Challenges of Leadership in Arts Policy and Practice in Multicultural Australia

Cecelia Maria Cmielewski

BA, BDes, MBA

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Institute for Culture and Society

Western Sydney University

New South Wales

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and my grandchildren. To my parents who together instilled in me their love of education and the arts. To my mother, for continuing formal education through all stages of her life. I walk in your footsteps. To my father, for teaching me how to dance and refusing to teach me Polish, which meant I had to learn it myself. I honour the gusto of your life as a post-war migrant. To my grandchildren, who were born at the beginning and towards the end of this PhD. You are a constant source of joy.

Acknowledgements

Statement of Authentication

I certify that the work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.
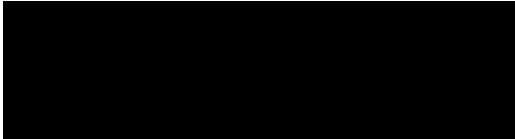
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Abbreviations

ABC   Australian Broadcasting Corporation

ABS   Australian Bureau of Statistics

ACE   Arts Council England

Australia Council   Australia Council for the Arts

ACMAC   Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee

AMA   Arts in a Multicultural Australia

AHRC   Australian Human Rights Commission

CAAP   Contemporary Asian Australian Performance

CALD   Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

CCAA   Centre for Contemporary Asian Art

DFAT   Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (federal)

MSC   Mapping Social Cohesion (Scanlon Foundation surveys)

MPA   Major Performing Arts companies

NESB   Non-English-Speaking Background

NSW   New South Wales

PWA   Playwriting Australia

QLD   Queensland

SA   South Australia

SBS   Special Broadcasting Service

S2M   Small to Medium arts organisations

UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

VIC   Victoria

WA   Western Australia

Abstract

Despite over thirty years of arts and cultural policy attention, there is a widespread view held by the public and artists alike that creative production does not reflect Australia's culturally diverse population. Australian society also displays increasing complexity which can no longer be confined to 'essentialised' or traditional definitions of ethnic communities. While this diversity and its emerging complexity can be 'celebrated' as a source of creativity and innovation, it can also give rise to social, political and creative challenges. A key challenge that remains for the arts sector is its ability to support the creative expression of cultural difference. One measure of inclusive creative production regards the participation of artists of non-English speaking background ('NESB'), a problematic term discussed in the thesis, in contributing to cultural formation. Yet there are half as many 'NESB' artists compared to those of other professions participating in the workforce. While under-representation is an issue for management in the arts sector, the question of representation also benefits from being understood more broadly beyond the narrow sense of multiculturalism as a tool to manage cultural difference.

Despite their low presence in the arts, 'NESB' artists find and generate support for their practice through creative, institutional and organisational domains which are critical for effecting sustained change in the arts environment. I argue that 'friction' occurs when these domains encounter cultural difference. The presence of friction can inspire creativity but also needs to be carefully handled. The ability to gain 'trust' through this process gives rise to creative, institutional and organisational leadership.

The thesis questions the relationship between Australian arts policies and the fostering of creative practice of 'NESB' artists. This relationship is broached by considering creative,

institutional and organisational leadership with a focus on the final Arts in a Multicultural Australia (AMA) policies of 2000 and 2006. Creative leadership refers to the work of artists who generate new developments in diverse creative content and generate opportunities for other artists. Institutional leadership refers to the internal policy processes and peers who work with the Australia Council. Organisational leadership refers to those in positions of influence in funded arts organisations to provide resources and support to 'NESB' artists. The term developed in this thesis of a 'multicultural arts milieu' presents an alternative given the current absence of arts policy to explore the environment around multicultural arts practices.

This thesis explores the relationship between visionary aspects of practice and policy. The leadership modes that are relevant to the arts in a multicultural Australia include transactional, transformative, distributive and relational leadership, all of which benefit from processes of 'attunement' and 'accompaniment' to realise effective creative co-production. The research demonstrates the crucial role of creative leaders and how they work with the 'mainstream' while maintaining their creative integrity and independence to generate a 'virtuous' circle of change. I argue that it is the 'NESB' artists who lead change in the arts sector. I also argue that creative and organisational leadership working in partnership make creative use of 'friction' and develop the necessary 'trust' to generate the 'traction' for a supportive multicultural arts milieu.

Introduction

Despite over thirty years of arts and cultural policy attention to cultural diversity, there is a view held by the public and artists alike that Australia's creative production does not reflect our multicultural society (Australia Council 2014; Screen Australia 2016). As well as fulfilling traditional roles of creative expression, art is called on to contribute to social questions of national identity, social cohesion and intercultural understanding (Van de Vyver and Abrams 2017), the importance of which often stems from local and global issues of social discord (Ang quoted in Hore-Thorburn 2017; Soutphommasane 2017). At the centre of this thesis are the artists and their practices that explore cultural difference in Australia, and which also provide insights into the arts policies that aimed to support them.

As Jakubowicz and Ho argue, and this thesis will examine, the key challenge that remains for the arts sector is to support "creativity that is inclusive and produces absorbing and rich representations of the reality of Australian life" (2013: 286). Their comment, however, implicitly echoes a kind of utopianism because of the "utopian impulse or tendency present in many of our foundational works of art and literature" to the extent that many in the arts "think art makes the world a better place" (Noble 2012: 12). The echo can also be found in individual experiences of migration:

> once remembered cultural landscapes became increasingly reconstructed as social Utopias. In a process that shares similarities with Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities", migrants used the past to consolidate contemporary identities and norms that offered empowerment in the Australian context (Mason 2010: 7).

The 'imagined communities' went onto become a socio-political vision:

of multiculturalism that contained an implicit form of cosmopolitan humanism –
which Lippman [founding chair of Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria] defined
in terms of 'empathy of interaction' (Papastergiadis 2013: 6)

This thesis explores the modes of leadership that enable the interactions of arts practice and
cultural difference. Moreover, the thesis asks us to think about identity beyond the simple
evocations of the nation found in much cultural policy such as *Creative Australia* (Australian
Government 2013). The theme of leadership frames this thesis' exploration of the
relationship between practice and policy and the environment that surrounds the artist and
their work. The leadership roles emerge through the exploration of the practices and the
issues and experiences faced by artists of non-English speaking background ('NESB'). Most
of the Australia Council's "multicultural arts" policies were aspirational statements to elicit a
vision of artistic participation that is informed by and which reflects society.

This thesis starts from the premise that such artistic participation is not simply a
matter of the individual artists' intentions, nor having better policy documents per se, but
involves big questions of leadership and collaboration within the sector. This thesis explores
the leadership challenges to realise those visions. The fostering of an arts policy and practice
which captures the aesthetic and symbolic expressions of a multicultural society, however, is
not necessarily a 'smooth' process. Critiquing the notion of 'unity-in-diversity', Ang
suggests paying "detailed attention to the very *process* of creating a sense of 'we' in the face
of our heterogeneity" (italics in original, 2003a: 33). Detailed attention to the processes of
art-making and multicultural arts-policy making are explored in this thesis across three
distinct domains of leadership to foster a real ethos of inclusion within the arts.

The Australian Human Rights Commission estimates that "32 percent of Australians are from "non-Anglo-Celtic backgrounds" (Soutphommasane 2016). However, the participation rates of 'NESB' artists are half those of the 'NESB' participation in the general workforce (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 143). This question of under-representation should certainly be an issue for management in the arts sector, but the question of representation would also benefit from being understood more broadly, rather than in the narrow sense of multiculturalism as a tool to manage cultural difference (Rizvi 2003: 231-233). Despite their low presence in the arts, 'NESB' (a problematic term discussed more fully below) artists find and generate support through the creative, institutional and organisational environments in which they practice. These factors led me to frame this PhD research around creative, institutional and organisational leadership – domains which are critical for effecting sustained change in the arts environment.

Creative leadership refers to artists who generate new developments in creative content and expand the potential for others to do so. Institutional leadership occurs through government and their agencies, in this case the Australia Council, specifically in terms of the policies in place towards the arts in a multicultural Australia and the disbursement of funds. In the context of this thesis, organisational leadership refers to those in positions of influence in arts organisations funded by the Australia Council and how resources and support are made available for 'NESB' artists – the most significant producers in the area of multicultural arts. These three domains encapsulate most arts activity and form the basis of the empirical research for this thesis.

The primary research focus of this thesis examines the relationship between Australian arts and cultural policies and fostering the creative practices of 'NESB' artists, particularly in relation to the federal government's arts agency, the Australia Council, and their AMA 2000 and 2006 policies. It approaches this relationship through creative use of

'friction' and the ways in which gaining 'trust' can generate the 'traction' to increase culturally diverse art practice. This thesis also explores whether Australian multicultural arts policies enabled the 'mainstream' to change and whether artists of NESB continue to work in marginalised spaces. 'Mainstream' in this thesis refers to those, usually, major arts organisations within the subsidised arts sector who receive the bulk of government and philanthropic funds and whose programming is generally drawn from the 'Western' artistic 'heritage' canon. This thesis presents and analyses the range of creative tensions and artistic opportunities that are produced in an Australian multicultural society that has increasingly become the social 'mainstream' (Ang, Brand, Noble and Wilding 2002: 4). At a deeper level, 'mainstream' points to the "workings of power and privilege [within] prevailing structural norms" (Rizvi 2003: 234) which, in the arts, are viewed as "'establishment' arts organisations" (Khan 2010: 184). Khan identifies the issue of multicultural arts within the 'mainstream' context as "a "normative and problematic one [which] complicates questions of what multicultural arts are, and who they are ultimately for" (2010: 190).

The relationship to the 'mainstream', in turn, prompted questions about the ways in which NESB artists maintain their arts practices and how they draw on their hybrid and multiple identities to describe, influence and/or critique Australia's cultural landscape. These topics ultimately led to a focus on the modes of leadership required to enable the creative expression of the complexity of identity in contemporary Australia.

Relevance of the Research

Published research has paid attention to broader questions of the arts in a multicultural Australia in the 1990s (Gunew and Rizvi 1994; Hawkins 1993: 86-88; Blonski 1992) and to culturally diverse audience development strategies in the 2000s (Kapetopoulos 2004; Rentschler 2006). Artists face issues in terms of their identity, creative production and

relationship to their discipline fields and organisational infrastructures, all of which are further complicated by a perception that 'multicultural arts' are pigeonholed by 'mainstream' organisations as community arts. Kalantzis and Cope detail the impact of confusions and contradictions of the range of terminologies around 'excellence' in the arts "showing the concept of excellence in the arts to be a contested one" because elite art was considered the domain of Anglo-Australians (1994: 13). Their hope that Australia was at a crucial turning point towards cultural inclusion in the arts twenty years ago is yet to be realised. Since 2000, there has been limited research published on the connections between national multicultural arts policy and the fostering of multicultural arts practices.

