: STU SPENCE



Mark Bin Bakar is the new Chair of the Australia Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board. Mark has played an important role in developing Indigenous artists and is a committed advocate for Indigenous musicians and songwriters. Mark's talents as a musician, singer, songwriter, sound engineer, broadcaster, filmmaker, actor and arts manager are an invaluable asset to the artistic direction of the the Indigenous community.

#### **What do you see as the key challenges facing Indigenous artists in the next few years?**

One of the key challenges is the economic sustainability of Indigenous artists. Not all artists want to make money from their art. For a lot of artists creativity is an outlet, a personal voice. But for those who want to be financially rewarded for their art, it is a great feeling when this happens.

Sustaining culture through contemporary and traditional artforms is a great tool for the sustenance of our identities. Not all artforms and mediums are for sale, but art has a sustaining value on it for the integrity of our individual, community and Australian identity.

A key challenge is to recognise the significance of arts resource organisations and representative bodies that need the support of Government and corporate arts funding bodies such as Australia Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board. We cannot place a dollar value on culture. An investment into sustaining a social aspect of our arts community is of greater worth to the nation.

#### **In your role as an educator, how do you believe art engages young people, and what more can we do to increase this engagement?**

Young people can see through the false messengers and/or educators. I, either in or out of character (Mary G, Black Queen of the Kimberley) find that they only comprehend straight talk. It must be real, honest and sincere as the survival mechanisms in the brains and minds of young people allow them to be more intuitive than what adults generally give them credit for.

I have travelled to most Aboriginal and Islander communities in Australia and I find the credibility of my character allows me to also communicate with young people. Once I explain why I do the character, they tune in as they also want to make a difference and most likely admire the gift of being able to express oneself through art.

Young people, though lacking the wisdom of older people, have a greater sense of freedom than is the case for older generations. An example of this is how younger generations are embracing technology such as mobile phones, electronic games and the internet and incorporating this into the art they produce.

#### **What influences you?**

##### **Which artists and comedians do you admire?**

The plight of Aboriginal and Islander people is what influences me in my journey as an artist. The love of my country, warts and all, and the ability of my nation to reconcile itself and own its negative history as much as its positive history is also an influence.

I feel I have a God-given gift to allow all people to drop the curtains of anxiety, to deal with the terrible state that we find ourselves in in this country due to the treatment of Aboriginal people since colonisation.

I find that a lot of ethnic groups relate to my Mary G character. They relate to that matriarch-type persona that every family has regardless of race, religion or culture. The mother figure is dominant in so many societies. She has a strong influence on families and communities in a controlling, but humorous, manner. Her leadership and integrity is respected and looked up to.

I've worked with many wonderful artists, including the late Bobby McLeod (Aboriginal activist and poet who died on May 30, 2009). His voice and words are so powerful and rich that it invited you to understand. We had been in discussions about joining forces before he sadly left us.

I find all arts inspiring, in particular when Indigenous artists play a role. I admire the many senior artists who, despite challenges, limited resources and limited support, still achieve a high level of recognition. I'm talking about Jimmy Little, Lionel Rose, Kevin Gunn, Vic Simms and others. These guys opened doors for Indigenous artists.

##### **What will you bring from Mary G to your new role at Australia Council?**

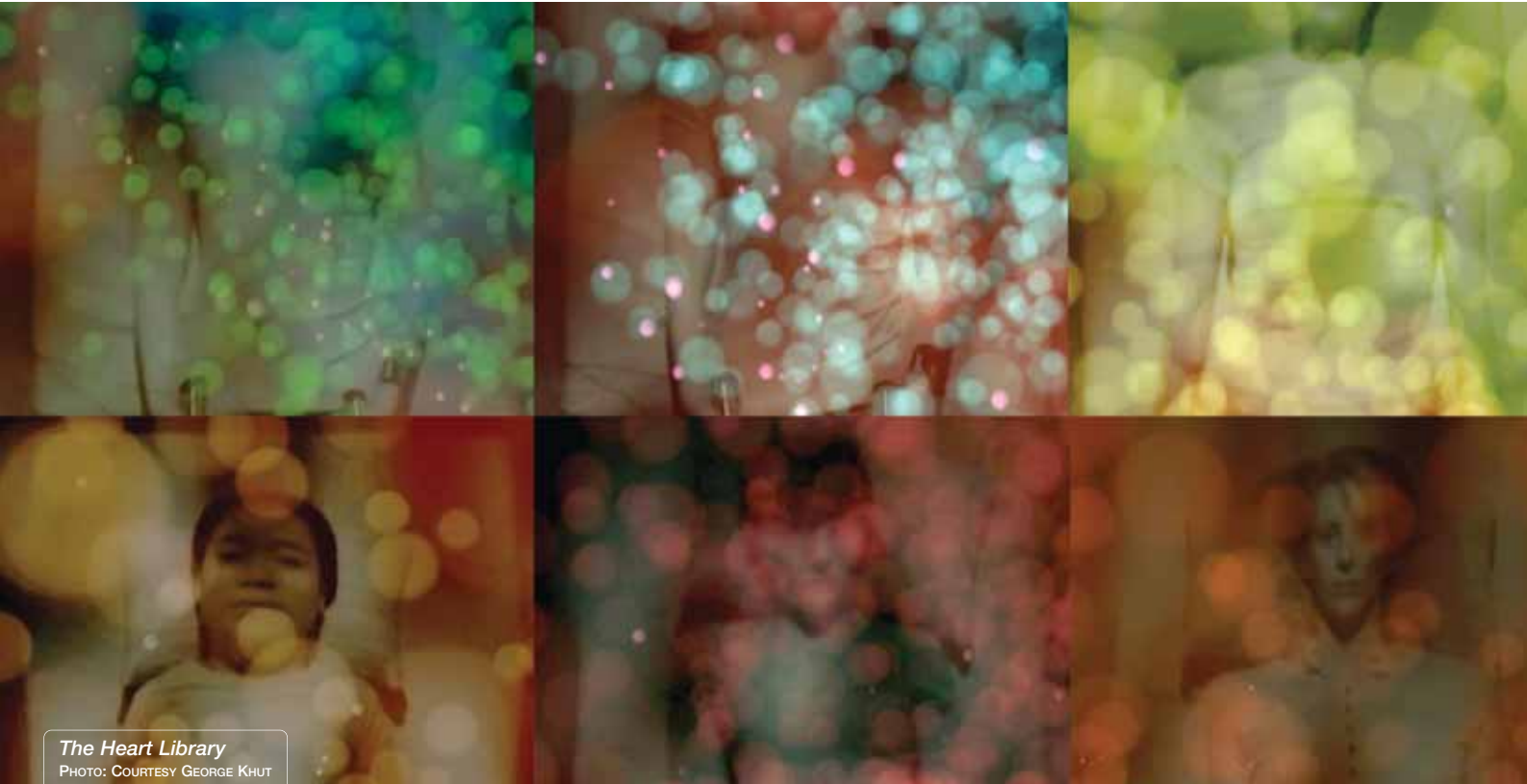
I hope to bring a great sense of fun, appreciation and getting on with it. Mary G is caring and she like/loves everyone so I hope to bring a sense of simplicity. The value of recognising that everyone has a gift and has something to offer is important to building a greater appreciation of our diversity, differences and talents that bring us all together as a nation.

