

# Collective Future

**JCU SoCA Cairns consultation with the the Creative and Cultural Sector**

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## Contents

Executive Summary	3
Terms of Reference	5
Methodology	6
Key Stakeholders	7
Key Findings	
• Graduate Attributes	8
• Case Study: Kain Shepherd	9
• Tropical Traits	10
Sector Overview	
• Commercial	12
• Not For Profit	14
• Service Providers	16
• Education	17
• Government	
○ Local	20
○ State	24
○ Federal	26
Recommendations	27
References	28
Resources	30
Example interview – Mak Advertising	31
Media Example	33

## Executive Summary

This paper provides an overview of the Cultural and Creative industries sector consultation initiated by James Cook University, School of Creative Arts (JCU SoCA). The study's context the JCU 2011 Curriculum Refresh project is curriculum refresh and the continued development of the Bachelor of Creative Industries program in Cairns. Over twenty key stakeholders participated in substantial conversations during September - October 2011, this dialogue underpins the ideas of the paper and subsequent recommendations.

Key stakeholders varied in scale and scope with the unifying traits of appropriate core sector business, and the geographic reach of Cairns and its surrounds. Those sampled include small to medium enterprises, leading tropical institutions, large events, and major commercial and government institutions. Three tiers of government were also sampled, and provide a context of the strata of local, state and federal perspectives.

The study uses the 'Tropics' as a central notion and frames the relationship of those approached. Within the Far Northern Queensland framework many industry individuals sympathised with a local, national and international context, the region as a gateway to the Asia-Pacific and globalised outlook. A majority of those sampled are long-term residents or have a long investment in the region, the rest are newer residents with three being new to their role this year. The Australia Council representative had previously worked on the JCU Vincent Campus, but did not indulge in the second and third questions in relation to the tropics, and spoke from a national context.

The environment and weather is reflected through the region's culture and artwork, the diversity of the region's natural flora and fauna attract visitors, JCU's tropical science focus reinforces the symbiosis between art and science. The sector does not have to market the destination because people know it already. So generally the sector is marketing its identity through an active space and place, cultural empathy, and qualitative engagement and practice directed through benchmarking, strategic planning and responding or facilitating change.

Sustainable relationships and networks are central to surviving in the creative and cultural industries in the Tropics. Economically the current feeling is that there is a limited market, and that although the sector is stable and ticking along, sales are not as robust as they have been. The sense is that the sector is cautious yet optimistic about the future, even with the global economic downturn. As there is no definitive way to look forward into a crystal ball the sector is looking toward investment catalysts in hard and soft infrastructure, such as the Cairns Entertainment Precinct that will create activity and increase staffing, and Backing Indigenous Arts and Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, which is investing in a market wave, the tip of which the sector likens to the marketplace tide of the Northern Territory Indigenous Art market in the 80's. So confirmed and potential assets are instilling confidence in the sector.

A majority of employment in the sector occurs through seasonal opportunities through events and projects, and casual part/time work. However indications are that this is business as usual for a traditionally free-lance industry. In some cases employers were unaware just how much opportunity, value and revenue was generated by their core business through adjunct activity and employment within and outside their sector. So potentially there is some scope for a current sector wide market analysis or economic report.

Specialised skills such as curatorial services, technical theatre, arts project management, etc are lacking in the region, and employers want their staff to be a jack of all trades with a broad skill set, so that they can be flexibly employed in a range of situations, as there are limited full-time salaried positions. Employers tend to train on site in the hope that they can retain staff with enough hours, as the wet and off-peak season play a significant role, and lack of hours can lead to employee transience. So employers will recruit inexperienced people, but if they exhibit drive and dedication, the sector will spend the time getting them up to speed through on the job training and mentoring.

Technology plays a major role, as the sector is actively and successfully securing its role in the global marketplace. Ongoing training with rapid technological advancement means ongoing employee training, and the ability for an employable person to constantly update their skill set through self-directed learning, will reinforce the persons' market value and employability.

There are arts policy documents existing in the public domain, which are not included in this paper that some stakeholders referenced. There is also a list of resources emailed by the Australia Council as reference material attached. A condensed interview and media example of trends is attached as well.

In listening extensively to the sector this paper produces an unbiased account of the Cultural and Creative Industries. Sector analysis and the carriage of the recommendations are at JCU SoCA Cairns discretion. Many participants expressed an interest in being informed of the study findings.

## **Terms of Reference**

To develop a deeper understanding of the current and future potential relationship between the School of Creative Arts core degree program in Cairns, the Bachelor of Creative Industries, and the creative industries sector in the Cairns and surrounding region.

- To create an opportunity for engagement with the sector via discussion and feedback with key stakeholders relevant to the school.
- To synthesise and document the key findings from this period of consultation and engagement.
- To develop a series of recommendations for consideration by the Head of School Creative Arts in consultation with the BCI degree coordinator and key staff teaching into the degree in Cairns.

The study concern of current and future sector trends in relationship to graduate attributes used these questions as a basis for discussion:

1. Can you briefly tell us about the goals and aims of your organization?
2. What do you see as the key advantages of being located in the tropics and regional northern Queensland?
3. What do you see as the key disadvantages of being located in the tropics and regional northern Queensland?
4. Describe the qualities of the type of person you would choose to employ in this industry?
5. Describe the key skills that are required for this industry?
6. What challenges do you currently face when recruiting suitable staff?
7. What level of depth of discipline knowledge is required for success in this industry?
8. How would you describe the opportunities for professional development in your organization?
9. Can you describe the current and expected growth in your area in terms of paid employment opportunities?
10. What will your industry look like in five years time?
11. What do you see as the key trends in relation to your audience and / or market over the next five years?
12. What do you anticipate employees in this industry will require in five years time in terms of skills and attributes?
13. How are you preparing to be ready for the future and the rapidly changing nature of the creative or cultural industries?

## **Methodology**

This study used the terms of reference above to conduct conversations with an initial list of key stakeholders supplied by JCU SoCA Cairns staff. In consultation with the BCI degree coordinator Mr Russell Milledge, the research progressed to seek qualitative reflection from key players and their view of the sector. In this manner the approach of the study is qualitative rather than quantitative research.

The consultant conducted one-on-one oral interviews regarding industry context and objectives with a view to current and future sector trends in relationship to graduate attributes, and general growth of opportunities with JCU SoCA Cairns. All participants were provided the questions prior to the interview so that they could reflect on their contribution before putting their view forward. The interview questions provided a basis to then have a conversation, which unpacked the view further. Some respondents chose to participate in writing and these are included as attachments.

The key stakeholders sampled were generous with their time and genuinely interested in the approach from JCU SoCA. Many mentioned that the questions raised were pertinent, interesting and considered. Many mentioned an existing relationship with JCU SoCA, and some the possibility to foster new partnerships, placements or projects.

Key stakeholders were informed of JCU SoCA's intent to use the study findings to tailor qualitative learning experiences in and for the tropics. Subsequently the interviews assist to continue an industry dialogue, promote JCU SoCA Cairns with the sector, and to position the University as unique in Australia and a world leader in the tropics.

The sound files of the interviews were compiled and exist as a non-public record for educative, research purposes. The interview information has been compiled into this report as an overview from the interviewee's perspective, and consultant recommendations. However there are ample rich and valid philosophies and processes in the interviews from experienced and resourceful key players that exist beyond the scope of this study, and the recordings are in themselves a fantastic resource and insight.