The empirical research for this thesis included interviews with artists, cultural practitioners, former Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee (ACMAC) members, and senior arts bureaucrats. There was a focus on the experiences of creative practitioners, an examination of institutional practices, and an analysis of the effectiveness and impact of policy aims. A bureaucrat at the Australia Council may see the policy as imperfect but effective, but cultural practitioners may point to the lack of diversity in the arts available to the public, while artists working in the multicultural arts may express frustration at the slow pace of change in the arts sector when it comes to normalising their inclusion.

The resulting tensions paint a picture of a lack of comprehension and/or relevance of multicultural arts policy within the creative sector. This includes the apparent cyclical nature (not unlike a vicious cycle) of debate around the naming, strategic focus and positioning (mainstream or not) of multicultural arts. The public record of the attempts to address issues across multicultural arts is incomplete. This uneven documentation results in limited historical memory or legacy in the field. National research with a dedicated focus on 'NESB' artists and the arts in a multicultural Australia has not been published since 1994 (Gunew and Rizvi 1994). This thesis aims to address that gap by reprising the work undertaken through

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the Arts in a Multicultural Australia (AMA) 2000 and AMA 2006 policies. The thesis also explores the current state of multicultural arts practices in Australia, critiques the relevance of past and present arts policies, and unravels some of the complexities that 'NESB' artists encounter, along with their creative and strategic responses.

The issues of intermittent leadership and paucity of historical knowledge in the development of multicultural arts practices in Australia continues a cycle of frustration at the lack of recognition of, and engagement with, artists working in this sphere. Via a framework of creative, institutional and organisational leadership, this thesis aims to provide ways to think through some of the 'messes' that frequently accompany multicultural arts policies. This thesis addresses elements of art-making and policy-making together, and considers whether cultural policies have embraced "multiculturalism as an aesthetic issue" (Rizvi 2003: 135). It also asks whether the complexity of multiculturalism challenges a 'smooth' arts policy process.

Exploring the Issues

This thesis explores the determination and creative persistence required of 'NESB' artists to navigate their practices, and the 'lag' between arts policy and practitioner experience. Tsing describes the need for dynamic small gestures amongst groups and individuals to disrupt the large-scale demise of the planet. Addressing cosmopolitanism and complexity, she notes that the "challenge of cultural analysis is to address both the spreading interconnections and locatedness of culture" (Tsing 2005: 122). This thesis uses the angle of modes of leadership to explore the agency of artists who connect across cultures to 'locate' their multicultural art practices.

Creative, Institutional and Organisational Leadership

Drawing on the research literature, the thesis identifies three domains of leadership which are useful for examining the challenges and opportunities in the relationship between the arts and cultural difference, and to analyse the possibilities that enhance a milieu that is more supportive of artists whose work contributes to 'multicultural arts' practice. These three domains – creative, institutional and organisational – entail a range of leadership modes, such as transactional, transformative, distributed and relational leadership (Hewison and Holden 2011: 28-40). The thesis will explore how those modes are used in conjunction with processes of "accompaniment" (Lynd and Lynd 2009: 93) and "attunement" (Gibson 2005: 272-273), and how they are relevant to many NESB artists in their collaborative practices.

Friction, Trust and Traction

The thesis uses notions of friction, trust and traction as conceptual tools to discuss the issues and aspirations encountered by artists across creative, institutional and organisational domains of the arts. These ideas emerged throughout the empirical research and reviews of federal policies directed towards the arts in a multicultural Australia. The agency of the artists and cultural practitioners who exercise and/or experience creative, institutional and organisational leadership is explored in the thesis through how they exploit frictions and gain trust to generate longer-term traction. I suggest that translating the friction into longer term traction sees trust act as a hinge to enable change across the arts.

The thesis explores the constraints experienced by 'NESB' artists who, in their creative leadership roles, can be typecast on stage and within their artform practice. The thesis explores how the friction arising from these constraints is used to develop intercultural practices that strive for creative and cultural autonomy. The notion of trust is also explored across all three domains as a marker of how artists and cultural practitioners engage and

participate in multicultural arts. The moments of change towards greater support for the arts in a multicultural Australia are identified through the notion of traction.

Who is a Non-English Speaking Background Artist?

The issue of terminology, beyond that of 'artist', is a vexed one for artists and institutions working broadly in the area of 'multicultural arts'. Artists can hold significant ambivalence towards different types of labels, including those of 'NESB' (which at times distinguished migrants as 'NESB1' and children of a migrant as 'NESB2') and 'multicultural arts'. I have made the deliberate decision to employ these 'unfashionable' terms of 'NESB' and 'multicultural arts' throughout the thesis.

Whilst 'NESB' is a policy term introduced in the 1970s and abandoned by many in recent decades, it remains useful as a description. It is a category that is contested both in itself and as an artefact of social practices and government policies. It is problematic because it frames people in the 'negative', by identifying a person only via a language that is not their first tongue. It becomes even more problematic when considering that their children, who were born in Australia (NESB2), may only speak English. 'Language Background Other Than English' (LBOTE) is preferred by education departments, while elsewhere the government's most widely-used term is 'culturally and linguistically diverse' (CALD or CaLD). CALD is problematic because, while it ostensibly refers to diversity across populations (that is – everyone), it has come to stand for groups of 'non-mainstream' or 'culturally diverse' people in the same way 'ethnic' or 'NESB' might have been used in the past. Artists' ambivalence about their 'NESB classification' also stems from perceived expectations that they should fit into a prescribed, at times simplistic, creative mould. Many migrant artists (and children of migrants) identify themselves through their 'hyphenated' and

'ethnic minority' backgrounds such as Greek-Australian or Polish-Australian which can also encompass the generational aspect of migration. While the 'hyphen' is appropriate for individuals and groups of ethnically similar artists, such as those from Arabic-Australian backgrounds, it cannot be applied more broadly. The collective genres can be described broadly as 'multicultural arts' but individuals are rarely comfortable being referred to as 'multicultural artists'.

A recurring challenge for the development of multicultural arts policies is based in the fluidity of artists' identities and the dynamic evolving nature of Australian society through emerging ethnic groups. By contrast, other demographic groups to receive attention for 'inclusion' in the arts are somewhat fixed and more easily identified. A young person is defined as under 26, a regional artist is defined by their residential postcode, an artist with a disability can choose to identify as such, gender options have increased to incorporate a broad range of possibilities, and an Indigenous (or 'First Nation') artist is recognised through their tribal lineage and peers (Australia Council n.d.).

The criticism of 'NESB' is that it reinforces 'othering' because it positions people in a negative category – by lacking the 'positive' attribute of having English as a first language. Babacan suggests that this leads to a form of "relative exclusion" from access to resources and the associated cultural sense of belonging to the general community (quoted in Sawrikar and Katz 2009: 4). The term is also criticised for combining those who are economically disadvantaged with those who are not, and as such, does not assist with monitoring resource distribution with a view to ensuring social justice outcomes (Sawrikar and Katz 2009). Confusion can also arise when Indigenous language speakers are considered because many do not use English as their first language; this means the 'NESB artists' label can equally incorporate 'First Nations' artists, adding an extra dimension of complexity. A further complicating factor is that ESB are uniformly positioned as 'white', which leaves non-white

English speakers querying how they might be 'included'. An alternative view which supports the term 'NESB', suggests that it remains a useful category because it is factual – it states the power differential in play. English is clearly identified as the source of power, and those without it are considered to be lacking, although this becomes problematic for the NESB2 artist, whose first language may be English.

Shifting identities (Ang 2011) are part of the fluid cultural milieu within which NESB artists operate that also defy and complicate any satisfactory description. Initially artists who were migrants from non-Protestant Anglo origins (Gertsakis 1994) were called 'migrant', 'ethnic', 'multicultural', then 'NESB' and now 'CALD'. While these terms have each been derided and critiqued in turn, the absence of any term at all is less than ideal, particularly with regards to a multicultural arts policy framework. In considering the option to abandon the (at the time, current) term of 'NESB', Papastergiadis, Gunew and Blonski sought to establish the value of a name.

> A name is like a container which one can accept and work within, or rebel against. To have no name is to be dropped into a vacuum, to wallow without markers. It disables rather than enables cultural intervention (1994: 128).

The authors pursued the option to reclaim the term 'NESB', so as to "reinscribe the negativity" (1994: 128). This process aimed to: identify the excluded category; legitimise viewpoints, experiences and practices that are not part of the dominant arts discourse; transform the cultural base through critical interpretations and new agendas and indicate cultural change by acting as a bridge between the "invisible and visible forms within a national culture" (Papastergiadis *et al.* 1994: 129). These authors also value the distinguishing terms of NESB1, those born overseas, and NESB2, who are descendants of immigrants and who maintain the linguistic and cultural links of their parents. The authors

evoke the trope of the journey to explain a continual process of change. For the NESB1, they claim the journey is associated with other dichotomies such as: "home/exile; severance/reconciliation", and they describe the NESB2 artist as inhabiting:

> a more ambiguous zone of neither home nor exile. If we could say that the perspective of NESB1 is predominantly bi-focal, then we would say that NESB2 is multivalent. Their pattern of engagement will be more complex, subtle, layered with identity formation no longer emanating primarily from the decision to leave one place, but from a mixture of inherited values and projected stereotypes (Papastergiadis *et al.* 1994: 130).

This description captures the sense of the inter-generational processes which contribute to a dynamic, multicultural Australia. It is a depiction yet to be captured by alternative terms. 'Migrant' could be used, as it is also an accurate term. Ang describes Hall and Gilroy, two key UK thinkers, as "post-colonial migrants" (2003b: 9). However, in Australia, this term is less accurate as an overall majority of migrants have arrived from the UK as native English speakers. This led to the introduction of the term 'ethnic' and its artistic equivalent 'folkloric' into bureaucracies, both of which became derogatory terms in 'contemporary arts' lexicon (Khan, Wyatt and Yue 2014: 7).

The term 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse' or 'CALD' was developed to address some of the issues arising from the 'negative' positioning of NESB and came into official use in 1996 (Sawrikar and Katz 2009: 2). The perception is that CALD:

> does not fix a characteristic from which minority ethnic groups deviate, and so it can avoid the relational exclusion and divisiveness NESB may produce for minority ethnic groups (Sawrikar and Katz 2009: 3).

Sawrikar and Katz suggest that CALD differentiates the range of cultural and linguistic groups in Australia. However, the term can also be seen as not providing any real level of nuance, because CALD, by its very openness, includes everyone who has a culture and a language.

