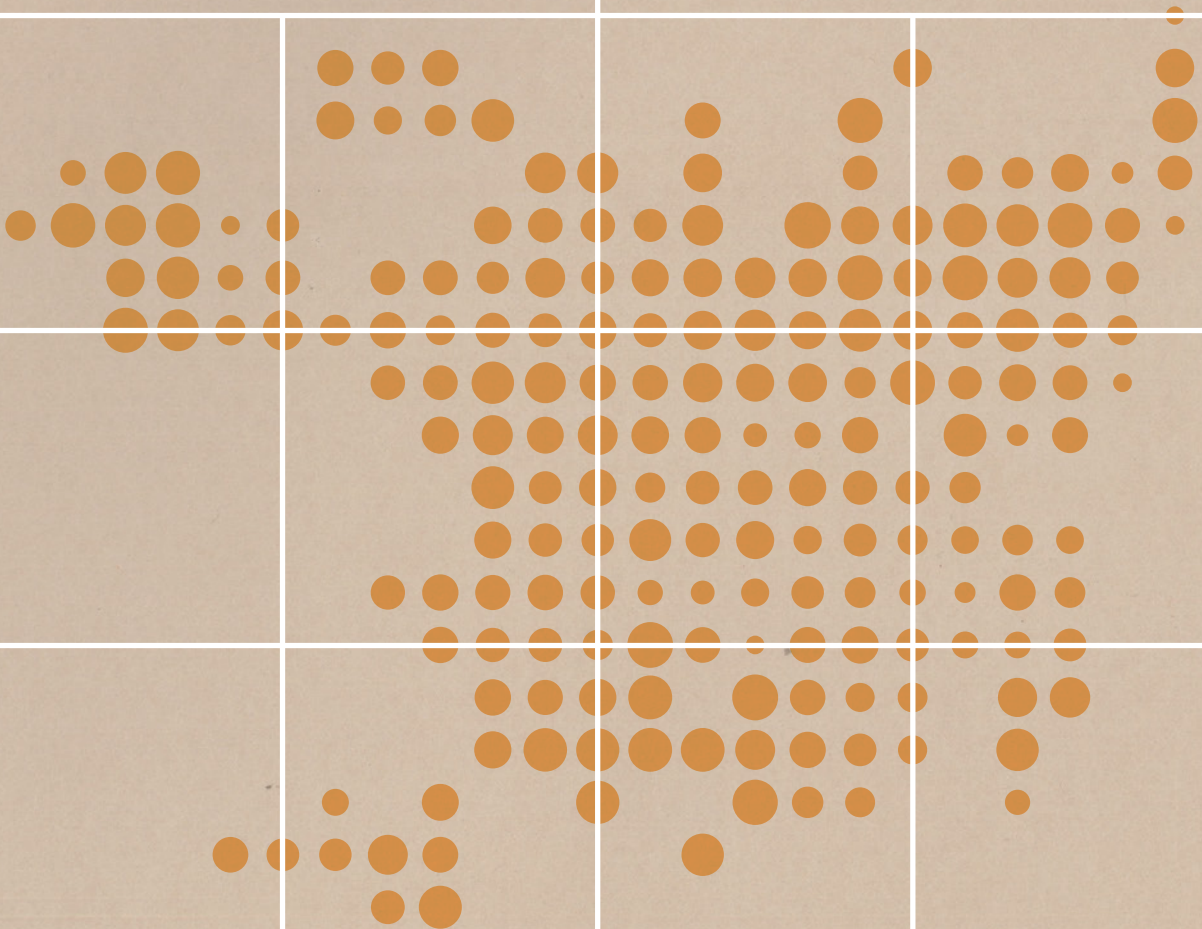
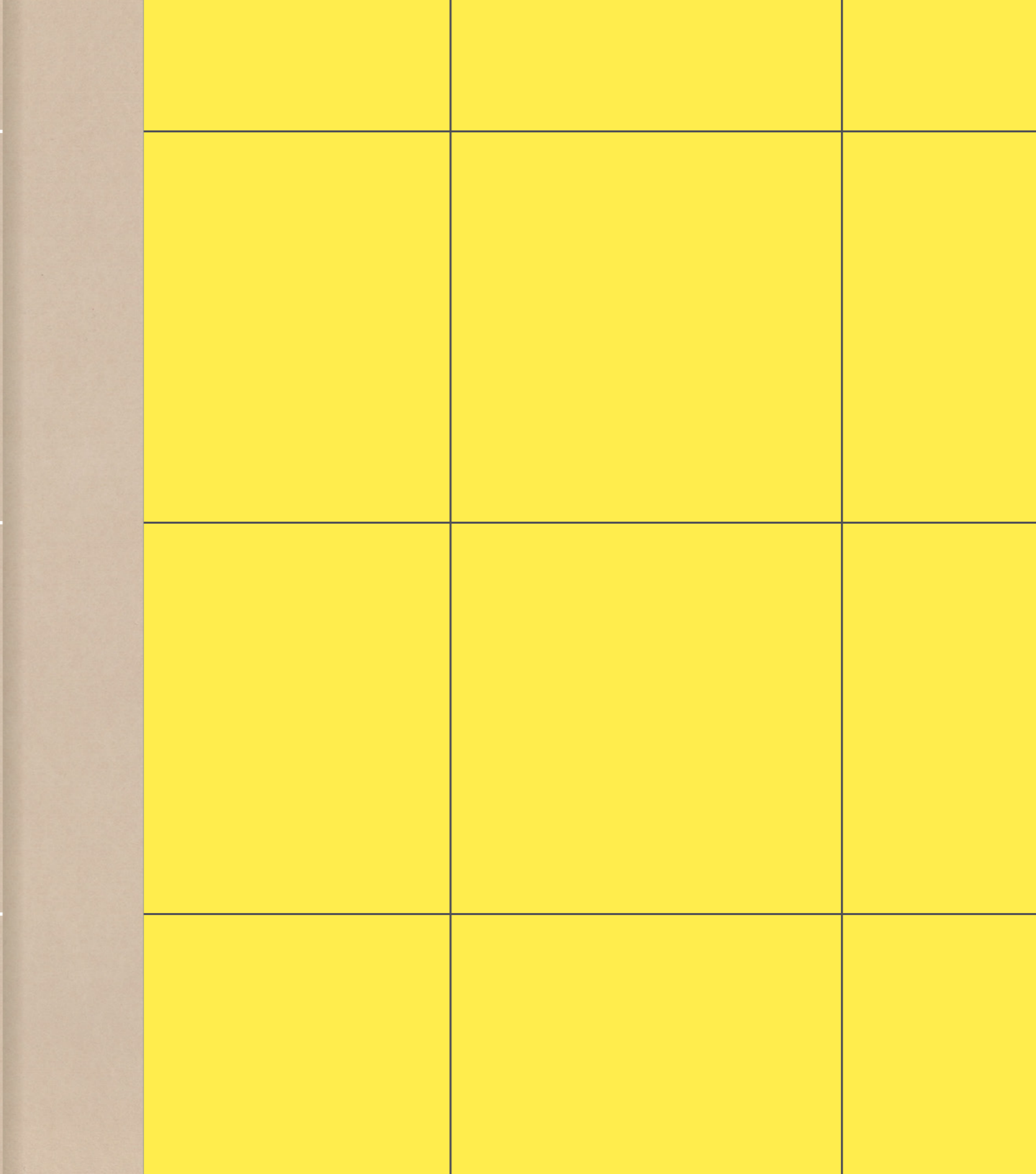
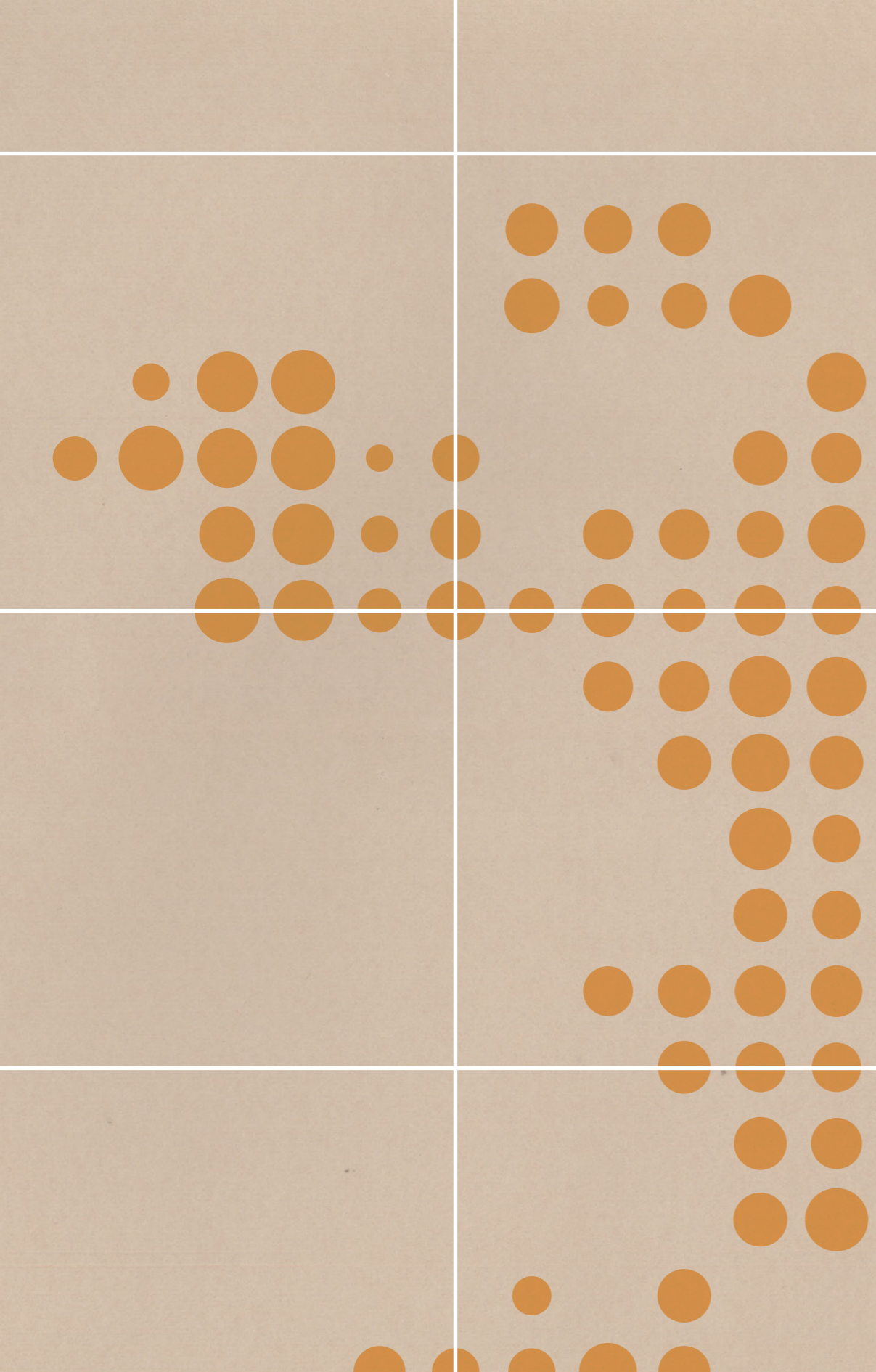


The Committee
for Sydney

The Sydney Culture Essays





The Sydney Culture Essays

2017

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Uncle Charles (Chicka) Madden

Welcome to Country

My name is Charles Madden, known around the inner city of Sydney as Chicka. I'm from Gadigal land, Aboriginal land.

I'd like to take this opportunity to extend a warm and sincere welcome to all my Aboriginal brothers and sisters—welcome to Gadigal land, Aboriginal land. I'd also like to welcome all our Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters—welcome to Gadigal land, Aboriginal land. And I'd like to welcome all our non-Aboriginal brothers and sisters—welcome to Gadigal land, Aboriginal land.

The Gadigal clan is one of twenty-nine clans that make up the Eora nation. The Eora nation is bounded by nature's own: the Hawkesbury River to the north, the Nepean to the west, and the Georges River to the south.

I've lived in and around Redfern and the inner-city suburbs of Sydney my whole life and raised my family here. As children my sisters and I went to Redfern Public School, which is now NCIE, the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence. I was just starting school there when the Second World War ended and I remember that day very well. For many, many years I've served my community here by being involved in different Aboriginal organisations in and around the inner city. When the Redfern Aboriginal Medical Service moved from the shop they had on Regent Street to the Catholic church on Redfern Street, I was elected onto the board and served for about forty-two years. While working on the rail-ways, I was a board member of Aboriginal Hostels Australia for six years. I've been actively involved with the Aboriginal Housing Company and the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, both in Redfern. I'm still a member of the land council. All of these services started here in Redfern and can now be found right around Australia.

The Redfern All Blacks football team are the pride of our community and bring us all together. I was very involved as treasurer for the Redfern All Blacks Rugby League Football Club for about twenty years. My young grandson now plays for the Redfern All Blacks.

Sydney has always been a meeting place for Aboriginal people and today it is home to the largest community of Aboriginal people in Australia.

This is Aboriginal land—always was, always will be.

Welcome. Welcome. Welcome.

Foreword

Sydney is at an extraordinary moment of transformation and growth. And culture must play its fundamental role in this change. Without culture, global cities are neither liveable nor sustainable.

The Sydney Culture Essays take up this challenge with an inspired spectrum of perspectives from practitioners and policy makers in our creative community.

These essays offer a body of collective knowledge which can help us respond to the pace, scale and character of the development in our city.

We all know the benefits of arts and culture to our communities and to the individuals living within them. That's why the NSW Government has developed *Create in NSW*, its arts and cultural policy framework. Through *Create in NSW*, we are committed to promoting the value of the arts and expanding our awareness of our state's arts, screen and cultural offerings.

We are committed to reflecting our strong Aboriginal cultural sector and the rich diversity of our communities in the arts that we support, whether in galleries, theatres, awards or on screens. This diversity is an asset, making our state and city an exciting and desirable place to live.

Sydneysiders, I think, desire a more open and connected city, one where people and ideas move more freely and are more easily shared and combined for common cause.

Building the cultural future that this global city deserves requires innovative collaborations and new thinking. The NSW Government will be a willing partner.

The timely conversations which underpin these diverse essays will influence the shape of Sydney's cultural landscape and identity, and ideas they share will inspire further collaboration and communicate its potential. Congratulations to The Committee for Sydney for this fantastic initiative.

Introduction: Only in Sydney

Global Cities have a distinct voice. They talk to themselves, and to the world, through a unique mix of landscape, history, commerce and neighbourhoods. These combine to give each city a syntax; a vocabulary and structure through which they define and express themselves to the world. They are animated and articulated by a complex interaction of people, culture, ideas and exchange. It is this 'voice' that makes a city a home for locals and alluring for visitors.

Sydney is undoubtedly a great global city. Yet what can we say of its unique voice and character? How is it expressed through its cultural and artistic institutions? What is the cultural identity of our city and how do we want to shape it in the years ahead?

This compilation of essays steps up to such big questions and delivers some exciting, and at times challenging, answers.

Sydney has a rich cultural identity. It includes its ancient and enduring Aboriginal inheritance, a history of openness and creativity, waves of immigration and strong civic and educational institutions. Sydney's layered urban culture contains an unusual mix of contrasts and contradictions: nonchalance and ambition; scrappiness and restraint; colonial pomp and twentieth century thrust; and both a proud parochialism and an eye to the world. Mix it all together and it is undeniably Sydney. But while there are many Sydneysiders, there are also many Sydneys.

Not everyone everywhere gets to experience the range and depth of Sydney's character and identity. For visitors, our cultural richness is often masked by other extraordinary aspects of Sydney's character—its landscape, climate and lifestyle. Too often the tourist doesn't get beyond the postcard, or off the beach. Too many don't allow time to experience the more subtle and surprising aspects of Sydney culture. Those that do, don't always know where to start. Our city's beautiful voices don't always sing in harmony. We lack much of the cultural cohesion and way-finding of other cities.

For Sydneysiders the challenge is different. For some, the challenges are accessibility and visibility. Others are alienated from cultural life of the city, feeling unwelcome or uninvited. And for some of our citizens, our city barely sings at all.

The problem of visibility and accessibility is particularly pronounced with Sydney's Eora heritage and continuing Aboriginal culture. These are part of Australia's only truly unique cultural inheritance. The world's oldest continuing culture is here, all around us. It is rich and extraordinary, but unknown or unrecognised by a large part of our non-Aboriginal community. The tragic and unresolved business of our history stops us from seeing and celebrating something that Aboriginal people want to share. Making the timeless and continuing Aboriginal culture of Sydney more visible and accessible should be one of our cultural ambitions; connecting all of us to the landscape of our city.

Our multicultural fabric is another great and unique part of our culture. Best understood in neighbourhoods like Marrickville, Auburn, Fairfield, Cabramatta and many other places where the different tide lines of post war immigration overlap. Yet how many Sydneysiders or visitors move between these places? How can we encourage a stronger

cultural connection with the food, languages, festivals and music of these remarkable communities?

We have extraordinary cultural assets, but for too many they are too far away or too hard to get to. The transport revolution taking place in Sydney offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve the accessibility of our cultural life and cultural institutions. We must not miss this chance.

The Committee believes in the intrinsic value of the arts for the community and the individuals who create, engage with otherwise enjoy them. For the Committee, it is self-evident that music, visual arts, literature and performance are to be supported and embraced as ends in themselves. There is no greater sign of the health of a city than the extent to which arts and culture are practised and supported by its communities, business and government.

We also know that a vibrant arts ecosystem is strongly associated with economic success and social development. Cities that do the arts well also do innovation well. The emerging understanding of the importance of innovation districts—where workers and tech startups want to work, live, share and mingle with people of diverse skills and backgrounds—is leading us to understand the powerful role that creative arts practitioners and institutions can play in creating great places. Such places are home to Richard Florida's creative class that has reshaped cities and their economies across the globe—and is doing so in Sydney today.

We welcome the Government's initiative to create a new arts precinct in Parramatta, as well as the City of Parramatta's recent discussion paper, 'Culture and our City'. These important initiatives encourage inclusion and participation beyond those places and communities currently well served. They will also add to the number and range of cultural producers and institutions in Sydney, and the capacity of other key places and communities in our city to grow the kind of high productivity innovation economy currently only enjoyed closer to Sydney's CBD.

In growing these arts and this economy for ourselves, we are also promoting Sydney on a bigger stage. In a world in which talent and investment go where they want, the quality of place becomes paramount. Sydney's economic offer is hugely reinforced by its arts and culture offer as two sides of the same coin in a global economy in which a city's liveability, and indeed culture, are core assets.

A dynamic city needs a diverse, accessible and thriving cultural base. It needs strong cultural institutions, creative precincts and a calendar of festivals and events that activate the different neighbourhoods of the city. It needs to nurture creative activities and industries and support arts education. It needs to ensure its culture, its voice, is heard by all of its citizens and across the world.

For Sydney to experience a full flowering of its cultural potential, we believe we need to recognise and strengthen our existing arts, heritage and cultural inheritance, and foster an even greater openness to innovation, creativity and diversity in our cultural and creative life.

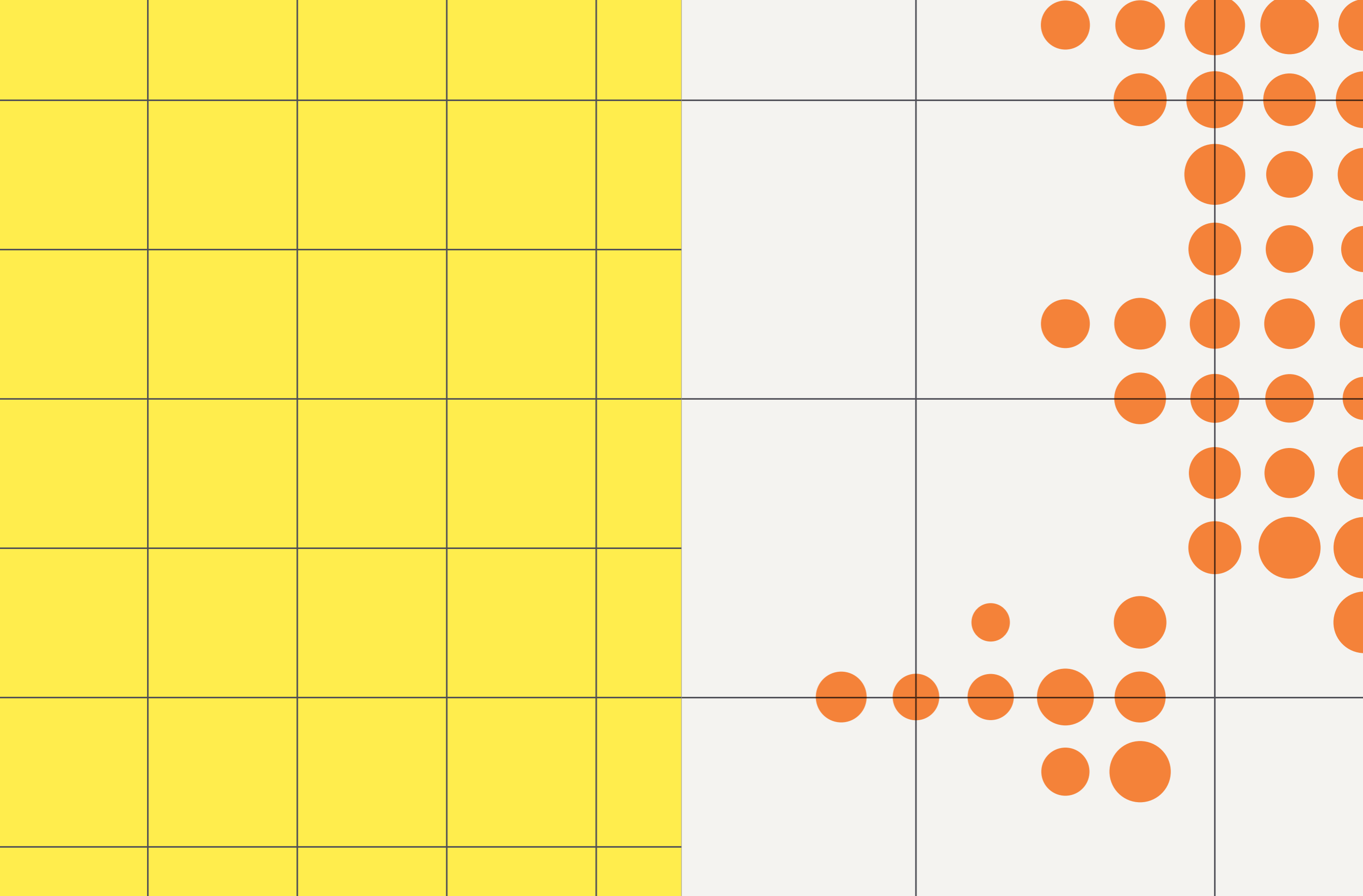
These essays bring together the thinking of many of the leading participants in Sydney's cultural life. The authors represent the unique

range, diversity and focus of our artists, institutions and cultural experience. They reflect the dynamism of Sydney's culture, its openness to change and the aspiration for Sydney's artistic and creative practice in the future.

At times provocative, illuminating and inspiring, the end result is an important contribution to the narrative and collective understanding of our city today. As Dr Caroline Butler-Bowdon and Ian Innes write in their essay, this is, 'a restless city that is constantly making and remaking itself'. Or as Lisa Havilah says, 'cultural institutions should... lie in the heart of our communities'.

The Committee for Sydney sees Sydney's cultural identity, and its cultural capacity, as essential to the life of the city. But they are also enablers of its future growth, liveability and prosperity. Our essayists emphasise the importance of Sydney's cultural life in the day-to-day lives of its citizens and the way in which they experience and enjoy their city. Surely that is the main thing for us to focus on. If we get that right, the rest will follow. We would like Sydney to have a new conversation about its cultural life and identity and we want to spark this conversation through these essays.

Welcome to the conversation.



The Pie Chart of Happiness: on the Articulation of Cultural Value

I like to keep it simple.

A specialised message for a particular audience can be as windy and exclusive as it likes. Contextualised jargon can be OK, even amusing.

But a message that is intended to be universal needs to be rugged, plain and humble. It needs to be simple.

This is something that any advocate for the value of arts and culture knows well, yet still struggles with.

When making a case for culture's value, there is so much to say, and so many people to convince. Audiences, customers, funders, patrons, governments, the media. We are torn between using our own, sometimes esoteric jargon on the one hand, and that of the economic impact study on the other. We pull our message out of shape in trying to show that we are both really, really broadly accessible, and provide good return on investment to boot.

We're clearly not doing it right. Despite Australia Council research finding that 85% of Australians think the arts make for a richer and more meaningful life, when it comes to articulating its value, culture still has a perception problem. We are a highly culturally engaged nation, yet we do not self-identify as 'cultural'. It's not part of our national myth-making. The value of culture, which we enjoy, goes below the radar, and this can adversely affect policy and resourcing decisions.

In an age fixated on metrics and evidence, is it perverse to argue that the main value of culture is happiness?

Are we afraid of looking too simple?



Between 2010 and 2013 I was involved in a series of meetings convened by US arts peak body National Arts Strategies (NAS). The gatherings were between arts and cultural leaders from around the world, and leading business academics. They took place at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan, the University of Texas at Austin and Harvard Business School, with a collective debrief held at the conclusion of the series in Sundance.

There were around 80 arts and cultural workers from around the world involved, with a broad definition of culture taken with representatives from organisations including large orchestras, community choirs, marine parks, museums and service providers.

NAS wanted to build the capacity of cultural leaders to increase the resilience of the sector in uncertain times characterised by scarce resources, rapid technological change and the increasing need for the 'non-profits' of old to compete for attention and finances in a crowded, complex market.

Amongst debates on topics ranging from media convergence to community diversity and the future of money, the slippery notion of 'relevance' always rose to the surface. The vital importance of art and culture was something fervently believed in by us all; yet the simple articulation of 'why?' remained frustratingly beyond us.

The key term here is 'simple'. As arts professionals, we were all

versed in the differences between intrinsic and extrinsic value. Perhaps because it's easier, and perhaps because we've been trained into it over a generation of economics-heavy public discourse, we were all able to reel off compelling statistics about the educational and well-being programs provided by our organisations, to quote our attendance numbers or cite figures from economic impact studies about cultural tourism and the night-time economy. We were aware of the various 250-page reports commissioned by governments and foundations that comprehensively champion both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits—yet their very density means they tend not to easily lend themselves to use in broad-base advocacy. We were quite good at arguing amongst ourselves the relative merits of zoos, symphonies and community organisations. But when pushed to address the question, 'Culture is important because?', a concise, relatable and true response was hard to land on.

