



# Annual Report 2016



Diversity Arts  
Australia

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgement of Country</b>	3
<b>About Diversity Arts Australia</b>	3
History	4
Our Vision	5
Our Ambition	5
Our Purpose	5
Our Values	5
<b>From the Chair</b>	6
<b>From the Executive Director</b>	7
<b>New Beginnings</b>	8
New Executive Director	8
Move to Casula Powerhouse	8
Consultations on New Brand	9
Changes to the Board	9
<b>Diversity Arts Australia National Engagement Program</b>	10
Making Art on Equal Terms	10
There's No Place Like Home	10
Cultural Diversity and Disability in Arts	11
Futuring and Arts Front	11
Arts Front and Decolonising the Arts	12
Final Gathering: Beyond Tick Boxes	12
<b>Kultour-Deakin University Research Project National Research</b>	13
The Research Project Team	13
<b>Representation</b>	13
<b>From the Treasurer</b>	14
<b>Board of Management</b>	15
Prof James Arvanitakis	15
Pilar Kasat	15
Joanne Pratt	15
Louise Dunn	15
Seb Chan	15
Jade Lillie	15
Suellen Maunder	15
Magdalena Moreno	15
Gambhir Watts OAM	15
<b>Staff</b>	16
Contractors	16
Student Placements and volunteers	16
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	16
Company Members	16
Partnerships, including presenting partners	16
Funding Organisations	16
Research Partner: Deakin University, Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation	16
Organisational Sponsor	16

## Acknowledgement of Country

Diversity Arts Australia acknowledges the traditional owners of Australia from over 500 Indigenous nations. We pay respect to their Elders past and present.

Diversity Arts Australia's national office is in Casula in Liverpool City Council, and we acknowledge the Cabrogal Clan of the Darug Nation as the traditional custodians of this area. We acknowledge that this land was also accessed by peoples of the Dhurawal and Dharuk Nations.

## About Diversity Arts Australia

Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) is Australia's key organisation promoting cultural diversity in the arts, across all creative forms in Australia.

DARTS supports artists, audiences and organisations to benefit from the enormous cultural opportunities available in our cosmopolitan nation. We provide evidence about the value of diversity in the arts. We measure cultural diversity and concentrate our programs on breaking down barriers in our creative industries. One powerful way to do this is to encourage connection and collaboration, and we also act as a broker between artists, industry, educators and governments.

