

ACCESSIBLE ARTS ANNUAL REPORT 2010



OVERVIEW



The key to sustaining engagement in the arts for people with disability is to continually strengthen the capacity and understanding of inclusive arts and culture across the arts and disability sectors.

The Arts Activated National Conference in March was central to achieving this aim. International keynote speaker Jenny Sealey MBE, provoked discussion and debate on excellence in arts and disability and shared experience from the strength of disability arts in the United Kingdom.

Implementation of the *Rural and Regional Engagement Strategy for NSW* and presenting the Accessible Music Pathways forum stimulated commitment to inclusive practices from arts communities along side the efforts of Accessible Arts.

Additionally, enhancing networking opportunities through the establishment of the Supported Studios Network and the Creative Programs Group engaged the disability sector. Together with Accessing the Arts Group and the Audience Reference Group, a conduit for information, research and exchange of ideas was achieved directly from the voice of collective stakeholders.

It is equally vital to foster the artistic opportunities and talents of those with disability in order for inclusive culture to flourish. The second residency for an artist with a disability at Bundanon saw Daniel Kojta progress his practice in a world-renowned creative community.

AART.BOX, ConnectED, the *Beyond Technique* dance masterclass and the First Flight Crew are all examples aimed at developing and showcasing the creative abilities of people with disability.

Four very successful years of the Western Sydney Project grew to a close this year. A sound understanding of the arts and disability sector in the region was gained and gaps filled in the delivery of creative programs for people with disability. The project developed strategic partnerships that leaves behind a raft of sustainable programs for people with disability, committed to by major arts centres and networks in the region.

Our own capacity has been enhanced through the addition of a specific policy and research focus. The *Removing the Obstacles* report and the 2010 Survey of Inclusive Arts Program and Projects were completed. A range of submissions to policy in the sectors have been proposed including responses to the National Disability Strategy and to the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries.

Our suite of information services is reaching the broader community and being utilised by an increasing number of followers. This has been realised through the continued development of content on the Accessible Arts' website in a range of forms, including podcasts and video. A social media strategy to promote this information and interact with broader

audiences has greatly increased Accessible Arts' profile as a key player in the arts and disability sectors.

The financial position for Accessible Arts remains stable and we returned a surplus of \$19,290 for 2010. The addition of a Development Officer has enabled the organisation to apply for a range of grants more regularly, and to utilise a wider range of fundraising tools.

The past year has also brought considerable change to the team at Accessible Arts. Some of the staff responsible for the shape and progress of projects have moved on. Our deep thanks goes to them, as we welcome their replacements and the new skills brought to the organisation. The achievements in 2010 were made possible by the dedication of both outgoing and incoming staff and volunteers, and the commitment of Directors who give of their valuable time and expertise to guide the organisation.

Our thanks to ArtsNSW, Communities NSW and Ageing Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Services NSW for their continued support and to all those who worked in support of a more inclusive society for people with disability through partnerships and support of all our projects.

Maryanne Ireland, Chair
Sancha Donald, CEO

Front Cover:

Daniel Kojta, *Stand up for yourself*, (digital still), Bundanon Residency Gravity Intervention (V), Apr 10.

Opposite page, left:

Jenny Sealey MBE, Artistic Director Graeae Theatre Company, International Keynote Speaker, Arts Activated National Conference, Mar 10.

Opposite page, right:

Accessible Music Pathways Forum, Utzon Room, Sydney Opera House, Apr 10.



STRENGTHENING THE SECTOR

Arts Activated National Conference:

Held at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney on 25 and 26 March, the conference brought together 350 attendees over two days from across Australia, New Zealand and overseas. Delegate representation included 40 per cent from the arts sector, 40 per cent from the disability sector and 20 per cent from health, education and the community sector. With support from Australia Council for the Arts, Jenny Sealey MBE from the United Kingdom was engaged as the international keynote speaker. Sealey is the Artistic Advisor to *Unlimited*, creating a direct link to the arts and disability cultural program being planned for London 2012 Olympics. A program including 80 speakers, 40 breakout sessions, four performance showcases, and a pre-conference dance masterclass, reflected on the conference theme: Arts - Access - Excellence.

Accessible Music Pathways Forum:

Held at the Sydney Opera House and supported by the City of Sydney, this forum identified strategies to broaden accessible music pathways for young people with disability. Thirty musicians, artistic directors, program managers, music teachers and disability service coordinators attended from across NSW, including representatives from the University of NSW, TAFE NSW, Australian Youth Music Council, Music NSW, Opera Australia, Australia Council for the Arts and Arts NSW. Richard Gill OAM, Musical Director of Victorian Opera and Pat Rix, Artistic Director of South Australian ensemble Tutti addressed the forum and findings were published on the Accessible Arts' website.

