

I am pleased to report on another active year for the Arts Industry Council in which we have been a strong advocate for the arts sector. Our work is driven by the ten volunteer committee members and supported by an Executive Officer paid for one day per week. The AIC and its work is highly-valued by its members, and I believe that through our strategic approach, we have made excellent use of their funds.

ARTS SUMMIT

In the first half of the year, much of our work focused on the Arts Summit, a major feature of the arts sector's 2003 calendar. I represented the AIC on the Arts Summit Steering Committee which met regularly to develop the pre-summit consultation process, the themes and the structure for the day.

The AIC also hosted a pre-summit discussion night for members and other summit participants. We saw the discussion night as an important part of the summit process, giving participants a chance to reflect on their vision for the arts, and to go to the summit prepared to articulate their priorities and visions.

The discussion night was very well-attended with a good cross-section of the sector represented. The discussion on the night highlighted that while many arts organisations do face significant financial difficulties, the South Australian arts sector continues to share a cohesive sense of purpose and goodwill. Feedback to the AIC about the discussion night was extremely positive and members told us that they appreciated the chance to meet with their colleagues and to talk about the shape and direction of the sector. For the AIC, it was a valuable opportunity to ensure that we understand the concerns and issues of our members, and we intend to hold other discussion nights in 2004.

There is no doubt that summit participants enjoyed the opportunity to discuss policy issues, and that they valued being able to contribute to the process of policy development. The AIC wrote to the Premier, passing on these sentiments. We suggested that some further

opportunity for the sector to contribute to development and refinement of priorities and/or new approaches to supporting the arts would prove to be immensely productive and would further generate a sense of partnership and ownership of the policy and the ideas and challenges it sets out for the future.

These ideas were discussed further at a meeting with the Premier in December, where he agreed that further input from the arts sector was essential to the development and refinement of the policy document.

Since the Arts Summit, the AIC has continued to communicate with Arts SA and the government on the development of an arts policy framework for the state, and I have continued to participate as a member of the Arts Policy steering group.


MEETINGS WITH ARTS SA

Besides its involvement in the Arts Summit Steering Committee, representatives of the executive committee continued to meet quarterly with the Executive Director of Arts SA, Kathie Massey and executive staff. These meetings are held in a spirit of strong and open dialogue, and are a key element in the AIC's successful role in facilitating communication about arts policy between government and the arts community. The committee was pleased that incoming Executive Director, Greg Mackie agreed to continue the quarterly meetings.

BUDGET ANALYSIS AND SUBMISSIONS

The 2003-2004 arts budget was a significant one for the South Australian arts sector, following on from the first arts budget from the new Labor Government, when we saw significant cut backs to Arts SA's operating budget and losses from Arts Industry Development programs.

The positive aspects of this budget included increased funding (on-going or one-off) to the Adelaide Festival Centre, the Adelaide International Film Festival, the Adelaide Festival of




Arts, the Art Gallery of South Australia, Country Arts SA and to establish a Live Music Fund. The AIC was concerned however, that further funds were cut from the arts industry development grants and from Arts SA's operating budget to help fund this new spending. The Arts Industry Development program sustained a cut of \$775,000, on top of the loss of \$475,000 in the previous budget, making a total loss of \$1.24 million over two financial years. Losses were sustained to the Health Promotions Fund, and other various funds which support project activity right across the arts sector, particularly for grant monies to support program activities among the small to medium arts organisations, project funding for individual artists and funds to support career development of freelance artists – essentially the research and development arena of the arts sector. This issue became a major element of the AIC's 2004-2005 budget submission.

For Arts SA, there was an additional cut to operating costs of \$323,000 following a loss of \$2.87 million in the previous year. This constitutes a \$3.2 million downsizing of Arts SA over two financial years, incorporating losses of six staff positions and discretionary funds to respond to sector development needs as they arise.

After analysing the budget papers and figures and holding several discussions with colleagues in the arts sector, committee members compiled a number of notes and points of significance about the budget, and the information was distributed to AIC members. This information is well-regarded by members and we received several requests to use the information more widely.

The council followed this analysis with a submission to the Government on the 2004-2005 budget. The submission noted that increases in the past two budgets to fund major events such as the Adelaide International Film Festival, Womadelaide, Adelaide Festival and the Thinkers in Residence are positive initiatives to ensure South Australia remains competitive in the national and international arts events



calendar.