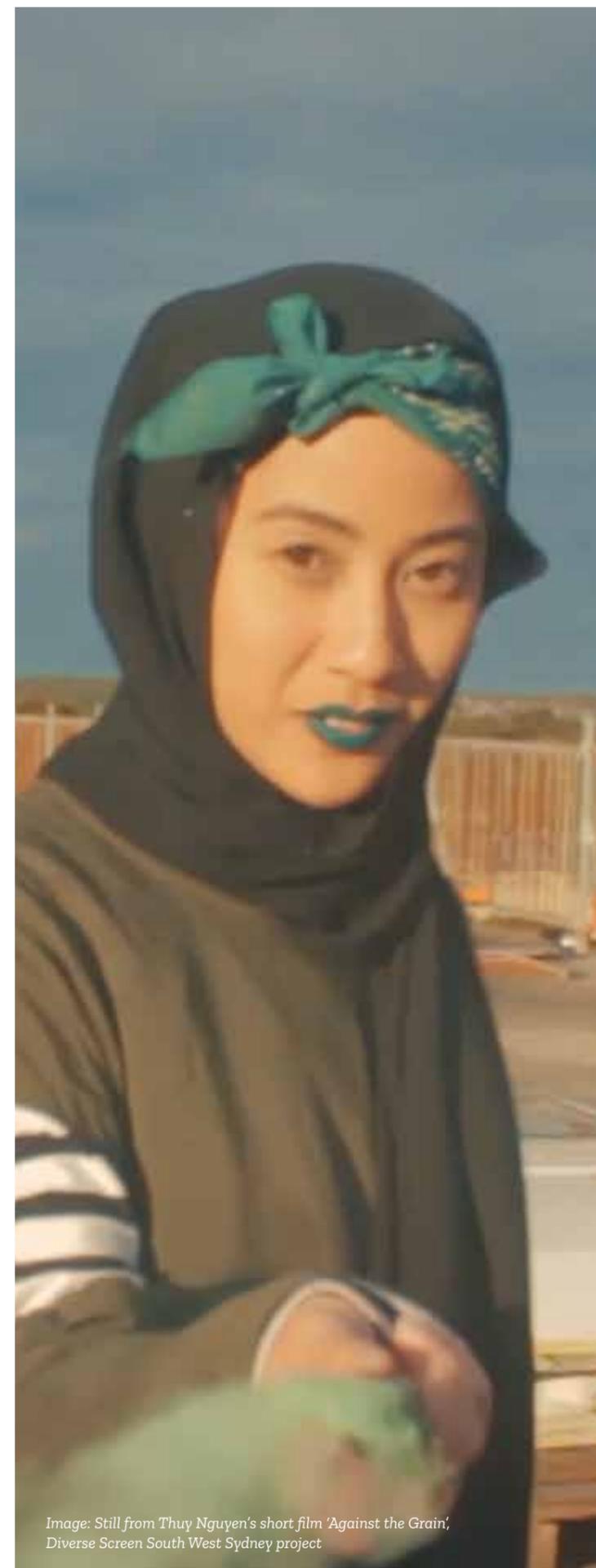


Image: Still from Thuy Nguyen's short film 'Against the Grain', Diverse Screen South West Sydney project

## History

Diversity Arts Australia began life as Kultour, established in 2001 as an Australia Council for the Arts initiative. The aim was to increase the profile of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) artists by touring them nationally, while building audiences for their work. Touring was Kultour's key mechanism for effecting change in Australian culture, but it was resource-intensive and reduced the capacity for the organisation to take on an advocacy and consulting role. By 2009 Kultour had reached a turning point. Ground level programming had created strong support for diverse artists within the national presenting sector, enabling Kultour to shift and sharpen its focus to higher-level strategic support and advocacy.

In 2012, Kultour/Diversity Arts secured its first investor from the philanthropic sector. The Scanlon Foundation provided significant support for Kultour as a national advocate for cultural diversity in the arts. With this support, Kultour partnered with Deakin University Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation (CCG) to research national evidence measures to monitor cultural diversity in the arts. The measures provide a platform for a new national framework for monitoring sector health in the arts in Australia.

Between 2013 and 2015, Kultour hosted a series of 'Gatherings' in most states and territories. These engaged artists, curators, presenters, producers and policymakers across the sector to identify and inform of critical issues and barriers for culturally diverse artists and for diverse arts practice. In 2015 these Gatherings used a new model which involved contracting Agents (locally engaged arts workers) to facilitate sessions, ensuring deeper and more sustainable engagement. Key issues identified included a lack of access to resources, limited networks and a dearth of projects that allowed opportunities for collaboration.

In response to the arts' sector's changing needs and the findings from the Gatherings, the company embarked on a major restructure from 2014 to 2015. As part of this new structure, in 2016 the head office was moved from Melbourne's CBD to the Casula Powerhouse in Western Sydney, in the centre of a community where some of the most cutting-edge culturally diverse work is evolving in Australia. The relocation to Sydney also positions the organisation closer to the nation's capital and has allowed the organisation to develop a new Sydney-based leadership role and a new operational model with agents across Australia hosted by state and territory organisations. Negotiations with funding bodies secured variations to funding agreements and a new director, Lena Nahlous, was appointed in 2016 after a rigorous recruitment process.

The organisation embarked on rebranding with a fresh strategic direction and in December 2016 adopted a new name: Diversity Arts Australia. Three new board members were appointed and Professor James Arvanitakis, Dean of the Graduate Research School, Office of Learning and Teaching, at Western Sydney University, accepted the role of DARTS's new chairman of the board.

Throughout its 15-year history, Diversity Arts Australia has adapted to respond to the changing needs of the sector. It has transformed from an informal network to an independent not-for-profit organisation limited by guarantee with partner organisations in all states and territories. It has also transitioned from a touring organisation to a national advocacy body, service provider and facilitator of programs responding to sector needs. Diversity Arts Australia is recognised by the Australian Government as a leading authority on cultural diversity in the arts in Australia. DARTS enters the current strategic planning period with new energy and purpose and a renewed commitment to the exciting challenge of creating an arts sector that reflects the true cultural diversity of Australia.