## **Key Stakeholders**

Leslie Sparks, Manager Cultural Services and Facilities, Cairns Regional Council

Kain Shepherd, Kanaka Creative (web site design, camera operator, editor, graphic design)

Chris Stannard, Curator – Visual Arts, Tanks Arts Centre

Summer Bland, Program and Events Coordinator, Tanks Arts Centre

Phil Finkelstein, Manager Cairns Civic Theatre

David Sudmalis, Manager - Programs and Arts and Education  
Manager – Strategic Development and Evaluation  
Community Partnerships  
Australia Council for the Arts

Suellen Maunder, *Artistic Director/Chief Executive Officer*, JUTE Theatre Company

Ingrid Hoffman, Director, KickArts Contemporary Arts and Djumbunji Press

Michael Kershaw, owner / operator, Canopy ArtSpace and Australian Art Print Network

Alex Woodcock, Faculty Manager – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies,  
Tropical North Queensland TAFE

Gayle Cargill, Executive Officer, Arts Nexus

Janet Parfenovics, Executive Officer, UMI Arts

Steven Lane, Creative Director, Mak Advertising

Eric Holowacz, Festival Producer, Cairns Festival

Ross Steele, General Manager, Cairns Convention Centre

Avril Quail, Artistic Director, Cairns Indigenous Art Fair

Alison Copley, General Manager, Cairns Indigenous Art Fair

Nat Trimarchi, Regional Manager, Arts Queensland

Janelle Williams, Trinity Bay SHS Visual Arts Head of Department  
QSA State Panel Chair Visual Arts  
REACH (Regional Excellence in Arts and Culture Hubs) Leadership Team

Andrea May Churcher, Director, Cairns Regional Gallery

Charles Wiles, Manager, Centre of Contemporary Arts

## Key Findings

### Graduate Attributes:

According to those sampled, an employable creative or cultural industries graduate will possess the qualities of drive and determination, aptitude and attitude, and be enterprising and entrepreneurial, even if working in a team environment. Self-learning and research ability is a key to sustainability in the sector.

Ideally graduates would develop a portfolio of skills with one or two discipline areas that they specialise in. They would be able to operate in a range of situations.

The industry identified these skills for a creative or cultural industries practitioner:

- Understanding and empathy for creativity, arts and culture and the core values of the business
- Cultural awareness
- Ability to research
- Ability to analyse
- Ability to network
- Ability to facilitate
- Ability to manage
- Look creatively at problems from different perspectives
- Good communication skills - Communicate effectively and comprehend communication
- Ability to write in a range of situations - grants, critiques, reports, responses to clients, copy writing
- Business skills – financial, time management, marketing, collateral production
- Work independently and collaboratively
- Curiosity - desire to continue learning
- Conversant with digital media and internet competency
- Understanding of NFP governance is a benefit
- Broad understanding of government / industry policy

The graduate would have done a lot of industry research, have an understanding of the industry, its business, and have had experience in their chosen field through some form of industry engagement like:

- Attending functions
- Join a collective or start an artist run initiative (ARI)
- Garnering an industry placement or secondment
- Volunteerism
- Committee and/or service organisation membership
- Mentorship
- Participation in industry initiatives
- Employment (casual / part-time)

### Specialised discipline skills

- Curatorial, art handling, etc
- Technical Theatre
- Design
- Information Technology
- Project Management



## Case Study:

Kain Shepherd works in the creative sector as Kanaka Creative, and does web site design, camera operator, editor, sound, graphic design, among other things. He has an array of clients including local festivals, musicians and clubs. Most recently he designed a website for a group of Russian Hip Hop artists based in Los Angeles USA (an online client). His career is diverse – flyer design, sound assistant, line producing for Channel 9 ‘Today Tonight’, interviewing for TV, music video production, and he also works part time for Cairns Regional Council in the Creative Partnership unit as a project coordinator.

Kain thinks it’s a small population here so he can attract work. Likewise it’s a small population here so big business tends to look outside of the region for service because of the perception is that locals can’t provide the service. Being online he can attract and tap into global markets through website production and social interaction networks.

The systems evolution is a quick progression of technology so he must keep up to date to remain relevant in the marketplace. His skills as project manager, administrator and in design are buffeted as technology changes “around you” so its important to understand the content as methods change rapidly. Early adoption of technology with its fast pace means being ahead of the trends through self-initiated, ongoing research via online articles, forums and blogs. The latest trend is the switch from PC to Mobile technology as more of the market wants iPhone apps and as Flash becomes obsolete.

Like others surveyed Kain started working along side someone else, he volunteered a few days a week, and started to pick up work through on the job training. Kain says “find your local industry, start hanging out with them, then when a job comes up, they know whom to hire.”

Kain notes, as technology becomes more available with cheaper production equipment he has noticed a trend for sloppy production values. So do the job well with an eye for detail. Be self-motivated, look for on the job experience, and he touched on how being a good assistant is a key skill when starting out. Not everyone will be a (camera) operator, however if you’re working in the regions you will probably be doing more than one role, i.e. producing, directing, editing as budgets are smaller than in the cities.

His sage advice, “have a desire to learn”. Qualifications alone will not necessarily get you a job in the sector. Multi-skill during your course, if one specialises you might not get a job in that area. Try to gain many skill sets to make you more employable. One must keep evolving to survive in the sector.

## Tropical Traits:

### Vocation

- Being regionally based, lack of locally trained candidates
- Low level of wages on offer in the regions compared to the cities
- Majority of entities offer casual positions, practitioners freelance
- Cultural competency – must have cultural empathy
- Opportunity for enterprise
- Collaboration and partnership
- Innovation, risk taking and evaluation

A prospective employee should:

- Analyse their skill set
- Articulate why they want that job, (i.e. don't just say I have passion)
- Investigate their own career goals
- Investigate prospective employers policy, philosophy, business, etc

### Location, Location, Location

- Outward looking - position toward the Pacific and north rather than south creating a global outlook
- Natural amenity of the Wet Tropics -
  - Benefit as lifestyle and tourism attraction
  - Weather – Acts of God impact and the Wet Season challenge event planning
- Proximity to country - indigenous culture
- Small population, small industry and geographic isolation equates to benefits for graduates –
  - More immersive experience in sector as many skills required
  - Rapid industry induction – key players will collaborate with those emerging in the industry
  - Less competition than urban centres

### Tyranny of Distance

- Operation: away from policy creation and decision makers located in urban centres like Brisbane and Canberra
- Distance from major markets and influences
- Distance from cultural events
- Distance from major service organisations and benefits i.e. Australian Graphic Design Association (AGDA), Australian Federation of Advertising Agencies (AFA), Australian Business Arts Foundation (ABAF), etc
- Visiting professionals go to the major cities so the regions miss out on professional development and training opportunities - seminars and workshops don't tend to come to regional Australia
- Suffer from 'outpost' syndrome – i.e. Expectation of the same program delivery as an urban counterpart, but with limited resources and staff
- Pockets of parochialism

### Market Place

- Loss of corporate knowledge
- Loss of archive and documented history
- Qualified, trained and/or young people are transient - talent drain

- Not in a major centre with lots of tertiary training, its finding the specialists and qualified people - smaller pool of specialists available
- Not a lot of market pressure here, so not a lot of competition for specific providers
- Integration and ripple effect of mass media