> CALD's acknowledgment of the uniqueness of different (minority) groups detracts from the fact that in its common use, the term still refers to the same groups as NESB – those who are different from the majority; it is simply less transparent about the fact that there is a majority from which others are seen to differ from (Sawrikar and Katz 2009: 6).

Curiously, the authors suggest an even clumsier term, "Australians Ethnically Diverse and Different from the Majority (AEDDM)", to address the issues of inclusion (Sawrikar and Katz 2009: 10). This term faces the same issues in that it identifies people on the basis of being 'different from the majority'. Trying to identify a subject by tying the language into knots compounds the frustration for the subject and does little to creatively engage the general population, decision-makers or bureaucrats.

The simple term, 'minority', has merits, in part because it is not an acronym, but also because it is more easily understood and acknowledges difference as distinct from the mainstream majority of a population. It appears to be less awkward because it does not draw attention to specific characteristics of a person. However, this is also where the term can generate confusion because it does not identify the ways in which someone is a minority. 'Minority' can include, for example, people with different physical and intellectual abilities, or those who live outside urban centres. It carries similar overtones to the term 'cultural diversity' – in that it is used to describe many groupings and situations and has come to be equated with multiculturalism. As Gunew observes, however, the function of the term "cultural diversity" is one of assimilation; it obviates the need for understanding because it "signals a refusal to examine difference in terms of incommensurability" (2003: 178). She

suggests Homi Bhabha's term of "cultural difference" as a useful alternative (Gunew 2003: 178). Of note, 'cultural diversity' has potential to create particular confusion within the arts context, because artforms also produce cultural diversity of *form* as they evolve. This is the reason for my use of the term 'multicultural arts' instead – to indicate arts practices that arise out of the creative potential afforded by multicultural Australia.

At times, the term "diaspora" (Ang 2003b) has been deployed in the service of the arts (Artlink 2011) to refer to artists caught up in global migration flows. It is useful to consider this term because it suggests the productive potential of members of the diaspora, as well as the complex relationships that must be navigated across multiple locations. While it encompasses the global experience for many, it is, however, without the necessary detail for understanding service delivery needs of specific settler groups and their particular situations within an arts context. As Ang suggests, the idea of the 'diaspora' may not incorporate the possibilities of local dynamics:

> The hybridising context of the global city brings out the intrinsic contradiction locked into the concept of diaspora, which, logically, depends on the maintenance of an apparently natural essential identity to secure its imagined status as a coherent community (Ang 2003b: 8).

In Australia, most migrant 'NESB' artists work as individuals or in small groups, and are rarely part of a 'coherent' ethnic group via which to maintain their 'marginal' status. Two examples of organisations with broad ethnic bases (while still retaining some specificity) are the Centre for Contemporary Asian Art (CCAA) (Centre for Contemporary Asian Art n.d.) and Contemporary Asian Australian Performance (CAAP) (Contemporary Asian Australian Performance 2016) who no longer emphasise their 'hyphenated identities' but prefer to emphasise their contemporary practices.

A term that has yet to be matched in Australia, is *métissage,* derived from Caribbean critic Edouard Glissant's "concept of braiding diverse cultural forms" (Gunew 2003: 190). When applied to the arts, *métissage* poetically evokes the interweaving of cultural difference through art practices, but still does not quite address the issue of terminology to describe individual artists.

'NESB' remains in circulation in Australia and, for some, enables self-identification for such purposes as monitoring levels of participation and assessing the distribution of resources. The cultural economist, David Throsby, for example, uses 'NESB' in longitudinal research into artists' incomes in Australia to maintain consistency in research parameters, and also because it is technically accurate (Throsby and Hollister 2003; Throsby and Zeldnick 2010; Throsby and Petetskaya 2017). Similarly, Sawrikar and Katz argue that:

> the word 'diverse' in the term CALD carries an emotive valence for people which the factual 'language in country of origin' does not. This valence is arguably detrimental to Australia's capacity to embrace itself as a multicultural nation (2009: 5-6).

I chose to use the 'unfashionable' term 'NESB artist' in this thesis. With this choice, I intend to incorporate those artists who are either born overseas whose first language is not English (NESB1: first generation) or have at least one parent whose first language is not English (NESB2: second generation). This term is less confusing and cumbersome than some of the other, more generalised descriptors. But one of my key reasons is that, like the pejorative colloquial term, 'wog', 'NESB' "reinscribes the negativity" (Papastergiadis *et al.* 1994: 129). Similarly, in writing of 'multicultural arts', I refer to art produced by a majority of first- or second-generation NESB artists. In particular, I am keen to be able to experience on any given day, in any given venue, the work of individual artists whose non-Anglo creative heritage and ways of creating are able to be expressed. I prefer to see more 'NESB' artists

than ESB artists with creative control in multicultural, cross-cultural and intercultural creative pursuits. These issues contribute to the concept of what I describe as a 'multicultural arts milieu' which is explored as an alternative to arts policy to encompass the elements that can be conducive, or not, in the support of multicultural arts practices. The concept assists with the aim of identifying some possible models that develop a supportive milieu.

Method

Inspired by Ang's call for "culturally intelligent researchers" (2011: 780), a mixed research method was used to explore aspects of the multicultural arts milieu. The mixed method included sourcing published data, unpublished Australia Council commissioned reports regarding the arts in a multicultural Australia, unpublished internal documents from several ACMAC meetings, online and radio media, and also carrying out semi-structured, qualitative interviews which produced four in-depth case studies. Quantitative data was drawn from Australia Council published annual reports, strategy planning documents and commissioned longitudinal studies into artists' incomes. Over the four years of this thesis research, I submitted regular requests to the Australia Council, asking for access to their data on grants paid to 'NESB' artists and multicultural arts organisations. These requests were all denied. As one of the designers of the system to collect, enter, store and extract data, I am aware that accessing this data should have been eminently possible. However, rather than lodge an FOI (Freedom of Information) request, I decided instead to extrapolate data from information the institution was prepared to publish. The textual data relevant to the AMA 2000 and 2006 policies was drawn from a combination of: Australia Council annual reports, unpublished minutes provided by former members of ACMAC, and unpublished 'internal' reports provided by the consultants commissioned to review policy and direction. I knew of the existence of these reports because I was involved in commissioning them. These latter texts

are a rich archive which attest to the levels of activity over the two final AMA policies. By incorporating these documents within this thesis, I hope to encourage more research into the breadth and legacies of those policies.

The Research Participants

The interview data provided the experiences and insights of NESB artists, cultural practitioners, policy makers and arts managers. The selection of artists interviewed was an attempt to encompass the spectrum of the art disciplines as well as provide some national overview. I chose to concentrate on performing artists as the issues of participation based on language and identity appeared more significant for them, borne out by arts participation research (Throsby and Hollister 2003). The interviews took place during 2015 and in a range of locations chosen by the interviewee. Around half were recorded in places of work, either offices or artists' studios, just under half were in coffee shops, and four were via telephone to London, Canberra and Darwin. Six former ACMAC members responded to my email inviting them to reflect on their experiences, as did Annette Blonski, who documented multicultural arts in the early 1990s.

The range of backgrounds of each of the interviewees reflects their diverse cultural heritages as well as the diversity of their arts practices. Many of them juggle "portfolio" careers, including a variety of casual employment roles, in order to manage and support their artistic careers (Stevenson, Rowe, Caust and Cmielewski 2017: 11). Each artist has had a unique trajectory, many arcing over decades, yet their experiences often coalesced around similar concerns.

Twelve independent artists from different disciplines and stages in their careers were interviewed for this study. Six established, two mid-career and four emerging artists agreed to be interviewed. These were: theatre and established media practitioner, S. Shakthidharan;

established visual artist, Hossein Valamanesh; mid-career dancer, choreographer and actor, Annalouise Paul; established composer, Konstantine Koukias; mid-career media practitioner, Panos Couros; established actor, director and executive officer, Annette Shun Wah; established actor and radio presenter, Lex Marinos and established comedy script writer Deborah Klika. Four emerging artists whom I had not previously met were videographer, Sean Ly; playwright, Anna Lau, media practitioner, Vinh Nguyen and community arts worker, Sandar Tun. These 'emerging' artists are within the first five years of their practice, and were included in this study to gauge whether their perceptions and experiences were palpably different from those of established 'NESB' artists who have been working for several decades. The emerging artists provided a rigorous assessment of what was required for them to be able to continue as artists.

The interviewees also included former and current bureaucrats – the former CEO of the Australia Council, Jennifer Bott, and the Executive Director of Arts Funding at the Australia Council, Frank Panucci. The current Australia Council CEO only approved an interview with Panucci, despite my requests for interviews with other staff members. I also interviewed the Senior Manager for Diversity at Arts Council England, Abid Hussain. Cultural practitioners also interviewed included: CEO of Carriageworks, Lisa Havilah; CEO of Playwriting Australia, Tim Roseman; former arts organisation and artistic director Nicholas Tsoutas; director of England's Clore Leadership Programme Sue Hoyle, and consultant Pino Migliorino. In total, I undertook 21 interviews with artists, bureaucrats, cultural practitioners and the consultant to capture a diverse range of ethnicities and professional perspectives on the relationship between the AMA 2000 and 2006 policies and the fostering of NESB artists. All biographies are listed in appendix 1.

My Role at the Australia Council

My personal interest in this research is based on over twenty-five years working in the national arts sector and my experience as an advocate and policy maker in the area of multicultural film and arts practice. I was employed by the South Australian Media Resource Centre from 1990-1998 to increase the participation of multicultural practitioners and audiences, and then at the Australia Council from 1998-2011 to develop and implement the AMA policy. I managed the cycles of the AMA 2000 and 2006 policies. My personal contacts in this space are wide-ranging, and I am encouraged by the genuine interest in this research from both, former colleagues and the many artists I encountered. I am in a unique position to articulate the context and content of the two AMA policy cycles, but rather than discuss this information from an autobiographical perspective, I chose to gather the reflections and experiences of those artists who remain active in the multicultural arts sector, and to aerate the reports and initiatives that appear to have lain dormant for the past several years.

The ease of access to, and communication with, the range of artists and cultural practitioners who provided the empirical data was possible through my many years of working in the field – as a visual and media artist, curator, arts administrator, and over a decade as a senior policy officer and researcher at the Australia Council. The interviewees were very forthcoming, borne out of the collegiate and decades-long relationships we had developed. Similarly, I was able to establish a quick rapport with the emerging artists whom I had not previously met, by finding common ground based on the trusting relationships I had had with their mentors.