##### **What are you looking forward to seeing in 2010?**

I hope to see as much as my travelling itinerary allows me to. I see a lot of artists – some established, some struggling – in my travels. I hope that by meeting and seeing them I can bring inspiration, just as they inspire me.

I'm looking forward to seeing the film version of *Bran Nue Dae*, as this reflects an important piece of theatre in our history. I'm also looking forward to the Deadly Awards and anything else I get the opportunity to see. The more the better. More theatre, concerts, movies, exhibitions.

# Art in a heart beat



*The Heart Library*

PHOTO: COURTESY GEORGE KHUT

An exhibition that allows audience members to translate their heart rhythms into art was designed to be shown in hospitals – locations where emotions often run high. *The Heart Library Project* is a travelling interactive art exhibition visiting hospitals and galleries across the country.

The exhibition uses video and sound and biofeedback techniques that allow audiences to explore how their heart rates can become an artistic experience. The unique work was created by Sydney-based artist George Poonkhin Khut, whose projects involve body-focused interactive technologies, and arts-in-health.

‘Exhibiting in a hospital means you can reach people who wouldn’t necessarily go to art galleries’ said George. ‘I love working in public galleries and organisations because they are social spaces. It is a contemporary arts practice that is about sharing experiences.’

He developed *The Heart Library* with Caitlin Newton-Broad through a series of research residencies and prototype exhibitions. The work was first shown in 2008 at UTS Gallery in Sydney, but was conceived for presentation in a hospital environment. Sydney’s St. Vincent’s campus arts committee responded enthusiastically to George and Caitlin’s initial proposal in 2007.

The exhibition invites people to observe interactions between their heart, nervous system and mental/emotional focus via sounds and visuals that respond to subtle changes in heart rhythm. Visitors place their hands onto a pair of wireless heart-rate sensors. These sensors measure moment-to-moment changes in heart rate that can be influenced by breathing and stress/relaxation responses. These changes are translated into colours, patterns and sound textures.

Changes in heart rate are mapped to colour temperature – with red and orange representing increases in heart rate, and cyan and blue representing decreases in heart rate. Participants can influence the colours and patterns through breathing and sustained mental/emotional focus.

‘The work invites you explore how the heart rate changes, whether you do something to your breathing or you think about something relaxing or something stressful,’ said George.

After their biofeedback experience, participants are invited to offer an account of their experience to the library, in the form of a hand-drawn map and interview. They can then describe how this map relates to their experience in a short video interview using an overhead video camera. The resulting collection of experience-maps and interviews are on show alongside the biofeedback artwork.

‘Our culture so often represents the body as a something to be controlled or overcome rather than as a source of inspiration or enjoyment. This work gives people an opportunity to explore physicality and subjectivity in a way that is not about having to be competitive or sexy,’ said George. ‘It’s also a way to explore the body outside the usual pathology-driven focus of medicine and health care.’

‘The experience is a real leveller. It’s a meditative experience, in that it strips away a lot of other preoccupations to reveal a very basic appreciation of being alive.’

‘The work is about self-experience, and making a new context for our use of these technologies – you shouldn’t have to be sick to have a reason to explore these technologies,’ he said. ‘At St. Vincent’s the pastoral care workers related very strongly to the work.’

While the work is not intended as a diagnostic tool, Khut is researching the potential of this work in a psychotherapeutic context. He is working with Steven Albert, clinical services manager with Eastern Sydney Community Mental Health Services, to use the project as a health promotion and educational resource for young people negotiating stress and anxiety related issues.

George regularly exhibits his work across Australia and internationally. *The Heart Library* is now being exhibited at the Royal Institution of Australia in Adelaide, until January 30, 2010.

>> [www.georgekhut.com/heartlibrary](http://www.georgekhut.com/heartlibrary)

# Performance explores dementia



Kate Denborough and Gerard Van Dyke  
PHOTO: COURTESY KAGE

**There is a whole community of people dealing with something really intense, and it's really not talked about.**

How would you cope with a confused aging husband constantly opening the front door and wandering into the street, no matter how you many times you locked the door and hid the key?

How about putting a sign for ladies' toilets facing inside the door?

It sounds funny, but it works. This is the kind of humour, pathos and gentle insight KAGE is using to explore the taboo topic of Alzheimer's in their latest project, *Sundowner*.

*Sundowner* combines dance, drama and film to reflect the experiences and frustrations of aged dementia. It focuses on the early stages of dementia, and the slide between being able to function and losing grasp of the reality around you.

'There is a whole community of people dealing with something very intense, and it's really not talked about,' said Kate Denborough, creative director of KAGE. 'By 2050 there will be around half a million Australians diagnosed with dementia, of which 70% will be Alzheimer's.'

KAGE is working with Alzheimer's Australia and Carers Victoria to ensure the authenticity of the work. 'We couldn't be doing the work without their blessing,' said Kate. 'They are very excited about the partnership, offering resources, support and feedback.'

'With *Sundowner*, we want to create something that's illuminating and enlightening for the audience,' Kate said. 'While darkness is a significant part of the disease, dementia is not all doom and gloom: there are still wonderful times and humour. It's about how people find life in loss.'

*Sundowner* has a very different theme to KAGE's other works like *Appetite*, a genre-busting fusion of female vocals, dance, theatre and striking visual design which premiered at the 2008 Melbourne International Arts Festival.