Supporting Mentorships: Support and advice to artists and organisations about mentorships for emerging artists with disability delivered a range of outcomes. A community partnership grant from the Australia Council for the Arts was awarded to Tracie Sammut, an emerging actor with a disability, to realise a drama facilitator mentorship program with Australian Theatre for Young People. Jump National Mentoring Program identified and addressed barriers for young artists with disability to increase their participation in the project. Tom Bass Sculpture Studio School and Pine Street Creative Arts Centre developed and delivered a pilot scholarship program enabling five emerging visual artists with disability to receive tuition in sculpture at the studio.

Plugged In: A month long initiative of events in October, presented by arts centres across Western Sydney, highlighted strategic development supported by Accessible Arts' four year Western Sydney project. An increase in creative opportunities for people with disability in the region was celebrated by nine arts centres, presenting a total of 50 inclusive workshops, an exhibition and two tours. An event attracting 250 people at Riverside Theatres, Parramatta marked the launch of the initiative.

Skills Exchange Day: Major arts venues from across metropolitan Sydney came together to exchange skills, in response to developing audiences that include people with disability at museums and galleries in Western Sydney. Fifteen people from five arts centres, including Blacktown Arts Centre, Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest, Powerhouse

Museum Discovery Centre, Powerhouse Youth Theatre and Fairfield Museum & Gallery attended and a resource to assist disability awareness and access in relation to audio description was developed with support from the Art Gallery of NSW and Museum of Contemporary Art.

Don't DIS my ABILITY: Six small grants were devolved across NSW, on behalf of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Services for the annual Don't DIS my ABILITY campaign. Recipients included two regional projects, two projects in Western Sydney, and two independent artists, engaging in total over 50 participants to work with professional artists to develop skills and broaden creative and artistic ability. Grant recipients demonstrated sustainable goals, community partnerships and the delivery of quality arts programs.

Creative Programs Group:

Representatives from disability services in greater Sydney came together to initiate a forum for those involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of creative programs within day programs for people with disability. Quarterly meetings hosted by participating disability services, networking, guest speakers and information exchange were identified as priorities for the group.



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Access to Festivals: Developing and consolidating access initiatives with a number of Sydney's leading festivals continued with the 17th Biennale of Sydney presenting audio description and Auslan interpreted tours at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cockatoo Island and the Royal Botanical Gardens, in partnership with the City of Sydney's community access program.

The 2010 Sydney Film Festival program included thematic films of people with disability, audio description of two new Australian feature films and a number of open-captioned films, including 10 Australian short films as part of the Dendy Awards.

Sydney Writers' Festival provided Auslan interpretation for panel session, *The Big Reading*, where a number of authors spoke about and read from their own works.

A collaboration with Sculpture by the Sea included support by Waverley Council to produce an expanded program of audio described tours with tactile access to sculptures at Marks Park and an Easy English tour for children with intellectual disability.

Penrith Arts & Disability Network: A regional disability arts and culture network was formed with the Sylvanvale Foundation and Penrith City Council to engage the arts and disability sectors in community capacity building through increased cultural opportunities for people with disability in the Penrith local government area. A working group met

regularly throughout the year and 19 representatives from the arts, disability and the community sector participated in a cultural mapping workshop at Penrith City Council in July.

Education and Training: A total of 168 people received customised Disability Awareness and Access training in a number of centres throughout NSW. Disability Action Planning was included in Disability Awareness training delivered to 17 delegates at the 2010 Regional Conservatoriums Conference. Volunteers and staff at the Powerhouse Museum Discovery Centre in Castle Hill and a range of staff at Sculpture by the Sea, Sydney Film Festival and the Biennale of Sydney were trained. Staff from Hoyts, Village Cinemas, Event Cinemas (Greater Union Birch Carroll and Coyle), and Reading Cinemas in Melbourne and Sydney received training as part of the Cinema Access Implementation Plan. Ten access champions from the Australia Council for the Arts attended the Arts Activated National Conference in continuation of the access training project being employed by the Council.

Performing Arts Venues Access Pack: A regional tour of UK theatre production *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg* was supported by online information about how to improve accessibility at performing arts venues and promoted in partnership with touring production company Critical Stages, to increase attendance by audience members with disability.

Bundanon Residency: Media artist Daniel Kojta was the recipient of the second Accessible Arts Bundanon Residency, developed with Bundanon Trust to further opportunities for NSW artists with disability. Kojta's four-week residency led to a solo exhibition at the Shoalhaven City Art Centre and continued collaborations and networking opportunities with some of Australia's most innovative practitioners.