I count myself fortunate to have been able to work directly with four chairs of ACMAC and more than fifty artists who took on engaged governance roles as ACMAC members during my time with the Australia Council. These experiences are complemented

by my understanding of the roles played by the consultants and commentators with whom I worked to develop and review the effectiveness of AMA. This knowledge puts me in an exceptional position to be able draw on the generosity of those contacts and to incorporate unique internal content to inform this research. The impetus for me to undertake this research, four years after having left that career, came from a curiosity about whether any of that work had been effective. The impetus which began as a curiosity was buoyed by the interest from the multicultural arts sector, alongside their repeated concerns about a lack of change and their view that it was important for this research to be done.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter I sets the social and cultural frame of multicultural arts, the case for addressing multiculturalism in the arts, and discusses how the UK and Australia have approached this policy area. This chapter identifies the issues of creativity and the participation rates of NESB artists. It concludes with a detailed description of the range of art practices which have emerged as innovative responses to multicultural Australia.

Chapter II explores a repertoire of leadership modes which have the potential to improve the situations of NESB artists and their multicultural arts practices. The chapter addresses the themes of friction, trust and traction and analyses the three domains of creative, institutional and organisational leadership.

Chapter III analyses the issues around policy formation and presents a brief history and context of AMA. The AMA 2000 and AMA 2006 policies are reviewed, along with a close reading of the structural role of ACMAC. This chapter fills in the historical gap in multicultural arts policy and finds that the AMA 2006 policy appears to be the last following the adoption of the Cultural Engagement Framework.

Chapter IV brings the thesis into the present through my empirical research and delves into the issues still being experienced by 'NESB' artists. It explores the ways they articulate the need for trust and the role of network formation as a way to sustain and extend their practices. A case study of *Mother Tongue* by choreographer and dancer Annalouise Paul illustrates creative persistence and experimentation of intercultural performance.

Chapter V analyses some of the issues experienced by 'NESB' artists who participate in governance roles at the Australia Council. The chapter examines the challenging demands of the post-ACMAC peer roles, as well as the issues of grant allocations to 'CALD' artists and organisations. In this chapter, the valuable role held by ACMAC of stimulating critical discourse about multicultural arts practices is reviewed, as are the failed attempts to establish a flagship company for the multicultural arts sector.

Chapter VI analyses the ways in which two forms of creative and organisational leadership working in tandem have the capacity to generate longer term traction for a supportive multicultural arts milieu. Three cases form the backbone of this chapter: Shakthidharan's epic play *A Counting and A Cracking* with Belvoir Street Theatre; the multicultural arts touring work of *kultour*; and the shining example of the *Lotus Playwriting Project* (CAAP 2017), a partnership between CAAP and Playwriting Australia, which demonstrates change can occur relatively quickly. The findings in this chapter include a 'road map' of the different stages to achieve the case study achievements.

Conclusion

It is both individuals and groups of artists who contribute significantly to an Australian multicultural arts milieu. This in turn generates and creates the space and provenance for more art to be made and seen. This is how a genre like multicultural arts either maintains its autonomy or moves into the mainstream. A continuous history of production and presentation

can shift the boundaries of, in this case, multicultural arts, to become the 'mainstream'. It could but does not yet, follow, that because we are a multicultural society, the art that is produced here reflects our society. This thesis 'details' several 'processes' that can be scaled up or down and are found in the persistence of artists and arts organisations which focus on multicultural arts practices to improve the multicultural arts milieu.

Chapter I

Advancing Multicultural Arts: Policies, Problems and Practice

Introduction

Global reality is one where shifting identities, mass migration and refugee movements are the norm. Since World War II, about 7 million immigrants from over 150 countries have settled in Australia, resulting in a linguistic and cultural diversity which is amongst the highest in the developed world; it is a population trend which looks set to continue. There are over 300 languages spoken in Australia with more than one-fifth (21percent) of the population speaking a language other than English at home (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017). It is estimated that 32 percent of Australians are now from non-Anglo-Celtic backgrounds (Soutphommasane 2016).

Policies of multiculturalism were developed in response to the rapid demographic changes in Australia's population and have been distinguished by three distinct approaches (Ho 2013: 31). The social justice approach focusses on the disadvantages experienced by

migrants whose first language was not English; it saw, among others, the establishment of Migrant Resource Centres and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) as the multilingual broadcaster. The productive diversity approach promotes the value of a culturally diverse workforce such as language skills, intercultural and cross-cultural communication competencies, access to international markets and business knowledge (Ho 2013: 36). Social cohesion promotes the concept of a 'mainstream' an undefined concept of what it meant to be Australian and to which migrants assimilate (Ho 2013: 38). A detailed account of the development of the policies of multiculturalism is presented by van Teeseling (n.d.). The policies of multiculturalism underscore the tensions that are held in play between plurality and cohesion, and economic advantage afforded by migrants and the cultural aspects of citizenship. These issues regarding multicultural Australia remain topical and contested, and arguably, are amongst the most important issues to resolve in the context of global migrations. The Australian Human Rights Commissioner (AHRC), Dr Tim Soutphommasane, sees the arts as crucial to contributing to conversations about issues of identity and belonging:

> It goes to the mission of the arts when they flourish: to nurture creativity, to foster exchange, to encourage understanding and respect. For those of you working for diversity in the arts, this task has become more urgent than ever (2017).

Australia's multicultural society therefore, carries with it the potential to create genuinely dynamic arts and cultural spaces in which artists may explore some of the consequences and offer opportunities to increase understandings of multiculturalism in action. This chapter presents an historical and sociological overview of multicultural Australia and the artistic expression that arises from this cultural diversity. The diversity of Australia's population includes a wide range of artistic traditions. Yet, there is a disparity between the socio-

demographic aspects of multicultural Australia and cultural and artistic participation. Despite decades of policy directed towards increasing cultural participation, the diversity of the Australian population is not reflected in Australian public cultural production (Screen Australia 2016; Australia Council 2014; Khan, Yue, Papastergiadis and Wyatt 2017: 1). There is, subsequently, enormous potential for artistic gestures and symbols to be explored in this diversity.

> A diversity of cultural expressions is intrinsic to social experience in all contemporary societies. Cultural difference is not something 'out there', outside of us, but part of who we are, irrespective of our cultural or ancestral background. Artistic work can express this intrinsic diversity by mobilising the unpredictable interfaces of intercultural exchange, which can be found everywhere (Mar and Ang 2015: 8).

Artists thrive on working with unpredictability and many 'NESB' artists take up the potential offered through intercultural exchange as a point of departure in their creative process. The issue is whether the artists experience adequate support to be able take up the challenges and opportunities presented through a multicultural Australia. This chapter presents demographic data about and some approaches to the experiences of Australians of living in multicultural Australia. The arts policy responses to a multicultural society will also be discussed and will include consideration of those of the Arts Council of England (ACE) – the organisational body on which the Australia Council for the Arts was modelled. A discussion of creativity and types of multicultural arts practices brings the focus of the chapter back to artists.

Multiculturalism as a Social and Cultural Issue

Multicultural Australia

According to the 2016 Census, 49 percent of Australians were either born overseas (first generation of migrants) or have either one or both parents born overseas (the second generation) (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017). The countries of origin of recent arrivals are changing. There has been a decline in migration from long-standing source countries such as the United Kingdom (3.9 percent as a proportion of total population) whilst 2.2 percent of the Australian population is now born in China and 1.9 percent born in India (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017).

The degree of demographic diversity varies significantly across Australian locations. The five mainland state capitals' average populations include 34 percent of Australians born overseas, as compared to 12 percent in rural areas. At the suburban level, 88 percent were born overseas in Haymarket at the southern end of the Sydney central business district (CBD) in New South Wales (NSW), with the majority born in China, Indonesia and Thailand. In Harris Farm near Parramatta in NSW, 77 percent were born overseas, and were mainly (46 percent) born in India. In Clayton, an outer suburb of Melbourne (Victoria), 77 percent were born overseas and are mainly students from China, India, and Malaysia (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2013). Australians' social and cultural experiences of multiculturalism through diversity and migration, therefore, are varied and characterised by dynamic change.

Language and national origin form part of the portrait of Australia's demographic diversity. The dynamics of Australian society are made up of multiple intersecting identities which incorporate any combination of race, ethnicity, class and geographic demography. Shifting enthusiasms and increasing scepticism about the value and success of multiculturalism make negotiations of identity particularly complex and ambiguous for

'NESB' artists. Part of this ambivalence is because Australia is no longer made up of discrete ethnic groups that can be readily identified and essentialised and thus more easily represented (Ang 2011: 24; Vertovec 2010: 94).

The evolution of Australia's diverse make-up is caused by widescale immigration, which is now in greater numbers than following the Second World War. This leads to what Vertovec calls "super-diversity", whereby migrants and their families possess a "plurality of affiliations" (2010: 94). Such "post-multicultural" (Vertovec 2010: 94) discourse suggests that ethnicity is no longer the single most important marker of identity. Noble argues that Australia is "hyperdiverse" characterised by the development of "poly-ethnic neighbourhoods", which result in relations and interactions that produce "a diversification of this diversity" (2009: 45). The ways in which Australians work at engaging with this level of diversity in their daily lives produce different types of experiences of cultural diversity – which everyone experiences and produces differently. Noble makes the point that this is work; unpaid work which requires the "sustained practices of accommodation and negotiation" to produce conviviality (2009:51). Art is also work, and is similarly rarely recognised as such (Gerber 2018). In particular, the role of the artist in delivering different ways to approach cultural difference carries those practices of accommodation and negotiation to a wider sphere.

Research into Australian responses to multiculturalism and cultural diversity over the past decade affirm support for migration into Australia. A study undertaken in 2002 found that only about 10 percent of Australians had a negative view of multiculturalism and cultural diversity (Ang *et al.* 2002: 5). These findings continue to be borne out by the Scanlon Foundation's Social Cohesion 2017 Research. Over the course of the ten years since the Scanlon Foundation's research was initiated, Australians express their overwhelming acceptance of multiculturalism, although there has been a recent decline. The 2017 Mapping

Social Cohesion Research found that 75 percent of Australians either agree or strongly agree that multiculturalism has been good for Australia whereas that agreement had previously been consistent across the 83 – 86 percent range (Markus 2017: 1). This drop is buffeted by the positive response from 94 percent of younger Australians aged between 18 – 24 (Markus 2017: 72). The decline, however, is reinforced by the doubled increase of those who "reported experience of discrimination 'because of your skin colour, ethnic origin or religion'" from 9 percent in 2007 to 20 percent in 2017 (Markus 2017: 3). These figures suggest a chafing between the experiences of the population and the ability to accommodate changes in society. Markus suggests that one interpretation indicates that in 2017, Australia is "less resilient than the Australia of ten years earlier, less able to deal with economic and other crises that may eventuate in coming years (2017: 3).