KAGE is planning a two-week development in November, and hope to premiere the work in 2011 in conjunction with a festival or venue. Performers will include Helen Morse, Stuart Christie, Michelle Heaven, and Gerard Van Dyck.

'*Sundowner* is very rich thematically and difficult to put on stage. We are not using a lot of text, but plenty of visuals and imagery and have a cast of strong physical performers,' said Kate.

The company has spent the last 12 months researching the disease. In a half-day workshop in August, 25 carers and people with dementia got together with the *Sundowner* cast. The workshop asked questions like, 'what would you most want to be able to convey to your loved one with Alzheimer's?' and 'how would you most like to be remembered?'

Common themes of grief, love and loss, and stories of humour, absurdity and horror emerged. 'The devotion of those caring for their loved ones is astonishing,' said Kate.

One woman, every day for the last four years, has got up early and gone to her father's house to shower him before she goes to work. 'Her friends think she is a saint, but she says it's the most precious time she has spent with him,' she said.

Another woman told a story of her once-abusive father becoming very soft and affectionate after being diagnosed with dementia and for the first time being able to say how much he loved her.

A family put on a terrific 70th birthday party for their mother. But the next morning the mother could not remember a thing about the party. It had been a huge effort for the family. 'You realise that a person with Alzheimer's lives only for the moment. You can't stop giving someone a full life just because they will not remember it.'

'I've learned a lot about how people measure value,' said Kate. 'This is something we want to show in *Sundowner*. It's a difficult but important topic, and we're always up for new challenges.'

KAGE is the inaugural company-in-residence at the Arts Centre, Victoria in 2009. The company has received \$20,000 from the Dance Board of the Australia Council to begin the creative development of *Sundowner*.

KAGE is also currently developing a new work called *Look Right Through Me*, based on the imagination of Michael Leunig. They hope to premiere both works in 2011.

## New appointments at the Australia Council

The past few months have seen a wealth of new appointments at the Australia Council, including **John Denton** who was appointed Deputy Chair in July.

A Partner and CEO of Corrs Chambers Westgarth, John is Deputy Chair of the Melbourne International Arts Festival, a Councillor for the Victorian chapter of the Australia Business Arts Foundation and a board member of the Business Council of Australia.

In September, **Dennis Haskell** was appointed Chair, Literature Board. Dennis is a published poet, editor and critic as well as Professor of English and Cultural Studies and past Chair of the Academic Board at the University of Western Australia.

**Leo Akee** was appointed to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts (ATSIA) Board. A former lieutenant in the Australian Navy, Leo is now the officer in charge of Naval Cadets TS Carpentaria. He has also been District Manager at Education Queensland and Deputy Mayor of the Torres Shire Council. Also appointed to the ATSIA Board was Desmond "Kootji" Raymond. Originally from Darwin, Kootji is a filmmaker, visual artist and writer. He was resident filmmaker at the WA Film and Television Institute in 2000.

The Rehearsal Director at Tasdance, **Carol Wellman Kelly**, was appointed to the Dance Board. Carol performed, choreographed and taught dance in seven different countries before returning to Australia.

**Andrew Arthurs** was reappointed to the Music Board. Professor of music and head of music and sound at Queensland University of Technology, Andrew is also a board member of the Brisbane Powerhouse and has composed music for dance, film, television and multi-media.

Artistic Director and founding member of the Cairns-based Just Us Theatre Ensemble, **Suellen Maunder** was appointed to the Theatre Board. As well as being an actor, director and writer, Suellen has worked in arts programming and management and has served on the Arts Queensland peer assessment panel.

The Australia Council welcomes all of these new appointments and the huge amount of experience each person brings with them.



Kathy Keele  
PHOTO: PHOTO: DEAN GOLGA

## ReGenerating Communities

Australia Council Chief Executive Kathy Keele recently spoke about the importance of local governments engaging with the arts, and how culture helped shape her early life.

Addressing the ReGenerating Community conference in Melbourne (2-4 September), which looked at building civic engagement through the arts, Kathy said: 'Early in my life – living in a big family with little money but a rich imaginative culture – I realised that arts and culture were an essential part of everyday life; and vital to our being as individuals and communities.'

Kathy said local governments are significant contributors to Australia's arts and cultural infrastructure through libraries, galleries and performing arts venues, which all make valuable contributions to supporting local arts and employment.

'Of all spheres of government, it is local government which knows best the nature of their local communities. They are at the coal face of developing the best artistic expression of that community,' she said.

The Australia Council has a long history of working with local governments, said Kathy. 'It's hard nowadays to find a local government which doesn't at least talk about the need to develop local arts and culture,' she said.

To read Kathy's entire speech go to [www.australiacouncil.gov.au/regenerationspeech](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/regenerationspeech)

## Fertiliser for budding artists

Recent graduate or final year student in creative arts? Find out more.

[artstartgrant.com.au](http://artstartgrant.com.au)



## ArtStart grants

In September, Australia Council announced the Federal Government's new ArtStart initiative which will provide grants of \$10,000 to recent arts training graduates towards the costs of establishing a professional artist practice.

The program will help artists to earn income and get work through their arts practice; giving them a head start early in their careers.

'This program will kick-start the careers of hundreds of artists who have recently graduated from arts courses at tertiary institutions. We are very excited to offer this opportunity to newly graduated artists and encourage applications from all the artform areas,' said Kathy Keele, Chief Executive of the Australia Council.

More information: [www.australiacouncil.gov.au/artstart](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/artstart)

# Writing for the digital age



Susan Hayes

Susan Hayes, Director of Literature at the Australia Council for the Arts, says the coming of the e-book will present writers and publishers with new challenges and opportunities.

When I read in a recent article that sales of the new Kindle in the USA have not been as huge as anticipated, I must confess that my first feeling was one of relief. In the course of the past week I have acquired a new phone that does everything but feed the cat and work an equally complicated camera. Both have necessitated lengthy tutorials from my son and I'm going through a fit of technology overload.

US digital guru Bob Stein and I sat down at the Melbourne Writers Festival in August to discuss *The Future of the Book*. Bob is one of those guys who calls books user-driven media. I'm one of those women of a certain age who belongs to a book club and can't get on a plane without at least one novel in my hand luggage.