However, the AIC remains gravely concerned that the past two budgets have seen significant cuts to Arts SA's Industry Development project funds, including a reduction to the Health Promotions allocation. The AIC does not understand why the Government has diminished its investment in the creation of new South Australian art work over the past two budget rounds, when this area of activity represents such a small part of the arts budget (approximately 2%), but plays such a major role. Without an increase to the pool of funds available for the production of new work there will be less art for people to see or participate in on a day to day week to week basis, and less South Australian arts product to showcase within our arts event calendar.

The AIC's key arguments for increases to the 2004-2005 budget were:

- Increased funds for the production of new SA work (\$1.5 million)
- Myer Inquiry Report State funding contribution (\$0.5 million)
- Facilities management (\$3 million)
- Regional theatres refurbishment (\$1.625 million)

In December, members of the executive committee met with the Premier and spoke to the budget submission as well as discussing the policy development emerging from the summit process.

LOBBY CAMPAIGN

Building on its budget submission, the committee began planning a strategy for its budget lobby campaign to be launched in early 2004. Using a slogan of '2% more for art', the key message of the campaign is that funding for the commissioning and development of new work by South Australian arts must be restored and strengthened. The campaign has formed

the basis for much of the Committee's work in 2004 and we anticipate that it will be a continuing part of our work in 2005 and beyond.

OTHER ACTIVITIES


The AIC was invited to have a representative on the Volunteer Ministerial Advisory Group (VMAG), a position which has been filled by Ruth Smiles, Executive Officer with Regional Arts Australia.

At the suggestion of a number of our members, the AIC also generated a summary paper on trade agreements and their implications for the arts, and wrote to the Trade Minister, Mark Vaile, supporting the submission made by the Australian Coalition for Cultural Development.

The AIC remains a credible and well-respected source of information about the arts, and as Chair of the AIC, I have been interviewed by a number of journalists, some seeking broad or background information, others seeking comment for articles.

THE AIC'S FINANCIAL VIABILITY

As highlighted in the last report, the financial viability of the council is of real concern. Subscriptions income remained static at just over \$8 000. For the second year, the council supplemented this subscriptions income with its 4 Seasons raffle. We were delighted that Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Adelaide Fringe, Australian Dance Theatre and Windmill Performing Arts all donated tickets to their 2004 seasons as prizes, and there is no doubt that the generosity of our sponsors was a key factor in the raffle's success. Fundraising income increased \$500 on the previous year's fundraising effort to achieve a total of \$2 500 in 2003. The increased fundraising income allowed the council to end the year with a small surplus of about \$500. However, the council is run on an extremely lean budget, and this surplus was realised only with substantial in-kind support through photocopying, meeting spaces and occasional postage donations.



With this in mind, the committee undertook to redesign its brochure, intending to bring a message to the arts community of the importance of the council in the South Australian arts landscape. The extra funds also off set the printing costs for the 2% More for Art campaign materials. Thanks go to Belinda MacQueen who donated a considerable amount of her time and talents in the production of the brochure and the campaign materials. Thanks too to Finsbury Press who offered us a substantial discount on the printing costs.

THANK YOU

The AIC is grateful for the generosity and goodwill of many people. As I mentioned, our raffle donors - Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Adelaide Fringe, Australian Dance Theatre and Windmill Performing Arts – Belinda MacQueen, Mark Orel at Finsbury Press and Ruth Smiles all made significant contributions to the AIC in 2003. Thanks must also go to many of our members who helped fundraise by selling books of raffle tickets and significantly helping us reach our fundraising target for the year. I would also like to thank members of the committee: Jane Andrew, Carmel Dundon, Jim Giles, Jodi Glass, Anne Levy, Steve Mayhew, John McFadyen, Christine Schloithe and Rod Taylor. All donate much of their time and expertise, sell raffle tickets, and offer the use of meeting facilities. Thank you too, to Executive Officer, Tracy Crisp who supports the work of the committee.

Our activities for the year show that the AIC remains an important part of the South Australian arts sector. We will continue to look for ways to attract new members, but more importantly, we will continue to engage in strategic, targeted activities which are to the benefit of our members.



Deidre Williams, Chair