Furthermore, the more we tried to agree on key terms or concepts of cultural value, the more our distinct terminologies, or the peculiarities of the cultural forms we worked in, drew us apart, not together.

Yet, listening to the lively discussions of this passionate, talented and experienced cohort over a period of years, I became convinced that we were all saying the same thing after all.

First, our shared conviction was that cultural value is a societal bedrock. We are culture. We are made of it. Whether or not we are aware of it, we view the world through cultural filters shaped over centuries by language, history, philosophy, travel, religion and art. Culture itself informs the way we see, talk and think. It is hard to measure the value of culture because it is almost impossible to point at it and define it, to describe it as an external phenomenon. To perceive something that is coded into our very means of perception creates a feedback loop from which it is difficult to extricate ourselves.

If we are made of culture, it makes sense that being aware of this is important. The ability to unpick and understand the ways in which we relate to the world around us will help us to create stronger relationships, to understand difference, and to make better decisions. Concepts like self-knowledge are so pervasive and fundamental that they are surely immeasurable—they are, in fact, the foundations on which measurable strategies are based.

If this sounds evasive, it leads to another challenge in answering the question of culture's fundamental importance. What if the answer is, because it just is? People love culture, they find it satisfying, inspiring and it makes them happy. Isn't that enough? Surely, the more happiness in the world, the better? I don't think anyone would disagree with this belief, but how do you prove it? How do you even set about gathering the evidence that happiness is good, in and of itself? The more you talk about happiness, the more the word itself seems hopelessly naïve. Sure, there has been plenty of interesting work looking at some extrinsic benefits of happiness. Research tells us, for example, that lonely old people have better health outcomes once they get a cat, which brings happiness (except perhaps to dog people). But you don't have to need happiness for a particular functional reason for it to be good for you. Happiness is good

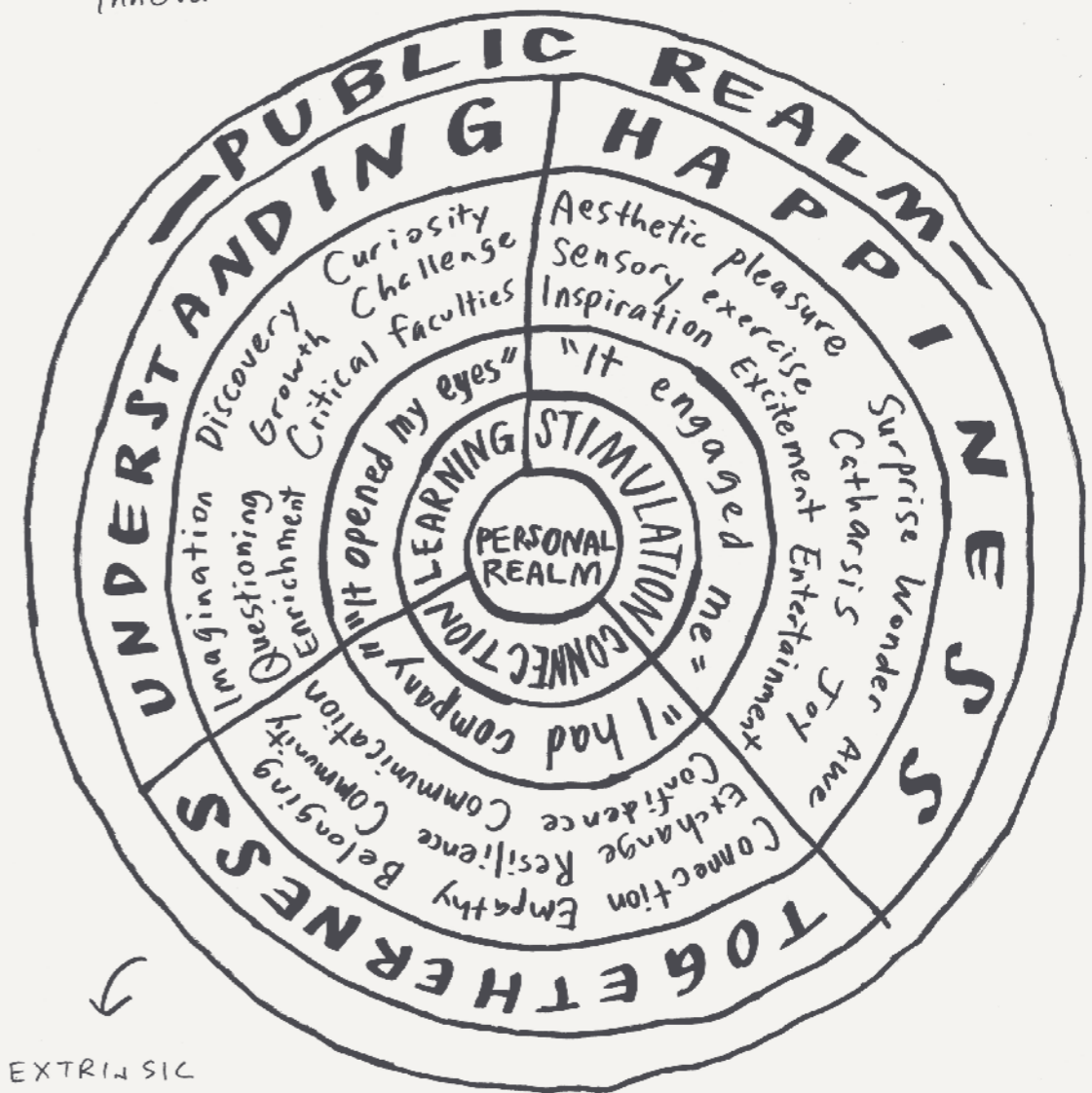
The Pie Chart of Happiness, Patrick McIntyre, 2016

EXTRINSIC
BENEFITS INCLUDE

- Education programs
- Creativity and innovation

EXTRINSIC
BENEFITS INCLUDE

- Health and well-being programs
- Tourism



EXTRINSIC
BENEFITS INCLUDE

- "Liveability"
- Social and community-building programs

THE PIE CHART OF HAPPINESS

in every moment of your life, but no one's about to study every moment of everyone's life.

There was a strong sense amongst the NAS group that the more individual happiness there is, the greater the communal happiness—a contributor to social harmony, productivity and what used to be called 'world peace'. All institutions of all scales were able to discuss how their programs and services contributed toward individual and communal wellbeing. They provided personal stimulation via participation or consumption. They were aware of the enhanced value of shared interests and experiences, and accordingly optimised their facilities to enhance interactions with others, and they provided the opportunity for further enrichment and learning, whether through formal educational programs for schools or adults, or simply through the possibility of a deeper engagement with culture, its practitioners, traditions, histories and techniques. These three pillars—stimulation, connection and learning—seemed to hold whatever the scale of the organisation, or whichever type of cultural activity it hosted.



While in public discourse, "cultural policy" is often taken to mean "arts policy", we should recognise, note and celebrate that art is but one branch of culture, as NAS did in selecting the members of its program. Others branches include philosophical and political traditions, history, language, sport and games, superstition, folklore, a love of 'the great outdoors', ceremony and ritual, fashion and food.

Struck by the clarity of the three pillars, I began applying them to other forms of cultural activity or institution, say a cricket club, a university, a national park, and found they could be equally applied.

In culture, the concept of 'externalities' applies: that is, benefits can be conferred on people by an activity with which they are not directly involved. Do I visit the Sydney Cricket Ground? Never. Am I glad it exists? Yes, because cricket is an important part of our culture. Cricket can be enjoyed as a game to be played with friends and family, or watched with a crowd. With practice, one can become better at it, progressing from backyard to elite level. It has a whole heritage of rules, scores and heroes that can be sifted through and obsessed over. Winning and losing exercises the emotions. A great game can buoy you through the week, and generate good will amongst strangers. The display of technical mastery can create awe and inspiration that can heighten our expectations of ourselves in our own endeavours. I'm not remotely interested in cricket, but I can recognise the benefits to my community of the stimulation, connection and learning it offers, and I'm glad of it.

I can go for years without thinking about the 50m butterfly, but if Australia wins bronze at some far-flung Olympics, I love sharing a knowing smile with a random passer-by. Swimming, like cricket—and, tellingly, unlike culture—forms part of our collective Australian mythology. We tend not to think of these moments as other than fleeting: abundant, common, dispensable, value-less. But we'd miss them if they stopped.

A cohesive, productive society is made up of endless accumulations of such moments. All forms of culture and recreation play their part—even those that don't bring us personal joy, because we benefit too from the joy of others, however inscrutable.

So, happiness is important for personal wellbeing and, by extension, communal wellbeing. A community is an aggregation of individuals—it follows that an aggregation of happy individuals will result in a happy whole. This is simplistic: not everyone is happy all the time, and not all people are made happy by the same things. Our own experiences and interests make us intrinsically different from others: therefore a community is also an aggregation of idiosyncratic differences that together give distinctive identity to a group. Culture makes us different, but can also bring us together, and give us the insights that help us to interact productively and generously. It can bring different people together around a shared interest. Art, history and language can help us to understand people of different cultural traditions—it even helps us get to know people from the past. National narratives serve to create fellow-feeling.

This mini-revelation—three pillars of value, scaling from the personal to the public realms—gave rise to the model above, which I call the Pie Chart of Happiness.

Initially a doodle in a margin, I wonder whether it might be a useful template to demonstrate how the intrinsic values of culture in the private realm amplify into the public realm as communal value. It traces programmatic, or extrinsic, benefits back to the intrinsic, providing opportunities to leverage these, including for economic gain, without losing sight of the fundamentals. Hopefully, some alignment can be brought to the vexed challenge of advocacy by finding a home for everything—from entertainment to self-knowledge to rarefied, esoteric mastery—in the one basic architecture of value that is unashamedly simple.

Here's Brian Eno, from his 2015 John Peel Lecture: 'Art is everything that you don't have to do... You have to eat, for example, but you don't have to invent Baked Alaska. We have to move, but we don't have to do the rumba.'

So why do we do the rumba?

Simply, it makes us happy.

Sydney: City of Festivals

For over 60,000 years Sydney has known how to hold a festival. Early recorded encounters between colonists and the First Australians talk of dancing, song and ceremony happening throughout the Sydney area. In what is now The Domain, the written record describes events and ceremony occurring as clans gathered to perform non-sacred dances and songs for the enjoyment of both locals and the recently arrived. Governor John Hunter, who looked after the colony from 1795 to 1800, wrote of the music and song of the women reaching Government House from Bennelong Point where they fished and paddled out in canoes. The shell middens around the Sydney area are reported as being up to 12 meters high and more like shell monuments to the gathering of clans as they feasted and discarded the cockle shells.

This long trajectory of communal gathering and celebration perhaps explains why Sydney has a reputation for being a party city.

Festivals are a core component of global cultures throughout history. A festival to celebrate a specific event like a harvest or holy day is common across cultures. These have evolved and altered dramatically over time: one only has to consider Christmas to see an example of a festival transformed through the ages. From observing a religious event through ecclesiastical ceremonies to the modern, mostly secular feasting, gift exchange and family gatherings that Christmas has become.

Halloween has gone through a similar progression from All Saints Day and Allhallowtide and before then the more pagan festivals of gods and goddesses of death and life, or the developments of South America's Day of the Dead, into a commercially led event.

Festivals keep changing to reflect the changing attitudes and interests of the people who celebrate them. There is something in the large gathering of people coming together in a united way to celebrate and focus civic identity that builds and binds communities of a great city.

After the tragedies of WW2 that saw almost a million Australians serve and over 30,000 die, post-war Australia was keen to bind communities through civic events and rituals. Record crowds gathered to see Queen Elizabeth in 1954, prompting city leaders to create festivals: Moomba in 1955 in Melbourne, Waratah Festival in 1956 in Sydney and Warana in 1961 in Brisbane. The Waratah Festival was held in October and was conceived to breathe cultural life into the city centre, including beauty pageants, a parade (fabled to involve over 5,000 people), flower shows and plethora of community activities. This festival continued until the opening of the Sydney Opera House in 1973. There are reports that the Waratah Festival ceased due to the withdrawal of sponsors, waning public interest and reports of the whole thing becoming boring and tacky. Maybe it had overstayed its purpose? Or maybe it had stopped evolving with the times? Whatever the cause, the Waratah Festival was soon replaced by the Festival of Sydney in 1977, which was established by the Sydney Committee and owned by the city council. The Festival of Sydney continued many of the Waratah traditions with equestrian events, dog shows, outdoor concerts and an ever growing program of cultural and civic events.

Jump to today, and the modern Sydney Festival reflects this long

history with over 150 separate events stretching the width and breadth of this expanding city, including free and ticketed shows and exhibitions, and boasting an attendance of well over 500,000 Sydneysiders and visitors. Many other smaller festivals have sprung up, and Sydney now has a cultural calendar full of festivals. It seems clear why Sydney is known as the City of Festivals.

Sydney Festival is one of the largest cultural festivals in the country and has inherited four very distinct personalities that drive its programming.

- The Heritage Festival highlights things we have been doing for a very long time and people have come to expect year on year—the large outdoor events, the free concerts, the Ferrython.
- The Summer Festival offers the chance to enjoy the city in summer by having a drink in the parks, being outdoors, enjoying time with friends and family.
- The International Arts Festival brings Sydney the best of the world and the country to expose us to what is going on and how what we are doing fits into a global picture.
- The Festival of Disruption and Change prototypes new ways of engaging with the city and helps existing organisations and arts companies to go beyond their limitations.

Sydney Festival works with every cultural body in the city to explore new relationships and dream big. Cultural ambition is what motivates many artists, but often the resources are not equal to the ambitions and hence collaboration is key to realising projects that are bigger than the groups who are undertaking them. Works like *Cloudstreet*, *Secret River*, *Black Diggers* or the work of Force Majeure are examples where Sydney Festival has collaborated with artists to support their vision.

There has been a huge growth in festivals in Sydney in recent years for a variety of reasons. Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, started in 1978, rose from modest beginnings to become an internationally recognised example of Sydney's acceptance and celebrated diversity. Carnivale, Parramasala, Corroboree and Lunar New Year have issued invitations to the city to celebrate the diverse range of cultures that populate Sydney. Over the years, venues like the Sydney Opera House and Carriageworks have been successful in creating and hosting festivalised programming streams to extend the impact in a particular field of cultural endeavour, such as the Festival of Dangerous Ideas.

These festivals have provided the opportunity to group together existing offerings whilst speaking directly with the general public about a body of work. Or in other cases they build momentum to capture and galvanise organisations and audiences around a cultural ambition that is not being addressed in other ways. Sometimes these festivals will come and go riding a wave of community interest or the skills of the individuals

Opposite.
*The Manganiyar
Seduction*, 2010.
Photo: Prudence Upton

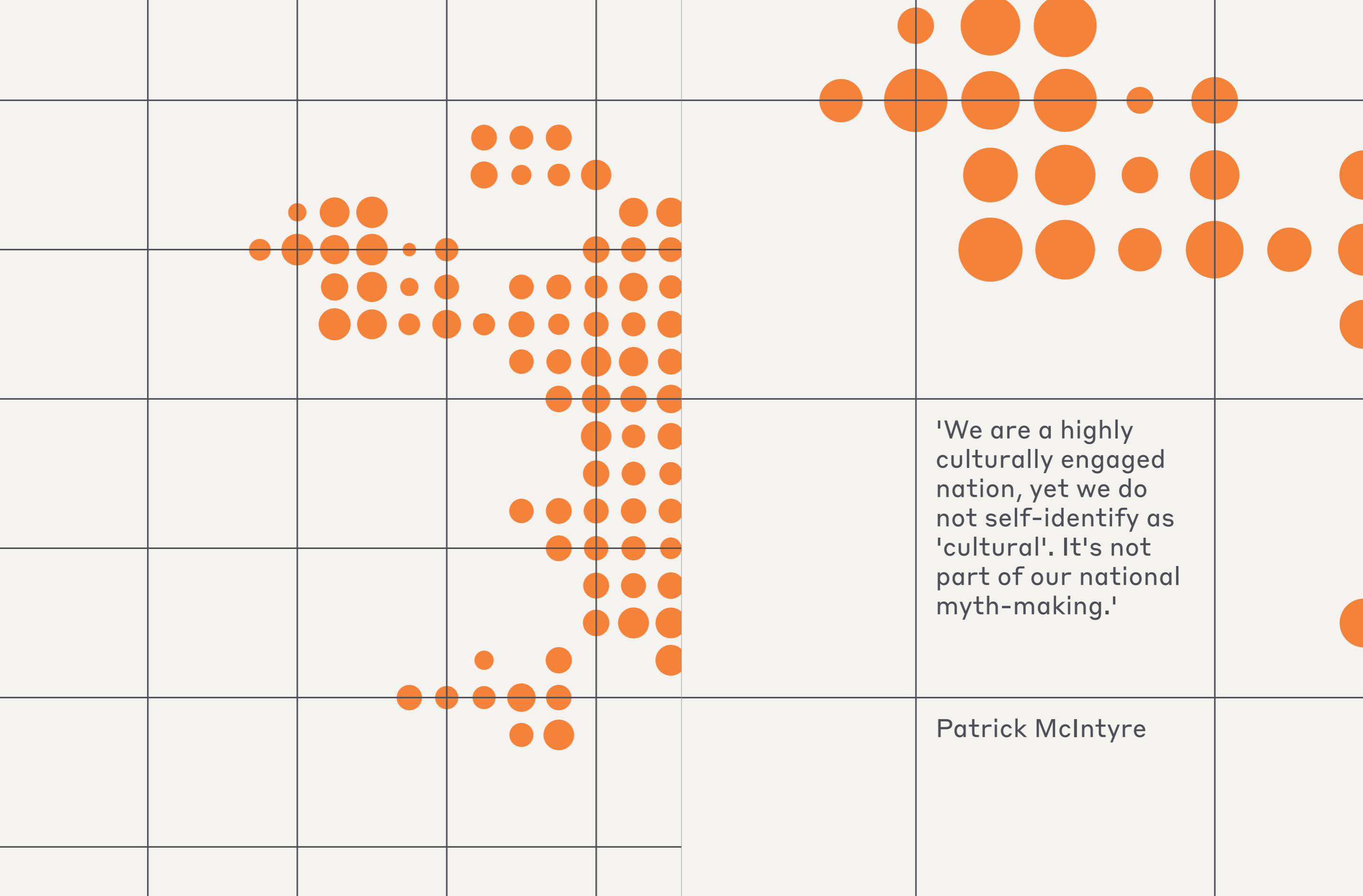


involved. Sometimes a festival fulfills its purpose and transforms into something new.

The role of the Sydney Festival is to be constantly prototyping the new and exploring exciting developments. Sydney Festival must continue to evolve, to show the way forward, to inspire. Up until 1996 the New Year's Eve fireworks were the responsibility of Sydney Festival before becoming their own entity. After years of Sydney Festival concerts in The Domain, it is no accident that there is now a constant stream of commercial concerts and festivals occurring in that space. Light installations, experimental music and large scale projections all were prototyped through Sydney Festival before leading to the establishment of the spectacular Vivid Festival in 2009. In a city of festivals, Sydney Festival has the role of thought leader, provocateur, elder statesman, risk-taker and reliable old friend.

What will the festivals of the future look like in a world where the digital and virtual technologies are leading us into amazing social changes? How will we organise ourselves as a community 50 years from now? Will the reasons for festivals still exist in the future?

Whatever the future holds, I believe festivals will be at the forefront of stimulating our communities to think about what is over the horizon, to test and to provide a vocabulary for future cultural developments. Like the early exchanges of song and dance between the first Sydneysiders and the clans of the Eora, Sydney Festival continues a legacy of cultural adventure and continuity, contributing to building a stronger and more vibrant community in which to live.



'We are a highly culturally engaged nation, yet we do not self-identify as 'cultural'. It's not part of our national myth-making.'

Patrick McIntyre

After White(le)y—the Role of Cultural Planning for Sydney

The defining cultural image of Sydney was nailed by Brett Whiteley in *The Balcony 2* in 1975—an immense ultramarine pond fringed by Harbour icons. In fact, Sydney is the opposite of this image. A ‘real’ map of Sydney shows a vertical blue strip of ocean, three green boundaries of national parks and a vast, variegated urban expanse of 5 million people.

Whiteley’s image reflects Sydney’s cultural history. Our major cultural institutions were built on British models out of Pymont Yellow-block sandstone in the nineteenth century. Cultural practitioners clustered in cheap places like Kings Cross, jazz haunts like the Ironworkers Club in The Rocks and port-side pubs frequented by The Push. As Sydney grew, cultural practitioners were forced out of town chasing cheap studio space. A new type of cultural practitioner also emerged after 1945 reflecting Sydney’s burgeoning social diversity.

As a result of these forces, Sydney’s cultural offering in 2017 is yoked to the far eastern slice of the city with the centre and west of Sydney under-resourced. There is a collective will across Sydney at all levels of government, amongst cultural groups and in the community at large to redress this imbalance.

We don’t need to look to overseas case studies to understand the cultural landscape of Sydney and how to fix our problems. A lot of thinking, data collection, mapping, analysis and planning about Sydney’s cultural offering has already taken place. A recent SGS report on a single strand of the cultural sector in NSW referenced over 20 major reports. Recent work has been led by the NSW Government through Infrastructure NSW and Arts NSW. There have been extensive programs by many LGAs and cultural stakeholders. The City of Sydney has led this work by virtue of its responsibility for the global core of our city. The forthcoming NSW Cultural Infrastructure Strategy will represent a comprehensive response to Sydney’s cultural needs and, critically, it will be backed by significant budget investment by the NSW Government. We have gathered enough evidence. We need to get on with the job.

Cultural mapping by SGS has provided evidence of what Sydney really looks like and where its strengths and challenges lie. We have found what most people would instinctively expect: that cultural diversity and social disadvantage are most pronounced in Western Sydney and that the cultural offering there is less substantial. This imbalance is reflected in the fact that Western Sydney has only 15% of total employment in the creative industries across Greater Sydney. In total, this sector contributes just 1% of Gross Regional Product and jobs to Western Sydney. This doesn’t mean that there is a lack of commitment. Volunteering as a proportion of the adult population in Western Sydney (13.1%) is virtually the same as Greater Sydney (14.7%).

Cultural planning requires recognition that culture is not merely bigger institutions and ‘arts plus’. Cultural expression includes the professional writer or performer developing and exhibiting a new work; the local amateur ceramics group; festivals and gatherings in local parks; and everyday activities and practices founded on shared culture.

A key element of cultural planning is creating opportunities for people to meet, collaborate and innovate in their arts and cultural

practices. Experts often talk about activating urban space. This means more than just converting high streets into malls. Culture is the defining element in activating urban spaces through exciting experiences like public art, street theatre and live music. Cultural offerings also engender controversy that makes us think about our aesthetics, and even ethics, as a society. Sydney has notable examples of cultural controversy from Bert Flugelman's stainless steel 'shish kebab' in 1978 to Hany Armarnious' inverted blue milk crate today. The recent discourse over the sale of 'Blue Poles' is another contribution.

Cultural planning shows that urban evolution has given a lot to eastern Sydney. This supports the government decision to create major cultural offerings in Parramatta and Western Sydney. The relocation of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS) to Parramatta is therefore defensible so long as MAAS is supported with sufficient capital investment to realign its core functions to meet the demand of the new target market in Western Sydney. MAAS should become a magnet—not an end in itself—to attract people to Parramatta who will stay and enjoy other cultural experiences sponsored by government and increasingly by the private sector. At present there is no private art gallery in Parramatta and very few between the Inner West and the Blue Mountains.

Different art forms and localities have vastly different access to appropriate spaces across Sydney. For example, there are no dedicated rehearsal spaces for dance practitioners in Western Sydney despite the fact it is home to FORM Dance Projects, the leading dance network for professional and community dancers in NSW. For many cultural practitioners, the greatest need across Sydney—and particularly in Western Sydney—is access to studio spaces to create, take risks and form networks.

Cultural groups in Western Sydney are taking the initiative with performances that reflect their demographics and dynamic stories. 'Bankstown Live' by Urban Theatre Projects was a remarkable event in the streets and backyards of Bankstown in 2014. It offered nine works about this diverse community including 'The Tribe', by Mohammed Ahmad and Janice Muller based on his novel about a Lebanese family in Australia; 'Bayanihan Hopping Spirit House' by Alwin Reamillo about communities in the rural Philippines; and 'Van' by Vinh Nguyen, a visual timeline of his father's journey from Vietnam to Australia.

Cultural planning is doomed to under-deliver if it remains locked in conventional thinking and governance. The new MAAS cannot reproduce a 19th century museum model. It needs to examine Western Sydney demographics, contemporary user preferences for interactive experiences and the role of technology so that it becomes a 'must visit' and 'repeat visitation' place. Sydney also has magnificent Indigenous and Pacific Island cultural collections dispersed across different institutions. They remain largely un-exhibited. We need to consolidate and share these collections and not allow them to remain trapped in institutional storage facilities.

In the end, cultural planning provides governments with an evidence-based methodology for investment. In both NSW and Victoria, SGS has

helped state governments develop cultural infrastructure investment frameworks. These frameworks examine policies, infrastructure portfolios, practitioner requirements, community demand and economic impact to make sound investment decisions. Key criteria are given a weighting which can be altered or substituted as government priorities change. The outcome is cultural investment that can be sequenced and funded effectively.

So what are the outstanding elements of Sydney's cultural offering?

On the basis of our work at SGS, we believe that Sydney should focus on four areas for cultural investment:

1. Revitalisation of our core CBD institutions to make them fit for purpose and connect them into a genuine cultural precinct.
2. Sustained investment in Parramatta building off the relocation of MAAS with contemporary cultural offerings that attract flow-on activity and private sector involvement.
3. Better use of existing cultural infrastructure in Western Sydney reconfigured and expanded with new spaces to meet demographics and practitioner needs.
4. Completing Sydney's global tourist offering with a major Indigenous Cultural Centre.

This final project is critical in our opinion. An Indigenous Cultural Centre in Sydney would deliver a multitude of positive outcomes. It will showcase Aboriginal cultures from across NSW and act as a meeting place for different Aboriginal nations and people. It would assist reconciliation at a time when Australia is finally seeking to deliver constitutional recognition to Indigenous people. It would be a source of immense civic pride to Sydney. It would fill the missing piece in our cultural offering by satisfying the number one aspiration of tourists coming to Sydney. Finally, it would provide economic development for Sydney and meaningful employment for Indigenous people in particular.

Sydney is a global city, an open city, a magnet for Australians and a leading global tourist destination. Cultural experiences are a critical part of Sydney's attraction. We must intensify and spread our cultural offering across the whole city so that instead of just seeing the soothing illusion of Whiteley's ultramarine harbour we see the colourful weft of the real Sydney.