Nevertheless, while Bob and I may disagree about the sanctity of an author's work and certain aspects of copyright, we will certainly be on the same page in acknowledging that the paper book, as we know it now, will gradually disappear from our shelves over the next 10 years. I welcome the day when I can ditch that heavy book and download a dozen titles onto my lightweight e-reader before I fasten my seat belt.

With the commercial success of the Kindle e-book reader in the United States and publishers in the UK already squabbling over royalty rates for e-books, it is essential for Australian publishers to be ready to go when this technology arrives in our stores.

The period of transition from book to e-book will be particularly hard for our smaller publishing houses. Setting a manuscript in user-friendly digital format is not simply a matter of pressing a few buttons.

While the multinationals are already taking advantage of both the publishing and global marketing opportunities offered by the new technologies, small independent publishers are struggling. Operating on low staffing levels and even lower profit margins, they do not have the necessary in-house expertise or the IT equipment capable of taking on this new level of sophistication.

**It is important for writers to stay in touch with the complex field of digital rights management and royalty payments.**

Paradoxically, I believe that those who have already gone to an all-digital output, investing in skills and technology rather than paper, have more chance of keeping pace with their more powerful rivals. It's the cost of putting out simultaneous on-line and paper versions of a book that will put some companies out of business.

It is equally important for writers to stay in touch with the complex field of digital rights management and subsequent royalty payments. Random House UK is in trouble for setting digital royalty rates below other publishers. Random is quoting 17.5% to 20% as a norm, while the original rate had been set at 25%. These rates can only be good news for writers, who currently expect a royalty between 8% and 10% for a conventional paper book, but they need to get canny about the variations between different territorial and new media rights attached to their book contracts.

Of course, a number of leading Australian publishers have already established strategies to take them into the new markets offered by the digital world. For a number of years, the Australia Council has funded online journals and we are viewing with particular interest the rise of the well-written blog.

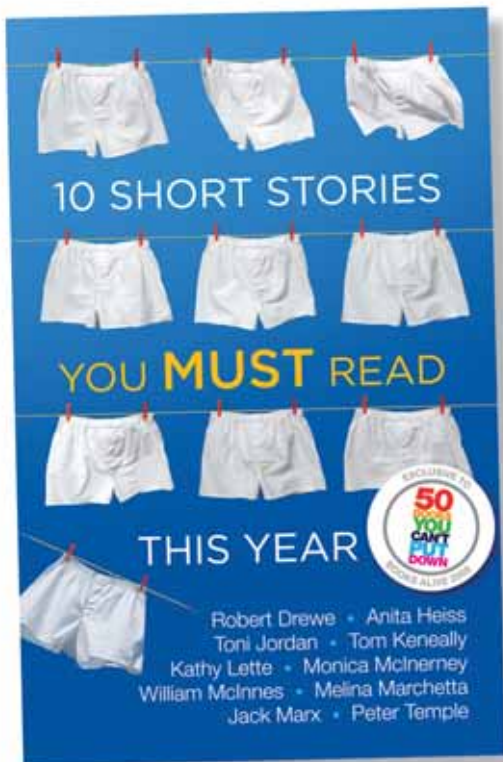
Canadian blogger Christian Lander's *Stuff White People Like* was picked up by Random House for print publication and subsequently optioned for film. Our own Marieke Hardy was the key speaker at this year's NSW Premier's Book Awards. Equally, over the past year I have had two separate approaches from leading Australian critics who want to create an online literary review, with the editorial integrity of, say, the New York or London *Review of Books*.

Writers with ambitions to self-publish online will need to develop advanced technical and presentation skills. They need to be aware that online distribution is not necessarily a splendid opportunity for all those authors whose manuscripts have been rejected by hard-hearted editors.

While the internet is touted as a medium for global exposure, where previously unknown artists can find instant fame, this has certainly not been the case for the music industry. Despite the universal appeal of the ipod and downloadable music, it has been established that fewer than 20% of songs published on the net without the marketing push of the recording companies, achieve more than a handful of sales.

At present there is an air of wait and see in Australian publishing. Australians read more books per capita than any other nation and I still see more people on public transport reading books than I see game-playing on their phones or laptops. There is no doubt that a huge marketing campaign will accompany the arrival of the Kindle in 2010 and it will be interesting to see the effects on both publishers and book-buyers.

# Books Alive cuts through



The eighth annual Books Alive was the largest yet, encouraging hundreds of thousands of Australians to rediscover the joys of reading.

Books Alive 2009, which ran through September, employed innovative techniques to reach Australians of all ages and interests.

High profile campaign ambassadors, free books and a new short story collection commissioned for Books Alive all contributed to the success of Books Alive 2009.

The pocket-sized Books Alive guide distributed 1.2 million hard copies with another 2 million copies delivered electronically.

Cheryl Akle, Books alive project director, said that sales figures were still being compiled, but the industry and public response during the month-long campaign was 'fantastic'.

Campaign ambassadors had attracted strong interest, with Gretel Killeen popular with young people and William McInnes well liked by women.

'Our ambassadors really cut through to audiences that might not be regular readers,' said Cheryl.

Books Alive promoted 50 Books You Can't Put Down, ranging from the literary to popular fiction and non-fiction to children's books.

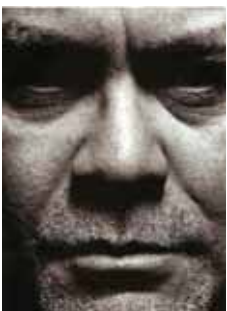
Anyone purchasing one of the 50 titles was offered a free copy of *10 Short Stories You Must Read This Year*; a volume featuring new work by Robert Drewe, Anita Heiss, Toni Jordan, Tom Keneally, Kathy Lette, Monica McInerney, William McInnes, Melina Marchetta, Jack Marx and Peter Temple.

'We're already hearing from authors and the industry with suggestions for Books Alive 2010,' said Cheryl Akle.

Books Alive is an Australian Government initiative supported by the Australia Council.

## Writers prefer paper

Artery asked four Books Alive authors whether they would read e-books.



### Safe for 30 years

I might download the odd e-book, but I suspect the first thing I'll do is print it out. Like many of my peers, I like to turn pages, so books are safe until me and my generation are gone – another 30 to 40 years for sure.

**Jack Marx**



### Screen-free beauty

I've found an even better way to read, using a specially-designed technology that's portable and doesn't need batteries or recharging. It's great value because I can sell it, lend it or give it away. It doesn't use a screen so it's a terrific break from my computer. And it's beautiful.