Markus' findings improve upon, but are not dissimilar to those of the SBS research at the beginning of the century. In 2001 SBS commissioned research to assist them in formulating their future directions, which found:

> The overall picture is one of a fluid, plural and complex society, with a majority of the population positively accepting of the cultural diversity that is an increasingly routine part of Australian life, although a third is still uncertain or ambivalent about cultural diversity (Ang *et al.* 2002: 4).

Follow-up research in 2006 identified "practical tolerance" as the main approach adopted by Australians to manage their everyday experience of cultural differences (Ang, Brand, Noble and Sternberg 2006: 37). The 2006 research included a focus on inter-generational responses to multiculturalism and found that younger Australians of culturally diverse backgrounds do not feel completely accepted by mainstream society and, yet, paradoxically what the researchers describe as "interactive diversity" is becoming an everyday experience.

Many of these Australians have experienced or observed instances of prejudice,

discrimination and intolerance first hand. However… interactive cultural diversity is

becoming increasingly mainstream. Younger Australians of culturally diverse

backgrounds are more comfortable interacting with others of different cultural

backgrounds and feel that multiculturalism in Australia has progressed a lot in the past

30 years (Ang *et al.* 2006: 9).

Many of the younger people interviewed for the study tacitly accepted the Anglo-Australian

core as the cultural norm. They expressed concern about separated and 'siloed' ethnic

cultural groups which the researchers identify as a desire for "intercultural connection" (Ang

et al. 2006: 19). This acceptance was characterised as one in which Australians 'live and

breathe' cultural diversity through their everyday lives. The ambivalence expressed by a

significant minority is also consistent with the 2017 Scanlon findings. Both sets of research

find consistent uptake of, and concerns about, living in a multicultural Australia. The

Scanlon Foundation, however, finds a starker contrast between the experiences of migrants

alongside the general population, and identifies "trust" as one of the measures of inclusion

expressed as a sense of belonging. The results from the Foundation's 2015 survey found that

indication of trust in others amongst those who had arrived in Australia since 2001 was at 37

percent, compared with 50 percent at the national level (Scanlon Foundation 2016: 46).

When the findings of both reports are taken together, the link can be established that

an increase in intercultural connectedness can generate a sense of belonging and inclusion.

Processes that enable intercultural connectedness include those of multicultural arts practices.

Everyday Multiculturalism, Conviviality and Interculturality

Relevant to the multiple roles of the artist are terms such as post-multicultural and

cosmopolitanism (Noble 2011, 2009; Papastergiadis 2013a, 2013b) because they provide

different frames for understanding the daily experiences of living in a multicultural society. These concepts argue that, rather than view cosmopolitanism and seemingly outmoded phases such as assimilation and cohesion as a linear historical process, they can be experienced on any given day – at the corner shop, on the train, in the park, at the cinema and, occasionally, in the art gallery. However, the policy version of multiculturalism often bears little relationship to the everyday experience because of the increasing versions of difference that no longer conform to essential views of ethnicity.

> This differentiation of difference makes the reified categories of ethnicity celebrated by multicultural policies increasingly unviable and, because of this, often results in social anxieties because this differentiation challenges how we manage differences (Noble 2011: 830).

Those everyday experiences can be described as cosmopolitanism. "Cosmopolitanism" comes from the original Greek meaning "citizen of the cosmos" and has been refined to include the manner in which the citizen engages in the world and a moral imperative to do so:

> Cosmopolitanism can be defined as a global politics that, firstly, projects a sociality of common political engagement among all human beings across the globe, and, secondly, suggests that this sociality should be either ethically or organisationally privileged over other forms of sociality (James 2014: x).

Regardless of its scope (whether local or global) this ability to move between cultures is an acquired skill based on experience and proximity to others, and as such is one of the competencies to help navigate difference:

> The internationalist outlook of cosmopolitan multiculturalism enhances people's resilience in such a world. A cosmopolitan orientation to life entails openness towards

different cultures, peoples and a general willingness to engage with 'the other' (Ang, Hawkins and Dabboussy 2008: 21).

Many 'NESB' artists are particularly well-placed to adopt such an outlook and competency.

The "willingness to engage" (Ang *et al.* 2008: 21) is receiving research attention to provide an alternative to the dystopic narratives around the 'failure' of multiculturalism generally presented in academic research (Wise and Velayutham 2013). This alternative comes from the observations that an 'ease' in everyday relations between ethnic and mainstream groups, or conviviality, is:

> the processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculture an ordinary
>
> feature of urban life in Britain (Gilroy in Wise and Velayutham 2013: 407).

This critiques the 'fixed' notions of difference based on race and identity to go beyond the colonial position and 'carnivale multiculturalism', or the occasional celebratory showcase of difference. Wise and Velayutham suggest that Gilroy offers a resilient approach to living multiculturally because he highlights the satisfaction generated by small daily events that come from the "creative, intuitive capacity among ordinary people who manage tensions" (Gilroy cited in Wise and Velayutham, 2013: 407). This could also be described as a form of social resilience that exceeds the incapacity of those who simply tolerate, because the people Gilroy observe show the capacity to interact with each other.

In *Friction*, Tsing (2005) describes the dynamic small gestures that groups and individuals use to disrupt the large scale demise of the planet. In addressing cosmopolitanism and complexity, she reflects that: "The challenge of cultural analysis is to address both the spreading interconnections and locatedness of culture" (2005: 122). The relevance of this challenge for arts practitioners can be seen both as a technique to make use of connections and of inspirational form for artists navigating their multicultural arts practices.

Noble (2011) attributes navigational agency to members of Australia's multicultural society because he sees that cultural difference is not juxtaposed, as in the "mosaic" metaphor for multiculturalism, but is "negotiated" (2011: 827). The social and cultural possibilities are presented as a dynamic relationship, one of "interactive interculturality" (Ang *et al.* 2006) and one which is more than an "awareness" of difference:

> seen in the multiple forms of adaptation and mixing that mark the process of settlement, intermarriage, intergenerational change and the plural social contexts in which difference is negotiated (Noble 2011: 827).

The issue of competence, however, sits at the centre of a successful engagement with such opportunities. Those with cosmopolitan awareness display their credentials by showing up in the first place, and by these appearances suggest that they have already developed a level of confidence to navigate and, if necessary, negotiate culturally complex events that require diverse "transactional competancies" (Noble 2011: 838). Those who are not interested in acquiring the competency to act 'in-between' or do not feel confident in navigating cross-cultural events may choose not to participate. Herewith lies the 'friction' that is at the heart of multicultural reality: the range of differences include different attitudes to engaging with difference. As this thesis will show, art can be one of the vehicles to assist in exposure to difference and may in turn open up spaces for dialogue between differences.

The Case for Addressing the Cultural Issue of Difference in the Arts

Young adults of migrant parents have described themselves as having 'hybrid' cosmopolitan identities, but in 2011, they did not tend to describe themselves as Australian (Collins 2013: 144). They equated their ethnicity with social and cultural credentials attained through their diasporic families and capacity to engage through the internet and social media. They did not, however, recognise themselves as being visibly represented as Australians (Collins 2013:

144). Five years on, these findings continue to be expressed by the young artists interviewed for this thesis. This right to be represented as belonging to the nation and as national subjects has been one of the core areas of friction in the policy development of multiculturalism. As Cope and Kalantzis observed 20 years ago:

> Those custodians of the symbolic nationhood, the media, the arts and education, have been slowest and the most combative when faced with the need to modify norms, canons or representational imagery. This is now a critical challenge. For too long those interested in change have drawn a dichotomy between the economic-political and the symbolic. It is time to bring them together (1997: 264).

To bring the economic-political and symbolic together remains a critical challenge in Australia. Symbols are at the heart of cultural production and must be handled with care because of their potential power. Whose symbols and how new ones emerge are core issues that face artists, including those artists concerned with ethnic minority identities.

Stuart Hall identifies the cultural role of the symbolic as crucial as it goes to the heart of social life and because culture "permeates all of society" (1997: 4). He explains that languages, in the broad use of the term (encompassing images, objects, gestures, texts, data and materials and the like) construct meaning and transmit it. For Hall, language is the 'privileged' medium for the construction of meaning:

> through which all facets of the cultural circuit - in the construction of identity and the marking of difference, in production and consumption, as well as in the regulation of social conduct (1997: 4).

The questions of how to produce cultural representation vary according to the context. The only in-depth description and analysis of the intricate politics and complexities of inclusion within Australian cultural production is *The SBS Story*, which is an account of how

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Australia's national multicultural radio and television broadcaster, the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) negotiates and presents Australia's multicultural society. The challenges of cultural diversity in which the multiple aspects of identity are clearly articulated:

> For many people, ethnicity is not the all-important determinant of their sense of self. Arguably the capacity for individuals to explore their own place in society, irrespective of their cultural background, is one of the hallmarks of a successful multicultural society (Ang *et al.* 2008: 46).

The authors, quoting former SBS Managing Director Malcolm Long's claim that "in the world that is coming, if you can't navigate difference, you've had it", present a succinct rationale for the benefits of cultural inclusion. They distinguish three phases in SBS' multicultural representation: ethno-multiculturalism, cosmopolitan multiculturalism and popular multiculturalism (Ang *et al.* 2008: 22). From the late 1990s, 'popular multiculturalism' positioned multiculturalism as the cultural norm, claiming it as the mainstream rather than the marginal (Ang *et al.* 2008: 20). The concept of popular multiculturalism is of key relevance to this thesis and appears to have been a premature cultural claim given the continued low levels of participation in the arts by culturally diverse Australians.

Francois Matarasso, a UK-based cultural researcher, speaks of shaping cultural identity – and having it recognised by others – as "central to human dignity and liberty. If people can't represent themselves culturally, how can they do so politically? If people are only imagined and portrayed by others, how can they be equal, autonomous and active members of society?" (Matarasso 2010). He suggests a solution can be found in the arts because "art is a great tool for intervening in culture" (Matarasso 2010). There is also a heightened interest and research in how the role of art leads to increased sociality. One recent

study observed (in this case via music) the transformation of "personal subjective experiences into collective collaboration" (Sorsa, Merkkiniemi, Endrissat and Islam 2017:1). Similarly, an affirmative link between a sense of belonging and culturally diverse artistic expression is inferred in research into cultural citizenship (Khan *et al.* 2017: 1).