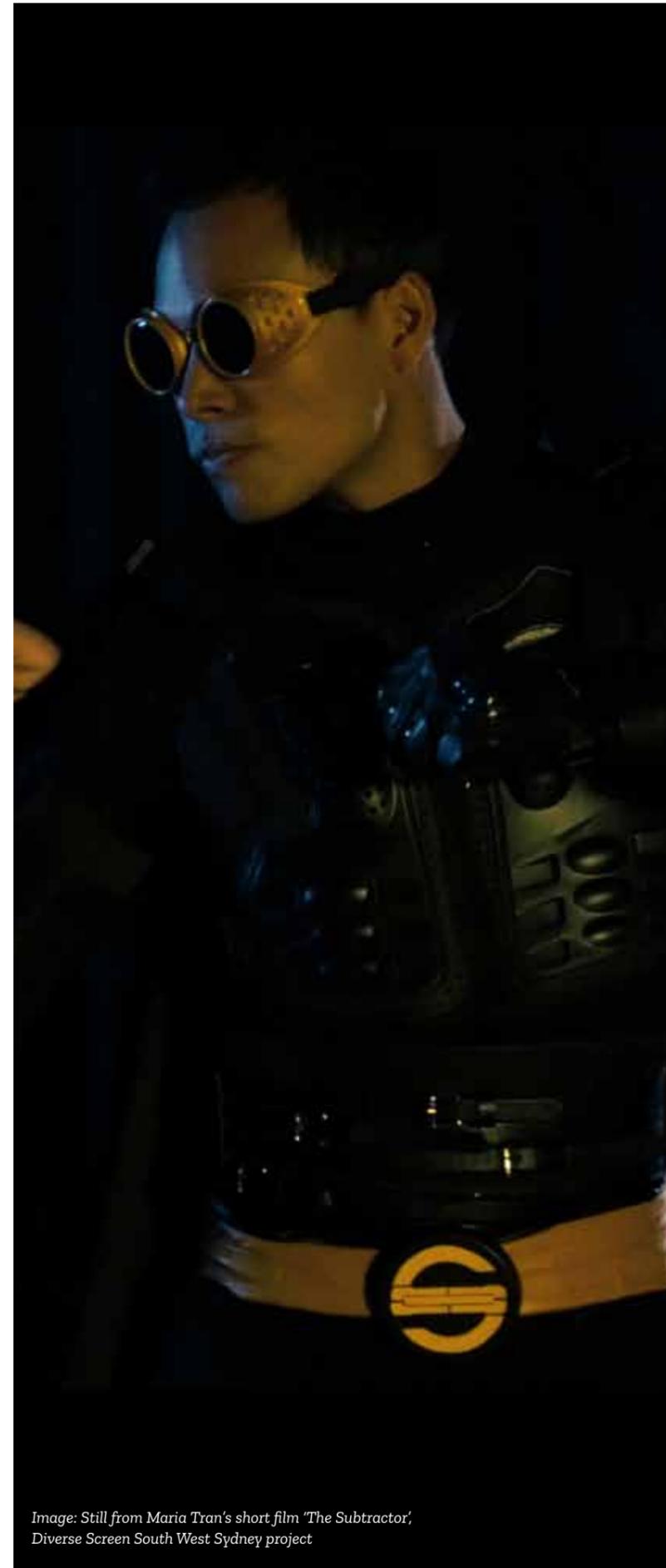


Image: Still from Maria Tran's short film 'The Subtractor', Diverse Screen South West Sydney project

### Our Vision

Diversity Arts Australia will be Australia's key organisation working to create an arts and cultural sector that reflects Australia's true cultural diversity.

### Our Ambition

Australian Arts that Look like Australia

### Our Purpose

Diversity Arts Australia exists to advance cultural diversity within Australia's creative sector.