**Toni Jordan**



### Between the covers

No. I'm a girl who likes to slip between the covers. The book covers. Besides, what if your battery went flat before the end? You'd never know Who Did It in the Who Done It. You'd never know if Elisabeth married her Mr Darcy. It would be a case of creative intercourse interruptus.

**Kathy Lette.**



### Can't replace pleasure

I would never say no to reading an e-book on a plane to avoid lugging around heavy books, or downloading one if staying in a place where books weren't readily available, but I can't imagine replacing the pleasure of holding a novel in my hand and turning the page.

**Melina Marchetta**

PHOTOS: COURTESY BOOKS ALIVE.

# Hip hop engages troubled youths



Recording session in Malak  
PHOTO: PHILLIP EATON

Hip hop has long been seen as the voice of the disadvantaged in America, and now it is helping disadvantaged young Indigenous and African people in Darwin better understand each other.

*Frontline* – Locative media projects with young Indigenous and Arabic people, which is being run by Darwin Community Arts (DCA) in the Northern Territory, is building on DCA's work in Malak, a Darwin suburb with confronting economic and cultural issues.

Bong Ramilo is Executive Officer at DCA and project coordinator for *Frontline*.

'We're looking at the relationships between people in the Malak area, looking at various media to bring them together,' he told *artery*.

Malak has seen increased levels of gang violence in recent years. 'Malak is in one of the most culturally diverse electorates in the Northern Territory. As well as the Indigenous community there are Somalis, Sudanese and people from other African countries,' said Bong.

'There have always been gangs but there are two main gangs, one is Indigenous boys and the other is African boys. There have been flare-ups in Malak, and also at Darwin High School.

'Both groups are from the bottom of the pecking order, so to speak. Both Indigenous and refugees are marginalised in the community. It's not good for marginalised groups to have conflict among themselves. Sometimes you hit each other out of frustration at your situation. Sometimes it's just boys being boys, but sometimes it's more than that.'

So how is *Frontline* helping to calm the situation?

'Part of the project is recording hip hop songs,' said Bong. 'Some Indigenous boys have recorded their songs and some African boys have recorded their songs.'

'We don't need them to like each other; we just need them to get along with each other.'

'We're working towards them recording together. There is always tension and conflict, but we're trying to find common ground, and music can do that.'

'The tension is still there; for instance the African and Indigenous kids don't dance together at events. We're organising a gig where they will all play their own music on the one night. The next step is to get them together in the studio, then on stage together in December and then together in the neighbourhood.'

'We're making progress. Whether it works is up to them. We provide the space and the tools for them to work together. These songs will form the soundtrack to the sounds of Malak,' said Bong.

Liam Devine, one of the young Indigenous rappers, said the recording project is helping getting kids off the street. 'It's getting them to focus on writing and making the beats, giving them something good to do. I'm looking forward to that little gig in December; it's a good idea, showcasing all our talents. I'm all for it,' he said.

Eli Alakaza, one of the young African rappers, is also enjoying recording. 'I like the songs we did, I'm very proud of what I did. It's good to do songs about life in Africa and life in Australia.'

'It was good recording in Malak. The facilities there are professional. We want to keep recording songs. We're also looking forward to the performance in December.'

As well as hip hop, *Frontline* is also focusing on new media, including laser tagging and giant projections.

'The Australia Council funding is paying for tagging and projection tools and recording equipment. That has helped us greatly. The benefit will extend beyond the project,' said Bong.

## Cultural engagement framework

The Australia Council's cultural engagement framework, adopted in September 2007, continues to support diversity in Australian society through artistic projects.

Darwin Community Arts was awarded \$175,000 to produce *Frontline* between March 2009 and June 2012.

The framework is also funding other projects around the country:

- Information Cultural Exchange (NSW) was awarded \$205,000 to produce and tour the *Arab Film Festival Australia* nationally between April 2009 and December 2011.
- Nexus (SA) received \$15,000 to produce and present *The Islamic Spectrum in Australia: Building cultural bridges through understanding* between February and December 2009. Muslim and non-Muslim youth make connections through a concert, exhibition, skills workshops, and a Blue Light Disco.
- Bankstown Area Multicultural Service (NSW) was given \$40,000 to produce a short digital animation, *Hairy*, with young Muslim women, about their issues and experiences.

# Splendour mentors young artists



Front: Alice Lang, Mish Grigor, Dario Vacirca, Lauren Brincat, Kristy Ayre, Carl Scrase, Lachlan Tetlow-Stuart. Back: Dominic Finlay-Jones, Shakthi Sivanathan, Daniel Tanner.

PHOTO: NATHAN STEVENS

Pioneering art initiative Splendid will take the work of Australia's top young artists to more than 17,000 festival-goers at next year's Splendour in the Grass.

In the tradition of performing arts festivals like Glastonbury, Splendid is bringing contemporary art to a mainstream and indie music audience. Ten chosen artists, from theatre, dance, design, installation, architecture, digital media, sound art, literature and community art, are specially designing innovative works to capture an unsuspecting audience.

'Splendour in the Grass represents the future of arts audiences,' said Steven Alderton, director of Lismore Regional Gallery. 'We are very fortunate to have Splendour contributing financially and providing the showcase for these works. It's just enormously exciting.'

The work will show to a larger audience than many gallery exhibitions in Australia, and may tour international festivals as well.

The groundbreaking initiative was developed by the Australia Council for the Arts, Lismore Regional Gallery, Northern Rivers Performing Arts (NORPA) and Splendour in the Grass to develop talent and to offer festival audiences new creative experiences.

The program involves a series of arts labs, forums and commissions that support cutting-edge contemporary work, promote cross-artform collaborations and get audiences engaged.

'Splendid is the greatest opportunity for young and emerging artists to learn cross-artform skills and develop new generation artworks,' Steven said.

A three-week arts lab residency in Lismore kicked off the program in July. Ten participants were mentored in their own art form by ten well established, award-winning artists. They worked together in a dynamic environment of critical thinking and experimentation.

The group also had rock star treatment, with a behind the scenes experience of Splendour in the Grass 2009 to help plan their projects. The artists are now developing their ideas into cutting-edge work to capture the festival audience in 2010.

