

Regional Arts Fund : a national focus

arts creating stronger regions



STRATA BY CAROL SEEGER



FIRST RAINS BY SUE HUTTON



THE FISH BY SUE HUTTON



An Australian Government Initiative



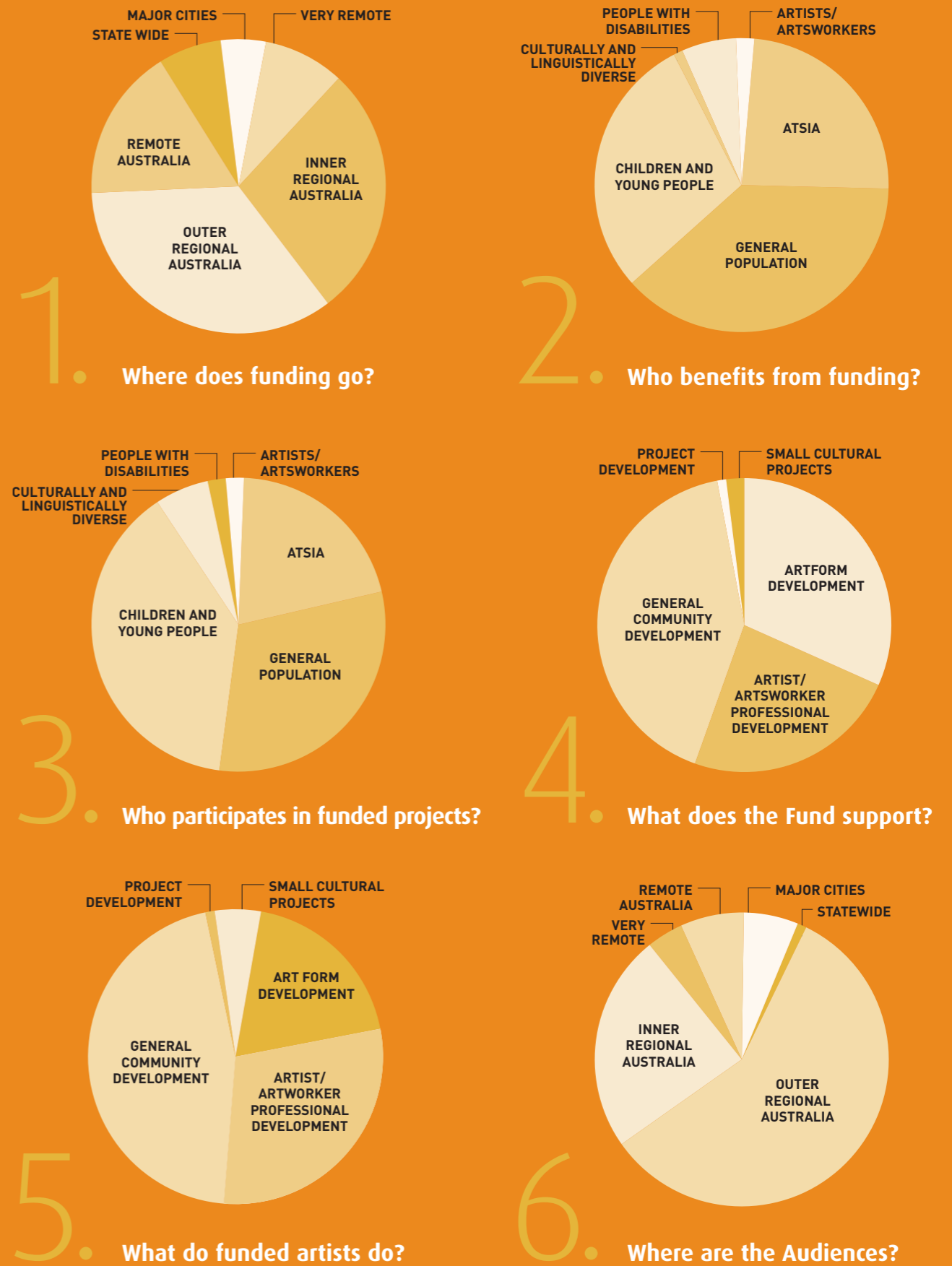
REGIONAL
arts
AUSTRALIA

Who receives Regional Arts Fund support?