### Trends

- Respond to change
  - Niche markets developing
  - Government and Community evolution
  - Industry innovation
  - Benchmarking
- Developing Infrastructure and Markets
  - Cairns Entertainment Precinct
  - Indigenous - Education and Training
  - Indigenous – Arts and Culture
  - Creative Arts Residencies
  - Development of markets through active participation in the arts
- Impact of new technology
  - Uptake by venues, staff, clients
  - Production and Dissemination
    - Rise of online marketing and social media networks
    - Simulcasts and joint programming
  - NBN
    - Information technology and networks
  - Audience interaction
- Partnerships
  - Consultative
  - Collaborative
  - Strategic
  - Mutually Beneficial
  - Innovative
- Projects
  - Evaluation - methodology inbuilt at project planning stage as a strategic planning toolkit
  - Efficiency and Effectiveness
- Future Graduate Attributes
  - IT competency

## Sector Overview

### Commercial

#### Canopy Artspace:

Australian Art Print Network's (AAPN) a Sydney based business with a presence is integral to the Cairns enterprise Canopy Artspace. The core business of retailing prints was a direct stimulus for the establishment of Canopy Artspace because of the proximity to indigenous artists that director Mike Kershaw represents as an agent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island artists. A gradual immersion into indigenous art and reflection on the state of the industry led to opportunity through mutually beneficial relationships. Support via Queensland Indigenous Arts Marketing and Export Agency (QIAMEA) through touring work has seen him reciprocate the support by investing in Cairns to grow the market. AAPN can wholesale from anywhere, however being in Cairns in proximity to artists' assists in the role of agent. You can be decisive about your business when you own it. Business is not built over night it needs significant groundwork. Artists can go to TAFE, then work with master printmaker Theo Tremblay as a pathway, however you need to sell a lot of work to earn a living out of it, and you need people championing the artists work to the buyers, and people selling who have the skills for sales. Queensland state is the most diverse, it's the only state with two indigenous cultures, and the art movement is young. Northern Territory art is anchored in tradition, Queensland artists are exploring other areas and are open to innovation and opportunity. Australian indigenous art in this region is on the brink of being discovered by the global market.

#### Cairns Convention Centre:

The centre benefits the economy and the reputation of Cairns by operating a world-class venue. We look for employees that are 'friendly, tropical hospitality'. In terms of the sector we need audio, visual and technical skills and personal qualities like a friendly, professional manner. In recruiting there is not enough good technical staff available in Cairns. We recently had to employ a production coordinator from outside the region because there wasn't anyone suitable here. Casuals leave during the summer months, which make for ongoing training and recruitment. We employ a mix of disciplines so that they can get sufficient work and a certain level of wage. Employees need skills in production (AV, projection) and operation. In the past we have outsourced design and layout, and IT work, however we are going to do more of this work in-house and we have a new IT coordinator (development and design website maintenance). We offer on the job training for staff (obtaining industry qualifications like varying accredited work 'tickets'), and the variety of events - conference, banquet, basket ball game, concert, assists with staff professional development. This company is part of a larger organisation. There is some opportunity to move with in the organisation, as there are twenty facilities in the group internationally that range from convention centres, to arenas, sports stadiums to performing arts and we run five theatres in Perth. We are at capacity from April to November, so any expansion would occur in the off-peak season.

In five years time, technically things will be different. There will be a hybrid of events where people will meet face to face, but also "direct in" on a screen someone from overseas, who will also be meeting over there at the same time, so technical hybrid events, with virtual and face to face events.

Venue breakout in a conference centre design is a change where people can inhabit nooks and crannies for informal discussion. Our art collection is a marketing tool and adds to the amenity and marketability of the centre.

The trend is toward shorter lead-time for events, and a combination of events, smaller events joining with other events to make larger events, industries joining together for economy of scale, and interdisciplinary interaction. Bookings used to be never before two years, now it's within the year. The economy goes up and down so fast, that people want to make a decision closer to the time in terms of whether they're going to hold the event. Being situated in the Asia-Pacific is a draw card to entice the northern hemisphere with growing their particular market.

We must keep pace with technology and upgrade equipment because of market demand. We have 25 technical staff and they must be 'jack of all trades' to get the hours as well as technically proficient with the latest global gear. This year ten high school students have had training in event management at the centre, where they create an event order for a mock project, and the event manager critiques it, so there's an opportunity to do something with JCU SoCA. In the past, JCU students have had placements here, and the centre works together with JCU on conferences such as these upcoming events: Asia Pacific Dental Students Association 39<sup>th</sup> conference, Global Health Medical Students Association, International Coral Reef Symposium and Tropical Biology.

The production manager who recently vacated her position had a theatre degree, so she came from an arts background, and she was great from a production point of view because one of the major skills that people need is project management skills – managing staff, managing rosters, managing equipment. She was hired even though she didn't have the experience because of her enthusiasm, she had the cultural side of our business, she had the theoretical skills, and she just needed the practical skills. If they leave a better employee than when they came in, they can add to the industry overall, and that strengthens our industry everywhere.

#### Mak Advertising

"To grow sustainably and creatively, and to have a bit of fun while we do it." I suspect with the convergence of media the business is going to look radically different. Already we're seeing a shift from our commission based structure to an exponential growth in online spending, which doesn't have the same underlying commissioned based structures, the business is going to have a major change.

As far as the key trends, there will be a massive move online and into social media, big divergence of television offerings - of free to air television, and probably a lot more subscriber paid TV courtesy of internet television, and we'll probably continue to see the decline of newspapers and magazines apart from specialist areas. Look that's just the way it is, but what will survive will be niche things, great publications with small runs, you're seeing a lot of that in magazines at the moment. And all of it's still going to require great design and the great creative. The attributes and skills will still be the same, it's the tools that they will use may vary slightly, but I don't think the skills necessarily and the attributes will change much at all. We're engaging, we've taken on staff with expertise in the area we're we didn't have it previously, particularly in the online environment.

Look our most recent JCU graduate came out, and she'd had good exposure to lots of different things, but unfortunately very little work on creative process. We can

teach the tools in a commercial sense, but the ability to understand how to think and how to approach a creative problem is probably consistently where it's lacked over the years. See the attached interview p30-31.

## **Not-For-Profit**

KickArts Contemporary Arts:

We showcase and benchmark artists against the national scene, and at present we are looking to resource international residencies for print making exchanges in these markets - Canada, Wales, New Zealand, Europe, Asia. Cultural and environment informs the Tropics, and we need to be able to export our cultural work and show that we can mix it with national and international artists by the quality of the work we are producing in Cairns.

The cost of travel is a disadvantage, but Queensland is a decentralised state, and we tend to make connections with peers and artists from other regional cities - Townsville, Mackay, Gold Coast and Brisbane. Travel and accommodation can be a barrier but we work to attract resources, which assists us with this. We tend to work in advance through "revenue raising to program", and it would be a challenge to accept a touring show spontaneously, so we plan well ahead.

Currently we are aiming to recruit a senior printmaker who can work collaboratively with indigenous artists of the region. For us a graduate must have courage to pursue an individual vision and dedication to specialize in a discipline, and be knowledgeable of trends and contexts. Graduates must also have applied education and understanding of arts industry. The creative industries are one of incremental knowledge. It's a non-ageist industry, and you are genuinely rewarded and respected for your cumulative knowledge in the visual arts, so being younger or older does not disadvantage you. It's a career trajectory where you can come in and out of other disciplines, and there are options for diversifying your career path over a period of time.

Professional development of staff has led directly to the current initiative of hosting residencies for the benefit of local artists exchange. We are actively pursuing the international status for our profile. We want to develop career paths of indigenous artists through Djumbunji Press. We are looking toward the 20-year celebration in October 2012 in partnership with JUTE Theatre Company.