Sydney artist Lauren Brincat is one of the 10, working hard on several pieces she hopes to showcase at the event. 'A lot of my work is inspired by music: from drum kits to song titles and lyrics. It's been a perfect match for me,' Lauren said.

'The residency was an incredibly challenging, inspiring process. We didn't stop talking about art for three weeks! My head was exploding with ideas by the end of each day, and then we'd all sit down for dinner and keep talking.

'It's a gift to be among creative people and those who've been in the industry for a long time. Being an artist can be lonely. It was great to be with others just as excited about art. If I could do this process once a year, it could almost be my therapy!

'I also learned a lot of business skills like how to pitch a project, and practical techniques on building works. In the future, I won't hesitate to work with specialists in other fields.'

The mentoring process continues both formally and informally, with artists and mentors in regular contact. 'With initiatives like this, it's exciting to be an artist right now,' Lauren said.

Lauren is also working on a series of performance works with drum kits with the help of a \$10,000 grant from the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council. She will travel to New York in January next year on a Helen Lempriere travelling scholarship, just making it back in time for the Splendour festival opening.

The talented line up of young and emerging artists are: visual artist Alice Lang; dancer Kristy Ayre; contemporary and community artist Shakthi Sivanathan; performance maker Mish Grigor; cross-artformer Dario Vacirca; visual new media artist Lachlan Tetlow-Stuart; performer and sculptor Lauren Brincat; multi-media artist Daniel Tanner; visual artist Carl Scrase; and architect Dominic Finlay-Jones.

## Sub story a small town hit



L-R: Julieanne Youngberry, Edward Foy, Sasha Janowicz, Dirk Hoult, Amanda Mitchell in *The Kursk*  
PHOTO: MICHAEL FUTCHER

**There is a wide audience for distinctive, challenging, high calibre theatre.**

Audiences in regional Australia now have access to an increasingly diverse range of theatre productions, as cutting edge shows find success outside the major cities, writes Luke Cowling, Producer of Critical Stages.

By the end of this year more than 50 theatres nationwide will have presented the work of independent theatre artists through Critical Stages. This initiative of Darlinghurst Theatre Company is funded by the Theatre Board of The Australia Council for the Arts and Arts NSW to develop high quality independent theatre productions for the national touring circuit.

Critical Stages has three productions touring across Australia in 2009: the highly original drama *The Kursk* by Sasha Janowicz with Brisbane's Matrix Theatre; hugely successful West End comedy *Dealer's Choice* by Patrick Marber, directed by rising star Craig Llott after his company Albedo Theatre's 2004 production at Sydney's Old Fitzroy Theatre; and outrageous comedy *The No Chance in Hell Hotel* by Sydney powerhouse performance duo Drew Fairley and Kate Smith.

The success of these tours suggests those charged with the challenging task of programming for regional audiences are looking more and more to independent theatre to provide a unique flavour to their subscription seasons.

In September, Stephen Pike, manager of the Queanbeyan Performing Arts Centre, felt compelled to email the network of regional presenters around the country after the opening of the most recent Critical Stages production to tour to his venue. 'If *The Kursk* is yet to come to you it is an outstanding and unique theatrical achievement,' Pike wrote. 'A gripping story combined with one of the most versatile and cunningly used sets I have seen and an ending which seems to rivet the audience to their seats. I never thought I would sit in a theatre and be convinced I was at the bottom of the ocean.'

Sasha Janowicz was studying theatre in Queensland when news of the ill-fated Russian submarine broke around the world in 2000. Inspired to learn more about a global incident which was clearly the stuff of drama and mystery, he set out back to his homeland to find some truths and the heart of this amazing story.

After visiting with many family members of the lost submariners, sifting through vast numbers of news reports and investigating the official military accounts of the incident, he returned to Australia to set about writing a play. After many

months of drafting he received a call from his parents in Poland who had received a package addressed to him, and on opening it had discovered a full dress jacket, medals attached, which had belonged to one of the lost officers. There was no note attached, no return address. Sasha was even more compelled to tell this story.

He developed the play over a few years and, in 2007, produced and starred in *The Kursk*, directed by Michael Futcher at Brisbane's Metro Arts. It was the hit at that year's Matilda Awards, winning Best Direction, Best New Australian Play and Best Independent Production.

The success of *The Kursk* caught the eye of Critical Stages, and after being co-produced for touring with Brisbane's Matrix Theatre, in October it will complete a six-month national tour of more than 90 performances at regional and metropolitan venues across the country to an estimated audience of over 16,000 people.

In an industry often noted for its stars and big budget spectacles, it is Australia's independent theatre sector that has become the crucible of our theatrical experience – a place where dedicated and motivated artists produce the shows about which they are most passionate.

Over the past few years Critical Stages has been actively seeking the best productions from across this sector with the aim of developing them for touring – hunting out the little theatrical gems that originate from tiny urban venues, produced on the back of the blood, lots of sweat and the occasional tear from their writers, directors, actors and designers, often for little financial reward.

The success of *The Kursk* shows there is a wide audience for distinctive, challenging, high calibre theatre. 'We have too few serious dramas and this show gave our country audience an amazing taste of professional theatre,' said Jan Fairclough of the Margaret River Cultural Centre following their performance of *The Kursk*. These sentiments were echoed by Claire Glenn, Performing Arts Director at Victoria's Swan Hill Rural City Council: 'The show looked amazing. Critical Stages continues to deliver high-quality product,' she said.

Having delivered eight tours in the past three years, Critical Stages is committed to providing a platform which brings together artists and audiences in a meaningful way, no matter how adventurous the work or remote the location.

# Outback theatre of dreams



The Ivanhoe Project  
PHOTO: PAUL MCKENZIE

Young people in the remote, outback town of Ivanhoe, NSW are not letting drought, unemployment and endemic poverty get in the way of learning about theatre, film and photography. On the contrary, it is inspiring them to tell their own story.

Outback Theatre for Young People (OTYP – which has a brief to work with people aged from six to 26), in partnership with TRAX and West Darling Arts, has developed *The Ivanhoe Chronicles*, a two-year, theatre focused project, in conjunction with the students of Ivanhoe Central School and other young people in the community.

The project provides creative opportunities for young people in a town suffering from a long drought.

*Under Me Skin*, a darkly comic tale of a boy who mysteriously appears in a remote bush town, is an integral part of *The Ivanhoe Chronicles*. Written by local Indigenous woman Gayle Kennedy, and conceived and developed by Melbourne multimedia artists Brian Cohen and Tara Prowse, it was performed in Ivanhoe on August 22.