Sydney: City of Renewal

'We cannot just look at the world through simplified quasi-professional prisms of transport systems, land use zoning or economic development through sequences of property deals'.¹

Successful places, in spite of all their individual particularities, have a common 'taste'; a similar atmosphere. At Futurecity we would describe this as 'seductive urbanism', meaning urban space as playful, lucid, varied, beautiful, pleasurable, rewarding and surprising. We believe that whilst culture is the key to unlocking the seductive power of city space it is still regarded by developers, architects, planners and politicians as 'magic dust', something to be sprinkled on a new development or city quarter, using an approach that has changed little in 30 years. The late Sir Peter Hall (who wrote about the economic, demographic, cultural and management issues that face cities around the globe) talked of 'the City as Pleasure Principle'² and referred to 18th century Vienna, 19th century Paris and New York in the 20th century, as cities that offered a symphonic experience—formal, creative, adventurous, breathtaking and spectacular even. But in the 20th century planners and architects adopted a more utilitarian approach, building successively the Industrial City, the Hygienic City, the Information City and the Investment City.

In the 21st century, Sydney, like many other world cities, is fast becoming the Cultural City; a place where creative and cultural genius can flourish. We know that cities still require the contribution of factories, sewers, high-density housing, infrastructure and metro systems. But these are no longer sufficient to attract us to one place over another. Now is the time of the city as a blank slate for beauty, an urban theatre for authentic experiences. But to achieve this a new cultural language is required and the guardians of our 21st century cities need to adapt their thinking to our rapidly changing world. When 20th century architect Alvar Aalto spoke of building art as being 'a synthesis of life in materialised form... not a splintered way of thinking, but all in harmony together', he sought an innovative and radical model combining art, architecture, creative engineering, science, master craftsmanship and innovative fabrication. In 2017 we need a new approach to designing the city if it is to be a place of culture, ideas and experience—a new system that doesn't discount risk and experiment.

Futurecity began working in Sydney in 2015 but had already spent a decade inside London's property boom, watching as the knowledge and creative sectors grew in importance and the financial sector declined as the city's main economic driver. Post-crash, investors, buyers and the public rejected the marketing promise of a 'Truman Show' urban paradise, bathed in eternal sunshine and populated by a CGI community of perfect people. Instead the idea of an authentic 'narrative' (not authored by a copywriter) began to emerge, set against growing disenchantment with consumerism and globalisation. In addition, a media-savvy public used social media as a tool to circumvent more traditional means of information and persuasion. In Sydney we can see the same danger signs but also the opportunity to learn from the excesses and mistakes of the London boom years. Sydney has a diverse, international

and rapidly growing urban population. There is also the need to differentiate the city from competitors in Australia and Asia, the huge growth in property development on former brownfield sites and an interest in urban development in what were once considered suburban places.

We believe culture-led placemaking must drive the debate on urban growth and help provide a focus for the economic, social and cultural benefits this scale of development can bring to Sydney. This is also a time for big global ideas. Perhaps Sydney becomes the 'Outdoor City', the 'Ideas City' or the 'Tech City' as we watch with admiration (and not a little trepidation) the plans to remodel the city's boundaries, re-inventing new city districts such as Barangaroo, Green Square and Parramatta and the reimagining of former industrial areas like White Bay. But how can the teams responsible for the remapping of the city draw from the wellspring of creative energy that resides in this unique bay city of sports and festival, outdoor lifestyles, health and wellbeing, diversity and culture—and are there a new generation of city savvy urbanists drumming the beat for Sydney as it changes both physically and conceptually?

Sydney can certainly learn from other world cities. In Costas Spirou and Dennis R Judd's new book *Building the City of Spectacle*³ they anoint Chicago as the 'City of Spectacle' and in particular the successful reimagining of 'Millennium Park' as the flag bearer for a 'culture-led' approach to regeneration, that turned bridges into sculpture, fountains into social commentary and landscaping into the front garden of this Architectural City. This was 'culture as catalyst': using the arts as a means to explain and deliver other agendas, such as inclusive public space, promotion of health and wellbeing or promotion of community cohesion and local socio-economic development. A decade later, the transformation of other forgotten and neglected industrial wastelands has provided the High Line in New York and King's Cross in London, each offering proof that culture can be a critical ingredient when planning a modern city.

An important point to make here is that it's not just about the public sector leading the way—we are in this together. It is time to consider the developer as a cultural brand. After all, they're already investing in architecture, infrastructure and landscape, in new shops and offices, in street furniture, public art, road systems, parks and public spaces. It's time for intelligent discussions about how to bring an ambitious cultural mix, including galleries, museums, libraries, studios, creative industries and theatres into our residential mixed use and commercial developments. In a world where the interchange of disciplines is becoming the norm, there is a need for new disciplines to join the developer, master-planner, engineer and other experts. New creatives can be involved in the reimagining of bridges, buildings and the urban landscape and in doing so, change the way we inhabit our cities. Imagine the city as a gallery without walls, a creative dialogue between developer, planner, architect and artist.

In the new Cultural City only originality, content and authenticity matter. Now is the time for urban theatre at street level, with experience

and encounter driving the design of new city quarters. In the UK this approach has led to the new global businesses choosing different locations for their HQs. Apple is moving to the iconic Battersea Power Station in the new creative district of Nine Elms and Google has chosen King's Cross for their new headquarter building. These are global brands moving to new parts of London, abandoning the established commercial districts of the City of London and Canary Wharf.

This approach of 'culture as business' is challenging developers to look differently at their economic model. The time of the Cultural City is upon us and yet culture is still frustratingly peripheral to our urban planning process. The top-down model persists: a pyramid culture, with the developer and the architect at the top offering 'vision and the solution'. Our contention is that the pyramid needs to be upturned, with vision, narrative, content and communities at the top, providing a trickle down narrative to those whose job it is to design and deliver our urban centres.

It is becoming clear that a new generation understands and wants to engage with culture in new and rapidly evolving ways and that the property sector needs to move fast to keep up. Millennials aren't compliant with the way cultural engagement is traditionally framed; they frame it themselves and not through accepting value judgements based on old financial models. Production models which require the public to come in and leave places at pre-ordained times, which provide limited interaction or scope for audience 'authorship' and which require rapt concentration and reverence—possibly even a pre-knowledge of art history or critical theory for the rewards to be fully unlocked—are fast becoming outmoded.

Here in Sydney that change is already upon us. The long-term investment in placemaking and culture taken by Frasers Property at Central Park has begun to bear fruit with the flourishing creative district of Chippendale—a testament to the right mix of studio provision and public realm activation, both temporary and permanent, and thoughtful acknowledgment of the unique history of the site. The business case of embedding culture has also been powerfully made by the City of Sydney to developers Greenland for their new CBD tower which will provide five floors of purpose-built rehearsal and creative spaces in the heart of the city, spaces that are in short supply in this rapidly transforming city.⁴

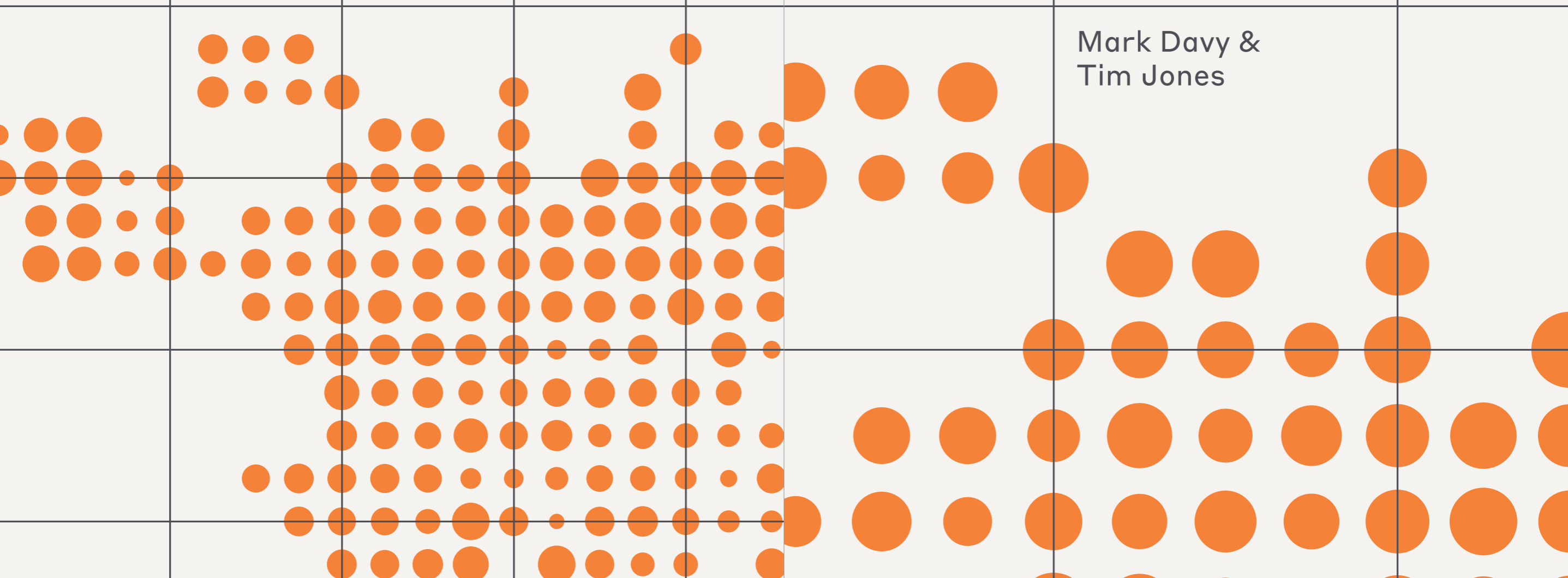
However, just as the developer and city planner need to change, so does the cultural sector. The arts have not presented themselves as partner or player in this new world. Sixty years of public funding for the arts has had an unfortunate side effect. It has made the arts focus on survival through government and agency funding, grants and sponsorship for their buildings' running costs, staffing and programming. As a result, the sector has created its own language, unique structure and reward. The arts have not engaged with the private sector except through the old-fashioned idea of sponsorship and a yearning for the tax breaks and big bucks philanthropy of the US. Like it or not, the cultural sector needs to find some form of rapprochement and common purpose with the private sector if it doesn't want to oversee the decline of its buildings and programs.

Sydney already possesses unique and memorable neighbourhoods, but its rapid expansion requires a bold and imaginative approach to its new precincts and districts. This staged approach ('evolutive' might be another name) is essential to modern placemaking. More importantly, the whole idea of the creative district is to develop a language and a set of tools that everyone can use—developers, local communities, institutions, entrepreneurs, artists and residents—to help shape the district over time. Through our work with UNSW Art & Design on their GLAM+ initiative, we have witnessed a subtle shift within Sydney's cultural institutions as they explore new ways to collaborate, engage new audiences and connect their collections and programs to a changing world.

The city has an extraordinary opportunity to leverage cultural investment from the formation of new neighbourhoods and new commercial quarters. Cultural institutions and the creative community must find new ways to engage with the energy and momentum of the change in Sydney in order to ensure that a lively, enriched and culturally dynamic city emerges. Futurecity is exploring new ideas for a modern cultural district, a place of creativity, commerce and community. We look at White Bay and Parramatta to provide opportunities for radical social, economic and cultural change with culture at the centre. Occasionally special windows of opportunity open up, illuminate the world and then dim, leaving traces to delight succeeding generations: Athens in the 5th century, Florence in the 14th, London in the 16th. Could such a moment occur in Sydney in the 21st?

'Sydney already possesses unique and memorable neighbourhoods, but its rapid expansion requires a bold and imaginative approach to the new precincts and districts.'

Mark Davy &
Tim Jones



The Making of a Modern Icon

The story of Carriageworks is a great one. It was born like all cultural institutions: through valiant battles, through triumph and failure. It is a place that is grounded in its context. One of the very few cultural institutions in Australia to be imagined and created in this century.

Formerly known as the Eveleigh Railway Yards, Carriageworks was established in 1880 by John Whitton, Engineer in Chief of the NSW Government railways. From the time of its establishment more than 6,000 workers worked in Carriageworks every day. Those workers shaped our union movement and contributed to the development of our city for over 100 years. It was from within the walls of Carriageworks in 1917 that the Great Strike started, a nationally important historical event which saw thousands of rail workers march on NSW Parliament and, through sheer power in numbers, shut it down. It was the politicised workforce that was formed within these walls that created a generation of politicians including premiers and prime ministers.

Carriageworks has a long history of equity. It is one of the first places to employ Aboriginal people on an equal basis in NSW and it is the place where generations of new migrants were first employed. Worker Richard Butcher described Carriageworks as, 'A place with heart and soul—that forged friendships that would last a lifetime for the men and women who served there. To these everyday people she was an inspiration for another day—a gentle giant who under her old wrought iron roof sheltered and protected as well as united us from all walks of life. She provided the fabric to be creative; to give strength to allow them to give in turn.'

Carriageworks is located on Gadigal land in the inner Sydney suburb of Redfern; a place widely referred to as the Black Capital of Australia. A place of resistance and change. It wasn't far from Carriageworks that 20 years ago, Keating made his famous Redfern address stating, 'How well we recognise the fact that, complex as our contemporary identity is, it cannot be separated from Aboriginal Australia. Redfern is a good place to contemplate these things.'

The creation of Carriageworks as the next generation of Australian cultural institution emerges from these histories. It has a responsibility to the cultural and social legacy that is embedded within it. It carries with it the history and future of urban Sydney.

The story of creative, entrepreneurial urban/suburban Sydney is not often told. Sydney's identity has for too long been dominated by harbour-side views, sandstone perspectives and seafood dinners. Contemporary Sydney is a much more interesting, diverse and complex place than that. It lies with the everyday practice of the artists, the creatives, the designers, the chefs and the producers. The people that are constantly thinking and re-thinking what Sydney is—in its constant state of change, like all international cities.

Within urban Sydney, Carriageworks is a step forward from the great harbourside sandstone institutions. Red brick, more suburban than civic. An entrepreneurial hybrid, a place that demands a program that is engaged with, and reflective of, the fast-changing communities around it. Like in life, art is no longer siloed in the same way that our homes, our

screens, our work has merged, the practice of how art is made and is experienced has also shifted. Sydney's young, culturally diverse audiences are seeking out large-scale immersive experiences not defined by form. Carriageworks commissions artists to make work that engages with contemporary ideas, ideas that move across disciplines and form.

Carriageworks audiences, our future communities, the ones we imagine and the ones that are yet to exist, are looking for the detail, for the relationship, for the fine grain, for the experience. As the next generation of cultural institution, we are in the middle of the great age of creative entrepreneurship. No one understands this better than artists who are now turning away from the mega stadiums and from the megalopolis museums that are replicated in the same ways but in different forms across the world. They as artists, like all of us, are looking for community.

Cultural institutions should be radical and participatory. They should lie in the heart of their communities, providing moments of great joy and wonder, they should provide pathways, lead social change and create and deliver on our individual and collective ambitions. We as a community and as individuals should demand a lot of our institutions. They must reflect our everyday lives and also allow us to step outside of ourselves, if just for a moment.

Collaboration is core business at Carriageworks and the commercial and the public are constantly colliding. Institutions need to be places that are entrepreneurial, expansive and multi-centred. Carriageworks' growth has emerged from the establishment of an innovative business model in which we derive 75% of our turnover through the application of a curatorial framework that brings together the Artistic Program, Major Events and Commercial Programs. This is a circular model, which is complex in application but simple in form. Carriageworks invests into its Artistic Program, which grows its profile, which in turn grows its Commercial and Major Events programs. These commercial returns are then invested back into the Artistic Program. As a result Carriageworks audiences have been doubling every year with over one million people engaging with Carriageworks programs in 2016. Growth has further been achieved through increasing investment into our Artistic Program, which has grown by 400%. Carriageworks supports over 850 Australian and international artists each year.

In its short life as a cultural institution change has been a constant for Carriageworks. The next significant change will be the implementation of the NSW Government's development corridor, Central to Eveleigh, which Carriageworks sits within. Over the next 10 years the re-invention of this critically important part of inner Sydney will face many challenges, increased density, demographic and social change. Lucky for Sydney it is full of creative, resilient entrepreneurial communities. Carriageworks as a cultural institution within this change has an even more important role in connecting new communities with place, communicating our histories and making sure that we remain inclusive and connected.

Opposite.
Zhang Huan, *Sydney Buddha*, Carriageworks, 2015. Photo credit: Zan Wimberley. Courtesy the Artist and Pace Gallery, New York



When the next generation of cultural institutions emerge we need to make sure that they are provided the space, the support and the resources to be as ambitious, as difficult and as risky as the artists they support. I hope that we as a city can support and sustain our artists, our organisations, our cultural institutions, to be places that we all hold in our collective memories, places that reflect our communities and deliver on our ambitions.

Loss and Resilience:
a Conversation about Contemporary
Indigenous Cultural Space

For the 32nd Kaldor Public Art Project in 2016, Wiradjuri/Kamilaroi artist Jonathan Jones presented *barrangal dyara* (*skin and bones*), a vast sculptural installation stretching across 20,000 square metres of the Royal Botanic Garden in Sydney. Almost 90,000 people visited the installation, which comprised thousands of bleached white shields echoing the footprint of the imperial Garden Palace, a colonial building destroyed in a fire in 1882, causing the loss of a wealth of Aboriginal cultural material that was housed inside.

Curator Emma Pike wrote, '*barrangal dyara* allows for profound dialogues to develop between forgotten histories embedded in the landscape and contemporary experiences. The project speaks to relationships between fire and country, allowing visitors to acknowledge the heavy losses accompanying the demise of the Palace, but also to feel the potential of the new growth that has followed... For Jones the Garden Palace is a forgotten ancestor to the modern city of Sydney and a number of intrinsic connections between the building and the city have revealed themselves. In *barrangal dyara* (*skin and bones*) he raises the building into Australia's consciousness, forgotten in a societal amnesia for the last century. Both the building and the International Exhibition of 1879–80 represent an incredible time for Sydney, a moment when the colony was attempting to define its identity not just within the empire, but also internationally.¹

In a symposium to accompany the project, Jonathan led a discussion with Hetti Perkins and

Stephen Gilchrist about what a contemporary Indigenous cultural space might look like. Hetti is Australia's premier Indigenous curator and a member of the Eastern Arrernte and Kalkadoon peoples. Stephen, from the Yamatji people of Western Australia, is currently an Associate Lecturer of Indigenous Art at the University of Sydney.

The following is an edited excerpt of their discussion.

JONATHAN JONES: A lot of today's conversation has been about how we have tried to re-shape museum and gallery spaces, but if we could wipe the slate clean, start afresh, what form might it take and what might it mean for our people? It's a difficult place to start the conversation, but an important one, nonetheless: what does it say about the health of our cultural landscape when a number of senior curatorial practitioners have left the mainstream industry to work independently?

HETTI PERKINS: One of the reasons that I left the Art Gallery of New South Wales where I had worked for many years, was I felt that Indigenous art was not being represented to the extent that it should be within that gallery, although there was a lot of talking about it and negotiating to try and change that position.² I felt I was not able to do that. I knew the collection quite well, and had done a lot of work there, but it was time for Cara³ to have her turn.

STEPHEN GILCHRIST: If you do look at the broader landscape, you will see that there has been this locational regression of the

spaces that have been afforded to Indigenous art in many of these institutions and because of that, there has been a numerical regression of Indigenous staff in these spaces. I think those two things need to be seen in tandem.

JJ: Stephen, you have worked overseas for the past few years, curating some amazing exhibitions. You recently returned from curating the exhibition *Everywhen: The Eternal Present in Indigenous Art from Australia* for the Harvard Art Museums in the US. How has that process, removed from the Australian context, informed your practice and how have you been working in that space?

SG: I have always thought it is important as a curator to be as promiscuous as you can, to work with different collections, different people, different artists and different spaces. I think it is important to go where the work is and to explore new ideas. For me the opportunity to go overseas is to also see Indigenous art within, and as part of, an international discourse. The internationalisation of Indigenous art is really interesting because it is not as polarized as it is in Australia. By virtue of being in the international sphere, the potential for expansionary movement in our discussions around Indigenous art is quite significant. It is a way of seeing Australia differently, but also a way of seeing the definitional regimes in which we position Indigenous art differently too.

JJ: When talking to one of our First Nations friends from the Postcommodity Art Collective,

when they visited for the 18th Sydney Biennale in 2012, about this notion of a dedicated Indigenous space, they said something that has always remained in the back of my mind, 'be careful what you wish for'. They felt that having the National Museum of the American Indian impeded them as contemporary artists; that a dedicated Indigenous space limited their scope within the mainstream. Do you think this was a pervasive feeling within the First Nations community?

SG: Situating Indigenous art within the institutional armature of a place like Harvard sends a message that is really productive. That particular collection is not Indigenous only; it is an encyclopaedic collection, which is the reason a lot of us work in these spaces—they are not just separatist spaces. Presented alongside some of the great art traditions of the world, it gives, on some level, an equivalent value to it. As curators of Indigenous art, we like to have separatist spaces that present the right cultural contexts, but also, to use a problematic word, integrated spaces which do not discount the history of forced assimilation, but say that this is equal and as good as any other artform.

HP: It is about being everywhere, like your exhibition title, *Everywhen*. Our artists should have the choice to exhibit wherever they want, whether it is in a museum context or a more contemporary art space. It is not one or the other, it is both. That is the opportunity that our artists should have. It is frustrating to come here and ask, do we need a cultural centre?

Opposite.
Kaldor Public Art
Project 32: Jonathan
Jones *barrangal dyara*
(*skin and bones*),
Royal Botanic Garden,
Sydney, 2016
Photo: Peter Greig



Why don't we have one? What would it look like? For God's sake we're well into the 21st century. And we're here talking about some of the practices of the south-east that people haven't twigged onto. Those cultural traditions are here! It is like a bloody wake up call, 'Hello, people, this is the oldest tradition in the world'. What else do you have to do to get a guernsey⁴ to get recognition, is that not enough?

Things like Bill Leak⁵ putting that cartoon in *The Australian* yesterday and defending himself with a following one. It is an absolute scandal, really, the way Aboriginal people are treated. There are people who are doing such great work in the communities, getting our kids to go to school, to take charge of their lives and be proud of who they are. It is obviously fantastic that we

can help our kids and have great educational programs. But no good will come of it, if you get your Year 12 certificate and then you rock up to a shop and try and get a job and someone will boot you to the door because they subscribe certain views. So until that culture changes, those sorts of things are not going to change. The way you change culture is you support culture, you support the arts.

Do we really need another football stadium in this city? It is like saying to the rugby league people, 'No, you have a field, you can all play there, that is good enough for you'. I support sport, it is fantastic and for many of our people it is the only way out of this vicious cycle, but if you are going to compare apples and oranges, what is it that makes Australia unique? The thing that

makes us different is the culture. I am talking about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, but also this new Australian culture that has grown up with who I call 'real' Australians—people who embrace cultural diversity. The scandal is that we are not celebrating what makes us unique and different in the world.

SG: We like to think that institutions do not represent the same systemic issues that are outside those institutions. We want them to be radical, progressive institutions, but often they are not, so we have to work from the inside to address this question about why we are excluded and why our histories are not recognised. We also have to consider why we are part of these institutions to begin with. They come out of a history of empire and this imperialist register continues, so we just have to keep poking and interrogating.

JJ: I definitely think we can do both; we need to be working from the inside out and from the outside in. Is the space we are looking for within four walls? Is the institution an institution? What are we talking about here? I'm interested in those promised spaces because they are often preconceived spaces, whether it is the mineral museum, which had been earmarked in the past for Tullagulla, or the proposed Barangaroo Cultural Centre. To me those colonial spaces already set the tone of the outcome.

HP: My first thought would be to turn it over to artists. To make a space that appropriately represents our people and culture but also engages contemporary

Australia with other ethnicities. A director of a contemporary art space told me recently that it is not her job as a director to tell the powers that be to fuck off—she just makes the space for the artist to do that. You can create an opportunity, but then leave it to the artist; they are the ones who take us on the journey and make sure that our cultural legacy survives.

JJ: Years ago, I was lucky enough to go to some of the African-American museums in New York. In one, when you entered, there was a glass room and on the other side of the foyer, a kitchen and a whole bunch of black fellas just making cups of tea and yarning. It was a community space, right from the front door. When they saw me come in, they came over and guided me through the space. What was meant to be a half hour trip was a whole day. Creating that space for elders to come and make a cup of tea, tell the stories and guide you through these spaces, is something I believe we need. Have you come across any other examples that you think might work for us?