For every dollar of the Fund, another \$3.30 is attracted in project earnings and cash and other support from state and local government, the corporate sector, donations and volunteers. This means that some \$11.75 million is applied to regional arts programs and projects each year. The Regional Arts Fund is in place until June 2008 and provides \$2.5 million per annum in public programs. Each year, funding enables projects that engage around 4,000 artists, 30,000 participants and audiences of 700,000 people. Quick Response Grants support a further 2,000 artists whose projects engage 17,000 participants and audiences of 870,000 people each year.*



* The graphs are drawn from Regional Arts Australia's Grant Management System which records details of all project funding from the Regional Arts Fund. Data represented is for the period 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2006. Geographic definitions are in accordance with the Accessibility Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) classification. ARIA defines five categories of remoteness based on road distances to service centres. Additional information on ARIA may be found at www.gisca.adelaide.edu.au





CHILDERS STREETSCAPE
INSTALLATION
ARTIST: ALICE MCLAUGHLIN

Taking community development to the street

The Childers Streetscape project in Queensland, about 300km north of Brisbane, is typical of many projects across Australia.

Residents worked with five project artists to create a range of work that has changed the face of Childers and created a cultural attraction that celebrates strong local themes. Sixty mosaic "stepping stones" and five paving murals in the main street celebrate local environment, history, contemporary life and popular stories. The unique streetscape encourages visitors to spend more time in the main street and explore local cafes, business and history: a case of art being good for business and community identity. The project was made possible by a funding partnership between the Regional Arts Fund (through Queensland Arts Council), the State Regional Arts Development Fund, Isis Council and local business.

Community Development projects received 45% of Regional Arts Fund resources in the past two years.

A regional approach to Indigenous arts

Typical of Fund support for Indigenous arts has been Country Arts WA's commitment to 12 communities in remote Ngaanyatjarra Lands.

A Strategic Regional Partnership with the local Indigenous Council and creation of a specialist staff position have helped the region's artists achieve new success since 2004 with: formation of Ngaanyatjarra Regional Arts as a development body; opening of two new art centres; increased funding for art centres; enterprise growth through Tjanpi Aboriginal Baskets; training; music initiatives; enhanced industry relationships; and extension of Shows on the Go and Writers on the Road touring programs to the region. All have brought new employment and economic power to people whose remoteness and special circumstance provide few other opportunities. Of 2,500 people in the region, over 1,800 are estimated to benefit from this outstanding initiative.



FREIDA LANE FROM PAPULANKUTJA COMMUNITY
TJANPI ABORIGINAL BASKETS PHOTO: THISBE PURICH

Indigenous projects received 23% of the Fund 2004-2006. Indigenous people represented 18% of the audience for all funded projects, 15% of all artists employed.

The arts: making a difference to communities and lives

From circus skills to life skills



3wAyXchange MELBOURNE 2006
PHOTO: COURTESY OF FLYING FRUIT FLY CIRCUS

A sell-out at the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games Cultural Festival were Brewarrina Youth Circus, Flying Fruit Fly Circus and South Africa's Zip Zap Circus, in a show called 3wAyXchange.

Behind it was a project from Brewarrina, a small town west of Bourke in NSW. With Regional Arts Fund support since 2005 and assistance from Arts NSW, Flying Fruit Fly Circus worked to develop Brewarrina Youth Circus. Partnership with the Brewarrina Council and Brewarrina Central School set out to increase school attendance with a circus skills development program and retain young people through creating new employment. The project has been a shining success, with school attendances up, engagement of young trainees, support to develop a business plan for the ensemble's future and – of course – acclaim at the Games. An extension of the project took the Circus on tour and cemented the local role of the arts in encouraging cooperation, self discipline and self-confidence.