'It went wonderfully well,' said Suzanne Hauser, creative producer of OTYP. 'A fifth of the town's population of 250 came out to watch it. We're pretty proud of that. I don't know any performance in Sydney that could pull that percentage.'

Through the winter of 2009, the young people involved worked with Tara and Brian and thought about the world they live in through theatre, digital film and photography. They were encouraged to explore their community and celebrate their stories by presenting this work through the installation of television sets and night-time projections in the abandoned shopfront windows along Ivanhoe's main street.

The project has proven hugely popular with the local children and young people. In a town so small it's hard not to know what happens behind closed doors, the children took the audience on an adventure where the stage is the main street and the backdrop the bush. 'One of the aims is to increase the

resilience of the young people. It's a hard town to live in, with a lot of endemic poverty,' says Suzanne.

'Unemployment is a big issue. The Central School was built in the 1970s with plans to have 200 students, but they've got only 29 now.'

Twenty-three of those 29 are involved with the project, as well as five former students. About 40 per cent of the students identify as Aboriginal or part Aboriginal.

'The engagement of the young people has been quite incredible,' says Suzanne. 'They have such spirit and independence. They really do have to make their own fun. There is nothing there; the town is about three streets wide.'

'We had a really good participation rate. Twenty minutes before the workshop they were literally knocking on the door. They were asking for skills, asking for experience,' she said.

Suzanne says the project has been a resounding success. 'Photos taken by the young people are now being exhibited in the Shearers' Hall of Fame in Hay (210 kilometres away).

'They are really original voices with very original takes on the world. We're really proud of the work we've done. This is an exciting leap for Outback Theatre. It is the most remote community we've ever worked in. We've come up against some really interesting challenges and I think it has been very successful,' she says.

The 2009 presentation of *Under Me Skin* is just the first instalment of *The Ivanhoe Chronicles*. Next year will see a two-day arts festival in the town, including the fully realised production of *Under Me Skin*. The event will include an interactive multimedia exhibition, conference panels, a live broadcast and a bush camp where audience members will be welcomed by the host community.

'There is a combination of about six different grants to fund the project,' says Suzanne. 'Australia Council support has helped fund all of our projects to date. Their focus on regional funding is very important.'

# Denton sees art and business synergy



John Denton, the new Deputy Chairman of the Australia Council, says business and the arts share more 'emotion and passion' than is commonly recognised.

A former diplomat (having served in Moscow, Baghdad, South Asia and at the United Nations in New York), John is Partner and Chief Executive Officer at leading law firm, Corrs Chambers Westgarth.

He is Chairman of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees Australia and, as a widely respected labour law expert, John was appointed Chairman of the Australian Government Business Advisory Group on Workplace Relations in 2008.

A Harvard Business School alumnus who also has a double degree in Arts and Law, John is a board member of the Melbourne International Arts Festival and actively involved in the Australian Business Arts Foundation.

Australia Chief Executive Kathy Keele said John's 'business, legal and arts sector expertise is a great asset to the Council'.

Federal Arts Minister Peter Garrett also congratulated John on his appointment, saying his skills are 'a great asset to the position of Deputy Chair of the Council'.

So what draws someone with a very successful business career to the arts?

'My first job as a diplomat in Moscow saw me assume the role of cultural attaché, amongst responsibilities for political relations and human rights,' John told *artery*.

'I was lucky enough to be exposed to some amazing artistic "happenings" and experiences and spend time with artists and performers who risked much in pursuit of their passions.'

Time spent in Russia has proved to be an enduring influence on John's life. His favourite artistic works are 'Russian literature and poetry in all its forms. In particular, I love the four great Russian poets of the 20th Century - Mandelstam, Pasternak, Tsvetaeva and Akhmatova.'

While he might not aspire to be the next Pasternak, John does have an artistic soul. 'I write. Probably poorly, but I try,' he said.

Some may suggest the worlds of business and arts are incompatible, but John says, on the contrary, they have much in common. 'There is more emotion and passion in business than many understand! Also we spend a lot of time communicating - particularly through stories and trying to find ways to inspire,' he said.

John says arts and business can learn about 'disruption and its power' from each other. 'We like to see ourselves at Corrs as a disruptive force, changing the status quo. A bit like Manet and his effect on art,' he said.

John is looking forward to challenging times ahead with the Australia Council, such as 'helping to show how the arts and culture are catalysts for the continued prosperity of our communities. The power of art to help us through the confusion of change and provide us with a respite from the materialism that surrounds us,' he said.

In a speech given at the ReGenerating Communities conference in Melbourne in September, John said he was very pleased to be there at one of his first official events as the new Deputy Chairman of the Australia Council.

He welcomed the conference as 'a fine illustration of the artistic excellence and creativity of communities that's just waiting for the opportunity to be unleashed'.

'The Australia Council in 2006 decided to invest \$780,000 over three years in the Generations pilot project, to explore if community involvement in arts and culture could lead to improved civic engagement,' he said.

'Through improved engagement and the involvement of all spheres of government, with local businesses and communities, we thought this was a way to develop innovative responses to complex issues confronted by communities.

'What we all set out to pursue was, I think, an interesting model which has wide social and economic implications. The project was addressing - in local impact - some big economic and culture ructions, which are also felt around the world. And to do this, Generations embraced an approach which both used and developed the creative and innovative talents of our people.

'Investing in our people - or if you permit me some jargon - investment in our human capital development - is essential if Australia this century is to be a truly successful economy,' he said.

In what, perhaps, offers some insight into the priorities of his term with the Australia Council, John told the ReGenerating Communities conference that: 'We cannot aspire to the possession of communities if we focus merely on material and the littleness of living.

'The Generation project is underpinned by the belief that cultural vibrancy as well as environmental sustainability and the social inclusion of communities are all integral components of how we measure the sustainability and growth of our society,' he said.

# From Arnhem Land to Copenhagen



Yilila on stage

PHOTO: COURTESY YILILA

Yilila is an outstation in Arnhem Land. It is also an award-winning band, described by the Australian Music Radio Airplay Project as 'an impressive fusion of Aboriginal culture and east coast blues and roots'.