A digital future for retail and marketing will see us develop these skills. The shop creates revenue for artists, our market reality is 50 – 70% visitors, and so we are tied to tourism trends, currently China, and their interest in Australian products. We collaborate with Room 40 where we partner in Sound Art events that are attracting younger audiences. The 'Art Babies' public art workshops are attracting repeat business, as young parents are a new niche market, as we can engage children, and through them, their parents. Audience engagement through digital marketing and selling and online trading will be more sophisticated. Website building, You Tube, you will need lots of visual communication skills. In future we will make a mix of recruiting young people with digital communication skills, who are in touch with a younger audience in the region and interstate, and a specialised skill set for welcoming older people because of the bump in the baby boomer / leisure time, so not alienating audience and buyers.

JUTE Theatre Company:

Our core areas are writing for stage, directing and dramaturgy. We face challenges like:

- Distance from the major centres of theatre making - pool of highly skilled artists is limited
- Cost of importing artists from major centres
- Lack of training opportunities for theatre makers
- Lack of trained actors, directors, designers, stage managers
- Lack of industry relationship between the theatre sector and JCU Creative Arts
- People with core artform skills (acting, directing, writing, design, technical, stage & production management)
- There is currently no local performance course that produces artists with the core skills to enable employment directly into professional practice. The current course does provide the time or resources to train potential theatre makers
- Ideally graduates have completed practical secondments within the sector during their training

It is hoped that the new Entertainment Precinct building will lead to increased need for creative projects. However with the reduced building capacity and no rehearsal or smaller performance spaces in the first stage, this may be some way off. The increased capacity of the Centre of Contemporary Arts and the support of Arts Queensland through the venue manager position are likely also to increase creative projects.

I believe there is great potential for entrepreneurial artists to work in a range of capacities throughout the regions. Workshops, small in-school shows, rural and remote touring, corporate entertainment etc. Potentially the rollout of the NBN will have made some difference to how we collaborate with other companies and artists, whether they are interstate or international collaborators. It would be great to think that we will be employing performers and creative's who are graduates of the JCU Creative Arts degree. As the sector continues to create opportunities for a dialogue between the different layers of the sector a greater understanding will be generated for all of forms of theatre making.

The Regional Council will be working with key performance makers in the lead up to the opening of the new precinct and will have commissioned a number of new works from different artforms to form part of the programming for the first 6 months of the venue.

There is an untapped market for theatre in this region. The question is how do we support potential theatre audiences to attend. Social networking will give us more access to audiences but there is a strong case for personalised connections to be made in bringing an audience member to theatre. There are always many audience research processes being undertaken by the funding bodies and other key stakeholders – I believe that the funding bodies will more and more play a key role in leading research for the sector and providing the sector with clear data for how to 'capture' an audience.

There is currently a lot of talk about 'demand driven' work and the democratisation of the arts – i.e. the audience should be driving the demand for what artists create. The audience is moving more and more into the centre of the concerns of theatre companies (rather than the artist and the artistic work created), and this is a recipe

for disaster, leading to theatre by numbers, and in the end, boring the pants off audiences, who are served up exactly what they expect, and get tired of it very quickly.

## **Service Providers**

UMI:

We have a focus on showcasing, career pathways and training for indigenous employment. The tropics are intrinsic to our core business, which has a regional northern focus. The challenge for us is how to build an intelligent, mainstream audience for indigenous culture, as understanding brings respect.

We are currently developing the Indigenous arts hub in partnership with Arts Queensland and all levels of government. We are creating a facility like the Centre of Contemporary Art, a facility that will be primarily for creation, but will have showcasing areas as well, studio space, gallery, retail space; rehearsal and sound proofing, small theatre; front of house, food, retail.

The consultation and feasibility reports are done, and it needs to be owned and operated by indigenous people. It will create employment for artswomen, an exhibition manager, curator, sound and lighting technicians, building manager, finance, marketing, communications- graphic design skill set. We have completed a gap analysis report funded through Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), and we've identified all positions that would translate into any mainstream employment. It will be a purpose built or adaptation of one or more existing buildings within the next three years. We have a three-year training plan rolling out, training for up to ten people in each of those jobs. We plan to qualify them with associate diploma or higher, which will make them employable for Kickarts, Cairns Regional Gallery, to run an art centre or go further a field to gain employment, so they have transferable skills. We will be working with local Registered Training Organisation's – Cairns Regional Council, Tanks Arts Centre, Cairns Civic Theatre, Kickarts, Cairns Regional Gallery. Research indicates that for indigenous people training is much more effective if delivered with hands on experience. We are putting together a strategy for work experience or secondment with these organisations, "a learn and earn a qualification".

There is a lack of training in the sector for curators, writers etc. Bricks and mortar need to be facilitated in hand with training. Currently opportunities are minimal for employment, it's a Catch 22 situation, and "the qualifications aren't there, so the opportunities aren't there". Mentoring is occurring in the interim, however indigenous people gaining formal qualifications is a priority. We would be interested to have non-indigenous people mentor indigenous people toward a qualification. The indigenous hub will employ eight positions, and in 3-5 years the entertainment precinct will be looking at equal opportunity employment. There is an opportunity to create a roving crew, which can install at Kickarts, CIAF or even expo trade exhibitions. The Hub report is on the website. Our training report may be available within the next three months, and we can provide an edited version.

It's important to have indigenous support officers available for students, particularly when they're coming out of a community or into Cairns, and they don't know people. We would be interested in a greater relationship with JCU SoCA. Perhaps you could do a "Toe in the water" or short introduction where indigenous people can experience a lecture or tutorial for two - three weeks, an intensive to acclimatise them, to see if



it's something they really want to do. There may be a better retention rate because the attrition rate in the first six to twelve months is high for indigenous students.

Arts Nexus:

We support and retain artists, and organisations, in the creative industries in FNQ, from Cardwell to Torres Strait. We are responsive to member needs. It's a very transient place, and our organisation is built to service the region, but we are distanced from the major centres, there is no Australian Business Art Foundation (ABAF) presence in Cairns. I'm new, but I hear, that March to October is production time, and during the wet its planning time.

Graduates must have a good work ethic. An arts management degree, and skills in marketing and finance will assist employment opportunities in the sector. Currently we have a lack of funds to recruit, I am the only full time staff member. There will not be much growth within the next twelve months, however within the next 24 months we may hire more staff – project managers. Technology is essential in marketing art works and practitioners. Graduates need to become much more computer and Internet literate. We need to address peoples' perception of how they can market their art, and make a living out of their art.

In the creative industries sector you need people management skills, to be tour savvy, to know how to project manage, how to do your own budgets and MYOB (accounting software), to do your own marketing, and your own graphic design and collateral layout. You must be literate enough to be able to find the right designer, and to work with them to get your product out there, the way you want it done. The university is lacking in specialisation, i.e. Set Design, Technical Theatre.

## **Education**

TAFE:

We deliver performing and visual arts, however access to the full range of creative industries facilities is limited. Consumables (ie. ceramics) and importing specialists competent in art, whose skills are not readily available in the community, are expensive. We do not cater for theatre or recording music for instance, as our facility does not have production capability. After 20 years the TAFE facilities may need upgrading as new needs and demands in specialist areas become needed. It's a balance between student volume, and limited capacity to service specialist areas. For instance a move into glass making would require local skilled expertise and the facilities. There are pockets of demand and limited capacity to meet that demand.

TAFE employs teachers with years of industry experience, because our focus is on the practical, rather than theoretical knowledge, so teachers must have a qualification, industry experience and currency. They must also have a broad understanding of national and international trends from a practitioner's point of view. It's always going to be an issue to find indigenous teachers to teach indigenous and identity units. They need at least a Certificate IV in training, assessment and education, a diploma, or preferably a degree and depth of qualification (i.e. ceramics).