30% of the Fund was committed to children and youth 2004-2006. Remote areas received 27% of the Fund. Of artists employed 16% were in remote areas, 22% worked on youth projects.

Arts partnership in better health

Terra-art brought Country Arts SA and the Regional Arts Fund together with a regional health service, a professional artist and a number of funding bodies including the Australia Council to target issues influencing youth suicide: self-esteem, mental health, social isolation, substance abuse and so on.

The project, based at Millicent in SA's south-east, saw the establishment of Terra-art studio as a regular place for participants to meet and work with art mentors. From this space – one that young people regarded as their own – flowed prints, posters and ultimately a highly acclaimed audio-visual presentation; and with these artistic outcomes came the self-confidence, social skills, arts experience and commitments to training and further education so necessary for viable lives. As one young person put it:

"In terms of saying what does this art project do for young people, sometimes it is just the fact that they are still alive. That's the indicator."



IMAGE FROM RED TAPE, TERRA-ART 2006

Community Development projects employed 53% of artists supported by the Fund 2004-2006.

The arts: making a difference to communities and lives



MICHAEL WATTS
PHOTO: COURTESY OF MALHOUSE THEATRE

Art and artists' development

Michael Watts, a Central Australian poet and playwright based in Alice Springs, has received consistent support through the Regional Arts Fund and Arts NT for his professional development.

This has helped to put Michael on the national stage (most recently in the acclaimed Malthouse Theatre season of his new play *Not Like Beckett*) and achieve artistic excellence and new career and employment opportunities. Separate Fund support for Plexus Productions in presenting Michael's first play *Train Dancing* (2001) played a key role in the growth of the performing arts in Alice Springs and the permanent establishment of Red Dust Theatre company in Alice Springs. That production was restaged for the 2002 Adelaide Festival, again with Fund support. Michael and Red Dust Theatre's success have made a crucial contribution to the performing arts in Alice Springs.

Artist/Artworker Professional Development received 23% of funding 2004-2006. Artform Development received 32%.

Increasing capacity

A multi-year commitment by Regional Arts Victoria and the Fund has forged new partnerships with local government across regional Victoria to assist communities in developing and implementing arts programs that will have long term strategic impacts.

The Regional Cultural Partnership Program has created five new Regional Arts Development Officer positions to focus on increasing access to arts and cultural infrastructure, developing networks and working with organisations to develop projects. The program has targeted the creation of partnerships within local government areas where there is little existing support for cultural development and where significant positive outcomes could be achieved for remote and Indigenous communities. In addition to Fund support, the program is supported by the Victorian State Government through Arts Victoria and the Community Support Fund and has secured matching financial contributions from 12 regionally based local government and cultural organisations.



FIG TREE COMMUNITY HOUSE OPEN DAY, LORNE WEARABLE ART PHOTO: NICHOLAS SOAMES

Creating access

Launceston's Arts ROAR is a nationally significant model organisation that is run and determined by people with intellectual and physical disabilities.

Arts ROAR generates highly visible, quality arts projects by people with a disability. Established in 2002 Arts ROAR has been involved in no less than twenty six arts projects, ranging from film production to joint and solo exhibitions by members. Funded by the Regional Arts Fund through Tasmanian Regional Arts, and by a host of project partners including Launceston City Council, the Tasmanian Government and the Australia Council, the organisation highlights both the creative capacity of the artists and the day-to-day issues they face. Arts ROAR is managed by a committee of participants and successfully challenges public perceptions of disability.



TASMANIAN TIGER ARTIST: HEATHER STYLES
ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 400X400 (DETAIL)

Projects for people with disability attracted 6% of the Fund 2004-2006. Many more projects targeted at the general population (31% of the Fund) include elements addressing this group's needs.