According to the Australia Council, Australian audiences wish to see a fuller artistic expression of its cultural diversity. Australian audiences want cultural diversity in what they see, listen to and read, but identify a shortfall with less than two thirds of people thinking the arts "reflect the diversity of Australian cultures" (Australia Council 2014). In 2016, Australia Council data analysed by market research company, Morris Hargreaves and Macintyre, indicated that 75 percent now held this view (Australia Council 2017e: 12). Further 2017 Australia Council data suggests that 64 percent of respondents think the arts have a big or very big impact on our understanding of other people and cultures (Australia Council 2017c). These varied results highlight the mercurial nature of cultural statistics, yet also bring to the fore the desire for cultural production that is relevant to Australian society. The data also raises questions about the effectiveness of the policies developed to address the imbalance of 'NESB' artists' production, dissemination and audience development.

International Issues and Responses to Cultural Diversity in the Arts

Development of arts policy responses to cultural diversity is an approach taking place internationally. The United Kingdom (UK) regularly revises its equity legislation through the Equality Act, in part because of its European Union commitments. Established in 1946. ACE is an agency of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and has had equity policies including for Black, Asian and minority ethnic artists (BAME) in place since the 1970s (Arts Council England 2011: 5). The model of the Arts Council England was the one adopted for the establishment of the Australia Council for the Arts. As part of a regular

review, DCMS commissioned former Edinburgh festival director Brian McMaster to report on the most effective use of public funds towards the arts. He identified:

> the profound value of arts and culture. Just as the new society we live in has immense potential for the creation of art, so art has never before been so needed to understand the deep complexities of Britain today (McMaster 2008: 5).

The need for art to contribute to understanding society is often cited as a beginning point for such reports, however, the McMaster report reinforces this point by articulating diversity as one of eight key areas of recommendations. In his words, he "refutes" the association of excellence in the arts with exclusivity, heritage and elitism, instead viewing it as a process that:

> takes and combines complex meanings, gives us new insights and new understandings of the world around us and is relevant to every single one of us (McMaster 2008: 9).

He perceives that to be relevant, a commitment to diversity "must run through" the concepts of excellence, innovation risk-taking and participation.

> The diverse nature of 21st century Britain is the perfect catalyst for ever greater innovation in culture and I would like to see diversity put at the heart of everything cultural. We live in one of the most diverse societies the world has ever seen, yet this is not reflected in the culture we produce, or in who is producing it. Out of this society, the greatest culture could grow. Culture can only be excellent when it is relevant, and thus nothing can be excellent without reflecting the society which produces and experiences it (McMaster 2008: 11).

These statements are akin to Australian discourse regarding the potential that cultural diversity offers to a vibrant culture which has yet to be realised. Both claim to inspire change

by placing diversity as a central tenet of art and cultural production. Subsequently taking up

the process to amplify issues of diversity, ACE commissioned *Third Text* in 2009 to heighten

the debate "about diversity and the arts to a new and different level" (Arts Council England

2011: 4). *Third Text* is a longstanding journal dedicated to issues of the arts and diversity

edited by Rasheed Araeen. There are also two other longstanding UK "flagship" companies

such as Rich Mix, dedicated to diversity in performing arts, and INIVA (Institute for

International Visual Art) dedicated to diversity programming and discourse in the visual arts.

These two companies lead the production and critique of work by BAME artists. The

resulting report, *Beyond Cultural Diversity: The Case for Creativity*, included claims from

UK-based critical thinkers and writers that Britain's state-sponsored policy of cultural

diversity had failed (Appignanesi 2010). "Some of us in Britain are being cast as outsiders

who require a domestically engineered foreign policy" and called for a "culturally integrated

future" which surpasses cultural diversity (Appignanesi 2010: 5). The report includes

government statements on leadership within the frame of the arts and promotes an "arts and

artists-led approach to diversity and equality" (Arts Council England 2011: 16). Arts

professionals are asked to own and creatively adapt the ACE policies on diversity and

equality and to "probe (and) innovate creative approaches and solutions" (Arts Council

England 2011: 16).

Diversity is seen as a core driver of creativity by ACE, and no longer as a deficit

burden, drawing from business models which connect the "characteristics of resilient

organisations and the embracing of creative diversity" (Nwachukwu and Robinson 2011: 5).

This link to resilience echoes the concerns of the 2017 Scanlon Report discussed earlier. The

Creative Case for Diversity (Creative Case), launched in 2011, is the ACE diversity policy

based on equality, recognition and a new vision. The new vision moves from a deficit model

to one which articulates "an approach that encompasses the ways in which diversity has been

and remains an intrinsic and dynamic part of the creative process" (Arts Council England 2011: 4).

The ACE approach affects all subsidised sectors of the arts, and in particular supports those who excel at incorporating diverse influences and practices relevant to British populations. Activities across six themes identify whether subsidised National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) are actively pursuing the Creative Case. The themes relate to artistic programmes, talent development, barriers to artistic involvement, resourcing and monitoring, self-evaluation and sector leadership. ACE positions diversity at the centre of the Creative Case as a sustainable strategy for the arts, because their view is that diversity is able to:

> address other challenges and opportunities in audience development, public engagement, workforce and leadership. Our funded organisations are expected to show how they contribute to the Creative Case for Diversity through the work they produce and present (Arts Council England n.d. a).

This expectation follows through in the ACE funding decisions for 2018-2022. The Bush Theatre, based in the culturally diverse London suburb of Shephard's Bush and known for its creative direction and BAME development under Madani Younis, received a 20 percent increase while Hampstead Theatre which has not produced work across the equity areas had a 14 percent decrease in funding. This is seen to reflect:

> that in the 21st century who you choose to work with, and how you work with them, is part and parcel of artistic policy. Arts organisations can't continue to work on outdated models and expect to secure funding (Gardner 2017).

Part of ACE's 'new vision' is to support the companies whose traction for diversity is evident. ACE also has clear equity objectives for BAME, disability, gender and sexual orientation across artistic outcomes, workforce and governance participation (Arts Council

England 2016: 6). The Creative Case recognises diversity as the central tenet for innovation to which £11m strategic funds have been allocated – approximately 10 percent of the annual expenditure (Arts Council England 2016: 6; Arts Council England n.d.b).

The Creative Case sits inside the British Government's Equity Policy whereby each department must deliver to equitable inclusion and demonstrate accountability across a range of measurements, including equity in employment and governance roles. To this end, ACE publishes the employment data generated by the arts organisations. They report that BAME employment in the arts is now at 17 percent compared to the average of 15 percent in broader employment (Arts Council England 2016: 7). The implication that since 2011, BAME artists and organisations are leading the diversity of the cultural make-up of the workforce, lends credibility to the ACE claim of effectiveness of an arts-centred approach to diversity.

Another ACE strategy allocated £5.3m to, in their words, "elevate" the many small organisations which have always had diversity as their creative focus by building their capacity to successfully apply for more substantial funds in the future, which in turn aims to increase the diversity of the organisations supported through the NPO funds (Arts Council England n.d.c). In this manner the 'Case for Creativity' addresses the structural barriers faced by the artist-run small companies who create important access spaces that enable diverse participation.

Arts sector debate is enabled through live interactive web-casts of conferences such as 'Creative Case: leading diverse futures', which included presentations from the chair of ACE, artists, bureaucrats and administrators (Arts Council England 2018). Arts Professional is an online arts news and information resource which in 2017 featured a series of monthly debates on diversity for organisations and practitioners (Arts Professional 2017). ACE develops resources to inform companies about how they can increase diversity in their sphere of the arts: tool kits for governance: for example, how to produce an 'Equity Plan'; tool kits for

increasing diversity in creative projects: how to attract talent and leaders of those from

diverse backgrounds; and equity data on diversity employment in each funded company (Arts

Council England: 2016, 2018). The striking element about the ACE approach, particularly

over the past decade is that the Creative Case policy systematically addresses structural

barriers to diversity by tying funding agreements to outcomes that increase diverse

participation, creative content, employment and governance.

Australian National Cultural Policy

The policy to tie Australian funding to particular outcomes is one that wanes far more than it

waxes in the arts. Government support for the arts has been slow and limited. Committees,

such as the Commonwealth Literary Fund (1908) were established in Australia at the time of

federation or soon after, but it would take sixty-five years before a government agency was

established. The Australian Council for the Arts, based on the British and Canadian models

of "arm's length" or distance from government interference was established in 1973 by Prime

Minister Whitlam, who also noted the lack of an Australian cultural policy, one which would

take a further twenty years to be tabled (Gardiner-Garden 1994). The Australia Council has,

from 1975 onwards, had a history of awkward relationships with governments and

oppositions alike, experiencing administrative and funding shifts on a regular basis. Even the

almost sacred tenant of 'arm's length' decision making has been critiqued for neither

adequately 'insulating' the Australia Council from political demands, nor providing a

valuable firm presence in Cabinet (Macdonnell 1992). The 1988 coalition shadow minister

Chris Puplick saw it as an "excuse for Ministers to avoid their responsibilities to define and

promote a national arts policy" (Gardiner-Garden 1994: 35).

There have been two federal cultural and arts policy statements, albeit short-lived,

both of which established connections between cultural diversity and creative expression:

Creative Nation, 1994 and *Creative Australia*, 2013. As the federal arts agency, the Australia Council developed specific multicultural arts policies that built on and reshaped the 1970s era of ethnic arts which "remained trapped within the rhetoric of welfare" (Hawkins 1993: 120). The Arts for a Multicultural Australia (1993 and 1996) and the AMA 2000 and AMA 2006 policies identify periods of policy attentiveness and resourced activity.

Creative Nation, launched by the Keating Labor Government in 1994, promoted a broad approach to culture which included areas such as film, media, libraries and heritage. Framed by this creative pluralism, it is important to note this document's direct reference to Indigenous and migrant cultures as central in shaping Australia's domestic and exported identity. But as Stevenson (2000) notes, the arts agenda continued to inadequately deal with the creative priorities of ethnic minorities. *Creative Australia*, launched almost twenty years later (Parliament of Australia 2013), made similar connections, but compounded the sense that political leaders are ambivalent about multicultural arts practices.

> *Creative Australia* contains very limited reference to multicultural arts, and outlines no policies explicitly directed at expanding the participation of migrant or ethnic communities in the nation's arts and cultural sectors. Instead, cultural difference in the arts is referenced obliquely within a broader category of 'diversity' (Khan, Wyatt and Yue 2014: 1).