Market demand suggests increase. The Cairns Entertainment Precinct may cause greater demand for training in the industry. Our enrolment figures tend to fluctuate,

and more so recently. A majority of our Visual Arts students are indigenous, and we are expecting that to grow, however we're unsure if it will grow with demand. We need people to buy art, and this tends to fluctuate, and with the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis and the current economic climate, we're unsure if demand will go upwards or downwards in the future. Industry will change, our role will change in industry as it meets new needs, and industry drives those needs, as we offer a practical application.

In terms of trends, TAFE will need to continually change and look at other markets, and look beyond traditional markets. Traditionally in terms of delivery with vocational and educational training, students come and enroll in a subsidised training environment and obtained their qualification, whether apprenticeship, traineeship or a specific area. That market has now changed because market forces now drive us and we work to meet their needs. So traditionally students look at the program and enroll, now the demand from industry means that industry are coming to us for delivery of training, but not using the traditional models. They might want a particular skill set or they may want a new mix of units within a qualification, and they might be prepared to also pay for it 100% in commercial terms. "So we're moving more and more over time, and driven by the market, out of the traditional market, and more into the market driven market."

In five years time in this region TAFE would like to see the possibilities of a lot of our teachers, who currently have degrees, to go into a "full blown masters program" that are about art, not a hybrid kind of arrangement, so that we can look at a Master of Fine Art for up here. For indigenous students, we would like to see the next stage on that pathway. Some of our most famous students who've come through here, such as Alick Tipoti and Denis Nona, came through TAFE and completed their Diploma, then had to go south to get their masters in print making, so those options are not available for indigenous students here. After our students do their diploma, they could go to JCU SoCA to do a BCI (degree), but I don't think that is meeting the needs of indigenous people. We're visual people, I'm indigenous myself. It's really the practical aspects of art.

Another aspect for indigenous people, which we're trying to make a contribution towards addressing, is the area of being able to run their own small business through their art, in terms of their intellectual property. So we're introducing more of the Certificate III in micro business operations, as part of our art program, so that people do have skills in business, and they can run their own business. We know that on a national level, over 50% of Visual Artists are indigenous, but less than 2% of indigenous people are involved in the management of that art. And that's another area that's lacking up here, is for students to be able to go into a Bachelor Degree program for students to be able to manage Visual Arts, and manage Performing Arts, and to have the whole aspect of ATSI identity within this region, as part of the overall Creative Industries that happen up here.

At the end of the day we're really looking for practitioners and managers that have those practical skills. Hopefully we will be in a collaborative partnership with JCU SoCA, starting discussions on the 'Pathways College', and the Creative Industries are certainly one of those areas that we can look at. Working more in collaborative arrangements between industry, VET, and University is the best way to prepare for the future, and work together to meet the capacity and demands of the industry up here.

Education Queensland / REACH:

Imagery and concepts that our students develop genuinely do reflect the context that the students find themselves in here. We don't often see images and stereotypical responses from our students. The fact that we are conscious of our remoteness makes us acutely aware of our need to work collaboratively, and to ensure our currency and awareness of contemporary practice.

It's important to have strength and a depth of knowledge in at least one discipline area. What we need are people who are versatile enough, and brave enough, to challenge themselves, and build skills in knowledge in areas, which they are not confident in. They need to have a core area of interest, (a major or a specialty), which they are particularly passionate about, because it is this focus or specialty in one area of their practice, that is a strong exemplar/model for students. Graduates need to be able to build and sustain relationships with young people, and work collaboratively in teams with colleagues to achieve goals.

There will be even more of a need for Visual Arts teachers to be engaging in new media, and embracing film and media studies. Many teachers have already begun making the move to hybrid media, but others lack confidence and skill in this area. We are preparing for the future by working more closely with the arts industry to try and build better relationships, and bring industry in to our classrooms so that students can interact with, and learn from, artists and arts industry representatives directly.

## **Government**

### Local Government – Cairns Regional Council

#### Creative Cairns:

The department is undergoing a change of name from the arts and culture unit to the Creative Cairns unit, and it operates by referencing its' Cultural Plan. The Botanic Garden Cultural Centre has just opened in the Tanks Arts Centre precinct, and will have merchandising opportunities. The council is developing an Indigenous Art Trail in partnership with the state government, and a new Cairns Entertainment Precinct in partnership with state and federal support. So this links in with active space and place all year round.

Collaborative and creativity skills are essential. Staff must find pathways and processes, and think laterally and multi-skill. There is a lack of skilled people available for employment opportunities.

Technology is assisting the ability to link up with the rest of Australia and the global community, and podcasts assist with keeping up to date. While people are speaking at events and conferences, we can be reading on twitter what the audience is thinking. Recently I went to a global cultural summit, where there was a Twitter poet, and this adds another layer to the experience. Likewise there was Twitter commentary by audience at a Council meeting about the Entertainment Precinct, where the audience is prohibited to speak aloud, so you can also see what people are thinking. And I went to a play production, where people were Twittering, and the play was changing in response to the projected Tweets, so it was really interactive with the audience.

Trends include recognition of indigenous arts in our region, Internet marketing through social media, understanding new technologies, and global warming, where more large scale natural events will lead to new ways of recovery work in the arts, faced with the aftermath of huge natural events, where arts could engage and build community.

In the future we will be mapping how to use the Entertainment Precinct, in terms of collaboration, within the creative community and creative intersections. There are more opportunities if we work together, rather than competitively, as more partnering will bring reward through the sum of the parts.

#### Cairns Civic Theatre:

The cost of touring and producing work, and distance from cultural centers creates operational challenges. For audience, in winter it's too nice for indoors, and in summer, Acts of God make audiences unpredictable. It is difficult to find technical theatre staff, as they are transient. However we can train them (within reason) on the job.

We would look for people who can find positive solutions, people who can find answers instead of difficulties. In three – five years the Cairns Entertainment Precinct will be coming on board, and we would increase paid positions by 10%. The precinct has a public plaza, so the plaza would attract additional programming.

In the future, competition from other leisure entertainment, screen media, and the Internet may have an impact on audience attendance. Networking and sharing

programs is predicted, as in the future there will be more simulcast productions, and collaborative programs in different time zones and geographic centres, so that a season premiering in London, can be screened in Cairns during the run.

#### Tanks Arts Centre:

We are open to approaches and trying new things. The sector needs a market analysis on exhibition sales. There is a strong music program, but we are looking to support other forms, circus, dance etc. We would be interested to continue the relationship with JCU SoCA following on from the 'Earthed' exhibition. Youth are future clients, and the Tanks are open to approaches and identifying opportunities for interaction. The Tanks has two JCU SoCA interns at present, as this is a great learning environment. The Tanks would repeat the collaboration with JCU SoCA students on a future project. It's not about the skills students learn at university, its about learning how to learn skills. Being confident in trying new things.

#### Cairns Regional Gallery:

There is a lack of gallery specific experience across a range of roles, and a lack of young male arts workers in the sector. There is also a lack of understanding in what role the Gallery plays within the Community.

In future we will continue to have a deeper engagement with education/ training and expect a greater international aspect at a local level. There will be greater use of technology in the promotion and display of exhibitions, and more event based or blockbuster style exhibitions, with a high degree of New Media, as technology will further alter how Visual Arts is produced and viewed.

This will be in response to techno savvy audiences demanding high quality technology based artworks. We will also focus on luring younger audiences with a greater understanding of Visual Arts through ongoing and successful public programs.