We do this through: undertaking research and policy development; advocating for change; providing support to the sector via brokerage and professional services; undertaking strategic projects to promote diversity; and, connecting artists and organisations through strategic partnerships and alliances.

### Our Values

Our Values underpin our work.

1. Inclusion Cultural diversity is a fundamental human right
2. Diversity Diversity strengthens and invigorates arts practice
3. Collaboration Collaborations with artists and the sector create a robust and sustainable arts industry
4. Participation Critical engagement with artists and the arts industry affects transformation
5. Empowerment/ Self-Determination We are guided by, and provide platforms for diverse artists and organisations

## From the Chair



It is with great pleasure that as the Chair of the Diversity Arts Board, I present the 2016-17 Annual Report to members and supporters. It has certainly been an eventful and successful year for Diversity Arts Australia.

As a new Chair/Executive Director team, Lena Nahlous and I have seen a number of significant changes within the organisation. Along with a new name – we moved from Kultour to Diversity Arts Australia, a reinvigorated Board oversaw the introduction of a new logo and a review of our strategic goals. In so doing, as Diversity Arts Australia, we are slowly establishing ourselves as a representative body that lobbies, educates and promotes the need for a diversity in the arts that truly reflects the diversity of Australian society.

At a time of conflict, terrorism, displacements and increasing divisions across the world, the arts have never been more important. The arts act as a mirror to challenge us, remind us that we can strive for a more just and peaceful society, and promote bridges across political, social and cultural divides. The arts are a universal language that must be supported and promoted – and it is for this reason that they must reflect our complex diversity. If they fail to do so, then the ability to achieve our potential will never be met.

This year at Diversity Arts Australia, we have begun a new research agenda, prepared an audit tool and reviewed the history of diversity arts policy in Australia. We have connected with a number of new supporters, establish new alliances as well as attended dozens of conferences, workshops and meetings to represent both the organisation and the need for diversity in the arts. In so doing, we continue to secure the future of the organisation.

To achieve a successful year requires the efforts of many people – too numerous to mention here. I would especially like to acknowledge the efforts of our Executive Director, Lena Nahlous and our core staff and contractors Kevin Bathman, Gary Paramanathan, Monique Perrin and Rani Haywood. A particular acknowledgement to our intern Nickin Alexander.

Thank you to our many supporters, particularly Liverpool City Council and Casula Powerhouse who host us.

On a personal note, thank you to the other Board members who have shown passion, commitment and have been very generous with their time and goodwill. And a particular thank you to outgoing Chair Louise Dunn for her significant work during this transitional time and for her continued support.

On behalf of the Board and the Executive Director we would also like to take this opportunity to thank those Board members who have stepped down: former Chair Caroline Stacey, Bong Ramilo and Jami Bladel. Your contributions have been invaluable.

We are aiming for an even more dynamic 2017-18 as we continue to strive for a more diverse and representative arts sector.

**Prof. James Arvanitakis, PhD**

## From the Executive Director



Our new sponsors, Liverpool City Council provided us with a home at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre. It has been a pleasure to be based at the dynamic Casula Powerhouse, and to work alongside a talented and generous team who have welcomed us like family.

Thank you to our passionate and industrious staff and contractors, in particular, Gary Paramanathan, Bethany Falzon, Paula Abood, Monique Choy and Rani Haywood. And to our invaluable intern Nickin Alexander. A special thank you to Kevin Bathman who invested so much energy and time in the latter half of 2016.

I would also like to acknowledge Kevin Nelson, our accountant, who has been the longest-serving team member of Diversity Arts Australia, and has been instrumental in passing on corporate knowledge to the team and Board. Thank you to all the artists, arts workers and organisations who worked with us, participated in and provided feedback so we could create a plan for the future informed by you. And thank you so much to our Board, and particularly our outgoing Chair Louise Dunn for all of her hard work and commitment and her steady leadership through a period of huge transition. And to our new Chair James Arvanitakis, for bringing with him such energy and excitement, and an enormous depth of experience in researching globalisation, human rights and the cultural commons. It has been an honour to work with you both.