Creative Australia was in part developed from the national consultation process of the 2020 Summit, convened by the Labor government around ten policy areas, one of which was for arts and cultural policy, and generated high expectations in the arts sector for clear direction and leadership. The 101 members of the 'Towards a Creative Australia' reference group included a handful of 'NESB' artists and artsworkers, and it remains unclear as to how influential the group was in formulating the five main goals of the final policy document. The

goals included to: recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture; and to support excellence and innovation and expand capacity into "all aspects of national life". Goal two was expressed in the least active language – to "reflect" the diversity of Australian citizens, including "cultural background, location and social circumstance" (Parliament of Australia 2013).

> In the *Creative Australia* policy, multicultural objectives are dissipated, via the language of diversity, into a range of economic, social and cultural governmental agendas (Khan, Wyatt, Yue and Papastergiadis 2013: 28).

Ambiguity about who or what was meant by the all-encompassing use of 'diversity' steered away from identifying specific groups. This had the effect of confusing arts organisations as to where their 'inclusion' agenda, if they had one, could be directed.

> Drawing multicultural policy back into an instrumentalist, welfarist agenda that is also targeted at 'community' has the effect of decentring it from narratives of the nation state. This displacement means that the language of 'multiculturalism' no longer carries the same symbolic status it did in *Creative Nation*, where it was explicitly incorporated into a vision of Australian society (Khan *et al.* 2013: 29).

The *Creative Australia* policy disappeared with the change of government following the September 2013 election of the Coalition Abbott government. Australia's cultural policy was in limbo, in effect leaving the AMA 2006 statement as the policy on multicultural arts under the umbrella of the Australia Council's Strategic Plan of May 2014. The unexpected and fractious budget reallocation to the Arts Ministry announced in May 2015 caused significant rupture between the major performing arts companies quarantined from the cuts to the Australia Council budget and increased competition between artists, especially smaller and medium-sized organisations. The Turnbull government (from September 2015) continued the

call for 'excellence' as the fundament for the arts and stipulated a quarantine from funding cuts to the Major Performing Arts (MPA) companies. This is the only word from the current Government on funding to the arts and, by default, must be read as the Coalition's cultural policy.

The Role of the Australia Council: Multicultural Arts Policy

The discussion at the first meeting of the Australia Council's Migrant Committee in 1975 considered two models for the inclusion of 'migrant artists' into the remit of the Australia Council. The Aboriginal Arts Board 'parallel' model or a distributed model in which all boards take on responsibility for "reflecting 'the multicultural reality of Australian society'" (Blonski 1992: 15). This issue of the positioning of multicultural arts within the institution would be a recurring theme for the Council and also for its advisors; a brief chronology is at appendix 2. The committee recommended increased membership from a wide range of ethnic groups, advertising in ethnic media of programs, consistent financial and advisory programs, and that their title should more realistically reflect their role and be known as the "Ethnic Arts Committee" (EAC) (Blonski 1992: 15). The relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts (ATSIA) was also on the committee's agenda from its inception. After several years ATSIA joined the EAC to present a united presence supporting difference in the arts.

One of the key issues both faced was the schism between practices of cultural maintenance and of new art production based on criteria of 'excellence'. The assumption was that 'cultural maintenance' falls outside the regime of excellence. Kalantzis and Cope elucidate the impact of confusions and contradictions in this criterion, "showing the concept of excellence in the arts to be a contested one" and "linked to particular ideological positions" (1994: 13).

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Decisions about excellence as one of the 'elite' systems of exclusion are discussed in the overview of the series, *Access to Excellence* (Kalantzis, Castles and Cope 1993). This series foregrounded the barriers and reviewed the means by which access is denied based of a narrow perspective on what constitutes excellence in the arts. Tim Rowse (1985) suggests that, despite Australia Council Chair, Dr Timothy Pascoe, questioning the use of the term as an undefined assessment criterion, the early days of Council are imbued with the narrow perspective. Rowse sees excellence as a "language of the powerful, which effaces the social basis of that power" and correctly, that it will "probably continue to be a persistent rhetoric" (1985: 33). Rowse explores the way this rhetoric is established as myth, as utopian in the homogeneity of its single scale of values, and that the notion of excellence attempts to distance art from "grubby" politics and monetisation (1985: 34).

A third utopian element can now be added to Rowse's discussion. The Australia Council's stated mission to move away from 'homogeneity' aims that Australian society is reflected in the participation and engagement in the arts as "arts without borders" (Australia Council 2017b: 10). This means nothing if the funds and the structural mechanisms are not present, and are not centre and front of the institution. The historical accounts of the arts in a multicultural Australia challenge the utopian rhetoric of inclusion that the arts will, in a regular and normalized manner, fully reflect multicultural Australia.

The two most recent Australia Council policies which focused on multicultural arts are those of 2000 and 2006. The AMA 2000 policy highlighted the roles of tradition and innovation in creativity and profiled individual artists' practices as well as their roles in community settings. By taking this focus the policy attempted to alter perceptions that multicultural artists were relevant only in a community setting, with its attendant lower status in the arts world. The AMA 2006 policy highlighted the need to incorporate 'the diversity of our cultures' through leadership, participation and creative production, including cross-

cultural exchange between Indigenous and 'NESB' artists. Since 2008, the AMA policy has been subsumed under the umbrella of the Council's Cultural Engagement Framework.

Multicultural Arts Practices

Issues of Creativity

Creativity is considered to be the unique and defining characteristic of humanity. It is the "innate quest for originality" and can be "judged by the magnitude of the emotional response it evokes" (Wilson 2017: 3). The concept of originality carries with it the subjective recognition as to what constitutes the 'new' and the potential for challenges to be generated in society because of that newness.

> Whether on the temporal, phenomenal, or social plane—the new is not objectively existing, but it always depends on schemes of interpretation, which are more often than not controversial. Social regimes of the new, as they are characteristic of modern societies, do both: they observe the new and they prefer it to the old (Reckwitz 2014: 25).

Using this lens, Reckwitz could conceivably be writing about the challenges faced by 'NESB' artists when raising the issue of "interpretation" and who decides what is new, and therefore of value. This may include, for example, social challenges such as a lack of understanding about and support for their work by mainstream arts agencies and the creative challenges when they bring traditional forms, usually associated with their ethnicity, into conjunction with contemporary art practices. The newness or "unexpected" brought about through creativity is also seen to stem from the recognisable (Hastrup quoted in Svašek and Meyer 2016: 3). Those wishing to make the new "cannot escape the intertwining of past, present and future" (Derrida quoted in Svašek and Meyer 2016: 3).

Art is even more elusive to define. The following is among my favoured contemporary descriptions because it evokes the potential, risk and powerful circulation of symbols that endure:

> I can't tell you what art does and how it does it, but I know that art has often judged the judges, pleaded revenge to the innocent and shown to the future what the past has suffered, so that it has never been forgotten. I know too that the powerful fear art, whatever its form, when it does this, and that amongst the people such art sometimes runs like a rumour and a legend because it makes sense of what life's brutalities cannot, a sense that unites us, for it is inseparable from a justice at last. Art, when it functions like this, becomes a meeting place of the invisible, the irreducible, the enduring, guts and honour (Berger 1992: 9).

The "meeting place of the invisible" conjures, for me, the sites of multicultural arts breaking through into visibility regardless of which medium the work stirs from. A more direct definition suggests that "art is a powerful tool to redress and reimagine our world" (Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum 2018). This definition also sits comfortably with how 'NESB' artists may develop their practice.

British-based art theorist, Araeen, describes the difficulty and importance of creating and presenting culturally diverse artwork.

> An enormous confusion reigns about cultural diversity, which has obscured both the question of its necessity to society and also its relationship to creativity. Only when people have freedom to think, to reflect and contemplate, can they confront the norms that have become fixed dogmas, and so reactivate society's creative energy. In other words, new ideas produced by individual creativity, underpinned by freedom of thought, create a society able to change and transform itself into a dynamic force in history (Araeen 2010: 17-18).

There is a connection between Araeen's claims of transformation based on cultural diversity which resonate with the McMaster report placing diversity at the centre of innovation. Both are advocacy documents written for a range of art decision makers and artists. Each type of discourse reinforces the central themes of the other and points to the influence that cultural theorists and bureaucrats can garner to make the social and cultural case for diversity in the arts. The ways this transformation can occur is multi-platform and multi-sited that builds upon opportunities and creative constraints.

Participation by 'NESB' Artists

Cultural economists recognise that a measure of culturally inclusive multiculturalism regards the participation of artists in contributing to cultural formation:

> One of the most important roles for the arts in this country is in celebrating the cultural diversity of contemporary Australian society. There are many professional artists in Australia who specialise in creating and re-creating art derived from a wide range of cultures, especially in the performing arts of music, dance and theatre.
> Artists from a non-English speaking background (NESB artists) also pursue their professional practice in the mainstream, often enriching their contribution through the influence of their particular cultural heritage. All of this activity is a vital element in the evolution of Australia as a truly multicultural society (Throsby and Hollister 2003: 71).

The most recent in a thirty-year longitudinal study into artists' incomes in Australia, *Making Art Work: An economic study of professional artists in Australia*, reveals some improvement in the circumstances of 'NESB' artists (Throsby and Hollister 2003; Throsby and Zeldnick 2010; Throsby and Petetskaya 2017). Yet the capacity of the arts to contribute to this rich diversity is circumscribed by economic and other factors. In the most recent *Making Art Work* report, 10 percent (an increase from 8 percent) of professional artists were of a non-

English-speaking background, compared to the 18 percent participation in the general workforce (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 143). By comparison, the proportion of English-speaking background artists at 78 percent is higher than in the general workforce of 73 percent (Throsby and Zednick, 2010). The 2 percent increase in 'NESB' arts professional participation to 10 percent does not translate as an arts specific increase, because it has kept pace with the 2 percent increase of 'NESB' participation in the general workforce from 16 to 18 percent (Throsby and Zednick 2010: 23; Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 142).

In a more detailed snapshot, visual arts and craft maintain the highest proportion of professional 'NESB' artists at 16 and 14 percent, composers make up 8 percent with musicians, and community arts and cultural development (CACD) workers at 7 percent with writers the lowest at 6 percent (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 143). The most significant increase is that of acting and directing in live theatre which is at 13 percent, up from 5 percent in 2009. Language-based arts such as writing and acting are considered to be the most challenging for 'NESB' artists and CACD work to be the most accessible due to local council use of arts in communicating with their "multicultural communities" (Throsby and Hollister 2003: 23; Throsby and Zednick 2010: 23). Historically, "ethnic" artists were "allowed" into the arts sector via the community arts door (Blonski 1992, 1994; Hawkins 1993: 86-88). The most recent data on the proportion of 'NESB' artists across artform professions is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Proportion of professional 'NESB' artists in each artistic field: 2009 and 2015								
Survey year	Visual artist	Craft	Actor Director	Dancer	Composer	Writer	Musician	CACD
2009 *	14%	14%	5%	10%	4%	4%	6%	3%
2015 **	16%	14%	13%	13%	8%	7%	6%	7%

 * Throsby and Zednick 2010: 24

** Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 147

'NESB' artists mostly practice in visual arts and crafts with a notable rise in the performing arts since 2009 when distinctions between artform practices were first published. The perception that 'NESB' practitioners are mainly employed in CACD roles is challenged by the data. Table 1 indicates that 'NESB' artists are not primarily found in CACD and participation remains relatively low compared with other artforms. This result may be due to more robust research techniques, it may represent a high level of volunteering by 'NESB' artists in CACD, or it could also reflect an upward trend in participation across the range of artforms. It may also be due to the general decline in CACD practice (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 7).