In five years time, graduates will need a high degree of understanding of technology and the creative use of its' application within the gallery environment, and a sound understanding of gallery practices.

#### Cairns Festival:

*"A strategic, simple act of communication, letter, email, phone call, can convey some opportunity, where that opportunity did not exist before. Where that relationship may not have even existed before. In terms of training in our field and risk taking, if you recognise an asset, or a partner, or a contributing force to what you're doing, engage with it, find something mutual, then you might have a partnership that you never expected, that's doing something magical."*

Eric Holowacz Producer

We are in the process of launching residencies for artists and artworkers, arts administrators, academics or arts management, who have leadership roles, and are recognised for their contribution to arts advancement. The concept is to make relationships with them that are not outcome focused by providing a residency

situation (without airfare) where they can bring their family, and have cultural immersion, and fall in love with the culture and environment. It's a Zen approach to residencies, where they might offer workshops, or get connected with an instructor, or not interact with the community, so there is no desired outcome, just a seed of the tropics. There is no formal application, as we don't want the usual suspects. The visiting guest would be sourced through reading national media coverage, good will in presenting what they're doing, or an award recipient. At that level, the stamp of industry peer recognition would be enough to offer an invitation for a residency. We would undertake a curatorial approach to find a good match of cultural producers and contributors, someone doing interesting work that may connect back to our community.

We are interested in leadership opportunities for regional, national and international players. The 'Arts Leaders Lunch' is a network of experience and dialogue with regular and informal meeting over good, inexpensive food, where deals can be made. They are regular events in the cultural calendar for the sector to meet.

'Arts Leadership Institute Australia' is a proposed professional development model for Cairns based on the South Carolina Executive Institute, a leadership initiative run by the government with university partnerships, for state agency executives, senior officers and non-profit organisations. Over an eighth month course, we met 2-3 times each month for 1-3 days training. Orientation had Key Note speakers, with the thrust of the Kennedy School of Government, the biggest repository of case studies for public policy in the world. The model used case studies of different scale to describe scenarios of where someone in a public setting, or leaderships with a problem, issue or circumstance, had a decision to make or weird thing happen. There were 1000's and 1000's of them written up and documented in an academic way. We had homework before every session to read up on them, and then have a facilitated discussion group, where there was dynamic discussing about what solutions there were to the case.

We have proposed to Council, hosting programmatic activities alongside development of the Cairns Entertainment Precinct. Arts leaders from around Australia can come to the tropics to do this process, and experience our arts and culture. If we give the Cairns Entertainment Precinct some extra ethos, then the building and the facility actually has a resonance around Australia with people who are in leadership roles, so there is lots of potential in relationship to the residency idea. The Precinct should have programmatic ideas drive it's development, rather than architectural or structural, and there is scope for this to happen through associations or visiting adjuncts, researchers, artists, academics, etc.

There is growth in Arts Management programs globally. This will assist capacity building for Not-For-Profits through assisting capabilities of trained personnel, governance and management. I'm unsure how that could play out here, however there is a possible link between universities, between JCU SoCA with programs being run at College of Charleston and University of North Carolina, to deliver through cross-pollination and developing a relationship and I (Eric Holowacz) can facilitate this.

The rapid change of technology will see people with technical skills as an ability and an interest get ahead, in a job or role, and that person will advance the role of the organisation once they get in. Without those skills, you are stuck in an era that no longer exists.

Three growth scenarios for the future:

1. GFC continues, economic climate is worse, and there is struggle to get people out and engaged.
2. New Cairns Entertainment Precinct, build onto the momentum there.
3. New Cairns Entertainment Precinct that's not been planned operationally or programmatically and it's a disaster in terms of efficacy, and then we will have to defend it, prop it up and make it worthwhile.

Our experience of live performance is going to be by way of 3D holographic presentation, either live in a group watching something live beamed in from the Paris Opera House, or watching a single solo performer in a tiny village somewhere in PNG, and we're sitting in our living room or the Tanks Arts Centre, because the technology will enable a life-like, live performance experience in any setting, and the control of that will be what arts administrators will be up to.

We will have close to real time or dial up able facilities, so that you can on demand it. This prediction is based on the development of the movie house (cinema) and other artforms. All the things developed for entertainment, arts and culture in the last 150 years, all had a specific infrastructure built around them, and managers and producers. So the arts managers field is going to grow in that way, so that they can operate, offer, and program that experience.

## State Government - Arts Queensland

Lighthouse grants: Partnership with Education Department to support indigenous education and training.

### Cairns Indigenous Art Fair:

CIAF is an Arts Queensland initiative to create the marketplace for ATSI art through retail and showcase. In its third year, it comes from the Queensland Governments 'Backing Indigenous Arts' program and focuses on high quality, contemporary indigenous arts. It was a four-year strategy from 2007-2011, and is committed to for another three years. CIAF works in conjunction with another program 'Building Skills and Opportunities'. In 2011 we had thirteen art centre, seven commercial art galleries, and that is unique in Australia in that it pairs and partners art galleries and commercial galleries. It's located here because of the high population of indigenous art, and vibrant art scene across all artforms, so CIAF is an investment from the Queensland Government in the growing Asia-Pacific region.

Cairns is on the verge of being discovered, so when the Cairns Entertainment Precinct happens, Cairns will see a flourishing from infrastructure of people coming here, and that for me is exemplified through the millennium arts funding of new infrastructure in Brisbane, and the impact that has had on the sector and global audiences.

To work in the sector you must have a three-year arts degree to gain a context and perspective, either in design or fine arts, and this will assist in gaining long-term employment in the industry. There are three hundred vocations around the creator, with the artist in the middle, such as event manager, stage manager, production manager, administrator, gallery attendant, security, registrars, art handlers, specialist careers, which are transferable internationally. Young people can do residencies overseas and gain networks and experience with new technologies. The Indigenous Curator Network supports relationships between art centres and tertiary education, to make sure there is a pathway for young people to go into the arts, other than being an artist.

The 2013 Symposium program is a key element of the art fair. That's where the arts market and arts buying public gains confidence in the product, by having key speakers, academic and non-academic artists and collectors coming together locally, nationally, internationally. Without that depth of discussion and presentation, you're just looking at a jumble sale. The tradition of the Symposium has attracted other forums such as Music, Dance, Public Art and the 'Second National Indigenous Theatre Forum'.

In 2011 we had the 'Collectors and Curators Program'. Our policy is to seek to increase local employment and engage local businesses. In the future there will be more of an international engagement, national visitors, industry visitors, increased attendance by buying public.

We are on the brink of something as the momentum gathers. Queensland is becoming known, for where valuable and collectable works of art can be found at a reasonable entry level. We are witnessing again something akin to the Papunya art movement in the eighties in Australia, except it's happening now with indigenous art in Queensland. So pick up art now, before the market value picks up.



The trend is toward sculpture and media works, and documenting artistic process through going out into country and documenting the creation of works (fibre as example), which adds value to the work, and that's something that didn't happen in the Northern Territory in the 80's, but its happening here. We are lucky to have Editions Tremblays here, the master print maker in residence in Cairns.

We are looking to positive ways of engaging with JCU SoCA for indigenous students and CIAF through forward planning and looking for partnerships, whether to raise money for a dedicated program, which is a positive stream pathway through JCU, to part employment with CIAF, with accreditation and work experience in the lead up to CIAF. Arts Queensland would be interested to formalise some kind of relationship into the future, and there is good support from a high-level within Arts Queensland for this.