**Lena Nahlous  
Executive Director**

The year 2016 was a year of reflection, re-imagining and of laying the foundations for our revitalised company. We rebranded and renamed ourselves Diversity Arts Australia, clearly articulating who we are and why we exist.

We strategically relocated from Melbourne to Western Sydney, locating ourselves in one of the most culturally diverse regions in Australia, known for its cutting-edge culturally diverse arts practice.

Some of our achievements this year have included: receiving our first two grants as Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS), the first from Liverpool City Council and the second from UNESCO; planning for our new website; planning for our final Gathering — the Beyond Tick Boxes symposium; participating in Arts Front and facilitating two initial “futuring” workshops in partnership; and, charring panels at strategic forums such as the inaugural Arts and Refugees forum and the national APACA conference. Thank you to the Australia Council for their continued core support and particularly to Adrian Burnett, Sigrid Lancker, Frank Panucci, Lina Kastoumis and Caitlin Vaughan for their advice and guidance during this re-establishment period.

## New Beginnings

An exciting new chapter began for Diversity Arts Australia/Kultour in 2016 with a refreshed board, new board members, a new executive director, new headquarters, a new name, brand and website, new staff and contractors, a new strategic plan and an ambitious and exciting forward-looking agenda for the next stage in the organisation's growth.



### New Executive Director

In March 2016 Diversity Arts Australia welcomed its new executive director Lena Nahlous. The former Executive Director of Parramatta's Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE), Nahlous brings a wealth of experience to the role. She established Artfiles, an employment and engagement program for Western Sydney artists, and Switch Digital Arts Centre. She also cofounded and managed the Arab Film Festival.

### Move to Casula Powerhouse

In April 2016 Diversity Arts moved its headquarters from Melbourne to Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in Western Sydney, one of Australia's most culturally diverse regions. The organisation undertook an in-depth self-analysis, reaffirming its vision and purpose and developing a new strategic plan, which included a new marketing and digital engagement strategies.



### Consultations on New Brand Changes to the Board

Under these plans the organisation underwent a rebranding process, in consultation with the board, staff and stakeholders within the organisation, and also through a workshop in Redfern on 6 July 2016 with industry and sector leaders, including Caitlin Vaughan from the Australia Council, James Arvanitakis from Western Sydney University, creative consultant Dr Paula Abood, Designer Meiying Saw, Creative Producer Kevin Bathman, Tiffany Lee-Shoy from Fairfield City Council, Augusta Supple from Create NSW, Writer Monique Perrin and facilitated by marketing consultant Rani Haywood. The organisation was successfully rebranded as Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS). A website, logo and digital strategy were developed for launch in early 2017.

In December 2016 DARTS welcomed five new board members: Professor James Arvanitakis from Western Sydney University; Pilar Kasat, former managing director of CANWA; Seb Chan, chief experience officer at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image; Jade Lillie, director and CEO of Footscray Community Arts Centre; and Magdalena Moreno, deputy director of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies, to join Joanne Pratt, Louise Dunn, Suellen Maunder and Gambhir Watts. We said farewell to valued board members Caroline Stacey, Jami Bladel and Bong Ramilo. James Arvanitakis accepted the role as our new chair of the board, with co-deputy chairs Pilar Kasat and Joanne Pratt, and Louise Dunn accepted the role of Treasurer.

For more on our board members, see the Board of Management section.

*(Above: Part of Team DARTS (L-R) Prof James Arvanitakis, Joanne Pratt, Lena Nahlous, Suellen Maunder, Louise Dunn, Pilar Kasat*

## Diversity Arts Australia National Engagement Program

After restructuring, rebranding and moving HQ, DARTS embarked on a busy program of events and projects in the second half of 2016 to engage a national audience.



### Making Art on Equal Terms

20 August 2016

Refugee and asylum seeker artists face many barriers to engagement. Held over two-days, the inaugural Arts and Refugees Forum hosted by Settlement Services' International's Arts and Culture Program presented strategies and examples of projects that attempt to level the playing field.

Chaired by Executive Director, Lena Nahlous, Making Art on Equal Terms was plenary held at Casula Powerhouse. Speakers included Eiman Al Ubudy from the Lebanese Muslim Association, Guido Gonzalez from CuriousWorks, Herlina Massing from Fairfield Intensive English Centre, Andy Miller from Multicultural Arts Victoria and Jeremy Smith from the Australia Council for the Arts.