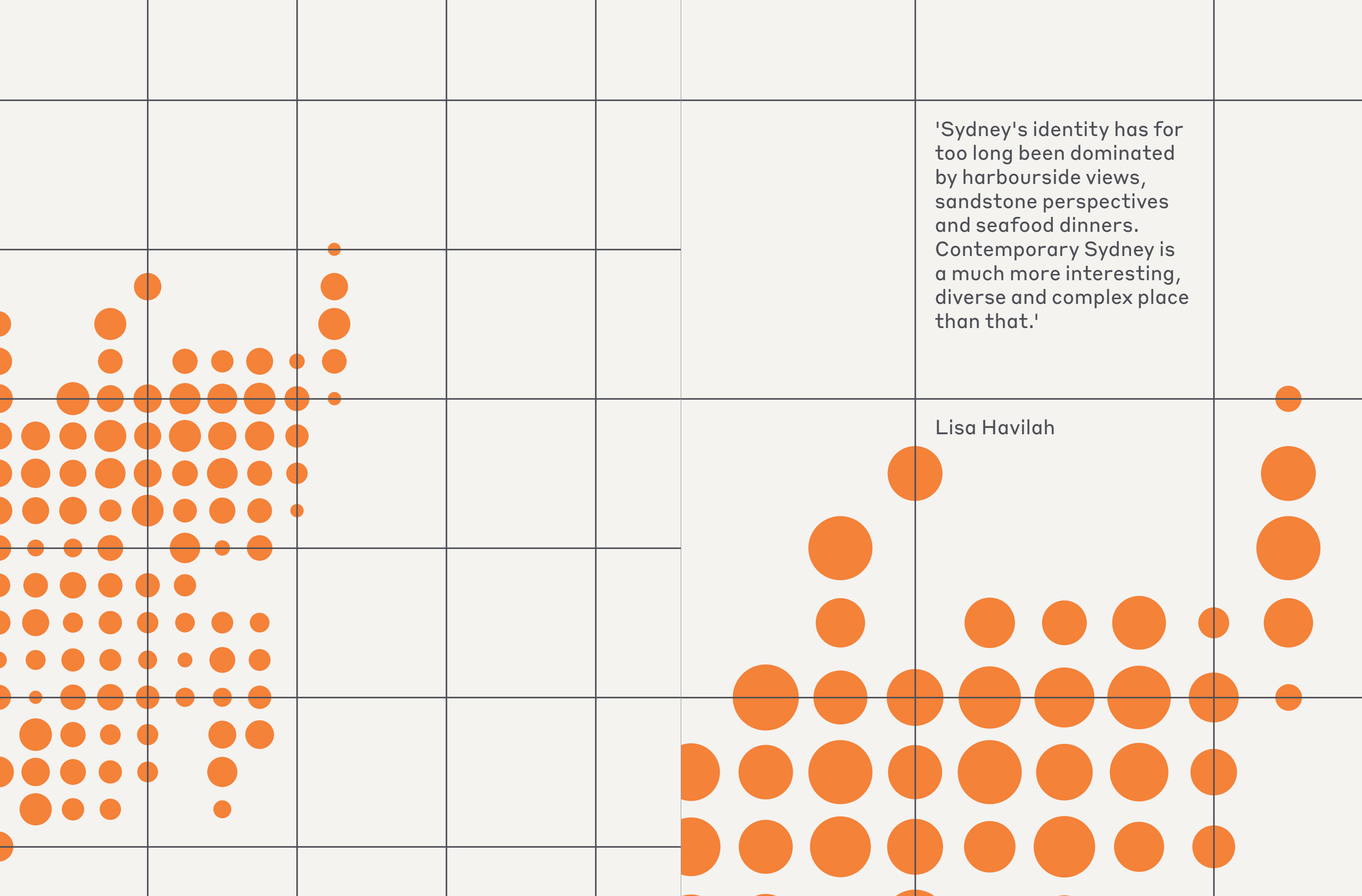
SG: Hetti and I have talked about a physical space, because a physical space makes legible the issues that we are talking about. But perhaps it does not need to have a collection. But it does need to be a space for Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people. There needs to be a responsiveness between what happens in the community and what happens in the institution. That is really the ideal; and that people feel the space is for them and not just a spectator exercise in looking at Indigenous peoples.

HP: One of the main things, I think, is that it has to have four walls and a roof. For most of the people I speak to—like some of the old Aunties—their main priority is a café! For instance, Boomalli is a place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel comfortable just walking in⁶. You can sit down and not get looked at. When you are a stranger in your own country that is what you want; you want a place where you feel comfortable. Artist HJ Wedge, who passed away a while ago, once said to me, 'I'd never walk into that white man's gallery'—referring to the Art Gallery of NSW—whereas he could go into Boomalli. It is important that cultural centres create an interface between the Indigenous community and the mainstream, as art centres do in remote area communities. Without it, we lack the opportunity that a cultural centre provides, that opportunity for networking so we can talk and support each other and come together.

SG: We are talking about a cultural centre, so culture has to be at the core of it. That will mean lots of different things to different people, but it has to be about language, art, culture, not a separation of art versus culture. When people see stretched linen paintings, they often forget that there are important cultural aspects that are underpinning these works. So the institution has to be ambitious, whatever it looks like, but it has to be about culture and teaching people about their political, cultural and social rights and responsibilities.

JJ: This conversation is building exactly on what we have discussed in previous sessions: that a collection without connections is not a collection, it is just an amassing of objects. As Aboriginal people we don't just need to maintain connections to each other but connections to our objects, to keep them real.

HP: For instance, the artist Pedro Wonaeamirri came to Sydney from the Tiwi Islands and he was amazed to see the Pukumani poles that were collected in the late 50's. He hadn't seen them like that: pristine. Our people take special objects and try and preserve them, so there is that idea that in ceremony an object is brought out for a brief moment and then put away again. That's kind of what exhibitions in galleries are. And it makes sense, we've been doing that for 60,000 plus years! There is a real opportunity to equate what happens in community life and what happens in this contemporary museum life, and to broker those connections and find common ground. As we know, most people come to Australia and say they want to see or experience Aboriginal culture—the world's oldest continual tradition. It's not just the right thing to do, it's the obvious thing to do.



'Sydney's identity has for too long been dominated by harbourside views, sandstone perspectives and seafood dinners. Contemporary Sydney is a much more interesting, diverse and complex place than that.'

Lisa Havilah

Heritage in the City's Future

No one wants a city that is indistinct from other global cities. The specific identity of a city, its sense of character and place stems from its heritage—places, buildings, whole streets and quarters of the city that embody past eras and encourage people to consider their place in time.

The medium sized cities we most admire and like to visit—Barcelona, Madrid, San Francisco, Boston, Vancouver, Chicago—are places that have worked out how to honour their heritage so it becomes a bankable resource, their brand even, that drives visitation, liveability and local character reflected in well-functioning communities. This is not just a question of great age but of attitudes to place-making that draw connections with the past. Huge swathes of other cities we admire such as Paris, London, Berlin or New York date only from the mid-19th century or early 20th century, but have a cohesive identity. They are cities that have not stood still or become historical theme parks, but their cultural heritage is integrated into their identity in a way we in Sydney have yet to achieve.

We have all visited cities that have lost their connection with their heritage. Whilst heritage is all around us, we're yet to develop a distinct and coordinated heritage brand for Sydney or an understanding of why the diversity of our heritage is so special. We need to articulate, be proud of and support the places that make up the heritage of Sydney, because we know that tourists and Sydneysiders alike want to connect with this rich resource.

Museums and heritage are vital to NSW's economy, with cultural and heritage tourism generating \$11.2 billion in 2015. Culture and heritage travellers represent close to 60% of all international tourists and the most popular cultural heritage activities are to 'visit history/heritage buildings, sites or monuments'¹.

We are justifiably proud of our status as a global city. Key to this is understanding the city as a layered thing: built and natural heritage cutting across time and the layering of building, nature, stories and uses of a place. This is described eloquently by Glenn Murcutt who said, 'It is wonderful to have the best of modern work sitting with the best of historic work, because the new tells [us] about the old and the old tells [us] about the new. In other words, no longer monotony but you've got now harmony in a new way'². Visitors and citizens are drawn to the combination of nature and culture, to the heritage of the city, to the ancient story of Country and Aboriginal history and continuity, to the materiality of the city, to the imported migrant cultural heritage of the 200 plus nationalities living in Sydney.

A too tempting view of Sydney's cultural heritage might be to characterise it as a few iconic colonial buildings, the Opera House, the Sydney Harbour Bridge and some splendid 19th century parks and gardens grouped around its superb natural harbour—a fine enough legacy. But it would be a simplistic understanding of heritage, which is embedded across the fabric of the city in the very street layout and place names, providing constant references to the past in a restless city that is constantly making and remaking itself.

Debates rage about what exactly are the things we collectively choose to keep, and there are significant losses that continue to be

lamented as individual buildings fall. Colonial heritage is well understood and respected, but only in recent decades have other 1800s structures become valued, notably terrace houses, long derided as slums suitable only for demolition. Unless we look beyond fashion and today's taste, the fine legacy of the more recent past, particularly of the Modernist project could easily be lost. All periods in history, including the current period, produce great works of architecture that will continue to resonate and have meaning and impact for future generations. If heritage simply means 'the things we keep', some buildings from our own period in history will become future heritage. The battle for Colonial housing, the significance of Federation and the importance of terrace housing is mostly won. What is more contentious and possibly under greater threat, are buildings and places of the more recent past.



Sydney's cultural heritage is a constantly evolving palimpsest of its physical setting, underlying geology and landform, thousands of years of Aboriginal presence as stewards of the land, early British settlement by a predominantly military administration only gradually giving way to civil institutions, its long history as an international hub of trade and commerce going back to at least the 1820s, and a post-World War II construction boom that transformed it from a smugly parochial outpost of the British Empire, to a cosmopolitan global city with a culture and lifestyle that is the envy of the world. These forces and processes are evident in the physical form of the city and the meanings and association that gradually become attached to specific buildings, sites or places.

Sydney's early colonial development created four zones that are still evident in the contemporary city: the military encampment and administrative centre on Church Hill, now York Street near Wynyard; Government House fronting Sydney Cove at what is now Bridge Street; the Governor's private pleasure park east of the Tobegully ridge, now the Botanic gardens and Domain; and in the centre, commercial and early residential development occurred.

Marking the transition from the military administration of the corrupt NSW Corps (the Rum Corps), Lachlan Macquarie (NSW Governor 1810–1821), developed a new government precinct to the east with his new general hospital (the Rum Hospital), the new convict barracks (Hyde Park Barracks), St James Church and new courts—all still standing lined up along a grand Georgian street eponymously named.

Whilst the landform is now concealed under streets and buildings, the broad form of a shallow valley between two low sandstone ridges can still be observed and appreciated, as can the profound influence of Sydney's signature material, Hawkesbury Sandstone, both as a substrate and a building material. Sydney's other most striking feature is its relationship to water, most notably the extended commercial zone between Farm Cove and Cockle Bay, the focus of daily life for most of the 19th century.



As Director-General of UNESCO says in the recent Culture Urban Future Summary, 'tangible and intangible heritage are integral parts of a city's identity, creating a sense of belonging and cohesion.'³ One of Sydney's great strengths is its cultural diversity—the many different nationalities that call Sydney home—but can our multicultural heritage inform our future as a city? How have these and do these different cultures contribute towards a distinctiveness across Sydney, a fusion of influences of immigration through architectural design styles and influences?

Whilst we undoubtedly require new construction and infrastructure to keep pace with Sydney's expansion and buoyant economic growth as Australia's biggest city, this needs to be maintained in equilibrium to balance our awareness of heritage with this growth.⁴ Critical to this is how we reflect contemporary community values and plan for showcasing multi-dimensional aspects of Sydney heritage for the future, drawing on Indigenous history, our natural history, our urban history and contemporary Australian culture. We must also ensure our definition and appreciation of heritage is not only the preserve of the privileged, or reflective of some cultures at the expense of others. Australia's new fusion culture is now an Anglo-Mediterranean-Asian-Indian fusion culture with significant populations from the UK, NZ, China, India, Philippines, Vietnam, and Italy.⁵

We need more opportunities for people to connect with heritage on site and online. How can we use our heritage to explain our character to the world—how does it communicate distinctiveness, boldness, inventiveness, openness and the longevity of our institutions and beliefs?

The past began yesterday and out of it will gradually grow an awareness of those buildings, places and stories that will become the heritage of the future. Future heritage calls for us to be aware of changes to our built environment, to recognise and value those special places from the small and simple to the iconic, and to ensure they receive statutory protection. It calls for us as a community to share our passion for architecture, place and heritage and to open a discussion about what matters, so that people will value it, conserve it and bring life to it for present and future generations. It means that we face the fact that perhaps Sydney, as a comparatively young city, has been too progress-focussed and through different eras, 'past-less' in its pursuit of the modern and the future.

It also calls on us to think creatively about re-purposing places for future generations to keep pace with city change; but also to think beyond fashion and trends to protect and secure places of beauty and meaning that feed our minds as well as our souls and will continue to feed our children's children's minds and souls as well. Mostly 'heritage' prompts images of old places but we need to think of it as places and things we will want to keep. It could be something that was built as recently as yesterday.

The Anglo-American poet T. S. Eliot observed that 'time present and time past are both perhaps present in time future, and time future contained in time past. Time past and time future, what might have been and what has been point to one end, which is always present'⁶.

Culture in Context: Connecting Sydney's Creative, Economic and Spatial Environments

An important part of successful cultural districts around the world lies in whether the thought has been given to the animation of public spaces for outdoor performances, smaller scale galleries, live music in cafes and bars, craft studios and maker spaces, informal gathering spaces, educational facilities and how all this links to the surrounding urban fabric. The small stuff that feels like background is as important in a compelling destination as are the more established cultural institutions that create the foreground.

Culture Forward—A Plan for Culture for Brooklyn¹

To talk about the culture of a city is almost tautological. It is our cultural life which makes Sydney more than a collection of buildings. That life emerges directly from our residents, workers and visitors.

Sydney's cultural life has strong foundations. Statistically, New South Wales hosts the nation's largest number of artists, musicians, architects, designers and cultural professionals, as well as the biggest audiences and highest levels of participation. As the NSW *Creative Industries Economic Profile* noted, our cultural life is of national importance. Indeed, the *Profile* found 40% of the nation's entire Creative Industries workforce was based in NSW, concluding:

*'Sydney is truly NSW's creative capital, with 86.3% of the State's creative workforce based in the emerald city as of 2011. This is far above its share of total employment in the State, which stands at about 65%. Not only is Sydney home to the most creative workers (127,000), but it has the highest concentration of creative industries employees in the State.'*²

The *Profile* notes 97.4% of creative enterprises were small, staffed by less than twenty people.² We must make room for these smaller initiatives and, moreover, we need to ensure the people who drive them can not only live in Sydney, but lead the kind of lives that inspire creativity. It is for this reason that the City of Sydney has begun developing a cultural infrastructure strategy.

Whilst Sydney is the state capital, it is defined by its place within a wider metropolitan, state, national and international context. Around 1.2 million people visit the city each day, including workers, visitors and our residents. Whilst our residential population is 205,339, the city has 576,869 jobs, driving 62,000 businesses.³ To maintain that creative workforce, we rely on the energy of people from beyond our local government borders.

This means the development of our cultural sector is complicated by the need to think across local and regional borders. If the Greater Sydney area cannot provide suitable space for creative enterprises, or provide affordable housing for cultural workers, we are faced with ramifications at the national level. Making this link between culture and space is difficult as the necessary policy levers are divided over numerous policy domains, including planning, building, liquor licensing, transport and housing.

Additionally, cultural policies have often been disconnected from other areas, which can produce significant, and unintended, results. For example, the 2015 NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework, *Create in NSW*, commits to ‘develop policy and regulatory settings to support the continued growth and vibrancy of music in NSW’,⁴ mirroring the City of Sydney’s *Live Music and Performance Action Plan*. Yet recent changes to the State liquor licensing law have had immense and negative impacts on live music venues, with the Australasian Performing Right Association estimating a 40% decline in live music revenue between 2013 and 2015.⁵

As Sydney has undergone significant growth in recent years, these policy disconnects have become more pressing. In 2013, the City commissioned a study into its employment lands, which found barriers within the built environment, in particular existing planning systems, were affecting creative enterprise “due to difficulties in utilising existing use rights”.⁶ Similar findings emerged in consultation for the City’s cultural policy, which found:

‘Regulatory policies continue to be cited as deterring cultural initiative, highlighting the City’s dual role in helping creative teams navigate difficult regulatory processes and elevating regulatory controls to the policy review agenda.’⁷

Over the past two years, the City has undertaken research into the impact of building and planning policy on the cultural sector to help understand exactly where the problem lies. This has involved public forums, a discussion paper and studies with the University of Technology Sydney and the Sydney Fringe Festival.

We found 20th century planning systems, built upon the separation of commercial, residential and industrial zones, have struggled to handle 21st century initiatives using hybrid business models and reliant on the cross pollination of ideas.

At one level, this is about updating our current regulatory framework. Beyond that is a more complex question of how to plan for the city we want to become. Whilst we know the bulk of Australia’s creative industries are based in NSW, a 2009 study by the Centre for International Economics, found Australia remains a net importer of creativity, importing twice as much as it exports. Indeed, the ratio actually increased during their study period of 1999 to 2008.⁸

This is reflected in the City’s review of core cultural occupations, collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, following a standard developed by UNESCO.⁹ These initially appear to show an 18% increase in the culture workforce between the 1996 and 2011 censuses.¹⁰ Yet this growth is falsely inflated by change in definition, absorbing information and communication technologies after the 2001 census.

When we look at a consistent definition of ‘cultural occupations’, strong growth in some areas, such as architecture, is offset by significant declines, primarily in those areas devoted to making new creative content. In their analysis of the census data for the Australia Council’s *Artfacts*, Stuart Cunningham and Peter Higgs noted those employed in ‘artist

occupations’—meaning visual artists, writers, composers and the like—actually declined between in 1996 and 2011.¹¹ This potentially explains our status as a creative importer.

Naturally, an architect, designer or artist doesn’t simply appear fully formed, but relies on years of creative engagement. Here we begin to see a further spatial and cultural division. The ABS’s cultural attendance and participation surveys provide detailed data on cultural activity across Australia, with stark differences across the Greater Sydney area. Within the City and Inner West, rates of attendance were around 70%, and participation just under 40%. In the Outer Western Suburbs, attendance declines to 46%, and participation rates more than halve, dropping to 18%.¹²

For an economy reliant on knowledge and ideas, creative participation is directly tied to workforce participation. Accordingly, differences in participation rates between outer and inner suburbs mean we are at risk of a spatial entrenchment of cultural and economic disadvantage. As the City relies on a workforce drawn from the wider metropolitan area, this disadvantage directly impacts on our place at the heart of Australia’s creative economy.

In this light, the term ‘cultural infrastructure’ is fundamentally a question about people, and not simply about infrastructure investment or economics. The development of our infrastructure strategy follows a path set by our *Sustainable Sydney 2030* plan, in which our community told us they saw culture as a fundamental part of their city.

Accordingly, we developed our cultural policy *Creative City*. Consultation for the policy raised issues around barriers to taking part in Sydney’s cultural life, ranging from the presence of creativity in the public realm, the impact of regulation on small and medium creative enterprise, and the sustainability of the cultural sector. Ultimately, the policy was built around six priorities: precinct distinctiveness and creativity in the public domain, new avenues for creative participation, sector sustainability, sharing knowledge and global engagement.

The City of Sydney invests \$34 million each year in the cultural and creative life of our city. However, we know that funding alone cannot deliver the outcomes we want. As our cultural policy notes:

‘[T]he City has many means of supporting Sydney’s cultural life and creative communities, and fostering and promoting individual and collaborative creative expression. It also has a special leadership role, including planning for cultural infrastructure and precincts as part of its urban-planning process. The ubiquitous interweaving of culture and creativity into every aspect of life also means it is sensitive to government regulations and policy in all areas.’⁷

We know the leadership we provide through avenues such as our planning and regulatory policies, and the management of our property portfolio, is critical. This includes initiatives like the \$25 million purpose built creative hub for dance, theatre, music, film and visual arts, to be

built in the city centre following an agreement negotiated by the City and developer Greenland Australia. It also includes our Creative Spaces and Accommodation Grants programs, which activate formerly vacant City-owned buildings through affordable leases to creative enterprise. In this way, we are making space for our citizens to make culture.

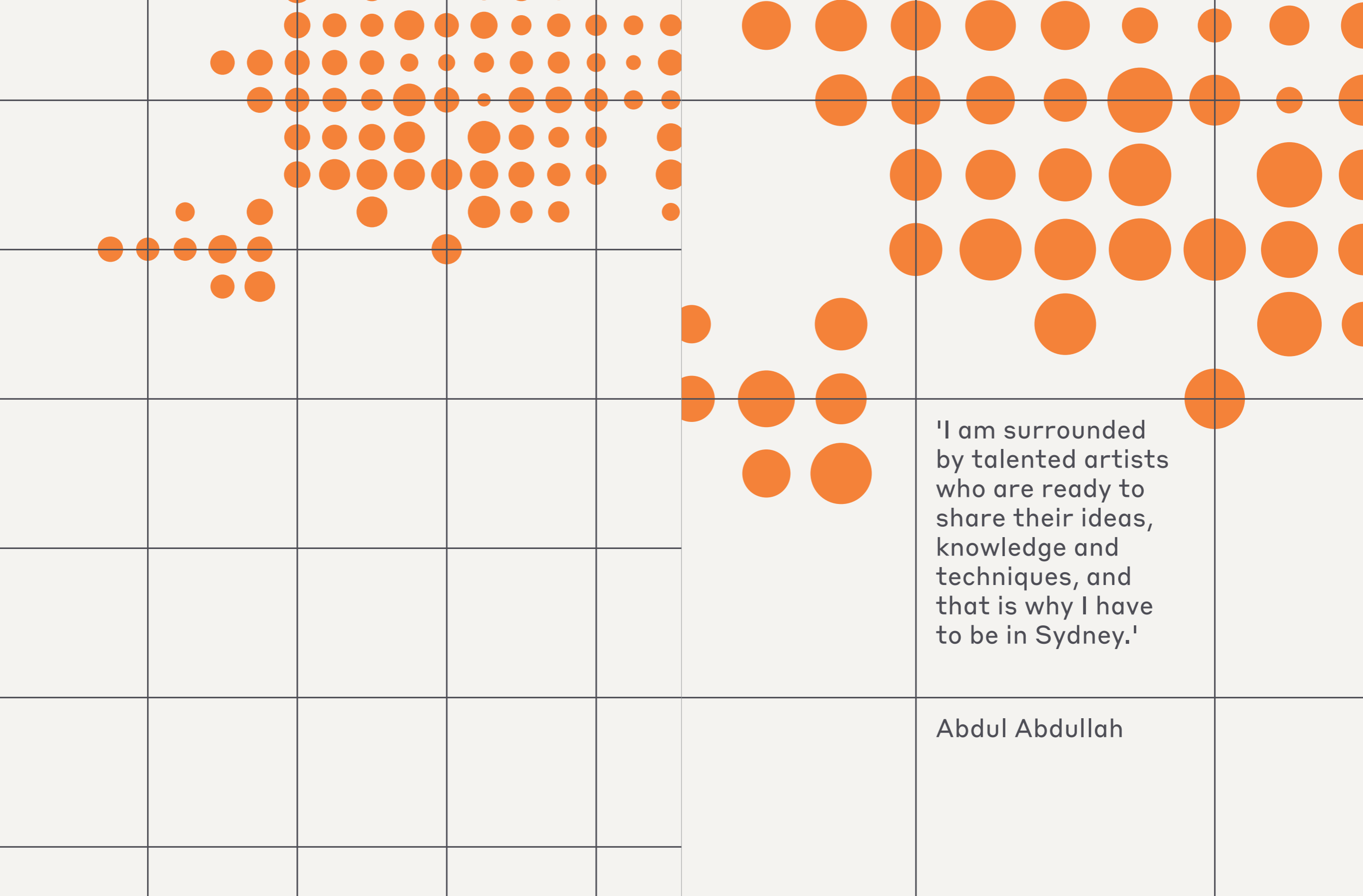
We also use things like our Design Advisory Panel and public domain design codes to shape the kind of city we want for the future. Similarly, our public art strategy, *City Art*, has reinforced the importance of the Cultural Ribbon and Eora Journey as transformation projects. Three of seven public art projects created by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists have now been installed. A draft Cultural Ribbon strategy has been on public exhibition, proposing a culture nature walk between the Maritime Museum and Woolloomooloo as its first iteration.

Whilst the City of Sydney has taken the lead on these projects, we simply cannot succeed if we think purely at a local government level, either economically or culturally. We must think at a broader level. To help us understand this challenge, the City of Sydney has undertaken a significant body of research, working with Western Sydney University, the University of Tasmania, UTS, the Cultural Development Network and World Cities Cultural Forum, as well as conducting our own Floor Space and Employment and Wellbeing Surveys. We've also funded sector driven research by the National Association for the Visual Arts and Frontyard Projects.

This research points to one conclusion. We cannot address these problems in isolation. In the coming months, the City will release its research and begin a formal consultation process to develop a strategy for cultural infrastructure. This will aim to understand what kind of space people need, the barriers impacting upon their access to it, and the policy levers available to us. We look forward to working with stakeholders from the arts and creative sectors, other government agencies, business, and the broader community to identify a cohesive, integrated cultural infrastructure strategy. We hope this will help us understand the spatial context in which our culture is created, and the ways we can strengthen this vital connection.

Opposite.
Street art on the
corner of Glebe Point
Road and Hereford
Street in Glebe, 2017.
The City of Sydney
has recently passed
a street art policy
that will enable more
street art in the City.
Photo credit: Eva
Rodriguez Riestra,
City of Sydney.





'I am surrounded by talented artists who are ready to share their ideas, knowledge and techniques, and that is why I have to be in Sydney.'

Abdul Abdullah

The Complete Picture: Why I Have to be in Sydney

In late 2014, I reached a crossroads. After growing up in Perth, living for a few years in Melbourne, then moving back to Perth, I was deciding where I wanted to base my practice and pursue my career as an artist. I looked to the Australian cities with the highest concentrations of cultural practitioners—Melbourne and Sydney. Weighing the potential benefits and disadvantages I compared the creative culture and community, the quality of living and opportunities for professional development.

When comparing creative culture and community I looked back primarily on the personal experiences I had when engaging with artists in each city. These interactions took place during exhibitions, competitions including the Archibald Prize in Sydney (2011, 2013 and 2014) and the Metro Art Prize in Melbourne (2012), research trips, residencies and arts festivals including the Next Wave Festival in Melbourne in 2012 and the Underbelly Arts Festival in Sydney in 2013. While my conclusions were entirely subjective, I felt I had made a greater number and longer lasting connections with artists based in Sydney. I felt that in Sydney there was greater permeation between creative communities and disciplines, and that these communities were less centralised. And so I chose Sydney.

In January 2015, I packed my entire life into a moving truck, flew 4,000km and set myself up in Australia's largest city. Prior to the move I had seen each city in much the same light. It was only on moving to Sydney that I came to appreciate how the particulars of Sydney's housing market affect young people looking to rent. For the cost of the room I rent in a shared apartment in Stanmore in Sydney I could rent an entire house in Perth, and probably a decent studio apartment in Melbourne.

Sydney offers me the opportunity to engage with a range of professional artists that I can learn from, and with whom I can exchange ideas, techniques and professional practices. This type of development is best undertaken in close proximity to other artists and practitioners. With the cost of housing and rent as high as it is, artists in Sydney are being pushed further towards the outer suburbs where working spaces are more affordable. An unfortunate outcome of this migration and dispersion of artists is that concentrated collections of affordable working spaces have become a rarity and the dynamic, effective exchange of ideas that has previously fed creative, critical development in Sydney has been stifled.

As artists, our work is motivated by the critical examination of ideas and I am proud that we are not primarily motivated by the accumulation of wealth. While this particular quality strengthens us, in that we are less beholden to commercial interests and persuasion, we suffer because this position lessens our political agency.

I am very fortunate in Sydney to have secured a studio space at Birmingham Street Studios on the Mascot fringe of Alexandria. This particular space is one of the largest of its kind in Sydney and is used by about 20 professional, full-time artists, who each consistently and regularly contribute to the national discourse. Yet even with the combined economic and cultural effort of 20 artists our building is under constant threat of closure as the zoning laws around the city's fringe are being changed. Alexandria has traditionally been a relatively low-cost,

light-industrial area south of Sydney, but as property prices have risen the zoning areas have been shifted to allow more residential apartments to be built in the area, resulting in warehouses like our own becoming less of a commercial viability for the building's owners.