At present we can see change and action being put into place at the Warf. The venue change assisted in attracting three thousand more visitors to CIAF in 2011, and one hundred and seventy artists from all over Queensland.

For the first time professional development funds for artists came from champions in government from different sectors, who had a relationship with regional locations that didn't always have an art centre. So CIAF had to devise a program that would suit and benefit the relationship, and worked with the creative regions to bring in artists for professional development opportunities.

We are currently in a conversation for a ten-year strategic plan - governance, annual or biannual discussions, entity, foundation, indigenous ownership and seeking Events Queensland sponsorship.

In 2011, 'Tracy' a JCU SoCA Cairns student, did a photography cadetship with CIAF and this was successful, because Tracy had the right level of maturity and interest, so CIAF is open to future student engagement.

#### Centre of Contemporary Art Cairns:

We are interested to develop strategies for ongoing, multi-channeled student interaction with the Centre through consultation with key JCU SoCA stakeholders including heads of department and lecturers:

- Open pathways for the cross promotion of events, projects and initiatives pertaining to the arts industry.
- Increased accessibility for JCU staff and students to view development processes and events at the Centre.
- Extend access to our high-quality venue to encourage and assist the innovative process of JCU arts students and staff.
- Strengthen, grow and promote the region's art industry through collaboration and community connectedness.
- Assist in research outcomes through the provision of resources including meeting areas, development space and knowledge exchange.

## National Government - Australia Council

David Sudmalis - Trend Predictions extrapolated from recent Australia Council research:

### Future Industry:

- Information Technology and Networks impact on production, dissemination and consumption of Art, particularly through the roll out of the NBN nationwide.

### Future market and audience:

- The Arts Education sector will undergo significant change when the Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority implements the National Curriculum in cooperation with State and Territory Governments from 2013. This will enable a significant growth opportunity for artists and artworkers to be able to share their knowledge and expertise in that sector.
- Continued rise in Transmedia and Cross-Disciplinary practice, particularly in the younger cohort of artists.
- Development of markets through active participation in the arts through the Education sector actively engaging with students and young people in self-determined artwork, in terms of audience and market development.

### Future employee skills and attributes:

- Collaborative and Consultative approach
- Ability to persuade through evidence, which underlies knowledge of evaluation methodology, and being up to date with literature internationally. Having a global context, then a national context, then a regional context and being able to synthesise those three contexts into a meaningful and sustainable practice, as it's a balance and a dynamic system.

### Profile of staff:

Given the importance of research, staff should have a research profile, or be actively supported to achieve one, and have a research fund upon which they can draw in order to present original research. Similarly, industry partnerships (in terms of creative work), grants and ARC funded research are essential. It can be a productive way of negotiating the global-national-regional terrain.

Following from our discussion of changes in production, dissemination and consumption of new work, it is critical that appropriately up-to-date and maintained IT is made available to staff and degree candidates. This includes appropriate discipline specific technology, as well as more general IT.

## **Recommendations**

These recommendations are not prioritised, and this should be taken under consideration by JCU SoCA Cairns staff.

**JCU SoCA Cairns seed strategic ideas in partnership with existing soft and hard infrastructure, and consider the role of the Cairns Institute in the equation.**

**JCU SoCA Cairns considers implementing a dedicated community liaison role for Cairns, charged with engagement programs and partnerships with key stakeholders and the sector.**

**JCU SoCA Cairns articulates its leadership role and value to the sector. Further engage the respondents of this study by providing key outcomes from this study.**

**JCU SoCA Cairns considers audience development and research opportunities through participation and / or partnering in the CIAF Symposium.**

**JCU SoCA Cairns partner with CIAF to create meaningful and manageable work placement opportunities for students to engage in.**

**JCU SoCA Cairns consider short courses in Technical Theatre and investigate partnering with local venues such as Cairns Convention Centre, Cairns Civic Theatre, Cairns Entertainment precinct, Centre of Contemporary Art Cairns to deliver student outcomes.**

**JCU SoCA Cairns consider a strategy to engage more indigenous people in gaining tertiary qualifications through developing partnerships with UMI, CIAF and the existing Creative Industry sector through an allocation of appropriate resources and an active investigation of interstate and international partners for this strategy.**

**JCU Soca Cairns makes a direct approach to the key stakeholders to inform them of their degree program and potential for Post Graduate study.**

**JCU SoCA Cairns considers focus on a project management or arts administrator program or strand.**

**JCU Soca Cairns consider maintaining strong existing relationships with the sector including Festival Cairns, Cairns Regional Council, Creative Partnerships, KickArts Contemporary Arts, Centre of Contemporary Arts, JUTE Theatre Company, Cairns Regional Gallery, Tanks Arts Centre, Djumbunji Fine Art Print Making, Canopy Artspace and REACH (Education Queensland Regional Excellence in Arts and Culture Hubs).**

## **References**

### **Oral Interviews on Telephone conducted by Rebecca Youdell**

Leslie Sparks, Manager, Cultural Services and Facilities, Cairns Regional Council, 11 October 2011

Kain Shepherd, Kanaka Creative, (web site design, camera operator, editor, graphic design); 28 September 2011

Phil Finkelstein, Manager, Cairns Civic Theatre; 6 October 2011

David Sudmalis, Manager - Programs and Arts and Education, Manager – Strategic Development and Evaluation, Community Partnerships, Australia Council for the Arts, 17 October 2011

Ingrid Hoffman, Director, KickArts Contemporary Arts and Djumbunji Press, 11 October 2011

Michael Kershaw, owner / operator, Canopy ArtSpace and Australian Art Print Network, 13 October 2011

Alex Woodcock, Faculty Manager – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Tropical North Queensland TAFE, 14 October 2011

Gayle Cargill, Executive Officer, Arts Nexus, 19 October 2011

Janet Parfenovics, Executive Officer, UMI Arts, 12 October 2011

Steven Lane, Creative Director, Mak Advertising, 19 October 2011

Eric Holowacz, Festival Producer, Cairns Festival, 5 October 2011

Ross Steele, General Manager, Cairns Convention Centre, 12 October 2011

Nat Trimarchi, Regional Manager, Arts Queensland, 19 October 2011

Avril Quail, Artistic Director, Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, 18 October 2011

Alison Copley, General Manager, Cairns Indigenous Art Fair, 12 October 2011

### **Written correspondence by Email with Rebecca Youdell**

Suellen Maunder, Artistic Director/Chief Executive Officer, JUTE Theatre Company, 12 October 2011

Janelle Williams, Trinity Bay State High School Visual Arts Head of Department, QSA State Panel Chair Visual Arts, REACH (Regional Excellence in Arts and Culture Hubs) Leadership Team, 26 October 2011

Andrea May Churcher, Director, Cairns Regional Gallery with staff, 25 October 2011

**Oral interview at the Tanks Arts Centre with Rebecca Youdell**

Chris Stannard, Curator – Visual Arts, Tanks Arts Centre, 5 October 2011

Summer Bland, Program and Events Coordinator, Tanks Arts Centre, 14 October 2011

## Resources

### State

Lighthouse Grants:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/indigenous/scholarships.html>

### National

Morgan Brady, Section Coordinator, Community Partnerships and ArtStart, Australia Council for the Arts, email to Rebecca Youdell, 14 October 2011

Links from the Australia Council that provide useful context for the study from a wider arts industry perspective.