AART.BOXX: Nine individuals, including artist advocates, disability and arts workers, designers and writers, were selected to form the committee for AART.BOXX 2011, Accessible Arts' bi-annual national survey exhibition. Sub-committees in curatorial, public programs and marketing and media were formed, developing a framework for critique and capacity building as a vehicle for expanding dialogue between the visual arts and disability sectors. The resulting exhibition will be held at SCA Gallery, Sydney College of the Arts in October 2011.

ConnectED Arts: In partnership with ArtsNSW, Communities NSW, a pilot artist in schools program was developed targeting students and teachers within support units. Led by Western Sydney artists David Capra and Daniel Kojta, students and staff from Sydney Secondary College developed a short film over a 15-week residency, to increase the value of the arts in school communities and utilise professional arts support.

I have witnessed the First Flight Crew engage the wider community in ways that shape attitudes and behaviour. These are profound responses that lay the foundations to determine future possibilities.

JENNIFER MOXHAM, FAMILY MEMBER OF FIRST FLIGHT CREW PERFORMER



POLICY AND RESEARCH

Dance Masterclass: An inclusive dance masterclass and performance, *Beyond Technique | Searching for Authenticity*, was presented in partnership with Restless Dance Theatre at CarriageWorks, with assistance from AusDance. Thirty-five participants with and without disability from education, dance and disability sectors from across Australia and New Zealand attended over two days. An informal showing of the work was attended by approximately 80 people.

Western Sydney Open Program: A skills development workshop series was developed and presented at participating arts centres in Western Sydney. *Performance in the Gallery* workshops at Hawkesbury Regional Gallery and acting/puppetry workshops at the Q Theatre, Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre are now ongoing.

First Flight Crew: The inclusive eight-piece hip hop project continued, increasing representation of people with disability in the arts through live performance at nine events, including Platform 3 Hip Hop Festival at CarriageWorks in March, appearing on Channel 7 live from the Powerhouse Museum and being engaged by Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Services NSW to be the face of the Don't DIS my ABILITY campaign.

Inclusive Arts Program and Projects Survey: Complementing a pilot study completed in 2008, this research project identified key characteristics of arts programs and opportunities in NSW for people with disability. The survey aimed to highlight gaps that exist in creative opportunities for people with disability and any barriers that restrict choice of involvement in creative programs.

Rural & Regional Strategy: Based on findings from the *Speak Up: Arts & Disability Priorities from NSW* report, the *Rural and Regional Engagement Strategy 2010-12* was developed with four key areas: capacity building, recognition and communication, access and participation and sector connection. A forum to consult with Regional Arts NSW and its network of Regional Arts Development Boards was hosted in July to initiate collaborative implementation of the strategy throughout rural and regional NSW.

Removing the Obstacles: A collaborative research report involving Arts Access Australia, UTS Shopfront and the Arts Law Centre of Australia, reviewed legislation and issues related to accessibility at arts centres located in heritage buildings. The report was made available on the Accessible Arts' website and includes an examination of *Disability (Access to Premises – Building) Standards 2010* and how legislation and policy impact upon the provision of access for people with disability at arts venues located in heritage sites.

Submissions: Eleven responses to a range of national and state policies were submitted including a response to the National Standards of Australian Museums and Galleries in April and a response to the State government's ten year plan for disability services, *Stronger Together*, in July.

Page 4, from left:

Auslan tour, 17th Biennale of Sydney (2010), Lord Mayor Community Access Day, Cockatoo Island, June 10.

Scholarship recipient Gloria Albornoz (right) with tutor Wendy Black, Tom Bass Sculpture Studio School, Erskineville NSW.

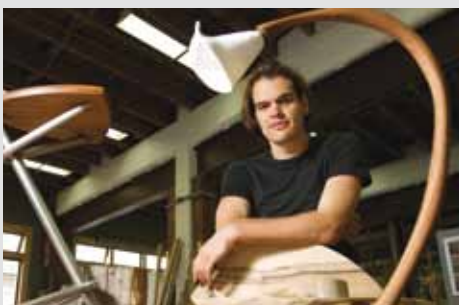
Page 5, above:

First Flight Crew, Don't DIS my ABILITY campaign, Ageing, Disability & Home Care, Department of Family & Community Services. Photo courtesy Paul Henderson-Kelly.



The arts community as a whole benefits greatly from opportunities offered by Accessible Arts, placing an emphasis on inclusion and community rather than 'disability'.

DEAN WATSON, CUSTOMER RELATIONS MANAGER, AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



PROVIDING A SERVICE

Website: Unique visitors to the website increased by 33 per cent from the previous year and pages viewed increased by six per cent. An increase in content developed across the site included new sections for the Arts Activated National Conference, the Regional & Rural portal and the Performing Arts Venues Access Pack resource. A total of 312 news items and event listings were published, documenting and promoting developments, events and opportunities, often with no other online presence.