This constant threat to medium and long-term property agreements, feeds a common anxiety and an unhealthy protectionism of, and competition over, limited and shrinking resources. The scarcity of affordable working spaces compounds what has felt like a broad assault on culture and creative practices in Sydney since 2015. The two other major components of this attack are the cuts to the Australia Council for the Arts, and the impending closure of Sydney College of the Arts, as well as the possible closure of the National Art School in Paddington.

These three threats to creative practitioners in Sydney reflect a shift in the value placed on cultural capital. I have witnessed a shift in our political environment where, in my view, 'value' is almost exclusively equated to potential economic contribution, and where culture and creative practice is only understood in the terms of what it 'costs' in dollars and cents, and not what it contributes to a society.

My arts practice in Sydney has provided me with opportunities to work in youth outreach programs with kids at risk, in juvenile justice facilities, with marginalised minorities, kids and young people with learning disabilities and at public and private schools across the state. Without the support of funding, or without the support of funded organisations, and without the support of affordable housing and working spaces, my professional practice would be left to the whim of the market. It is a pretty simple equation. Commercial market viability eliminates risks (especially in emerging arts practices), the elimination of risk goes on to eliminate innovation, and the elimination of innovation results in a stagnation and retardation of culture. Art stops being challenging, and if art isn't challenging it becomes propaganda. It becomes another tool used to propagate systems of power.

With so much discussion coming from conservative pundits regarding the preservation of Australian culture, like Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party policy that states current immigration levels threaten to '[undermine] the maintenance and further development of a unique and valuable Australian identity and culture', I am always surprised at how little value we put in Australian cultural practitioners.

Despite the challenges of living and working as an artist in Sydney, I still remain. I am surrounded by talented artists who are ready to share their ideas, knowledge and techniques, and that is why I have to be in Sydney.

Opposite.
The Man, 2013, oil,
acrylic, resin and
aerosol on canvas,
150cm x 120cm.
Image kindly provided
by the artist.



City of Film? Sydney's Untapped Potential

Sydney is a city proud to lay claim to the title of filmmaking capital of Australia, and it has been recognised as a leader in being named a UNESCO City of Film. Rightly so, as Sydney leads Australia in the film industry, with nearly 60% of production and post-production businesses based here, and we've produced remarkable international talent the likes of Cate Blanchett, George Miller and Baz Luhrmann—to name just a few. We are home to Fox Studios, containing the largest sound stages in the southern hemisphere, the Australian Film Television and Radio School (AFTRS), one of the world's top 25 film schools, and we boast a diverse array of incredible locations for production. We also host the Sydney Film Festival, Flickerfest, the World of Women Film Festival, Arab Film Festival, Queer Screen Film Festival, Tropfest and more.

So why is there a sense that things aren't as good as they could be? Sydney has an incredible arts scene, but due to funding cuts and a lack of understanding about the importance of grassroots innovation, we're putting at risk our future generations of filmmakers.

Our emerging sector is under threat. Metro Screen's 2014 report *Emerging Visions* found that our current screen industry is built on established and mid-career practitioners who have had the benefit of substantial investment over many years, while emerging talent has been left out. If we want a sustainable film industry with a global impact, we need to foster the diverse, fresh voices of new filmmaking talent.

We must seek out and support emerging talent like Indigenous filmmaker Ryan Griffen, from Western Sydney, who developed an Indigenous superhero television series, *Cleverman*, while interning at production company Goalpost. Last year, *Cleverman* had a successful premier at the Berlinale Film Festival and its rights were acquired by Sundance TV in the US. This is a brilliant example of emerging talent being given a chance to thrive and bring a fresh voice to our cinematic landscape.

Lack of funding opportunities, creative hubs and artist residencies for filmmakers impact on the career development of emerging screen practitioners. The closure of Metro Screen in 2015 has left a dent in Sydney's culture. We lost an important innovation hub which, for the last three decades, cultivated a culture of supporting grassroots talent. It delivered affordable short courses, offered grants and was a centre for collaboration and cross-pollination of ideas, all in the heart of the CBD.

Dr Karen Pearlman, a notable filmmaker, academic and lecturer at Macquarie University, told me that the closure of Metro Screen was 'devastating for the film culture of Sydney especially emerging filmmakers. It's a terrible message to send to filmmakers, that their grassroots organisations aren't valued'.

The only organisation close to resembling Metro Screen is Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE) in Parramatta, but Sydney's city centre needs its own creative hub. A creative hub in Sydney's city centre would send a message to the public that we as a city, value our film industry and emerging talent. It would allow for a creative community to be built in the city itself which only adds to Sydney's culture.

We also need a space dedicated to film, a cinematheque or film centre, to live up to our potential as a UNESCO City of Film. Six years ago,

the Sydney Film Centre Committee¹ together with the City of Sydney explored the feasibility of a film centre and found the benefits to Sydney's creative culture to be overwhelming. In the absence of a cinematheque, perhaps we need to look at more cross collaboration between existing cultural institutions. We could have more festivals and screenings for films at the MCA, MAAS or the State Library, building on the promising plan to expand Carriageworks to include a 200 seat cinema.

People still crave engagement with film and cultural experiences collectively, outside of their computers and devices. No one can deny the magic of an event, when people come together to experience art, then continue to engage in that art through conversation. Referring to the sold out performances of *Imagined Touch* at the 2017 Sydney Festival, screen industry executive Courtney Gibson said, 'It offered audiences the chance to experience the world as a person who is deaf and blind. We want to feel how others feel, we want to walk in others shoes, and in this case two women who are deafblind wanted the world to know what life is like for them. Art experiences like this make us a stronger, more engaged society'.



In 2008 at the age of 19, Metro Screen provided me with a small grant of \$2,000 and free access to their camera equipment to help me make my short film, *Be My Brother*. I had no credits to my name and no proven track record of success. There were no other options for funding other than from Metro Screen. *Be My Brother* went on to win 1st prize at Tropfest and the lead actor, Gerard O'Dwyer won Best Actor. He was the first actor with Down Syndrome to receive the title. The film was made by a crew of people with and without disabilities, it was my first inclusive film and the experience inspired me to co-found the not-for-profit organisation Bus Stop Films.

Bus Stop Films is leading the way when it comes to fostering professional filmmaking opportunities for people with a disability. We've developed work made by people with intellectual disabilities that has screened in competition at academy accredited film festivals around the world, including Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia where we won an audience choice award. The 2015 premier of our short film *Heartbreak and Beauty* at Palm Springs Shortfest was a world first. Never before had a film featuring three directors and nine performers with an intellectual disability, been selected to screen in competition at an academy accredited film festival. This kind of success and ground breaking work is thanks to the initial grassroots support I received for *Be My Brother*.

Current grants available for short films are few and far between. With the exception of targeted funding aimed at increasing gender equality in the film industry, funding for emerging and entry level filmmakers is non-existent. Grants are not tiered, so every prospective filmmaker vies for the same funding. Television and commercial directors apply for the same \$20,000 grant as emerging filmmakers aspiring to make their first short. This kind of competition isn't healthy. We need tiered funding for filmmakers, starting with micro budgets like the ones Metro Screen gave

out, then as a filmmaker progresses in their career, the funding matches their career level.

Courtney Gibson believes there's an opportunity for City of Sydney and local councils to support grassroots filmmakers. State funding bodies exist to support practitioners from right across the state and underrepresented groups in regions outside the city, but 'Sydney doesn't have its own screen advocate; it doesn't have dedicated support in its own backyard.' By comparison, the New York City Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment in October committed US\$5 million to support females in film and theatre, including script development funding and project financing.

As with the wider creative sectors, filmmakers feel that Sydney's cost of living greatly impacts on their ability to innovate. It's hard to get past the level of expense involved with living and working in Sydney. Extra grant programs, discounts on location fees, and other incentives driven by council to bring down production costs for low budget films could help. If we don't tackle cost of living, we will lose creative talent to other cities where job opportunities are better, cultural production more concentrated and where low rental prices allow creatives to earn a living wage. Subsidised studio spaces, supported housing and prioritised grants for artists and filmmakers are other incentives that could relieve the financial pressures and help Sydney to reach its full potential as a great cultural city.



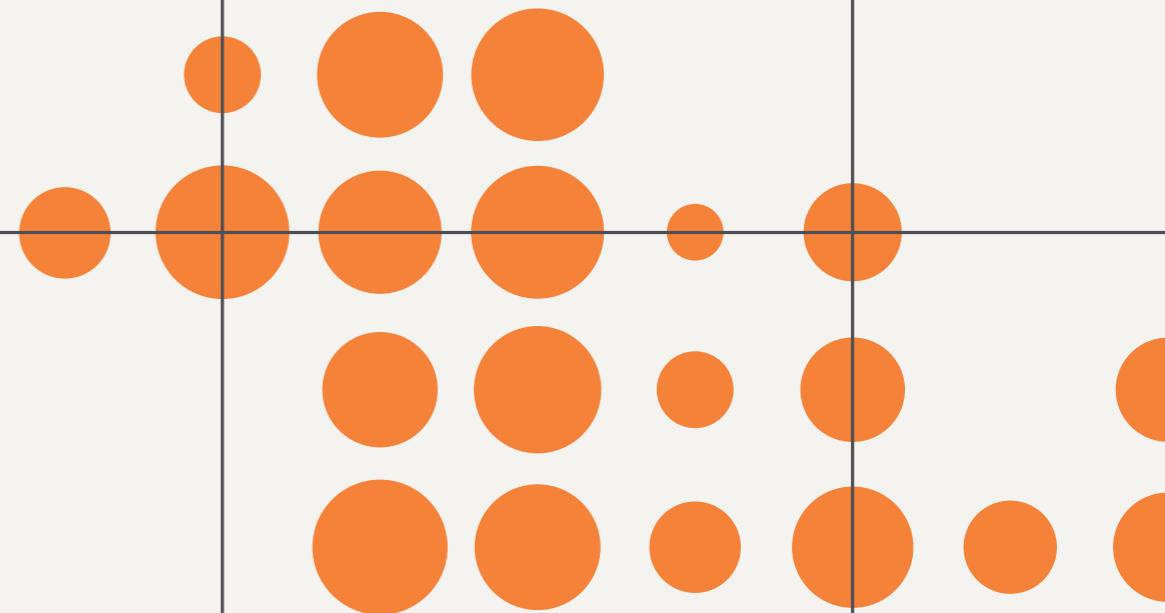
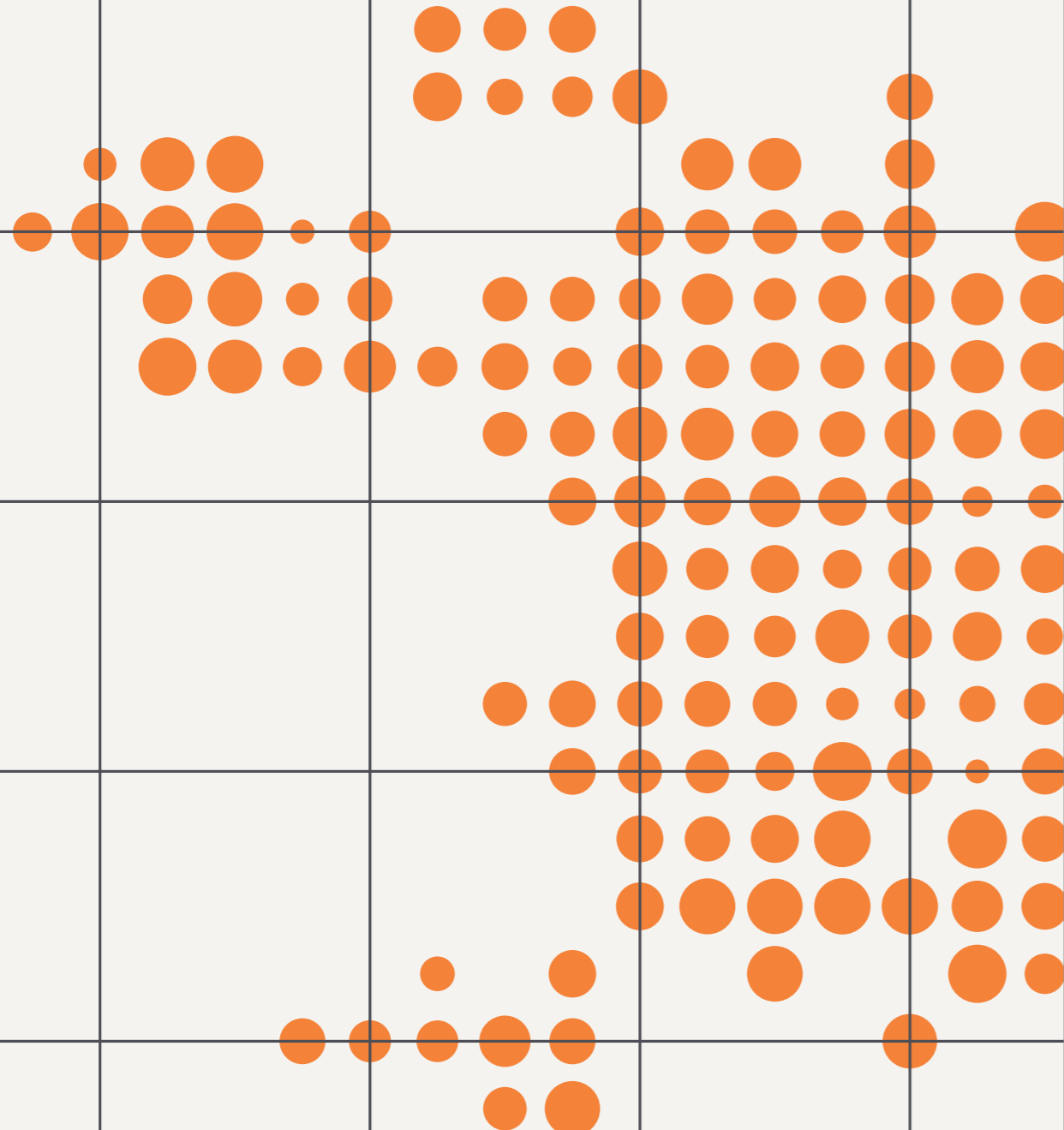
In some areas, Sydney is definitely leading the way. Screen NSW has an initiative to achieve 50:50 gender equality by 2020. In just twelve months, figures for female participation in key creative roles rose dramatically. Across all genres and formats, female directors were attached to 46% of funded projects up from 28%, female writers rose to 48% from 30% and producers rose to 67% from 56%. These figures make Sydney a pioneer in the world in terms of delivering gender equality. Production companies have been opening their arms to interns with a disability. And as a city we are pushing the boundaries in virtual reality technology.

We must build on our momentum. Sydney is a city of incredible arts and culture, with a wonderful film industry full of talent, resources, locations and screen practitioners, but we can do more. We must take special care to address the lack of support for emerging filmmakers. The grassroots is where innovation and the future sustainability of our film industry is generated. Having the UNESCO title will mean nothing if in ten years our industry has been corroded by a largely non-existent emerging sector. We need a new creative hub, innovative ways to support filmmakers living in an increasingly unaffordable city and spaces in which we can share the experience of film and cinema. If leadership fails to see the value in supporting Sydney to be the city of film we would all like it to be—healthy from the top down to the roots—we will miss the opportunity to reach our full potential.

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'The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras embodies all that I love about my multicultural and irreverent hometown.'

Julie McCrossin



From Violent Battle to Cultural Icon: Happy Mardi Gras!

The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras embodies all that I love about my multicultural and irreverent hometown. The story of its origin and transformation is remarkable. Mardi Gras is an international model for how to achieve justice for a despised minority. It offers a beacon of hope to more than 70 nations where homosexuality is still a criminal offence and where the penalties for conviction include jail terms and execution.

The first Mardi Gras in Sydney was in 1978 and was a key driver for the decriminalization of homosexuality across several states and territories in Australia. It was a catalyst for the liberalisation of the laws controlling public protest in its home state of NSW. We thank the late former Premier of NSW Neville Wran and his Attorney General Frank Walker, for the repeal of the *Summary Offences Act* (NSW) in 1979 and the decriminalisation of homosexuality in NSW in 1984.

The influence of Mardi Gras in changing cultural attitudes towards homosexual and transgender people is equally, if not more, significant. This transformation has made Sydney and Australia a much happier place to live for gay, lesbian and transgender people and their families. And the transformative role of Mardi Gras is still essential today. There are many cultural and faith communities that continue to find homosexuality, or gender diversity, utterly unacceptable. You have to be a very brave person from a Muslim community to join Mardi Gras openly.

The thrilling thing is that the positive shift in attitudes towards homosexuality, and the legal reforms that followed, were primarily achieved not only by the Parade but also by a cascade of cultural, sporting and community events that grew from the Parade. Some very big naughty parties have also been influential—Sydneyiders love to party!

The first official Mardi Gras Festival was directed by Tony Crewes and Rodney Thorpe in 1985. Their vision was to engage a much broader audience and to include people who wanted more than a Parade and a party. The idea of the festival was to offer a myriad of ways to be involved.

These days the Festival includes Fair Day, attracting over 70,000 people to a family-friendly carnival; Queer Screen, a major Mardi Gras Film Festival; and Queer Thinking, a program of in-depth community forums on topics like 'coming out' in sport, marriage equality, raising a family and gender trailblazers.

The Festival is held over a couple of weeks with over 80 events. It includes partnerships with mainstream arts organisations like Belvoir, The Performance Space, the Darlinghurst Theatre Company, Carriage-works and the Powerhouse Museum. In 2015 we celebrated the *Anti-Homophobia in Sport Accord* with Cricket Australia, the AFL, the NRL, Australian Rugby Union, the Football Federation and the Sydney Convicts and their Bingham Cup. Sporting features are a central part of the Festival.

The audience for our Festival and Parade is now boosted by the power of social media. In 2015 a tribute video to Freddie Mercury, *Are You Ready for Freddie?* went viral with over 2.5 million views. It featured the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Choir, Olympian Matthew Mitcham and veteran drag queen, Joyce Maynge and was filmed in one, continuous, unedited take on Pyrmont Bridge.

Preserving our history for new generations is now an urgent priority. The Pop-Up Mardi Gras Museum in 2013 was a great first step. It enabled archivist Nick Henderson to display original documents, media coverage, film and costumes dating back to 1978. Photographers William Yang, Mazz Image and C. Moore Hardy, whose body of work captures the intimate and creative history of Mardi Gras, gave presentations with images to audiences who were not even born in 1978. But this was a temporary display.

It's true that parts of our history are included in other collections. The works of C. Moore Hardy are in the City of Sydney Library Archive Pix. The Pride History Group website hosts the 100 Voices project. The Australian Lesbian and Gay Archive stores great material. The Powerhouse Museum Collection at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences holds costumes, including those by Ron Muncaster, who won 11 costume prizes in 11 years, including six first places.

But we need a permanent Mardi Gras Museum to share our history and display our creative work, including objects created in the Mardi Gras Workshops. Peter Tully set up the first workshop in 1982 and led the transformation of Mardi Gras from a battle to a parade. One of the most famous creations is the iconic *Fred Nile's Head on a Plate*. It was built by Ron Smith for the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. Fred Nile is still with us as a NSW politician, and he is still opposing our legal equality. This is part of the witty, gritty cultural history of Sydney. It deserves a permanent home. Tourists would love it.

The cultural calendar of the Festival increases public engagement with Mardi Gras. Yet the Parade is the heart of the matter. Hundreds of thousands of people come for the flamboyant floats, dancing groups and exotic costumes. The Parade makes people happy. Australians will forgive almost anything if you can make them laugh.

The ubiquitous cry of 'Happy Mardi Gras' reflects a genuine, positive community engagement on a scale the original marchers could never have imagined. Public protest and 'coming out' began in Sydney with Gay Liberation around 1972. We never dreamed Mardi Gras would become so big and so integrated into the economic life of our city.

When it began in 1978, Mardi Gras had just a few hundred gays, lesbians and drag queens celebrating our identity by walking through the streets. We were trying a new strategy to achieve social justice. The plan that night was to be a 'celebration' in contrast to a 'protest'. It was Ron Austin's idea. After scores of protests for Gay Rights that ended in arrests, Ron said, "Let's have a street party." His fellow-activist, Margaret McMahon responded, "You mean a Mardi Gras?" And so the idea was born. Ron is now 86 and has never missed a Parade.

But on that first night in 1978, the marchers met violent resistance from police. Back then, the dark corners of the NSW Police were running the sleazy parts of Sydney in partnership with organised crime. They didn't want homosexuality or prostitution decriminalised. It would have cut their share of the income from the illicit brothels and gay bars. Fifty-three people were arrested and their names and addresses were published on page 3 of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. At the time, homosexuality was

Opposite.
The Hollywood Hotel is highly popular in Surry Hills as a Queer friendly pub/hotel. This group of friends gathered together pre-parade to have photos taken. It shows just some of the costumes worn on the night of the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade. Photo Credit: C.Moore Hardy.



illegal and considered to be a mental illness and against God's will. Some individuals paid a heavy price with their families and employers.

Mardi Gras changed all that. Now the Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers in NSW Police are world leaders in community engagement. It is the marchers in uniform that bring the biggest cheers from the crowd—from police to emergency services and the defence forces. When I see the rows of NSW Police, marching with military precision, I feel elated.

The Mardi Gras Parade is now the largest public event in Australia. In 2016 there were over 12,000 participants and 170 floats in the Parade. Over 300,000 spectators crammed the parade route. It is estimated over 25,000 interstate and international visitors come to Sydney for Mardi Gras and the Festival events, injecting in excess of \$30 million into the NSW economy.

Mardi Gras opened the 'closet door' for us. We leapt out en masse and discovered lots of people wanted to join our party. Australia used to be known around the world for a jumping marsupial and sporting achievements. Now the world knows we have homosexuals as well as kangaroos, and that some Aussie Olympians are 'out and proud'.

All major political parties now march in the Parade. Party leaders write messages of warm support to be printed in the program of events. The Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull and his wife Lucy, walked with us in 2016. In 2005, the then Governor of NSW, Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO, the Queen's representative in Australia, officially opened the Mardi Gras

Festival in Hyde Park. In 2015 she was joined by her husband, Sir Nicholas Shehadie as Chiefs of Parade. They led the Parade in an open-topped car, driving just behind the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander group. The City of Sydney's Lord Mayor, Clover Moore has been a long-term and loyal supporter. It is always great to see the Rainbow Flag flying over the Sydney Town Hall.

The economic contribution of Mardi Gras to tourism is undeniably a factor contributing to our mainstream acceptance. Major bank ANZ has been a Principal Partner for ten years. Other funders include Qantas, Facebook, Google, Twitter, Airbnb and Canon. Media partners have included ABC TV, Network Ten, Foxtel and SBS.

But in my observation over the years, it is not just commercial interests that drive this engagement. Many businesses, government and non-government agencies have got involved because of internal lobbying by their own staff. Marching in Mardi Gras or funding associated events is a way that CEOs can show support for diversity within their own staff and customers, as well as among the broader community.

Faith groups have joined us, including the Quakers and Progressive Jews from the early days and, more recently, the Uniting Church. This is profound social change.

In 2016 the NSW Government, its police force and Fairfax Media (who publishes the *Sydney Morning Herald*) apologised for the events of the first Mardi Gras in 1978. Member of Parliament Bruce Notley-Smith addressed Parliament and said, 'For the mistreatment you suffered that evening, I apologise and I say sorry. As a member of the parliament which dragged its feet in the decriminalisation of homosexual acts, I apologise and say sorry. And as a proud gay man and member of this parliament offering this apology, I say thank you. The actions you took on June 24, 1978, have been vindicated.'

Happy Mardi Gras!



Opposite.
The Fair Day image shows a group of young community members with two police officers from NSW who work with the community. Fair Day is a family day for all members of Sydney's GLBTIQ community. This year it was held in Camperdown Memorial Park, Newtown. Photo Credit: C Moore Hardy.

The Night is Young

Both the music industry and media are experiencing major technological disruption, changing how and where we can produce and consume culture. Audiences have access to music and content from around the world at their fingertips.

Within this brave new world, media and cultural programmers offer audiences a sense of curation in what can otherwise be a sea of noise. The function of radio is to allow for discovery whilst providing context and companionship. And as a broadcaster that has a mandate to foster local and emerging culture, we're increasingly looking at how we can offer opportunities for connection in the real world.

FBI Radio exists to support Sydney music, arts and culture—specifically youth and emerging cultures. We do this by playing 50% Australian music, with half of that from Sydney, and we program musicians, artists and broadcasters who are unlikely to be supported or yet to be discovered by other media.¹

In essence, our license mandates that we're a champion for the new. And for Sydney. It's our job to help to discover the next big thing. Even just the next thing. And it's our job to ensure that young people have a voice in this city.

How do we best do this when our city, as well as our cultural and media landscape, is changing so rapidly?

Each year, more Australians go to see live music than sport, with over 40 million attending contemporary music performances annually². Engaging with live music culture has myriad social and cultural benefits. Live music helps to build communities and social connections and create a sense of attachment to a place.

Youth culture and music culture are inextricably linked. A survey undertaken in 2014 by the Australia Council for the Arts³ found that a third of Australians aged 15–24 are involved in making music. The survey also found that amongst that audience, the role of arts and cultural participation was critical to defining a sense of self. Of those surveyed, 53% in this age group felt the arts were important in shaping and expressing cultural identity, compared with 43% for people over 25, and that the arts provided 'the ability to express themselves', at 74% compared with 58% respectively.

In recent years, this city has produced a stunning and diverse array of artists that have achieved commercial and critical acclaim internationally. Whilst our geographical isolation has fostered strong, unique musical communities, technology has removed some of the tyranny of distance, allowing for international collaboration, international distribution and international audiences. Sydney artists such as Flume, Flight Facilities, Hermitude, Jagwar Ma and The Preatures, who all received some of their first airplay on FBI, have benefited from the increased reach that new technologies provide, building substantial international audiences and headlining major international music festivals in recent years.

But technology's influence presents new challenges. Online streaming platforms have not only changed the way audiences are consuming music, but are changing the extent to which artists can rely on revenue from

recorded music. As a result of diminished potential for revenue from recorded music, live performance has taken on a greater importance, and income from live performance is now an integral part of developing a viable and sustainable career as an artist.

A healthy local live music culture enriches the lives of its makers and participants and helps to define our cultural identity through participation and expression. It employs 65,000 people nationally⁴.

However, in Sydney we currently have a live music sector in decline. Many venues in the city have closed, and those that remain open report a range of regulatory challenges—prohibitive costs associated with building compliance, urban development, sound complaints, and licensing regulations that have reduced trading hours.