### There's No Place Like Home

August 2016

What influence have refugee artists had on the broader Australian arts landscape? With limited funding and opportunities, can they create arts practices that are sustainable?

These were some of the questions posed when DARTS/ Kultour coordinated and facilitated a breakout session of the Australian Performing Arts Centres Association (APACA) in Melbourne with speakers Jiva Jehanathan Parthipan (STARTTS), Tania Cañas (RISE: Refugees Survivors and Ex-detainees), Osamah Sami and Rani Pramesti.

DARTS took the theme 'There's No Place Like Home' for the session, to fit within the wider conference theme of 'The New Normal'. Artists from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds are involuntarily displaced from their homes, thrust into a new world and expected to create a new normal. How does this new normal fit in with their arts practice, their ideas of a new home and notions of belonging? And how does the current conservative funding environment, where asylum seekers are bound by work right limitations, affect their practice?



### Cultural Diversity and Disability in Arts

26 October 2016

What does the intersection of cultural diversity, disability and art hold for us? Who has gone before us, who stands beside us, and what will be the future in this space?

DARTS executive director Lena Nahlous was invited to facilitate this forum by artist Sarah Houbolt as part of her No Borders residency with Blacktown Arts Centre. The forum examined the relationship between cultural diversity and disability in the arts, asking questions such as: How do we ensure that our artists with disability have the same opportunities as others? How do we reach out to the wider arts and disability community? Do we use the language of disability in our work when it may not even be a word in our culture?

Sarah Houbolt is a Dutch-Australian, circus performer, arts manager and cultural worker with disability. Her residency at Blacktown Arts Centre investigated how particular artists relate to and create work informed by multiculturalism and disability.

### Futuring and Arts Front

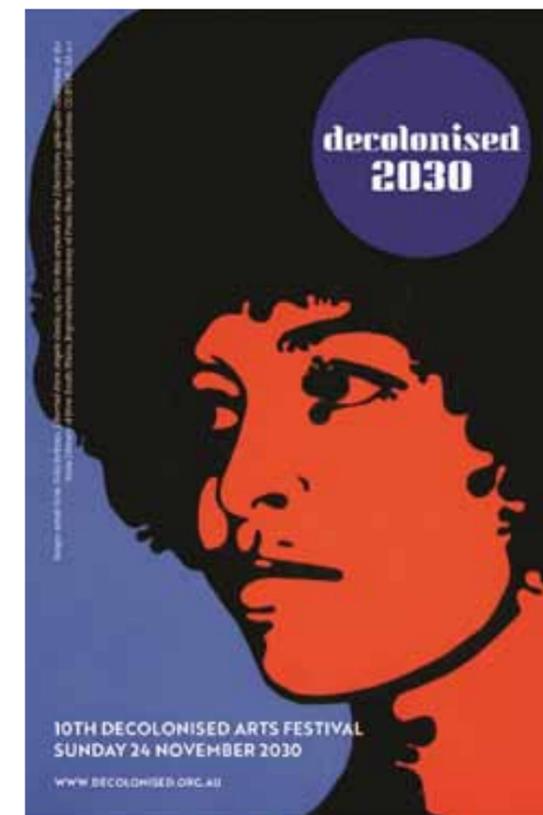
Diversity Arts Australia has been working with Arts Front on an artist-led project to imagine our way into a more inclusive future. The four-year project supports artists to take a lead in shaping the future of culture and the arts in Australia. It's an inspiring chance to set our imaginations free from the confines of current systems and brainstorm ways to

make our visions a reality. In the lead up to the national Arts Front gathering, DARTS ran a Sydney-based futuring session in Parramatta on 7 November. Sixteen people from diverse arts, community and cultural development backgrounds were invited to step into the future and imagine how our arts and cultural landscape would look in the year 2030 if it truly represented the social and cultural diversity of Australia.

Discussion ranged from alternative sources of arts funding to inclusivity vs exclusivity and the limitations of our current language. The session was facilitated by Paula Abood and Lena Nahlous with support from Frontyard's Clare Cooper and Will Scott-Kemmis and DARTS' Kevin Bathman and Bethany Falzon.