**Artists' careers research summary:** good graphs and stats that summarize some of the **current industry trends**.

[http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/79072/Artist\\_career\\_research\\_summary.pdf](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/79072/Artist_career_research_summary.pdf)

Throsby report: **'Do you really expect to get paid'**

[http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/79108/Do\\_you\\_really\\_expect\\_to\\_get\\_paid.pdf](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/79108/Do_you_really_expect_to_get_paid.pdf)

**Summary of 'More than Bums on Seats':** Identifies trends in audiences that are continuing- especially the engagement with Indigenous content and the use of digital technology.

[http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/71256/Australian\\_Participation\\_in\\_the\\_Arts\\_summary.pdf](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/71256/Australian_Participation_in_the_Arts_summary.pdf)

**ArtStart Assessment meeting report.** This report is quite in-depth relative to other assessment meeting reports in order to give new graduates a clearer idea of the expectations upon them in making applications. It may provide some useful info to the **graduate attributes** questions

[http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/grants/amr/artstart2/pages/artstart\\_-\\_assessment\\_meeting\\_report\\_-\\_may\\_2011](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/grants/amr/artstart2/pages/artstart_-_assessment_meeting_report_-_may_2011)

Profiles of successful ArtStarters: also good for what the Australia Council's definition of 'funding for success' looks like in real terms- **graduate attributes**

<http://www.artstartgrant.com.au/ArtStarters>

Mak Advertising: Creative Director Steven Lane

1. "To grow sustainable and creatively, and to have a bit of fun while we do it."
2. Distance from major markets and influences.
3. Distance from major markets and influences. Being distanced from major service organizations i.e. Australian Graphic Design Association (AGDA), Australian Federation of Advertising Agencies (AFA), means you get no benefit from membership in the regions. Likewise we are far away from industry based training support and many seminars and workshops don't come to regional Australia.
4. Someone with passion that was prepared to go above and beyond to put in the hard work.
5. The ability to look creatively at problems from different perspectives.  
To be able to communicate effectively is critical.  
To be able to comprehend communication.  
The ability to write in a range of situations, grants, critiques, reports, responses to clients, copy - Print, internet, television, radio, ambient, outdoor.
6. Being regionally based, a lack of locally trained candidates, the low level of wages on offer in the regions compared to the cities.
7. Can learn in a commercial environment. Passion, Look for someone who's done a lot of research, understands the industry, understands the business specifically.
8. Recruitment approach: Typically we will have a graduate for the first couple of years after their graduations, beyond that we don't have the support necessary to offer training in services, and they will take off over seas to pursue their career, and come back here much later. In the beginning we offer experience on all levels, on all things, they get a much more immersive experience. So in the first two years they get a lot more experience in the agency than they would in a city, that skills them and equips them exceptionally well for travel, and for furthering their career elsewhere.
9. Well given the current situation. It's not looking good either, advertising is pretty much contracting, until we see growth in the rest of the economy, we're unlikely to see it in our industry. (RY: GFC?) (SL:) Insurances and advertising are often the first to suffer, but they should be the last, I mean cash rules.
10. I suspect with the convergence of media it's going to look radically different. Already we're seeing a shift from our commission-based structure to an exponential growth in online spending, which doesn't have the same underlying commissioned based structures. The business is going to have a major change. We're an accredited advertising agency, so we make the bulk of our money out of media placement and planning, and because we take on our client's media bills, and we guarantee them to the media outlets, we're paid a commission by the media. So if we place a television commercial for instance, we earn a commission on that. The client doesn't pay extra. The clients not charged, but that's how we make the bulk of our money. That model is radically in decline. We're having to move toward more of a service based structure, where we have to charge fees for that planning, which in other industries are expected for nothing. Change. People expect us to pitch and give them ideas, and tell them how they should run their advertising for nothing basically. (RY: unhelpful?) (SL) Unsustainable. So yeah, there's going to be some big change.

11. As far as the key trends, massive move online and into social media, big divergence of television offerings - of free to air television offerings, and probably a lot more subscriber paid TV courtesy of Internet Television, and we'll probably continue to see the decline of newspapers and magazines, apart from specialist areas. (RY: good, bad, way it is?) (SL) Look that's just the way it is, but what will survive will be niche things, great publications with small runs, you're seeing a lot of that in magazines at the moment. And all of it's still going to require great design and great creativity. The medium really doesn't matter that much. Just get a good story and know how to tell it effectively, and you'll still get noticed, you'll still get cut through and you'll still sell.

12. The attributes and skills will still be the same. It's the tools that we will use that may vary slightly, but I don't think the skills necessarily and the attributes will change much at all. (RY: They still need to be resourceful?) (SL:) Absolutely, and creative, I mean, when I began in this industry we used to use pens, scalpels, rulers and standard drawing boards, we still did the same job, just the tools have changed enormously over the years (RY: well you've done well to adapt to all those radical changes) (SL) yeah, well you've got to, but I've been on the bleeding edge many times.

13. We're engaging, we've taken on staff with expertise in areas we're we didn't have it previously, particularly in the online environment. We travel to conferences and do a lot of online research. We develop as many collaborative partnerships as we can with strategic partners. (RY: ongoing?) (SL:) Oh it's got to be. No matter what's happening in your industry, I think you can never assume that it's going to be the same.

Other notes:

We've employed quite a few JCU graduates over the years. We've watched the course chop and change many times. I certainly think it could use some direction. (RY: well there is quite a presence for media, photography and design at the moment) (SL:) Look our most recent graduate came out and she'd had good exposure to lots of different things, but unfortunately very little work on creative process. We can teach the tools in a commercial sense, but the ability to understand how to think, and how to approach a creative problem, is probably consistently where it's lacked over the years.





Launching in Cairns this month, Hussle Media brings a wealth of knowledge in the online arena and has plans to boost local businesses by helping them reach wider audiences through carefully planned online strategies.

Online Strategist and owner of Hussle Media, Alex Cordova, is a specialist in online strategy including website design, google indexing, search engine optimisation (SEO) and online marketing. He says there is a big gap in the Cairns market for businesses needing dynamic solutions. "We combine cutting edge design with well-planned solutions and show clients how to tap in to a range of demographics they have previously been unable to reach," Alex says. "Many businesses are missing out on a lot of potential traffic because they are not aware of the technologies available to them and how to use them." He explains that many businesses believe that having a website is enough of an online presence, but unless businesses utilise their website and other relevant social media outlets they are not really gaining the benefits of being online. Alex points out though that social media like Facebook and similar forums do not work for all businesses, and just creating a Facebook page does not benefit a business at all. He says the best thing a business can do is employ the services of an online strategist to review current online marketing, web presence and discuss what online strategies will work best for that business moving forward. Coming from Melbourne which has a big focus on technology and sub cultural elements, Alex says he wants to incorporate

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some of the relevant elements and solutions to Cairns. With a background in other mediums such as radio, event management and music, Alex and his team make it their motto to have their finger on the pulse and they would love to assist in creating a more dynamic Cairns.

"To truly understand the culture here we need to eat in the restaurants, drink in the bars, hang out with the locals and engage within the community, and that's what we have been doing," Alex says. "We need to be aware of all the subliminal elements that make Cairns as a community tick." Alex has been coming to Cairns on holiday for years and believes he is beginning to understand the dynamic of the city. He is very excited to launch Hussle Media here.

Alex says once they have established themselves in Cairns he would love to create an local online directory here which would be endorsed by the council and supported by all businesses, with this portal being used locally and by tourists to find relevant businesses, restaurants and other services. "With more people choosing to search online for services using their mobiles and laptops, it would be great for Cairns to have an instant and up-to-date directory that could be accessed anywhere in Australia, anywhere in the world... wouldn't that be great?"

*For more information on Hussle Media log on to [www.husslemedia.com.au](http://www.husslemedia.com.au)*