Figures released by the Australasian Performing Rights Association (APRA) and the Australian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society Limited (AMCOS) in February 2016 via the Live Music Office, showed that within the Sydney CBD, since the introduction of the lockouts, live music venues saw a 40% drop in attendance and a 15% overall reduction in expenditure on artist fees.

In a climate in which live performance is an increasingly integral part of the new business model for music, the already difficult task of earning a living as a musician in this city is made even harder. With fewer venues and reduced trading hours in licensed venues, fewer slots are available for artists to hone their craft and build relationships with local audiences, both of which are traditionally the first step to building an international profile.

With fewer slots to fill, emerging acts or those with smaller audiences are less likely to be booked. This results in less diversity in programming, and fewer choices for audiences, particularly youth audiences, to engage with a range of artistic practice.

Understanding the important role that live music plays in helping young people form a sense of identity and community gives some insight into the high level of youth engagement with the Keep Sydney Open movement.⁵ What may be seen by older generations as a petulant over-reaction to the lockouts, ignores the symbolic and actual importance of supporting youth culture in a shifting landscape.

All of this points to a sector that needs assistance to navigate a complex technological and regulatory environment. We have a pipeline of unique, globally competitive talent, and audiences that both value and are engaged in culture. And we have an industry that contributes \$1.2 billion to the economy annually.

We are seeing programmers adapt, particularly at a grassroots level. Solutions are being presented to the challenges faced by a reduction in venues and licensing regulations restricting late night entertainment. A partnership between local event promoter Astral People and the National Art School resulted in a series of daytime events last summer. In the last 18 months the event collective Lovebombs, have been responsible for day parties on a basketball court, a hotel rooftop and more recently in a marquee at Pier 2/3. These events all showcased emerging local talent and have strong creative communities surrounding them.

Opposite.
FBI SMAC Awards,
Carriageworks, 2016

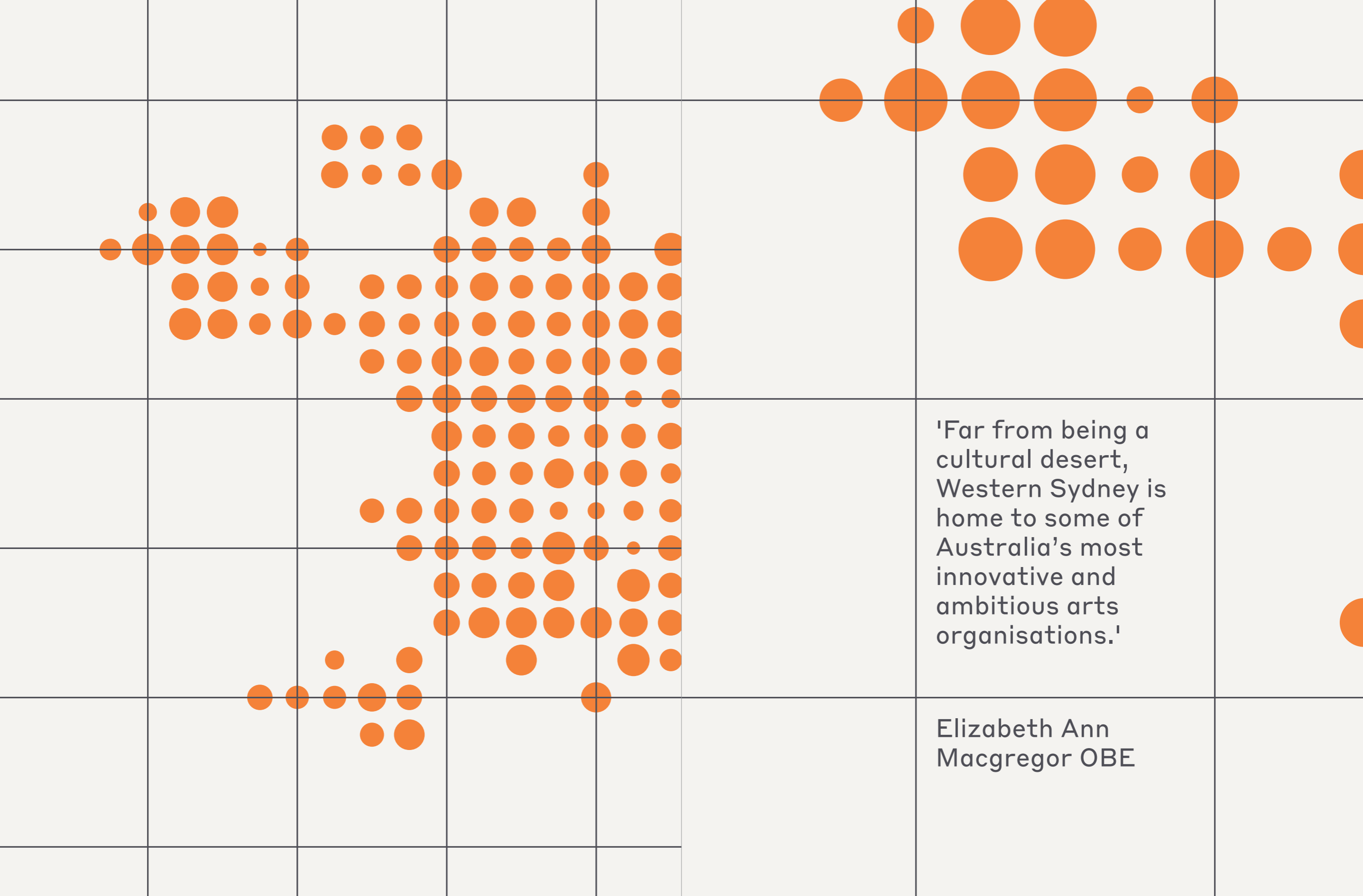


The inclusion of local contemporary music—particularly partnerships with third party and young programmers—in the programs of Sydney cultural institutions such as the Opera House and Carriageworks, are helping to ensure their ongoing relevance to the next generation of audiences. I would encourage other cultural institutions to follow suit.

But the creativity and ingenuity of those working to create and maintain culture in our city does not mitigate the need for local and state government to examine the current regulatory framework, specifically to assess its impact on existing live music venue operators. The majority of these venues exist within the inner city, and it's these spaces that are vital to supporting emerging acts and a diverse range of voices. The City of Sydney has taken positive steps in developing a Live Music and Performance Action Plan⁶ that includes strategies to streamline approval processes for small scale, temporary and live music activity. The City of Sydney also made a number of regulatory recommendations to the NSW Government⁷ around the Liquor Law review. This included trial exemptions for live music and performance venues that would remove the 1:30am lockout and allow for annual renewal based on good management.

With 47% of Sydney's population now residing in Western Sydney, we must also look for ways to engage audiences in contemporary music outside of the Sydney CBD. Parramatta City Council have recently appointed a Live Music Coordinator. The Plot—a festival with an all-Australian lineup—returns to Parramatta Park for the 2nd year running, with considerable focus on Western Sydney talent. FBI is also focusing our attention West in the coming year, working alongside Campbelltown Arts Centre and Blacktown Arts Centre.

Culture thrives only through exposure and interaction. Let's ensure that together we find more ways to make space for younger voices in this city.



'Far from being a cultural desert, Western Sydney is home to some of Australia's most innovative and ambitious arts organisations.'

Elizabeth Ann Macgregor OBE

A Tale of Two Sydneys

'It's all the fault of the Vikings—or rather the lack of...' opined a senior government bureaucrat recently. European cities, he went on to explain, were established inland, upriver from the coast to keep them safe from the marauding invaders. His point being that the perfect location for the development of Sydney would have been Parramatta rather than the current CBD, perched on the edge of the harbour with no room for expansion. He suggested that Sydney's planning problems stem from this geography. Topographically, Parramatta is indeed the centre of Sydney. There are stories (probably apocryphal) of tourists booking accommodation in Parramatta on that very premise. However, the 'power' of Sydney has developed and continues to reside in the east of the city.

The east vs. west debate has in recent years taken on a new life, fuelled by *The Daily Telegraph's* laudable 'Fair Go for the West' campaign which recognised the economic necessity of giving Western Sydney a fairer share of government spending. How to address the constraints of this harbourside focus has become an acute issue, as the impossibility of continuing to bring more workers into the CBD each day has become apparent. But the divide between east and west is more than geographical.

Following the establishment of a new AFL team in Western Sydney, the GWS Giants, as part of the AFL's campaign to make the game truly national and challenge the predominance of rugby league, football commentator and Collingwood president Eddie Maguire referred to Western Sydney as 'the land of the falafel' and sometimes the media can be even worse. An *AFR* columnist mocked the idea of supporting the arts in Western Sydney with the headline 'Wasting art on Westies'. Tongue in cheek? Maybe. But the sneering tone is nonetheless a symptom of a deep-seated prejudice stemming from ignorance about the range and diversity of cultural activity in Western Sydney, and a belief that the rugby league supporters of the west have no place at arts events.

Wrong on both counts. Far from being a cultural desert, Western Sydney is home to some of Australia's most innovative and ambitious arts organisations. Casula Powerhouse in the 1990s pioneered curatorial programs that enshrined diversity and the collaboration of artist, curator and community. Campbelltown Arts Centre exhibited the work of world renowned Chinese artist Ai Wei Wei long before the recent blockbuster at the National Gallery of Victoria. More recently, with *Secrecy and Despatch*, its extraordinarily moving response to the Appin massacres with work by Canadian and Australian Aboriginal artists was an ambitious exhibition worthy of any state or national gallery. Urban Theatre Projects in Bankstown has a 30-year history of ground-breaking work re-imagining what theatre might be and in Fairfield, under the artistic directorship of artist Karen Therese, PYT has created a program for emerging artists that has included transforming a group of local young people who enjoyed street acrobatics (parkour) into a sought after performance group, most recently selling out the studio in the Sydney Opera House. In Parramatta, as well as the dynamic Parramatta Artists Studios and the Riverside Theatre that houses the recently established National Theatre of Parramatta, Information + Cultural Exchange creates opportunities for some of the most vulnerable communities to work with artists to tell

their stories. They produce engaging digital content that would not be out of the place on the screens of the major broadcasters.

This is a small sample of the energetic, quality arts organisations that thrive on the challenges and possibilities offered by their location in Western Sydney, home to some of the most diverse communities in Australia.

Yet Western Sydney gets only 5% of the arts funding, when its population is 30% and projected to grow to over 50%. Cultural equity is a serious issue, hence the proposal to relocate the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences to a new building on the river in Parramatta and Tropfest, the short film festival, to Paramatta Park.

The MCA has been challenging for years the prejudice about Western Sydney through its ground breaking and increasingly internationally recognised program C3West. To achieve its objective of increasing access to all sectors of the community, as well as breaking down preconceptions about the audiences for contemporary art, the MCA needed to reach out from its harbourside location.

C3West aims to broker partnerships between artists, communities, businesses and government to bring new ways of thinking to issues of concern, drawing on the specific circumstances of Western Sydney for inspiration. The MCA is committed to developing ethical partnerships with the thriving and highly entrepreneurial arts organisations in Western Sydney: Campbelltown Regional Gallery, Blacktown Arts Centre, Penrith Regional Gallery, Casula Powerhouse, PYT and I.C.E.

A six year collaboration with the Penrith Panthers began a long term commitment to working in Western Sydney. Panthers' visionary marketing manager Max Cowan saw the potential of C3West for the image of club from the outset. Panthers Entertainment Group was an ideal partner because of its position within the community. More than a rugby league club or entertainment precinct, Panthers is a major business with significant investments and strong community links and is also the second largest employer in Penrith. The club has a fascinating history and at the time was facing a number of challenges. The first commission was Craig Walsh's photography project *Heads Up* involving the players and fans.

The most far-reaching project led over a number of years to a highly ambitious plan for the city—*the Future of Penrith, the Penrith of the Future* by Campement Urbain. This is a collective founded in the late 1990s by the internationally renowned video artist Sylvie Blocher and Urban Planner/Architect Francois Daune on the outskirts of Paris—an environment not dissimilar from the suburbs of Western Sydney.

Ambitious and experimental, this artist-led process addressed the issue of urban sprawl and how the cities on the fringes of major urban conurbations can develop their own character and 'liveability'—an issue faced by countries across the world. It was launched by NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell in the Sydney Opera House—the location being provocatively selected to emphasise that what happens in the west will impact the east in the long term and that it has as much importance as the more conventional cultural activities on the harbour. Innovation, which is what artists do, often comes from the places away from the so-called centre.

C3West also works with the vibrant community of artists from Western Sydney. Last year, in collaboration with Blacktown Arts Centre, a project was developed around the highly contested site of the Blacktown Native Institution. It was here, between 1823 and 1829, that Aboriginal children were removed from their families and institutionalised, marking the beginning of government policies of forced assimilation designed to disrupt Aboriginal connections to culture, kin and land. Its cultural importance for the local Darug people and other Aboriginal people is profound. Artists Darren Bell, Karla Dickens, Steven Russell, Kristine Stewart and Leanne Tobin joined with community members, local artists and various experts to share and collect stories, develop an achievable vision for Aboriginal ownership of the site, and create new artworks. As a result, Blacktown Council has committed funds to develop a feasibility study for the future use of the site. A major outcome of the project was the development of a website (www.bniproject.com) as a keeping place for stories, histories and plans for the sites gathered during the project, as well as for soliciting community contributions.

This snapshot of C3West projects demonstrates the vibrancy of Western Sydney, its arts organisations and local councils. Socially engaged work, where artists propose new solutions has become increasingly prominent in the international art world. Last year the collective Assemble won the prestigious Tate Turner Prize for their work in collaboration with local communities. In Australia, it is Western Sydney that is at the forefront of this kind of work. Whether it's urban planning, the environment, food security, youth disenfranchisement, waste disposal or the coming to terms with our history, artists can bring us to a new awareness and offer alternatives to conventional outcomes. Challenging prejudice of any kind has a particular resonance in Western Sydney which has first-hand experience of it.

The establishment of the Greater Sydney Commission marks a shift into a new era: a rethinking of the east/west dichotomy as key to Sydney's economic future. In her recent Bradfield Oration, Chief Commissioner Lucy Turnbull proposed a radical solution, suggesting that Sydney should become a three city metropolis—Western, Eastern and Central—with Parliament eventually moving to the Central City; Parramatta.

In the short term, while the debate may rage about how to create greater equity of arts funding, the arts organisations and artists will continue to make engaging and thought-provoking work—work that could and should be appreciated by all Sydneysiders, regardless of where they live. As transport links improve and the physical barriers are removed, so should the attitudinal ones. The importance of the cultural contribution of Western Sydney in creating a vibrant international city will eventually come to be recognised—better late than never!

Sara Mansour

Bankstown Poetry Slam

Where Poetry Thrives

Bankstown Poetry Slam was a project forged from the fires of frustration. I clearly remember having to make the arduous, red light camera filled journey from Punchbowl to Newtown and beyond just to perform or listen to my latest passion, spoken word poetry. A phone conversation between cofounder Ahmad Al Rady and I sparked the idea that the gap should indeed be filled—by us.

After speaking to local cafés and Bankstown Council, our little project found a home at the Bankstown Arts Centre in February 2013. We purposely set our expectations low; we would have been happy with a solid crowd of 30, even if 20 were related to us. However, at the first slam we had just shy of 90 patrons clicking away at the performances. This number began to grow organically each month, as our only means of communication and promotion was our personal Facebook accounts and the page we set up. There was, and is, something about Bankstown Poetry Slam that sets it apart from every other poetry event, evidenced by its month-on-month growth to be the largest regular slam in the country, attracting crowds of 250–400 people on every last Tuesday of the month. This burning difference can be attributed to a number of factors; the demographic, the oratory traditions of its community that transcends culture, the frustrations of the youth and the ability of the spoken word to transform a stage and an audience into a family that is supportive, inclusive and empathetic. Performing spoken word poetry is a cathartic and validating experience and in turn, listening to it moves you to a place of understanding, of a sense of the depths of humanity. As cliché as it sounds, one has to see it to believe it.

This piece was inspired by some reflections on the lead up to Australia Day. It is for me an extension of the nuances and the palatable fusion of two cultures that make up my experience as an Australian Muslim woman.

Home means a lot of things to different people but is ultimately underpinned by the notion of being in a place that is familiar and safe. My friend Yasmine Lewis recently wrote and performed a piece about Bankstown and one of her last lines ‘it was home when the rest of the world said no’ deeply resonated with me. The city of Bankstown is a wonderful pocket of Sydney that epitomises what it means to be living in the Age of Diaspora; of reinvented identities and forged homes. Although the majority of its inhabitants struggle with issues of culture, religion, language and othering (to varying degrees), I don’t think there is a more authentic Australia than in Bankstown. Growing up in Punchbowl, I didn’t learn about the policy of multiculturalism on Harmony Day or in history class, I lived and experienced it every day. I wasn’t taught tolerance or acceptance, I was born into it. Whilst I recognise that Australia is by no means perfect, I will always strive to own my identity, even if that means claiming it from others who try to push their stereotypes and their biases onto me. This poem is about that.



My Australia is
Walking through the streets of Punchbowl
With the smell of freshly roasted Lebanese coffee kissing
the Asian bakeries good morning
The eucalyptus towers overhead and the frangipanis scent my breath
As we sing the unofficial national anthem
“I come from a land down unda...”
Living from beat to beat
Bumping down the streets
With Tupac on our tongues and
We’re headed for the beach
Water so unapologetically salty to the eyes
But we take it in our stride
Remembering all the lessons at Greenacre pools and at school
When Cronulla hit high tide

So when people ask me where I’m from
I tell ‘em Punchbowl
More often than not, they smile, and reply
“No, where are you FROM?”
I sigh, roll my eyes and in an explanatory tone respond
PUNCHBOWL
You know.. It’s near Bankstown
The city where mouths do not ebb the flows of
“Welcome” in over 60 different tongues
Where over 100 nationalities are housed under one postcode
This is my ode to the only place I know
Where no one is told to go back
Because everyone understands
This is my ode to home

When my parents came to Australia
They came with nothing
They slept on a mattress in a unit in Dudley Street
Baba worked back to back shifts to make ends meet
And his limbs can attest to this
His hands, hard
Unlike his heart...
We love this place
This place
It is

Where women wear their sari’s and their colourful hijabs proudly
Men don sweat stained blue collars like war badges
You can get the best pho in Sydney
12 dollar woodfired pizzas, the realest Lebanese and Chinese
And you feel at ease because no one judges your garlic breath or the
Tabouli stuck in your teeth
It is finding the most authentic spices

In shops where Arabic and Chinese signs
Sit like jewelled crowns atop their doors
It is neighbours passing barbequed meat over the fence
And always saying hello
It is all the stoic traditions
It is stoic—a community that has been hardened by media headlines
It is targeted
It is judged
It is 3am sirens and perceived thugs

But it’s also where the calls to prayer
Gently interlude with the ringing of church bells
It is co-existence
And artistic resistance
Like the 4elements youth hiphop festival
And the largest poetry slam in the country

It is my Dad’s voice 25 years on
Accent thick with resilience
Warm like an Autumn breeze
Smelling of petrol and truck smoke and all the forgotten things
All the zaatar and the tahini and the crushed petals that were once dreams
Saying
We are lucky
It’s not perfect. But it’s
Home when Lebanon’s cedars started to rot with political corruption
When Libya traded dictator for dysfunction
When Syria became a cemetery for your childhood dreams
When Iraq unwittingly traded oil for constant bloodstream
When Falasteen hasn’t beckoned you for 68 years
When Egypt’s air became thick with constant fear
When Saudi continues to force the hijab on your head and
In Bahrain if you’re a Shiite you’re wanted for dead
When Afghanistan is still nursing open wounds
And Yemen’s babies are oppressed before they exit the womb

Then if you listen closely, you can hear my Dad’s voice saying
We are lucky
It’s not perfect. But it’s home.
It will never be perfect, but it will always be home
Home. When the rest of the world says no.

John Kirkman

Information and Cultural Exchange

Made in the West

This is personal. Subjective. I am suburban, with fibro in my veins. I come from Western Sydney, South Granville. My house was War Service, my Father was an ex-Army truck driver, and my Mother worked in retail. Our home had few books and no art. My schools were State. Rough. There was a library, the cinema, radio and TV.

My heroes were Angela Davis, Germaine Greer, The Easybeats (who'd lived up the road in a hostel that became a prison) and Gough Whitlam. For me Whitlam was once, twice, three times a hero. He gave me a university education (no scholarship required), ended conscription and brought the troops home from Vietnam.

I work and live in Western Sydney. I like its diversity, ambition and drive. I also like its aggression and mess. In his seminal work *The Australian Ugliness* (1960), Robin Boyd critiqued the gimcrack aesthetics of the Australian suburb. He argued that to find rare elements of beauty you had to search. Let's search.

For generations artists have worked and created west of the harbour—Aboriginal people for millennia. Tom Roberts, Elioth Gruner, Sidney Long, Reinis Zusters, Gerald and Margo Lewers, Richard and Pat Larter, Vernon Treweeke and Wendy Paramor all created work in the region. Some even lived 'west'. It should be remembered that Patrick White lived, wrote (and bred dogs) just north of Parramatta. Then he went to town.

Today there is a diverse and complex range of artists, activists, communities and arts organisations working across the region.¹ Each contributes depth, nuance and richness to the cultural vibrancy of Sydney by ensuring artists and communities from Western Sydney have the opportunity, means and resources to be cultural producers. Together they enable community and artists to define and guide creative process and deliver artistic outcomes. They are cultural catalyst, creative crucible and audience builders.

Importantly, the 2015 Deloitte Report 'Building Western Sydney's Cultural Arts Economy: a key to Sydney's success' nailed Western Sydney as 'a microcosm of Australian culture, with the art created in the region reflecting the nation's diversity, aspirations, individuality and uniqueness' and that the region 'continues to break new ground, sets new standards, and rivals in excellence, art created elsewhere in Australia, and overseas'. It also made the point that Western Sydney represents 1-in-10 Australians, yet receives only 1% of Commonwealth arts program funding, and 5.5 % of NSW arts, heritage and events funding.

Information and Cultural Exchange (I.C.E.) is a key part of the Western Sydney arts ecology. It is also part of a rich history of Australian community art and cultural development: a discipline and practice honed from the late 1960s through to the mid-1980s.

Based in suburban Parramatta, I.C.E. is a digital arts organisation working in cultural development, community engagement, screen culture, digital technology and training. I.C.E. commenced in 1984 by providing resources and information (via a mini-bus, part-time staff and pamphlets) to local migrants and refugees.

I.C.E. has expanded into a technology-focused creative and educative

catalyst that specialises in cross-disciplinary community cultural development programs. We have retired the bus, but remain on the road.

I.C.E. works directly with communities (usually at point of need) to facilitate and create art that is bold and relevant. Our vision is for our communities to have the confidence, resources and opportunity to create self-determined art that provides opportunity and drives change, and speaks with their voice. Our job is to enable this to happen.

I.C.E. production includes making digital/screen-based work for TV, cinema and multi-media platforms; creating music (including Hip Hop/Rap, Electronic, R&B); presenting film festivals; producing cultural tourism events; offering training, education and professional development initiatives and nurturing social enterprise development. Our work is local, national and international.

In 2014 I.C.E. developed and produced *Villawood Resident Voices*, a community engagement project working with residents of the Urana Street, Villawood East housing estate in Western Sydney. Funded by Woodville Alliance, the project was initially intended to engage residents in digital storytelling, address media stigma and build community pride. What followed was an intense, facilitated creative engagement process that developed into an ambitious community-based movie to be titled *Lost in the Woods: A Fiction*.

Community engagement is tough work: experience, flexibility and cultural fit are essential. *Lost in the Woods* was led by Producer Christian Tancred (whose experience included filmmaking projects in Timor Leste and with Aboriginal communities), cinematographer Vanna Seang (local filmmaker) and dramaturge/performance director Nicholas Lathouris (whose work includes *Mad Max*, *Wild Side*, *Phoenix*, *Heartbreak High*).

After six-weeks of serving food, washing up and meeting community via a weekly *Food4Life* lunch program, the I.C.E. team recruited a group of men interested in participating in a screen-based creative project. Some live with physical disability, mental illness and long-term unemployment, most have hard-core lives, all wanted to devise, film and star in their own cinema fiction to be titled *Lost in the Woods*.

Next was an intensive four-week creative development workshop program where the team built trust, mutual respect and strong personal relationships with participants. From this sharing, and based on local stories and characters and the daily lives of the participants, a story/script synopsis emerged.

'The people have to have a say about the community and about breaking down stigma about Villawood being a hotspot for drugs and crime.'

Son Sriratanakoul. Script workshop participant

Raw story and script synopsis formed the basis of performance and character development workshops. These examined, explored and developed plot, structure, action and character. Workshops were well attended and established a cohesive, creative and confident performance ensemble.

With the storyline established, a shooting synopsis was devised.

Importantly, it was decided that there would be no script, that performances would be improvised, rehearsed and subsequently filmed. With this in mind (and based on the work of Stanislavsky) Lathouris, Tancred and Seang delivered a twelve-week performance development, rehearsal and technical skills development program. No actors were required.

'I reckon it's awesome. It has a lot of different plots and turns in it, I like the main actor, he reminds me a lot of myself.'

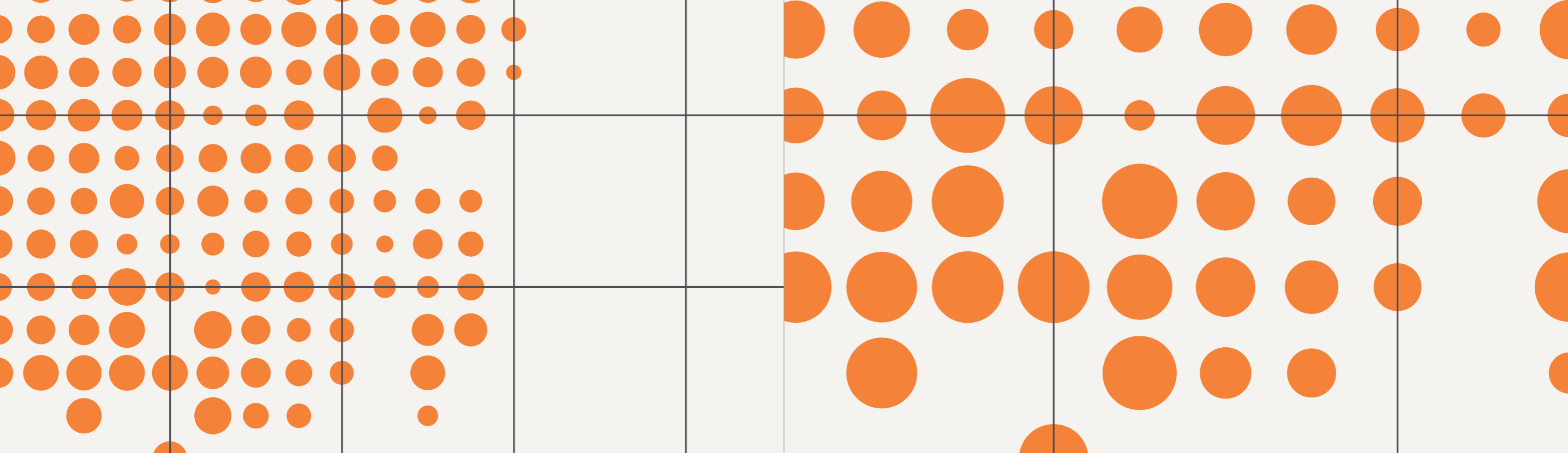
Grant Everts. Performer

What was produced and filmed was a raw, evocative twenty-minute work for cinema. The finished work contained all the hallmarks of successful community engagement: truth, pride, integrity, trust and the voice of the community. As a work of cinematic excellence it also succeeds. The production values are high, the story intriguing and the performances extraordinary. From writing, to rehearsal, to filming, to red carpet launch, *Lost in the Woods: A Fiction* was a cracker project.