One of the groups imagined the The Decolonised Arts Festival, in a future where citizen artists overtake our most elite arts institutions and unfurl creativity across our communities without the permission of funders and gatekeepers.

The flier (pictured) was developed following the workshop and taken to the Melbourne-based Arts Front gathering to provoke discussion at the Futuring workshop we held there.





## Arts Front and Decolonising the Arts

Footscray Community Arts Centre  
23-25 November 2016

DARTS led a Futuring Workshop, with support from Frontyard, inviting 36 workshop participants to imagine what a decolonised arts landscape would look like in 2030 and to develop strategies to get us there. Read more about it and watch interviews with participants on [www.diversityarts.org.au/project/arts-front](http://www.diversityarts.org.au/project/arts-front)

DARTS' Lena Nahlous and Arts and Community Worker Paula Abood will chair the Arts Front Cultural Diversity Working Group.

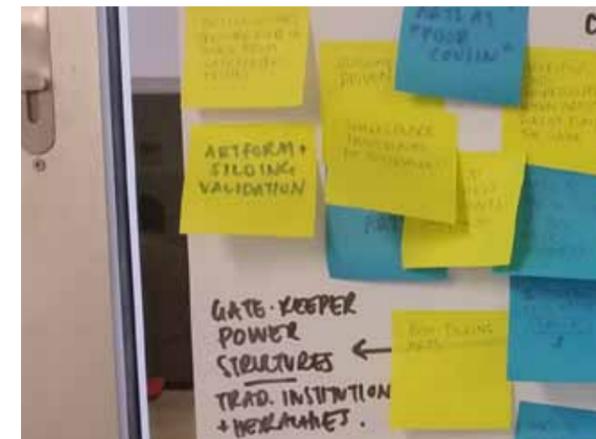
## Final Gathering: Beyond Tick Boxes

29 June 2016

In 2016 we started planning our final Gathering, named "Beyond Tick Boxes: cultural diversity in the arts in Sydney". This will be held at Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in 2017. Following this event, we will publish a report on the broad findings of the national gatherings held since 2012 and this final gathering.



Hero image from Beyond Tick Boxes: symposium on cultural diversity in the creative sector in Sydney. Illustration by Sydney-based Rosemary Fung.



## Kultour-Deakin University Research Project National Research

Pilot Project (Phase 1)

We continued to work in partnership with Deakin University to develop a national evidence base for cultural diversity in the arts. This work included the development of an audit tool for measuring the participation of culturally diverse artists in the mainstream arts sector and a significant draft Literature Review to look at work that has been done in this area both locally and internationally. The final Key Findings Report will be launched in 2017.

### The Research Project Team

- Associate Professor Danny Ben Moshe
- Professor Fethi Mansouri
- Associate Professor Yin Paradies
- DARTS staff and Board

**Funding from the Scanlon Foundation** and in-kind support from Deakin University Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation has supported this project.

### Representation

DARTS is represented on the Arts Peak Executive Committee.

## From the Treasurer

The 2016 year was one of consolidation, following the appointment of Executive Director Lena Nahlous; the establishment of a new national office in Western Sydney; and an expanded Board.

Diversity Arts Australia worked to a revised budget forecast due to these changes, with a sharpened funding focus in this last year of its Australia Council triennial funding.

Operational expenditure of \$206,944 was financed by the aforementioned Australia Council grants including the amount unspent from the previous year. Outstanding fully funded projects were completed during the year, except for the Unfunded Excellence (Gatherings/ Beyond Tick Boxes) project which is carried forward for completion in 2017.

Unspent operational and project funds totalling \$191,153 have been carried forward to 2017 and other grants and revenue sources are being vigorously sought to offset the impending loss of Australia Council core grants which will end in December 2017.

Expenditure continues to be carefully controlled with an understandable emphasis on seeking additional funding as well as the continued development of the company's vital advocacy role.