Regional Arts Fund special initiatives

Creative Volunteering is an innovative program that provides accredited training to regional arts sector volunteers. Managed by Regional Arts Australia on behalf of the Australian Government and delivered by member agencies in partnership with registered training organisations, Creative Volunteering was initiated in 2002. Since that time, over 5,500 volunteers have attended over 600 workshops in 179 locations throughout Australia. For more information on the training program and how to participate see www.regionalarts.com.au.

Regional Arts Australia produces a range of reports from time to time. Two publications currently available are: *Heartwork: great arts stories from regional Australia* (2004, co-published with the Australia Council with the support of the Australian Government through the Regional Arts Fund), which profiles exemplary regional arts projects; and *National Directions: Regional Arts* (2005) which outlines Regional Arts Australia's priorities and strategies for regional arts development. Contact your



SOUND CIRCLES WORKSHOP, ARTS ACCESS THE PACIFIC EDGE
PHOTO: GAIL CIAVARELLA, ARABELLAFOTOZ

state or territory Regional Arts Australia member agency for copies of these publications.

Regional Arts Australia National Conference

The Regional Arts Fund provides support to the biennial Regional Arts Australia National Conference. The 2006 National Conference – *Pacific Edge*, held in Mackay Queensland, in September 2006 – attracted over 700 delegates from around Australia. The next National Conference, *art at the heart*, will be held in Alice Springs during September 2008.

The Regional Arts Fund in Australia

Contacts

South Australia

Country Arts SA
2 McLaren Parade
PORT ADELAIDE SA 5015
P 08 8444 0400
F 08 8444 0499
E email@countryarts.org.au
www.countryarts.org.au

New South Wales

Regional Arts NSW
Pier 5, Hickson Road
Millers Point NSW 2000
P 02 9247 8577
F 02 9247 7829
E info@regionalartsnsw.com.au
www.regionalartsnsw.com.au

Victoria

Regional Arts Victoria
PO Box 600
PORT MELBOURNE, VIC 3207
P 03 9644 1800
F 03 9646 3832
toll free 1800 819 803
E enquiry@rav.net.au
www.rav.net.au

Australian Capital Territory

ArtsACT
Chief Minister's Department
GPO Box 158
Canberra City ACT 2601
P 02 6207 2384
F 02 6207 2386
E artsACT@act.gov.au
www.arts.act.gov.au

Northern Territory

Arts NT
Department of Natural Resources,
Environment
and the Arts
GPO Box 1774
Darwin NT 0801
P 08 8999 8981
F 08 8999 8949
toll free: 1800 678 237
E arts.office@nt.gov.au
www.arts.nt.gov.au

Queensland

Queensland Arts Council
GPO Box 376
BRISBANE QLD 4001
P 07 3846 7500
F 07 3846 7744
toll free: 1800 177 789
E info@qac.org.au
www.qac.org.au

Tasmania

Tasmanian Regional Arts
PO Box 172
LATROBE Tas 7307
P 03 6426 2344
F 03 6426 2889
E info@tasregionalarts.org.au
www.tasregionalarts.org.au

Western Australia

Country Arts WA
PO Box 7012, Cloisters Square
PERTH WA 6850
P 08 9481 0077
F 08 9481 0477
toll free: 1800 811 883
WA country only
E info@countryartswa.asn.au
www.countryartswa.asn.au

Regional Arts Australia

2 McLaren Parade
Port Adelaide SA 5015
P 08 8444 0424
F 08 8447 8496
E info@regionalarts.com.au
www.regionalarts.com.au



PHOENIX FIRE TRIBE, *THE PACIFIC EDGE*
PHOTO: GAIL CIAVARELLA, ARABELLAFOTOZ

other regional programs

administered by the Department of Communications,
Information Technology and the Arts

Festivals Australia

www.dcita.gov.au/festivals

Festivals Australia Regional Residencies

www.dcita.gov.au/festivals_residencies

Visions of Australia

www.dcita.gov.au/visions

Playing Australia

www.dcita.gov.au/arts/arts/playing_AustraliaContemporary

Contemporary Music Touring program

www.dcita.gov.au/arts/arts/touring_program