Working with Western Sydney's most vulnerable communities (at-risk youth, Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, asylum seekers, refugees, migrant families and people with disability) I.C.E. creates art and capacity, facilitates social inclusion and builds community cohesion. At its core our work is about respect, integrity, truth and impact. We aim high and punch hard.

'Just watching the film is pretty powerful. It might touch a few nerves ...about what some people actually go through...To me it was honouring, so I really wanted to do the best I could do, without no script or words just delivering...As a kid you always dream of being some kind of star...The biggest kick I got of all was hearing my Mum say Good onya son, you know.'

William E. Paratene, Performer



'The city of Bankstown is a wonderful pocket of Sydney that epitomises what it means to be living in the Age of Diaspora; of reinvented identities and forged homes.'

Sara Mansour

Learning the Value of Culture

To build great cultural institutions you need great educational institutions to support training and skills. We are in a time of rapid change and development in Sydney, and it is incredibly important that we balance the long-term development of the city whilst respecting the extraordinary history embodied in our cultural institutions.

Institutions like the National Art School (NAS) play an important role in Sydney as it evolves. NAS occupies the former site of the Darlinghurst Gaol, built in 1885 and maintained in close to its original state. Henry Lawson, one of our great poets, spent a couple of years in the gaol. Jimmy Governor, on whose life Thomas Keneally's 1972 novel *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* and a subsequent film was based, was hanged there as well as Louisa Collins, the last woman to be hanged in NSW in 1889. There is an extraordinary back story that we need to be able to tell better, to justify why the site has been an art school for a hundred years, and why that is really important to the story of Darlinghurst and Sydney.

It's been a pretty convulsive year for some of the key arts educational institutions in Sydney, including NAS and the Sydney College of the Arts at Callan Park. Sydney University has moved the Sydney College from its home and has stopped taking students for 2017. The National Art School has been under threat from the NSW Government, which wants to cease funding the school and would prefer that the Federal Government or a university take it over, causing prolonged uncertainty over the Darlinghurst site which has been occupied by the art school since 1922.

Art schools, here in Sydney and around the world, are continually being told that the only way to educate artists is the way most universities teach all their courses, with limited direct face-to-face teaching and a close eye on the economic cost of their courses.

This doesn't work for artists. It also doesn't work for actors, musicians, filmmakers or circus performers and is why we need specialist institutions that are government funded and allowed to operate in distinct ways relating to the unique characteristic of their art forms.

Sydney's reputation, both nationally and internationally, makes much of the educational institutions of the city, and of the importance of these institutions to the vibrancy of the economic and social life of the city. They are also significant contributors to the economic and social wellbeing of our city. Why then has it been such a torrid time for the educational institutions whose primary role is to create the artists who play such an integral role in the development of our cultural life and the rationale that sits behind our great cultural institutions?

Sydney should be as ambitious as other great cities in fostering its visual artists. The list of the world's top ten arts colleges includes London's Royal College of Art, New York's Pratt School, the Rhode Island School of Design, the Art Institute of Chicago and the Glasgow School of Art. These are all small-scale independent institutions and provide the world's best practice models. Why shouldn't Sydney have an institution of this calibre and international interest in the same way we celebrate, sell and extol to the world our business, medical, legal and accounting schools?

NAS is Australia's oldest art school and continues to provide Australia's best artists with a unique art education unavailable elsewhere.

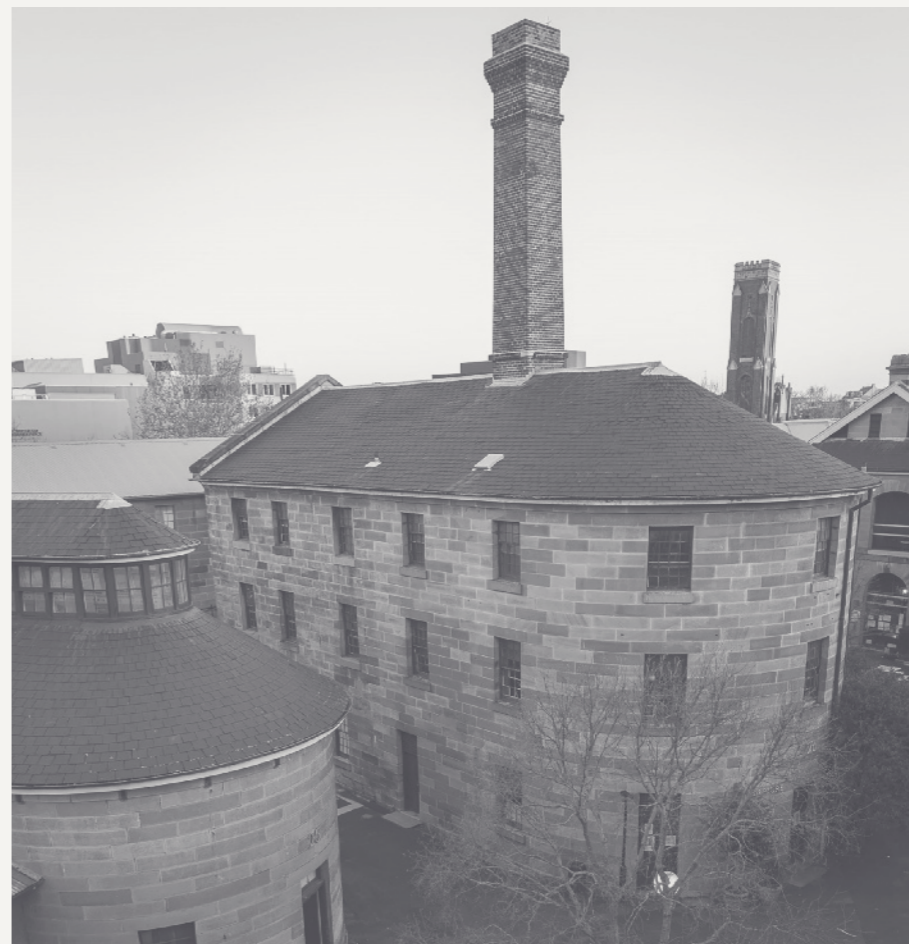
NAS is set apart from other universities and art schools by its history, its educational philosophy and its traditions of studio practice. NAS uses the atelier model of training, which is characterised by small class sizes and high teacher contact hours, and is built around individual studio space. Selection methods are based on portfolio and interview and not only HSC results. The school also reaches outside the more privileged metropolitan area with almost 40% of degree applicants coming from non-metro areas. For 2017, NAS has an unprecedented increase in students wanting to come to the school. Moreover, the school's ratings by the Commonwealth Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching puts the school ahead of all the university courses in which it competes. NAS must be doing something right.

Independent art schools are increasingly facing pressure to merge with universities. For me, a fundamental concern is that the commodification of education that is so well advanced in the university sector leaves little room for unique places in the cultural infrastructure of this great city. How do artists learn to paint other than from other painters? Or potters other than from potters? Without NIDA and the AFTRS we wouldn't have much of a film industry and there would be an outcry from many quarters that we should be training people to make an Australian contribution in such an important cultural sector. But why not the same outcry and outrage over the threat to the future of a preeminent visual arts institution? After all, among the NAS alumni are Brett Whiteley, Tim Storrier, John Olsen, Martin Sharp, Reg Mombassa, Fiona Hall, Susan Norrie, Cressida Campbell, Max Dupain, Colin Lanceley, John Coburn, Garry Shead and Margaret Olley amongst others.

I marvel at the proposal to move the Powerhouse Museum to Parramatta at a cost to the State Government of \$600 million, and the approved expenditure of \$155 million for the Walsh Bay Arts precinct. These are major cultural projects that illustrate the Government's commitment to arts and culture. But all it costs the State Government annually to support the NAS is \$5.5 million. Small beer I reckon.

Art schools matter. To me, we can't have great cultural institutions if we don't have great educational institutions to give us our own artists to challenge and inspire us. Great art schools make significant contributions to cities—just look at what Central Saint Martins has done for King's Cross and Greater London. We cannot lay claim to cultural greatness as a city if we only have one art school to create the painters, sculptors, drawers, ceramicists and photographers who will continue to define us, surprise us and express our stories.

Opposite.
The National Art
School, photographed
at a Committee
for Sydney event in
September 2016.



All Schools Should be Art Schools

I've been thinking a lot lately about a recent Bob and Roberta Smith painting entitled *All Schools Should Be Art Schools*. We would do well to adopt it as a slogan for our own city.

Part of a series of contemporary works produced by the British artist Patrick Brill (who uses the pseudonym Bob and Roberta Smith), it was the centrepiece of his campaign to be elected to UK Parliament in 2015.

In Australia, our own Arts Party campaigned similarly in the last NSW election—though theirs was a fully-fledged political action rather than a complex art project.

If art provides the heartbeat of a free society, as both campaigns asserted, then our political arena should have its finger well and truly on that particular pulse. It certainly doesn't feel like it's a pulse many of our politicians are checking. But that doesn't mean that it's not there.

Whatever the political future holds, it's hard not to agree that all of us would benefit from 'a more creative, cultural, educated and artistic life for all Australians', as the Arts Party puts it. Vibrant global cities are never devoid of raucous art and cultural scenes that contribute to the driving pulse of the greater metropolis. Connected to local neighbourhoods, diverse communities, big ideas, and global issues, vibrant cities are culturally active cities. They feel alive and a bit unruly. A bit like an art school. That's part of what attracts such a wide array of diverse creative people to our region, though it's not something that gets said often enough or loud enough.

While neither Brill nor the Arts Party ended up getting elected, Brill's artworks continue to provoke us to think about what our world might be like if all schools were a bit more like art schools. It's an interesting proposition. It follows a long tradition of similar thought by modern and contemporary artists. Pablo Picasso supposedly said that everybody is born an artist. 'The problem' he quipped, 'is how to remain an artist once we grow up.' Exactly.

Our schools and educational systems do an excellent job of squeezing whatever creative spark we might have out of us at an early age. Sir Ken Robinson's popular books, TED lectures, and online animated talks have done much to popularise the reasons behind all of this. And yet our schooling remains stuck in a 19th century mode of industrial thinking, as if production lines in the factory require their mirror image in education. I'm not sure how valid production lines are any more. Why should our education continue in the same manner?

If the values and methods of creative arts schools were adopted in other areas, perhaps we would see more people tap into their innate creative potential, rather than have it languish untapped for the rest of their lives.

A number of recent reports conducted by the City of Sydney, the state government, and other agencies suggest that active participation in creative arts and crafts in our city is on the rise. This can only be a good thing, and something we should try to understand better.

From contemporary stitch 'n' bitch social knitting and textiles groups, community art initiatives, new experiential and performative art practice, live music, small clubs and cafes—and yes, even the widespread

interest in adult colouring books—active participation in creative art activities appears to be increasing.

In a recent *Huffington Post* article, Senior Lecturer at La Trobe University, Patricia Fenner, suggests that there ‘are neuroscientists who have produced evidence of impact on brain function which leads to benefits in reduction of stress’ through a range of art activities, including colouring in.

According to this field of research, it turns out that active involvement in art practice of any kind can be seen to provide meaningful and motivating experiences for a lot of people. And that can only be a good thing when we think of the growing problems of personal wellbeing, cultural inclusion, and social cohesion. Indeed, many individuals have been separated from even the most basic kind of art making since they were turned off at primary school. Only now are we really starting to better understand the positive social, cultural and personal value that comes from thinking and acting a bit more like an artist—even just a little bit.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the famous German performance and installation artist Joseph Beuys came up with his own variation on this idea during a series of influential actions and paintings based on the theme ‘Everyone is an artist’.

The statement itself was a political act (Beuys went on to be one of the founders of the German Greens Party). According to Beuys, everybody has the capacity to become an artist: it’s just that not all of us know it yet.

Against the backdrop of a bleak post-war Germany, he claimed a unique role for art in the spiritual regeneration of society, standing in stark opposition to the materialistic culture that had emerged from the ashes of global industrial warfare. For Beuys and many who followed in his path, art has enormous value in and of itself. This is where the greater good of the social and personal benefits of art lie.

Patrick Brill, a graduate of Goldsmiths, University of London, has been quoted as saying that going to art school taught him *how* to think, not what to think. It’s an important point. And surely in an age where we’re constantly called upon to be more ‘innovative’, ‘creative’ and to ‘think differently’, thinking a bit more like an artist is vital to the success of our cities. Not a bad thing.

At an art school, people have the opportunity to learn how to think critically, while at the same time they learn how to receive criticism (constructive or otherwise). While many of us try in other walks of life, it’s a hard thing to do well. People at art schools have been doing crits since their inception. The intellectual rigour and emotional resilience developed in this context helps not just the art, but it helps the individual become more self-aware and self-assured.

At art school we learn to reflect deeply and singularly on a particular question or idea for a prolonged and focussed period. We learn to become a confident independent individual who is capable of free thought and unexpected responses to difficult, complex problems that have no obvious solutions. We also learn to work together in studios, to work on

collaborative projects and to share in the exchange of ideas expressed in material and immaterial forms: artworks.

At an art school, people learn to think with their hands. This is where ideas often first emerge (as some recent neuroscience also seems to confirm). The materials of making, drawing, painting, sculpting, or composing all have their own logic, which is grounded in centuries if not millennia of tacit knowledge. That is what artists and craftspeople come to know, to learn.

Perhaps if all of our schools allowed students to think independently, to generate original ideas in response to studying a problem, to encourage observation, direct experience, bodily sensation, and personal judgment, our cities and the citizenry that animates them would become more vibrant and exciting.

As Joseph Beuys observed, every one of us is potentially an artist, *it’s just that not all of us know it yet*. But how will we know, if the immense value of art isn’t expressed through our education?

Culture's Role in Attracting Bright Minds to Sydney

Bright minds, big city, buffed galleries and bronzed beaches: Sydney shines as a well-rounded metropolis with heart, soul, intelligence, creativity, drive and a little irreverence.

In the words of Lonely Planet:

'It's little wonder that Sydney causes a brain drain on the rest of Australia. Like New York, London and Berlin, this is a place that draws in anyone who's got something interesting to say. Australia's best musos, foodies, actors, stockbrokers and models, writers and architects flock to the Harbour city to make their mark, and the effect is dazzling: a hyper-energetic, ambitious marketplace of the soul, where anything goes and everything usually does.'

This is Sydney.

This is the city that we at Business Events Sydney (BESydney), have the pleasure of selling to the world. That is, the business world. We bid against other international cities for the right to host strategically relevant conferences, meetings and incentive programs. People attend these international events to learn, collaborate, drive innovation and build global networks. We know that they are also lured by the opportunity to explore Australian arts and culture.

Business travellers want to experience the city on all of these levels, to see the depth and texture Sydney has to offer. Culture matters: it impacts on the city's international reputation, businesses' ability to attract talent, and of course tourism.

According to the *FutureBrand Country Brand Index*, the most important factors—aspects that truly differentiate a country brand—are its associations and attributes across five key dimensions: Value System, Quality of Life, Good for Business, Heritage and Culture and Tourism. So things that make people's lives better.

When deciding where to holiday, live or work, people have images of a city in their minds. The Reputation Institute's modelling also demonstrates that a city that knows how to effectively manage its reputation can attract more tourists, greater investment or a bigger influx of talent. These outcomes are closely linked to business events.

A number of studies by Business Events Sydney and University of Technology Sydney (UTS) explore business events as economic drivers. The *Beyond Tourism Benefits*¹ suite of research clearly demonstrates that conventions and congresses—in addition to driving value for the visitor economy—provide opportunities that fuel trade, investment, talent attraction and more. These benefits ultimately impact positively on productivity.

Ranking Australia's number one business event destination, 6th in Asia Pacific and 25th globally² is positive reinforcement for the work BESydney has been doing to align its strategic bidding activity with New South Wales' (NSW) broader economic development. It is also a strong indicator that the city is working together effectively—the cities with the best reputations are those that have been able to maintain balance and leadership across sectors.

It's important that this continues and that Sydney hones its ability to collaborate and work with broader city goals in mind. It's essential that we maintain a culture that attracts bright minds to our shores.

In 2016, close to 810,000 international business visitors were welcomed to Australia. Of these, conference and convention arrivals account for over 25%³, and NSW maintains the highest market share with almost 50% arriving via Sydney⁴.

These are big numbers with big impact. As mentioned, the events that BESydney secures for NSW deliver visitor economy benefits well beyond the conference days with valuable pre and post touring. In addition the knowledge economy benefits are far reaching, influencing our current and future business and educational leaders, and of course our global reputation.

BESydney's research also shows that business visitors spend over six times more money than the average leisure tourist⁵. They are also generally highly educated, looking for authentic experiences that will challenge and inspire, and open minds and hearts.

Landmark events including Vivid Sydney, Handa's Opera on the Harbour, Sydney Festival, and the Sydney International Art Series are just a few cultural highlights that attract international patronage. Experiences like these delight and inspire business visitors. This is why we work with some of Australia's most respected cultural institutions to showcase Sydney's wider cultural offering to the world: Sydney Opera House, Opera Australia and the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences are three of BESydney's strategic partners.

It is Sydney's ability to attract switched-on thinkers, creative collaborators and vibrant trailblazers—resident and visiting—to an environment that encourages fresh thinking, that makes it a great destination for successful conferences. We need to continue to develop Sydney's destination 'pull'.

In addition to continued collaboration and leadership across sectors, Sydney needs to make it easy for business people to engage with our after work culture. BESydney strongly supports the creation of a cultural pass that would allow visitors entrance to multiple cultural institutions. This would make Sydney's world-class galleries, theatres and festivals much more accessible to time poor, international business visitors, who we know are looking for diverse and rich experiences.

A recent report commissioned by the Committee for Sydney benchmarked Sydney against 32 of its 'peer cities': cities comparable in size, average income, international orientation and quality of life. Sydney ranked in the top 10 for culture and diversity⁶. This is not a surprise. Sydney's cultural offering is world-class. What is needed now is the thought and planning to enable visitors to walk through the door more easily. In addition to a one-stop-shop cultural pass, other initiatives such as late night openings and connecting cultural institutions to our transport card system for easy admission fee payment, and more, could have great impact.

Successful global cities need soul. They need culture. If transformation and change reflect the constant evolution of a city's culture,

then Sydney is well placed to strengthen its standing as a major cultural capital in the Asia Pacific region.

Developments including the expansion of the Art Gallery of NSW; Sydney Living Museum's plan to create a heritage precinct along Macquarie Street, with new museums and hotel facilities; and the City of Sydney's Cultural Ribbon project—a nature and culture walk along the harbour foreshore from the Maritime Museum to Woolloomooloo, engaging with some of the city's foremost cultural attractions, are all worthwhile and valid projects for the city to support.

Neighbouring the Maritime Museum is the new International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney), a world-class facility, and one of the tools we use to sell Sydney as an international events destination. The building is only part of the story—the surrounding Darling Harbour precinct, a reinvigorated hub of dining and entertainment that sits alongside the world's largest natural harbour—is equally as important.

The precinct offers a place to enjoy our culture in all its various forms. It is also at the heart of Sydney's innovation culture, with universities, over 60% of Australia's start-ups and creative industries' employment, Google and other leading businesses, just a stone's throw away.

This heady mix is essential for the international bids Business Events Sydney prepares—strategies that attract leading minds to learn and share, businesses to invest, and global talent to choose Sydney. Sydney needs to be so much more than just a nice place to do business.

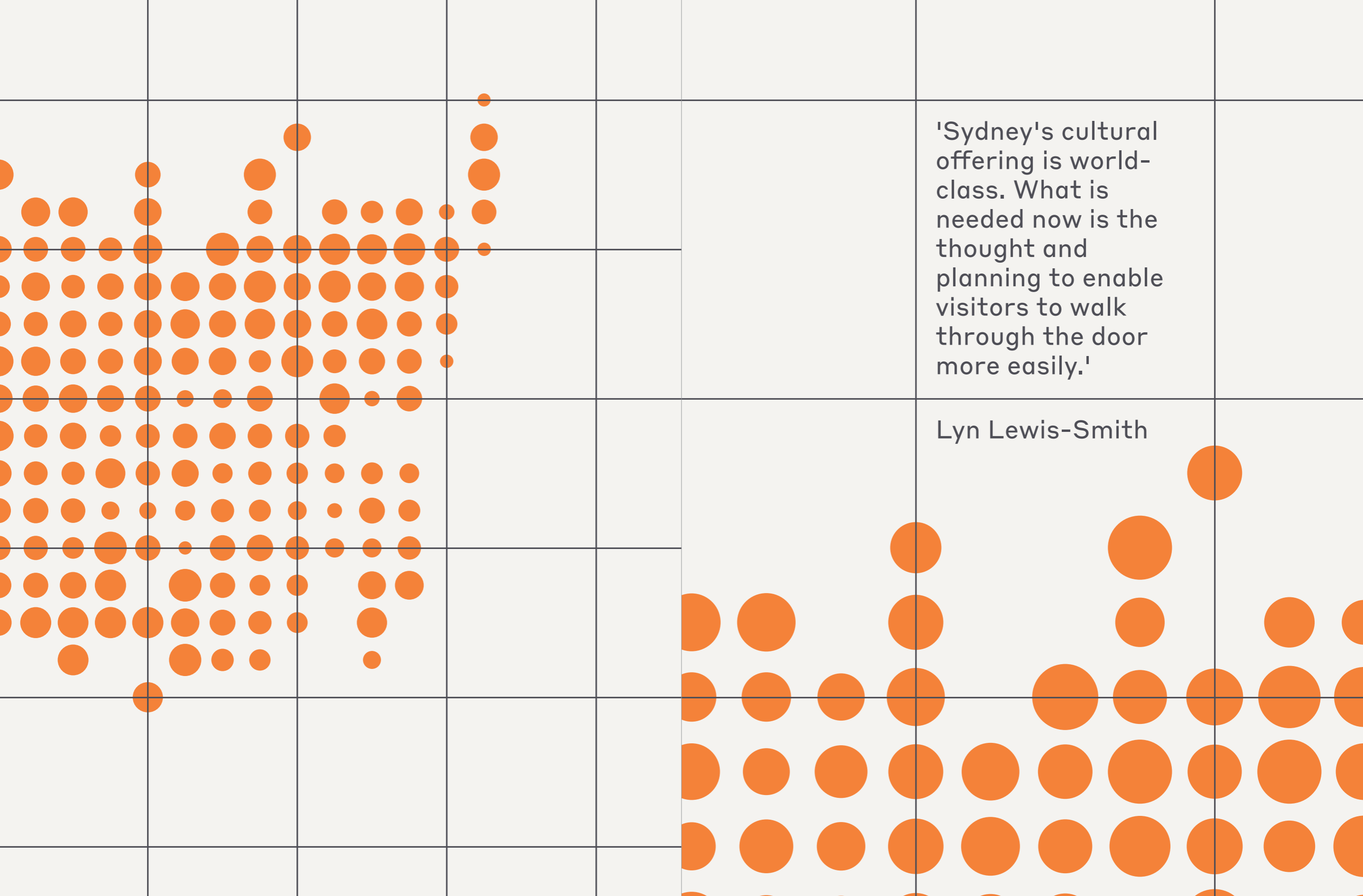
We must continue to foster relevant experiences, activities and precincts—not just Culture, with a capital 'C'. It's up to all of us to shape our city. What do we want to achieve? Who do we want to be? As a city, what's our place in the world?

Culture includes a group's vision, values, norms, systems, symbols, language, assumptions, beliefs, and habits. What we believe, do and say is important.

What do you want for our city? Would you say it aloud?

I want us to keep sparking Sydney's unique mix of adventure, entrepreneurship and a thirst for the unknown that makes our city great. A city where truly, anything goes.

As leaders it is up to us to set that culture.



'Sydney's cultural offering is world-class. What is needed now is the thought and planning to enable visitors to walk through the door more easily.'

Lyn Lewis-Smith

Cultural Leadership Through Philanthropy

Spanning cultures and crossing generations, people have always come together for the love of the arts. Our Indigenous peoples, the oldest nation in the world, have a cultural tradition of story-telling through art. Culture brings people together and builds communities that thrive. We can learn a lot from our Indigenous cultures, in particular, how to harness generational respect for the cultural experience.

And as we see with large-scale events like Vivid, the sheer enjoyment factor should not be overlooked either. The sharing of arts and culture makes people feel good. It's that simple.

After years building businesses and working successfully in the corporate environment, I made a conscious decision to move sideways and concentrate equally on my philanthropic interests. Having a foot in both camps, I can see the real need for the skills acquired in the business arena, to be put to good use in the charitable and not-for-profit sectors too. As a consequence, I feel strongly that we in the business community have a responsibility to share the load of cultural funding rather than the entire burden falling to governments. In partnerships, this will maximise the leverage for each government dollar for the organisations to receive.

Governments are finding their budgets squeezed tighter by the competing funding demands of education, health, transport and infrastructure. Whilst there is still a commitment from state and federal governments for arts funding, we would be living in a government-funded film script if we thought it was going to move up the agenda any time soon. And so it falls to businesses and individuals to pick up the slack. And why not?

The perception that philanthropy is largely made up of well-meaning millionaires dolling out large-scale dollars whenever they feel their conscience niggles, is an outdated notion. So is the idea that corporations are only looking for a positive media release to correct a poor brand image. This may have been the perception a few years ago but in today's corporate environment with strong governance and accountability, there is a requirement for more thoughtful and focused giving.