Social media included increased promotion of web content through feeds to Facebook with 231 fans, and 1049 followers on Twitter who received 544 tweets and re-tweeted on average 21 per cent of Accessible Arts' content.

Twenty four film clips were uploaded to YouTube, including keynote presentations from Jenny Sealey MBE, international speaker at Arts Activated National Conference. The *Beyond Technique | Searching for Authenticity* film clip was the most watched, receiving 650 views since upload in June.

The newsletter became bimonthly with a subscriber base of 1800 and an audio version for each edition produced by David Doyle and distributed as a podcast available on iTunes.

Public Relations: The Arts Activated National Conference received national coverage on ABC TV, with arts reporter Anne-Marie Nicholson profiling *Beyond Technique | Searching for Authenticity*, in a story on the 7.30 pm weekday news. A major feature article about conference speaker and Tasmanian furniture designer with a disability, Duncan Meerding, made the arts and lifestyle section of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. This article was republished in *The Age* (Melbourne) and *The West Australian*. Coverage of other speakers and activities was also published in local newspapers and peak disability organisation newsletters.

Partnerships with festivals and major cultural events involved access and disability specific marketing support including advocacy for inclusion of universal access symbols in marketing materials, direct marketing to disability-specific target audiences, and pitching mainstream media stories for increased media representation of people with disability in the arts.

Increased contact with Regional Arts Development Boards and a partnership with Critical Stages, touring production company enhanced the delivery of the Accessible Arts' Performing Arts Venues Resource Pack to regional venues across the state.

International Day of People with Disability presented opportunity for media coverage both in the regions and in the Sydney metropolitan area. Local papers covered projects in Fairfield, Kirrawee, Eurobodella Shire and Byron Shire.

Above (top):

Dave Carter, filmmaker, Sydney Film Festival 2010, Dendy Awards finalist.

Above:

Duncan Meerding, Hobart based artist presented Arts Activated National Conference paper, *Practising as a Legally Blind Furniture Designer*, Mar 10.

Opposite page (left):

Performance in the Gallery, Western Sydney Open Program, Hawkesbury Regional Gallery, Nov 10.

Opposite page (right):

Embodied, dis/assemble dance project, artistic director Tim Podesta, Albury NSW.

OUR PEOPLE



BOARD

Chair: **Maryanne Ireland** | Company Secretary: **Joshua Dowse** | Treasurer: **Elena Gildina** | **Suzanne Becker** | **Lisa Havillah** | **Dougie Herd** | **Sarah-Jane Rennie** | **Chrissie Tucker**

STAFF

Chief Executive Officer: **Sancha Donald** | Accounts and Administration Manager: **Mukesh Bhardwaj** | Access Coordinator: **Sophie Clausen** (from March 10) | Access to Festivals Coordinator: **Anneke Barnes** (to March 10) | Arts Development Officers: **Josie Cavallaro**, **Becky Chapman** (to April 10), **Sarah-Vyne Vassallo** (from June 10) | Creative Programs Coordinator: **Alison Richardson** (to Dec 10) | Communications Coordinator: **Jacqui O'Reilly** | Development Manager: **Naomi Bower** (to April 10) | **Elaine Austin** (from Aug 10) | Education & Training Manager: **Jane Pollard** (to Sept 10) | Media and Marketing Coordinator: **David Finnigan** (to Jan 10) | **Tracylee Arestides** (from Feb 10) | Policy & Research Officer: **Lee Sinclair** (from Mar 10) | Projects Officer: **Jacqueline Drinkall** (from July 10) | Strategic Initiatives/Web Coordinator: **Jennifer Teo** | Training Coordinator: **Amanda Tink** (from Nov 10)

VOLUNTEERS

A dedicated team of volunteers contributed to integral aspects of work achieved throughout 2010. Volunteer photographer Gemma Deavin contributed to photographic documentation of Accessible Arts' projects. Janet Diane, Carolyne Gilbert, Peter Muller, Peter Nomchong, Liz Pemberton, Joy Stone and Gunta Vucina all generously worked on a weekly basis in a variety of roles.

COMMITTEES

AART.BOX 2011 | Accessing the Arts Group (ATAG) | Audience Reference Group | Creative Programs Group | Supported Studio Group

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

ArtsNSW, Department of Communities NSW | Ageing, Disability & Home Care, Department of Human Services NSW | Department of Community Services | Australia Council for the Arts | Perpetual Trustee | Lucy Giumelli Saini Trust | Motor Accident Authority | City of Sydney | Department of Family, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs | Waverley Council | Law & Justice Foundation | The JB Seed Arts Grant Fund



Communities
arts nsw



Human Services
Ageing, Disability & Home Care



To view the 2010 financial statements go to the website or request a copy by phone or email.



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