**Louise Dunn**  
Treasurer



Image: Still from Roxie Vuong's short film 'Act Now',  
Diverse Screen South West Sydney project

## Board of Management

**James Arvanitakis**  
Chair

Professor James Arvanitakis is Dean of the Graduate Research School, Office of Learning and Teaching, at Western Sydney University (WSU) and the Head of The Academy at WSU. James' research areas include citizenship, resilience, piracy and the future of universities.

**Pilar Kasat**  
Co-Deputy Chair

Pilar is Former Managing Director of CANWA, and led the organisation to become nationally recognised for its work in community arts and cultural development practice. She is on the Board of the Chamber of Arts and Culture of WA.

**Joanne Pratt**  
Co-Deputy Chair

Jo is the General Manager at Vulcana Women's Circus, and runs the artist management company, Sage Music, specialising in Indigenous and world music. Jo was the CEO/Artistic Director of the Brisbane Multicultural Arts Centre for seven years.

**Louise Dunn**

*Incoming Treasurer, previously Chair, Deputy Chair and Member of the Development Committee*  
Louise is the Executive Director of Nexus Multicultural Arts Centre based in Adelaide, South Australia. With a background in theatre design and community development, Louise developed and managed the Ruby Award-winning Barngarla Stories of Resilience project in Port Augusta in 2014.

**Seb Chan**  
Director

Seb is Chief Experience Officer at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne. He transformed the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York with a human-centred digital renewal and is known for his ground-breaking work with Sydney's Powerhouse Museum.

**Jade Lillie**  
Director

Jade is Director and CEO of Footscray Community Arts Centre in Melbourne. Jade has been working in and with communities for the past 15 years. She is a passionate and experienced practitioner, arts executive and facilitator.

**Suellen Maunder**  
Director

Artistic Director and CEO of JUTE Theatre Company in Cairns, Suellen was a key player in the development of the Centre of Contemporary Arts in Cairns. Suellen has served on the Theatre Board of the Australia Council and the Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

**Magdalena Moreno**  
Director

Magdalena Moreno is Deputy Director of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA) in Sydney, NSW. Chilean arts manager Magdalena lived in Melbourne for 20 years, until 2012 when took up the position of Head, International Division and ministerial adviser at the National Council for Culture and the Arts, Government of Chile.

**Gambhir Watts**

*OAM Director, previously Treasurer and Chair of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee*  
Gambhir Watts is the CEO of Gambhir Watts & Co and Taxation Guru Pty Ltd. A specialist in business, finance, strategic and tactical planning, Gambhir also works in international development and is Founder and CEO of International Centre of Nonviolence Australia.

## Staff

Lena Nahlous  
Executive Director  
(from Mar 2016)  
Bethany Falzon  
Admin and Projects Officer  
(Apr-Dec 2016)

## Contractors

Kevin Nelson, Accountant  
Monique Choy Perrin, Geek in Residence;  
Writer and Communications Consultant  
Gary Paramanathan, Business  
and Projects Officer  
Kevin Bathman, Producer, Projects and Events  
Dr Paula Abood, Facilitator  
and Creative Consultant  
Rani Haywood, Marketing Consultant  
Pat Armstrong, Web Design/Development  
Meiying Saw, Graphic Designer  
Fiorinda Koch, Research and Policy

## Student Placements and volunteers

Nickin Alexander,  
University of Technology Sydney  
Eugene Hoh, Graphic Design

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to our 2016 members, partners,  
funders and supporters.

### **Company Members**

Kickstart Arts TAS  
NEXUS Multicultural Arts Centre SA  
Salamanca Arts Centre TAS  
The Street Theatre ACT  
JUTE Theatre Company QLD

### **Partnerships, including presenting partners**

Arts Front  
Australian Performing Arts Centres Association  
Blacktown Arts Centre  
Feral Arts  
Settlement Services International

### **Funding Organisations**

Australia Council for the Arts  
Liverpool City Council  
Scanlon Foundation

### **Research Partner**

Deakin University, Centre for  
Citizenship and Globalisation  
Professor Fethi Mansouri  
Associate Professor Danny Ben-Moshe  
Associate Professor Yin Paradies

### **Organisational Sponsor**

Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre

### **Other**

University of Technology Sydney  
Western Sydney University