The band lives up to its billing and will soon become the first Australian Indigenous group to perform at the World Music Expo (WOMEX) in Copenhagen. To date Yilila has released two albums and a DVD and collaborated with musicians such as John Butler and classical Indian singer Raku Mukherjee. But it all started in the tiny community of Nummular on the Gulf of Carpentaria in Arnhem Land.

Yilila's music is based on Red Flag songs, part of the traditional culture of the Nundhirribala clan from Numbulwar. Maccassan traders from Indonesia sailed to Arnhem Land 500 years ago. The locals learned their language, traded with them and created their flags from the sails of Maccassan boats.

Yilila's music is also strongly influenced by reggae, country and other traditional world music. Their songs are sung in a mixture of Wubuy from Nummular, Anindilyakwa from Groote Island, English, Creole and blends of Maccassan and other Indonesian languages.

'The band has been around in Arnhem Land for a long time. I met them in 2001 when I moved to Numbulwar to teach music,' Tony Gray, Yilila's bass player, manager and producer, told *artery*.

'I met the band and they said they needed a manager. They said, "We've got this band, we want to do something". They gave me a private concert on the singer Grant Nundhirribala's balcony. They just wanted me to hear their music. The music sounded great and there was something special about the singing. I just decided I wanted to take this on and I just went for it, non-stop,' said Tony, who also works as a commercial pilot.

Grant's ability to mix his traditional vocals into contemporary songs is the focal point of the band. 'The thing I find amazing with Grant is he just learned out there in the bush, but still he can

get up in the city and blow away an audience and then make a CD and blow everyone away with that too. He has a versatility and skill that other people just don't have,' said Tony.

Eventually, Tony moved in with Grant. 'We worked on it full time to try and make something. It's just been non-stop, no holidays. All this time and money goes into the band,' he said.

'I was working at the local school and we had some recording equipment so we were able to work on songs and make CDs. It was a real struggle but it has paid off. The band is the only business in Numbulwar.'

Yilila got a big break when an Australia Council grant enabled them to showcase at the inaugural Australasian World Music Expo (AWME).

WOMEX has been called 'the most important international professional market of world music' and presents an undoubted opportunity for Yilila.

Yilila are grateful for the opportunity to play there, despite the enormous cost. 'WOMEX is such a huge exposure but you don't get paid for playing there. We would not be able to do it without getting another Australia Council grant.

'Getting the band from Numbulwar to Darwin is expensive enough. Going from Darwin to Copenhagen would be impossible.

At WOMEX you're lucky to get a chance to showcase. Touring agencies, especially in the US, have been contacting us already even before we play there just because we are playing,' said Tony.

As well as Grant and Tony, the other members of the band travelling to Copenhagen for the October 30 showcase are: Jaydron Nundhirribala, didjeridoo/dancer; Don Murrungun, didjeridoo/dancer; Dion Wurraramara, acoustic guitar; Mark Smith, drums; Luke Howard, keyboard; and Glen Kniebiess, guitar/table.

Copenhagen is in for a treat.



## Brisbane schools win Venice online project

The Australia Council and ABC Radio National's collaborative online artspace, Pool, invited primary and secondary schools to participate in the inaugural Venice Biennale Australian Schools Art Project.

Pupils and teachers were asked to imagine mounting an artwork exhibition to represent Australia at the 2011 Venice Biennale – a major international art event.

Students selected and curated the work of five classmates to represent their school. Entries, which were submitted through the Pool website, were then open to viewing by all participating schools. People were asked to leave comments about each exhibition to encourage further discussion.

The most innovative exhibition, chosen by the Venice Biennale Education Advisory Panel and Felicity Fenner, curator of a group show exhibited at the 2009 Biennale, received a back-catalogue collection for their school library and an exclusive art making workshop with acclaimed arts educator, Dr Margaret Baguley.

The selected schools were Brisbane Girls Grammar School and Saint Ita's Primary School, Brisbane.

Sandra Bender, Venice Biennale 2009 Project Director, said: 'Expanding the Venice Biennale art education resource to incorporate a rich interactive component like Pool is very exciting. Through this project, we want students to explore issues that are important to them through their creativity and artworks.'

See <http://pool.org.au> for more information.

## Australia ramps up presence at leading US arts conference

There was a strong Australian participation at the Western Arts Alliance (WAA) conference, which was held in Phoenix, Arizona from August 31 – September 4.

This year's conference included a Pacific Rim focus, offering artists from Australia, New Zealand and South Korea the opportunity to showcase export-ready performances, attend workshops and build on professional networks.

The annual WAA conference brings together a broad cross-section of presenters, artists and agents from North America's coastline from Alaska to British Columbia, the western states of the US and down to Mexico.

Australian delegates and artist representatives, managed by the Australia Council, showcased nine performing arts companies to key US buyers and decision makers. The attendees were: Slingsby Theatre Company (SA); The Black Arm Band (National); Circus Oz (Vic); Australian Dance Theatre (SA); Chunky Move (Vic); Lucy Guerin Inc. (Vic); Circa (Qld); Strange Fruit (Vic); and Sydney Dance Company (NSW).

For full details about Australia's presence at the WAA see [www.ozarts.com.au](http://www.ozarts.com.au).



## G'day world! Australia to host huge arts summit

The Australia Council will host the 5th World Summit on Arts and Culture in Melbourne in October 2011.

The prestigious International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) announced that Australia had won the right to host the 5th Summit at the recent conclusion of the 4th Summit, which was held in Johannesburg.

Welcoming the announcement, Australia Council Chief Executive, Kathy Keele presented a video featuring endorsements by Federal Arts Minister, Peter Garrett, actor Cate Blanchett and other arts leaders, celebrating how the arts express the voice of communities across Australia.

The Melbourne Summit will be held from 3-6 October 2011, on the eve of the Melbourne International Arts Festival and in partnership with Arts Victoria.

The 5th Summit's theme is 'Creative Intersections', which highlights the current global interest in how the arts can give voice to different communities and concerns, through collaborations with business, technology, health, the environment, education and identity through Indigenous, local and global cultures.

'Australia is a recognised leader in the diverse and energetic ways the arts now intersect with many different sectors and peoples,' said Ms Keele.

'Our arts are giving voice to health and environmental messages, to community building and multicultural expression, to a new interchange with our business world, and of course to the continuity of our Indigenous cultures.'

More information at [www.ifacca.org](http://www.ifacca.org).