It's certainly a mistake to think of philanthropy solely in monetary terms. It would be many people's idea of an easy way to tick their philanthropy box and not worry themselves further if it was just about making a large donation. Of entirely equal value is the giving of both time and skills to those organisations in need of guidance and individuals within the sector in need of mentoring.

And it is skills such as a well-thought-out business strategy, governance, financial acumen, functional operating models, marketing, coaching and mentoring that are just as valuable a philanthropic commodity as cold, hard cash. Time is as limited as money. Making the time to share experiences and expertise can be beneficial to both sides of the relationship.

Simply because a foundation or charity, art gallery or museum relies on donations, whether they be in the form of government 'hand outs', corporate gifts or consumer contributions, doesn't mean they shouldn't be run as a business. There should be an onus of not

simply being accountable for how they spend the money, but just as importantly, how they thrive financially too.

Governments and the private sector don't need to work in isolation from philanthropy. Globally there are different models within arts funding. In Europe the arts are largely funded by the government whilst in the US, they are on the whole privately funded. Here in Australia, we have a mix and I truly think it is the best of both worlds.

The role of government within the arts works very well at a community level. Startup funding, developing the scope of a new arts project and getting it moving are all areas that need wholesale government support. But just in the way that governments are now looking more holistically at our cities and how we live now and in the future, they need to look too at the role that the arts and culture play within that model. They need to leverage every single dollar they commit to arts funding and it's leveraging that is key.

The Sydney economy has long benefitted from the overseas tourist industry and part of that benefit stems from our cultural and arts offerings. We have natural assets like the harbour and our climate that we've capitalised on. Part of what makes Sydney a vibrant, liveable and loveable city is our cultural offering but that's wrapped up in the larger infrastructure package.

It is imperative that we make our arts and culture accessible, exciting and part of our everyday existence. Culture needs to be planned just as much as infrastructure, indeed planned *alongside* infrastructure. Arts precincts, venues that are easily walkable, vibrant public spaces and if we're thinking really big, theatre districts, do not come about by happy accident.

If we are to encourage the growth of our cultural offering and make it an attractive proposition to those keen to invest their philanthropic time and money, we need to think holistically in how we approach the next generation of arts funding. Raising awareness and interest from an early age is key, so education plays a huge role. I talk of the 'next generation' deliberately. Would not taxpayer dollars be better spent on vibrant and relevant arts and culture than trying to mend our broken drinking culture?

The biggest market for the arts in this country is its audiences and it's clear we have a real appetite for it. Every year when Sydney hosts the ever-expanding Vivid and the Sydney Festival, our city comes alive. And the reason they get bigger every year is because high quality arts and cultural events are crowd pleasers. They have mass appeal, people want to participate and they want their children to be part of it too. And whilst there is certainly a place for more niche events, if we can get the masses interested in the arts at an early age, that interest can continue later in life.

The NSW State Government is heavily involved in these cultural events but they are sustained by businesses, corporate sponsors and people who are passionate about culture in our city and the benefits for the end user—the audience. The arts are an important part of our society, not an after-thought, and should be viewed as a

good investment for business.

Philanthropy has a broader social impact than the funding of single projects, however popular or niche they might be. If a project is successful as a result of philanthropic efforts and that project then goes on to engage, entertain and educate, the initial philanthropic donation (whether that's money or skills) has had a much broader social impact. The social dividend is clear.

And so, whilst it might be beholden to the corporate world to pick up the budgetary slack in the culture and arts sector through philanthropy, overall I believe that has a positive benefit to all. Business thinking can be brought to the table, the sector can be diversified, corporates benefit from positive marketing exposure and supported organisations can become more accountable.

For me, business and philanthropy are intertwined. I am lucky as my business interests facilitate my philanthropic ones but I do believe it's a circular equation. There's certainly satisfaction in knowing one's had a positive impact. If that has the potential to fuel increased philanthropy from the corporate sector, then that is reason enough.

Sydney is Our Canvas

This beautiful city has given us wonderful opportunities. We have witnessed and endeavoured to play our role in making Sydney a global, welcoming, connected city for over 47 years. From the iconic coast to the very heart, we have connected the world's leading artists to this city.

Kaldor Public Art Projects is a small not-for-profit organisation and is partnership driven; our projects are developed through collaborations both nationally and internationally. They have no fixed location or timing, which give us the flexibility to explore unusual public sites that bring contemporary art into the everyday. From our very first project—Christo and Jeanne-Claude for *Wrapped Coast*, Little Bay, 1969, that saw 2.5 km of Sydney's coastline wrapped in billowing fabric—our mission has been to open the eyes of the public to the wonders of art. To engage and educate young and old and bring communities together in celebration of how art enriches our society.

Wrapped Coast is an example of the perfect relationship between place and artistic vision. Christo and Jeanne-Claude knew of Sydney's world-renowned coastlines and this inspired them to propose the first Kaldor Public Art Project. They knew that their concept would have had few opportunities to be realised anywhere else. By achieving it here in Sydney, we not only helped create an extraordinary new experience for Sydneysiders, but we took our city to the world. This artwork became the iconic artists' first major artwork in the landscape and the first major contemporary public art project of its kind anywhere in the world. Documentation and drawings from this ground breaking project have been exhibited in international museums from the time of the work's creation and, in 2017, works from *Wrapped Coast* will be exhibited at the National Gallery in Washington.

Kaldor Public Art Projects are constantly searching for locations that will inspire leading artists to create new works that will make an impact locally and resonate internationally. From coastlines to islands, churches, brick kilns, wharves, gardens and modernist architecture, many of the projects we premiered in Sydney have gone on to be exhibited internationally. Richard Long's *A straight hundred mile walk in Australia*, 1977, was shown at Tate Britain on the occasion of Long's retrospective in 2009. Jeff Koons's lovable *Puppy*, built for our 10th project in 1995 at Circular Quay, now stands proudly in front of the Guggenheim in Bilbao in Spain. Gregor Schneider's *21 Beach Cells*, created first for Bondi Beach, was shown on Accadia Beach in Herzliya, Israel. More recently, John Baldessari's *Your Name In Lights*, created for the rooftop of the Australian Museum in 2011, was the highlight of the Holland Festival at the Stedelijk Museum later that year, and was chosen to launch the new Monnaie de Paris in 2014. It is the ongoing connections and intersections between Australia and the international art world that has always been our core mission—our contributing to Sydney as a global cultural city.

As the City is expanding and skyscrapers dominate our skyline, it is essential to preserve and create spaces for art where temporary projects can take place. Too many of our wharfs and warehouses are being converted, losing the heritage of the city and making empty space difficult to find. An example of this is the staging of two of our most

successful projects at Pier 2/3 at Walsh Bay. In 2013, we transformed the Pier to exhibit *13 Rooms*, first shown at Manchester Festival in 2011 and expanded and adapted for Sydney. The Rooms project has been shown worldwide: at Ruhrtriennale, Germany in 2012, Art Basel, Switzerland in 2014 and at the Long Museum, China in 2015.

We also welcomed Marina Abramović and her team to the Pier in 2015, transforming the vast spaces into a major exhibition and studio where she mentored both the public and emerging performance artists. Abramović has since used the concepts and architecture we created for her in her overseas presentations. The raw space of Pier 2/3 was a dramatic setting for these projects and so many other Biennales and exhibitions before them. I hope that the newly refurbished exhibition space in the Pier, although reduced in scale, will still remain versatile for future projects. While the Pier created a unique environment, a newer space with great possibilities is the enormous Cutaway at Barangaroo. It is wonderful to see a raw space like this dedicated to culture and events.

Working collaboratively has helped us to increase the impact of our projects on the city. In the past we have engaged with many of the cultural organisations across Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia, Sydney Festival, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, The Royal Botanic Garden, City of Sydney, Australian Museum and The Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, to name a few. Last year we worked with Carriageworks to realise a new experimental work by French choreographer, Xavier Le Roy, which premiered in Sydney and was later shown at Centre Pompidou, Paris in 2016. This contemporary art/dance project reflected the spirit of the 21st century, where the boundaries between art forms have fallen away and artists are freed from such restrictions. Carriageworks is a wonderful space of experimentation and creative invention and they show the future possibilities for art.

For several years now, art education has formed an integral part of each project we present. We partner and collaborate with all of Sydney's major universities and with primary and secondary schools across the state. We produce innovative education materials and resources that expand on the concepts of the projects both in print and online. We have also delivered many successful mentoring programs for arts graduates and our internship program has provided career skills to many young professionals who have gone on to successful careers.

Our hope is that education will help break down any perception that art is elitist. We celebrate sporting heroes yet cultural ones receive scant recognition. Today all our cultural organisations have well developed educational programs, whether it is the Opera House, the Art Gallery of NSW or Campbelltown Arts Centre. I hope in the future the thousands of children that participate in these programs will celebrate art as much anyone before them admired Australia's sporting heroes.

As we move towards our 50th anniversary of projects in 2019, we see a city that has evolved to be dramatically different from the time of our first project. Sydney has grown into a multi-cultural city, able to draw on the heritage of so many diverse cultures and new energies.

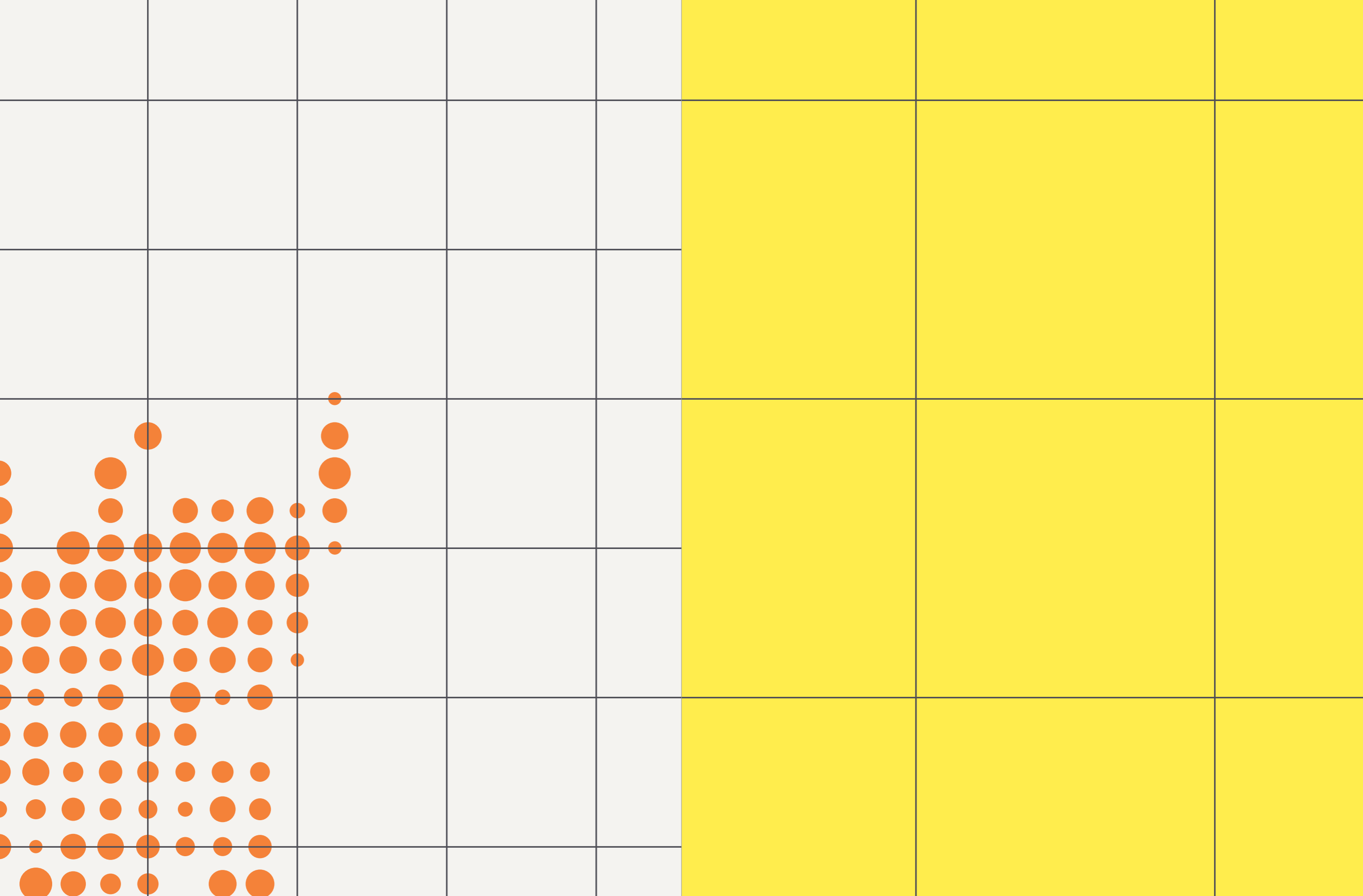
Opposite.
Kaldor Public Art
Project 01: Christo
and Jeanne-Claude
*Wrapped Coast—
One Million Square
Feet*, Little Bay,
Sydney, 1968–69. This
installation saw 2.5 km
of Sydney's coastline
wrapped in billowing
fabric. Photo credit:
Harry Shunk



To build our future, we must also embrace our past. Not only the recent 200 years, but the 40,000+ that preceded it, and celebrate Aboriginal culture as a central part of the unique portrait that will become the international image of Sydney. As a global city, this is what will make us unique.

We are blessed with a magnificent natural position, a great advantage. But this is not enough today. What makes a city global, great and connected is the calibre of the people who live and work there. Not the buildings. Art and culture play a vital role in making our lives fulfilled. If you look around us, to Singapore and Hong Kong, art and culture is emphasised to attract the best talent internationally. But we can also look locally and see the impact that MONA has had on the economy of Tasmania, transforming Hobart into a vibrant city and an international destination. We must play a dual role as a global city. We must face outwards to the world but also inwards to regional Australia, supporting it to be part of an expanding cultural landscape.

If we succeed in creating a city of great art and culture, it will become our heritage, forming the collective memory of future generations.



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HETTI PERKINS, JONATHAN JONES & STEPHEN GILCHRIST

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2. Perkins' resignation was reported in the Sydney Morning Herald on 26 September 2011. The Gallery's recently announced Sydney Modern Project—an initiative of Michael Brand who replaced Edmund Capon as Director in 2012—includes a proposed 1200 square metre gallery for showcasing and expanding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art collection.
3. Cara Pinchbeck is Curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.
4. Informal Australian saying meaning to receive recognition from to 'get (or be given) a guernsey' refers to being selected for a football team.
5. In August 2016 Bill Leak, cartoonist for The Australian newspaper, drew a controversial cartoon depicting an Aboriginal man with a can of beer in his hand and not able to remember his

son's name. Both Leak and *The Australian* were investigated by the Human Rights Commission.

6. Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative is one of Australia's longest running Aboriginal owned and operated art galleries. Established in Chippendale Sydney in 1987, Boomalli, a word derived from three different NSW language groups, means 'to strike; to make a mark'.

DR CAROLINE BUTLER-BOWDON AND IAN INNES

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GENEVIEVE CLAY-SMITH

1. Led by film veterans Gillian Armstrong, Jan Chapman, Margaret Pomeranz and Sandra Levy, with the support of industry luminaries Jane Campion, Toni Collette, Andrew Denton, Robyn Nevin, Metro Screen and others.

CLARE HOLLAND

1. FBi [Free Broadcast Inc] was established in 1995 where it was run out of a shop front on Pitt St Mall and ran a series of month-long test broadcasts for many years.

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JOHN KIRKMAN

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Penrith Performing & Visual Arts, Richard Petkovic, Powerhouse Youth Theatre, Riverside Theatre, STARTTS, Sweatshop Western Sydney Literacy Movement, Leo Tanoi, Maria Tran, Jacinta Tobin, Urban Theatre Projects, Varuna Writers' House and Westwords.

LYN LEWIS-SMITH

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Contributors

ABDUL ABDULLAH

Abdul Abdullah is a Sydney based artist who has exhibited in solo and group shows both nationally and internationally. A seventh generation Australian, he is best known for his work exploring the experiences of young Australian Muslims. In 2016 he was a finalist in Australia's 2016 Archibald Prize for portraiture and completed his Masters by Research (MFA) at UNSW Art and Design.

DR CAROLINE BUTLER-BOWDON

Dr Caroline Butler-Bowdon is Director, Strategy & Engagement at Sydney Living Museums. Spanning 20 years, her career has been dedicated to cultural leadership that connects diverse audiences to arts and heritage through a broad range of public engagement programs. She is the winner of multiple awards for projects including festivals, exhibitions and books exploring urban life, architecture and design across the centuries.

GENEVIEVE CLAY-SMITH

Genevieve Clay-Smith is a 28 year old filmmaker and social entrepreneur. She currently sits on the Arts and Culture Advisory Board Committee for the NSW Minister of the Arts and is an advocate for inclusion and diversity in the film industry. She is the 2015 NSW Young Australian of Year and 2014 100 Women of Influence Young Leader award recipient.

BRETT CLEGG

Brett Clegg is a Board Member of The Committee for Sydney and former Group Executive with News Corp Australia. Brett chaired the Committee for Sydney's Liveability Loveability Taskforce, and his passions outside of work include writing and the arts. He is a board member of the Sydney Dance Company and an ambassador for the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation.

LISA COLLEY

Lisa Colley is the Manager of Cultural Strategy at the City of Sydney. Prior to her appointment at the City she was Director of the Australian Government's Creative Industries Innovation Centre, where she co-authored *Valuing Australia's Creative Industries* and *Creative Business in Australia*. She is also a non-Executive Director of the Institute for Creative Health, which she co-founded in 2006.

MARK DAVY

Mark Davy founded Futurecity in 2007, a culture and placemaking consultancy and platform for the culture-driven development of our urban centres. Driven by a commitment to cultural excellence in our cities, his commercial and intellectual knowledge place him at the forefront of the debate about the changing role and purpose of modern cities. As Futurecity extends its impact globally, Mark is a regular speaker around the world, from thought leadership events such as TEDx and Smart City to industry workshops and urban development conferences.

DR BILL DUNBAR

Dr Bill Dunbar is Chief Executive Officer, Principal and Partner of SGS Economics and Planning. SGS is one of Australia's leading cultural advisory firms spanning asset and portfolio planning, prioritisation, mapping and business case development. Bill is an infrastructure policy and procurement expert with almost 20 years of executive level experience across Asia in the public and private sectors, including NSW Premier's Department. He has a PhD in English Literature and received a University Medal in Australian Literature from the University of Sydney. Torin Allen and Keeley Allen also contributed to this piece.

WESLEY ENOCH

Wesley Enoch is the Festival Artistic Director of Sydney Festival for the 2017–2019 Festivals. A Noonuccal Nuugi man from Stradbroke Island, he is a Playwright and Director and was previously Artistic Director of the Queensland Theatre Company (2010–2015). He has also been Artistic Director of Kooemba Jdarra in Brisbane, Resident Director of Sydney Theatre Company, Associate Artistic Director of Belvoir and a Trustee of the Sydney Opera House.

STEPHEN GILCHRIST

Belonging to the Yamatji people of the Inggarda language group of northwest Western Australia, Stephen Gilchrist is Associate Lecturer of Indigenous Art at the University of Sydney. He is a writer and curator who has worked with the Indigenous Australian collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the British Museum, the National Gallery of Victoria, and the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College. In 2016 Stephen curated 'Everywhen' at the Harvard Art Museums, Harvard University.

LISA HAVILAH

Lisa Havilah is the Director of Carriageworks. Since 2012 she has implemented an ambitious contemporary multi-arts program that is unrelenting in its support of artists. Under her leadership, Carriageworks has experienced extraordinary audience, artistic and commercial growth, resulting in it becoming the fastest growing cultural precinct in Australia. Previously, she was Director of Campbelltown Arts Centre, where she pioneered an internationally renowned contemporary arts program that brought together culturally and socially diverse communities. She has been named one of Sydney's top 100 influential people.

CLARE HOLLAND

Clare Holland is Managing Director of FBi Radio, Sydney's largest independent youth broadcaster. FBi has been pivotal in discovering and breaking new talent, supporting local industry and in building broad audiences for local music, arts and culture. Prior to this, Clare has worked for Sydney Festival, the Biennale of Sydney and Underbelly Arts. Over the last 10 years she has developed a reputation for identifying and cultivating emerging talent and championing new directions for contemporary culture in Sydney.

IAN INNES

Ian Innes is the Director of Heritage and Collections at Sydney Living Museums. Spanning 20 years working in conservation and sustainable management throughout Europe and Australia, Ian provides leadership in heritage management across Sydney Living Museums portfolio. Previously he has held Director and Curatorial positions at Centennial Parklands and the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney respectively.

PETER IVANY AM

Peter Ivany AM is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Ivany Investment Group. Previously the CEO of Hoyts Cinemas, Peter was behind the success that saw the company grow from a small chain in Australia to a global business. He is Chairman of the NIDA Foundation Trust, the Sydney Swans Foundation and the Advisory Council for the Sydney Film Festival and is an Honorary Life Governor for the Jewish Communal Appeal. Peter has been an MCA Board Member, on the President's Council of the Art Gallery of NSW, and a founding member of Destination NSW, formerly Events NSW.

JONATHAN JONES

Jonathan Jones belongs to the Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi nations of south-east Australia. With collaboration at the heart of his practice, Jonathan works across a range of mediums and practices. Jonathan has worked on a number of public art projects, most recently as the Kaldor Public Art Project 32 exhibiting artist with his solo show *barrangal dyara (skin and bones)*. Jonathan's works are held by various public and private collections throughout the world.

TIM JONES

Tim Jones is Head of Strategy at Futurecity. Tim is an experienced cultural strategist, city branding and placemaking expert, with expertise that spans the commercial and cultural sectors. A member of the prestigious Placemaking Leadership Council, Tim develops placemaking strategies, research and new business opportunities for Futurecity. Tim is a member of the London Artist Workspaces Taskforce and is an award winning entrepreneur with over 20 years' experience as a senior arts director, consultant, producer and lecturer.

JOHN KALDOR AO

John Kaldor AO is a dedicated collector, patron and supporter of contemporary art. His not-for-profit organisation Kaldor Public Art Projects has created 32 projects since the original Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *Wrapped Coast Little Bay, 1969*. He is currently on the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art, New York. He has been Commissioner for the Australian Pavilion at the 51st and 52nd Venice Biennales in 2005 and 2007 respectively.

JOHN KIRKMAN

John Kirkman is currently Executive Director, Information and Cultural Exchange. Previously he was CEO, Penrith Performing & Visual Arts; Director, Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest, inaugural Director, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre and Project Coordinator, Flying Fruit Fly Circus. He was a member of the NSW Premier's Arts Advisory Council (2003–2006) and has a Masters of Arts Administration from the College of Fine Art, University of NSW.

LYN LEWIS-SMITH

Lyn Lewis-Smith is Chief Executive Officer of Business Events Sydney and President of the Association of Australian Convention Bureaux. Lyn is passionate about promoting Australia's cultural offering to international visitors. She has published international papers in partnership with the University of Technology Sydney. In 2015, Successful Meetings magazine nominated Lyn in their '25 Most Influential People in the Meetings Industry' list and she was a finalist in the NSW Telstra Business Women's Awards.

MICHAEL LYNCH CBE AM

Michael Lynch CBE AM has recently stepped down as Interim Director of the National Art School in Darlinghurst. He was previously Chief Executive of West Kowloon Cultural District, Sydney Opera House, The Australia Council and London's South Bank Centre. He chairs Circa in Brisbane and the Sydney Community Foundation and lives in Sydney.

ELIZABETH ANN MACGREGOR OBE

Liz Ann Macgregor has held the position of Director at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia for over 17 years. She was previously Director of Ikon Gallery, one of the UK's leading contemporary art

galleries. She is a regular speaker and contributor on arts issues and was recently elected President of CIMAM., the International Council for Museums of Modern and Contemporary Art. She holds a Master of Arts, Art History, from Edinburgh University.

SARA MANSOUR

Sara Mansour is the Co-Founder, Director and Host of the Bankstown Poetry Slam, the first poetry slam in Western Sydney and the largest regular poetry event in Australia. She is currently a Paralegal at Allens and will be starting as a graduate lawyer at the firm next year, having recently graduated from a Bachelor of Laws at Western Sydney University.

JULIE MCCROSSIN

Julie McCrossin is a journalist and broadcaster who joined Gay Liberation at the University of Sydney in the early 70's. Julie was part of the huge demonstration outside Darlinghurst Police Station in 1978 to help bail out those arrested, and has herself been arrested many times. After 20 years as a broadcaster with ABC Radio National, ABC TV and Network Ten, she is now a freelance journalist and facilitator. Currently Julie writes for the NSW Law Society Journal and facilitates conferences and seminars nationally.

PATRICK MCINTYRE

Patrick McIntyre has over twenty years' experience in cultural management. Currently Executive Director at Sydney Theatre Company, he has also held management roles with The Australian Ballet, Sydney Film Festival, Sydney Opera House and Sydney Dance Company. He has also served on community boards, worked as a freelance music and entertainment writer, and presented at various industry events in Australia, the US and Hong Kong.

HETTI PERKINS

Hetti Perkins is a member of the Arrernte and Kalkadoon Aboriginal communities. She is a curator and writer and is currently the curatorial adviser to the City of Sydney for the Eora Journey's public art program. Up until 2011, Hetti held the position of Senior Curator of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales for 13 years. She has previously been a member of the Board for the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory.

MICHAEL ROSE AM

Michael is the chairman of the Committee for Sydney and of several other Government, arts and not-for-profit organisations including the Sydney Living Museums, ChildFund Alliance and the Institute for Global Development at UNSW. He is active in Indigenous Affairs being a member of the Referendum Council on Constitutional Recognition and Chairman of the Indigenous Engagement Task Force of the Business Council of Australia.

PROFESSOR ROSS HARLEY

Professor Ross Harley is the Dean of UNSW Art and Design as well as an award-winning artist, writer and educator. His video and sound work has been presented at the Pompidou Centre in Paris, New York MoMA, the Biennale of Sydney and at the Sydney Opera House. He is currently Deputy Director at the National Institute for Experimental Arts. He is a former editor of the journal *Art + Text*, as well as a number of anthologies.

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The Committee for Sydney is an independent think tank and champion for the whole of Sydney, providing thought leadership beyond the electoral cycle. Our aim is the enhancement of the economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions that make Sydney a competitive and liveable global city. Our members include major companies, universities, not-for-profits, strategically significant local governments and state government departments and key cultural, sporting and marketing bodies. We represent no one sector or interest but we share one passion: Sydney and the role it plays as Australia's global city. We seek to bring all parts of the city together so that Sydney can 'collaborate to compete' more effectively.