The income gap from creative practice and arts-related activities (mainly teaching) between English-speaking background (ESB) and 'NESB' artists has also shifted. In the 2002 and 2009 *Making Art Work* studies, 'NESB' artists earnt 36 percent less than the $22,000 average creative income of their ESB colleagues (Throsby and Zednick 2010: 83). In the most recent study, the income from creative practice have increased to 95 percent for 'NESB' artists as compared to ESB artists (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 142). The earnings from arts-related activities, however, was 18 percent higher for 'NESB' artists in 2009 but is now 27 percent lower than their ESB colleagues (Throsby and Zednick 2010: 83; Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 145). Shifts such as these highlight the precarity of the portfolio careers that artists must engage with in Australia, and the agility with which the artist must manoeuvre to maintain their practice. While it is heartening to see that creative income is reaching parity, it is cause for concern when their ability to subsidise their income and have a broader presence across the arts sector has reduced by 45 percent in the past seven years.

Levels of public funding are another measure to gauge support to artists. In the most recent report, 18 percent of 'NESB' artists claim the largest barrier to their practice is the "lack of access to funding or other financial support" (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 147)

which is a rise of 5 percent from the earlier 13 percent (Throsby and Hollister 2003: 74). This links to the findings that, compared with ESB artists, "fewer applications made for a grant, fellowship, residence, prize or funding are successful" even though 'NESB' artists had more success in grant applications at the Australia Council than to the state art departments or local councils (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 147). The Australia Council claims an improved success rate of 'CALD' applicants (the term used by the Australia Council). In March 2015, 20 percent of all applicants identified as 'CALD' and of those, 19 percent were successful; in March 2017, 23 percent of all applicants identified as 'CALD' and of those, 29 percent were successful which indicates an increased success rate of 10 percent over two years when compared within the 'CALD' cohort (Australia Council 2017d: 17). These success rates also indicate the high calibre of the applications in the very competitive arena of arts grants. However, if this data is used to compare success across all applicants, the 29 percent cohort of 'CALD' artist's success rates represents an overall success rate of 5.8 percent.

Despite their leaner economic position in the arts, in an earlier *Making Art Work* study 60 percent of first generation 'NESB' artists felt their ethnic backgrounds benefited their career while 15 percent cited a negative impact (Throsby and Zednick 2010: 24). In the most recent study, 54 percent identified an overall positive impact with an increase to 19 percent of those who experienced an overall negative impact (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 145). For one-fifth of an artist population to identify negative consequences suggests significant issues are preventing their full participation.

This published data provides a detailed view of the situation for 'NESB' artists and those organisations dedicated to their support and promotion. The picture that emerges is one of consistent under-employment in the arts of 'NESB' artists, when compared to the rest of the 'NESB' population, and lower levels of arts grant funding across all categories in comparison to ESB colleagues. This data suggests that, should Australians wish to see

cultural diversity in the art produced and experienced, a policy response could improve the situation.

> Policy provides the articulation of field problems and solutions by setting and shifting
> agendas, validating actors and directing funding and technological resources (Rowe,
> Noble, Bennett and Kelly 2016: 12).

Therefore, it is relevant for this study to include a discussion of issues that address the relationship between multicultural demographics and arts policies which attempt to encompass and support the range of multicultural arts practices.

Types of Multicultural Arts

There is an inherent creative response in all migration, through "an internal dialogue, the migrant compares the old home with the new, making with luck some creative novum out of their disparities" (Cubitt 2005: 315).

All artists have a desire to make works that are affective and potentially transformative to individual audiences and for some, to social groups as well. There are artists who choose to concentrate on their individual practice and accept the constraints and opportunities afforded by existing contemporary art infrastructure. Many of the artists interviewed for this study describe their need to be able adapt to, or stretch beyond, the systemic barriers they can face in the arts in Australia, some working within existing structures and others devising their own. Inter-disciplinary or inter-cultural elements and collaboration are often considered as a foundation for creating environments to encourage innovation, and have emerged as the most contemporary ways in which artists navigate their presence into the arts scene. There is an apparent

tension which emerges when a claim is made for the potential for innovation because of a multicultural context.

Historically, 'multicultural arts' has been relegated to the sidelines of the outdated and, by implication mediocre, because of the association with cultural maintenance that sets it aside (Blonski 1991; Hawkins 1993; Khan et al. 2014). It could be argued that, as a response to this kind of criticism (as simplistic) and perception (as static), 'NESB' artists have developed a spectrum of creative processes to increase the possibilities of artistic innovation. The spectrum ranges from ethno-specific, intra-cultural, bi-cultural, intercultural, cross-cultural and, more recently to transcultural categories. These are all different processes which come together under the earlier umbrella of multicultural arts and now under the more general descriptor of 'hybrid'.

Ethno-specific refers to ethnic and linguistic groups who share the same race and ethnicity. When used artistically, the term points to the cultural traditions of specific ethnic groups and implies maintenance of those cultural 'traditions' Hawkins describes inaugural funding for 'ethnic arts' through the Community Arts program of the Australia Council as having a focus that was:

> almost exclusively on support for the folk or traditional arts activities of non-English speaking groups… the discourse of ethnic arts invoked tradition in a way that restricted the possibility of connections with other artforms and practices. It implied that migrants were essentially cultured and that their cultural expressions were pure and original (Hawkins 1993: 87).

Hawkins views this as resulting in a "narrow cultural ghetto for migrants" (1993: 86). It also may have contributed to the double-bind narrative that migrants are both valorized for their

'stories' and inherent knowledge of what constitutes 'culture' while simultaneously being shunned by creative peers for not being contemporary.

In Australia in 2018, ethno-specific artists are most likely to be musicians, singers or visual artists and, if successful in gaining attention and audience, tend to be slotted into the 'world music' or 'global art' genre. Ajak Kwai is a singer and storyteller who migrated from South Sudan to Tasmania and now lives in Melbourne. In 2006 she toured as part of the kultour program, which romantically described her performances as "songs of the timeless musical traditions of her people, the Dinka of Southern Sudan" (Multicultural Arts Victoria 2006). This stage of her career is an example of multicultural arts as 'ethnic showcasing' and one which is often perceived as a narrow view of multiculturalism, one which is static and limits cultural exchanges (Shigayuki in Ang and Mar 2015: 9). Ethno-specific arts, however, as we see in Kwai's case below, can leverage from their traditional base into dynamic creative shifts that alter the artists' work.

One example of an ethno-specific art is that of Rebetika, which is a form of jazz/blues using traditional instruments, such as bouzouki, performed between the 1920s and 1950s in Greece. A group of Greek-Australian musicians and musicologists were part of the revival in the 1980s of this musical form and went on to receive international recognition for their performances. A successful play was developed through a Multicultural Arts Professional Development (MAPD) project which celebrated this sub-cultural milieu. *Café Rebetika* directed by Stephen Helper toured Australia with kultour in 2011. Regular performer Demeter Tsounis appreciates Greek music and wants to "have the opportunity to keep exploring and rediscovering it and performing it because it is such a treasure" (Tsounis quoted in Karavas 2009).

Intra-cultural processes occur between artists of similar cultural backgrounds which may reinforce cultural traditions but can also lead to adjustments within a cultural form,

depending on the context. Artists who perform cultural forms of traditional dance and music may be said to work intra-culturally. The Tawadros brothers use intra-cultural processes as composers and musicians. Joseph Tawadros is an oud player trained in Egypt who it is claimed, "single-handedly popularized the ancient instrument the Oud" (ABC Radio National 2015). Joseph mainly plays with his brother James, both of whom live in Australia. Similarly, brothers, Slava and Leonard Grigoryan are accomplished Australian guitarists originally from Kazakhstan. When these two sets of brothers perform together as Band of Brothers, they present a more inter-cultural or bi-cultural process to their music. Visual artist Hossein Valamanesh works in a minimalist contemporary style using materials from the earth to make two and three dimensional works that evoke his Iranian heritage. It is in his use of materials – which could be from an Australian as well as Iranian landscape – and the motifs he employs, such as the twirling shape of a dervish or the items such as oil lamps, which lead to adjustments in the cultural form of contemporary painting and sculpture.

Mar and Ang identify that "truly relevant and energetic creative work will come from working across cultures" when considering diversity of cultural expression (Mar and Ang 2015: 8). The processes which arise from working across cultures generate art which has a more contemporary look and feel as well as having a closer context to much of contemporary life. The following are some of the processes that arise from Mar and Ang's "working across cultures" (2015: 8).

Bi-cultural creative processes link two (usually distinguishable) cultures or perhaps sub-cultures. Ajak Kwai has since fused her musical sources in a bi-cultural process to what appears to be great success, as she now performs in Womadelaide, the National Folk Festival and Melbourne Festival:

Whether Ajak is singing in Arabic, Sudanese or English she leaves you in no doubt as to the depth and richness of her Dinka roots. Music is the vehicle for her experiences as a

refugee, exiled from her home town. Ajak and her songs take us on a journey deeply

feminine, unique from the Upper Nile to gospel singing in Cairo to Melbourne where she

has successfully fused her African roots with the grassroots of Australian music (Ajak

Kwai n.d.).

Doppio Teatro, a South Australian based Italo-Australian theatre company established by

Teresa Crea and Christopher Bell in 1983, demonstrates the move from ethno-specific

(originally they presented bi-lingual theatre by Italian playwrights) to bi-cultural writing and

presenting theatre about the experiences of Italo-Australians. Teresa Crea explains:

> The idea behind Doppio is to underline the duality that exists here in Australia for many
>
> people who have two cultures within them - or rather, who have culture of origin plus
>
> their confrontation with the dominant culture, which is the common code we live by, the
>
> Anglo Australian culture (Mitchell 1998: 133).

Doppio Teatro was known for its ability to present quality production values in their theatre

works and also for its ability to respond to the changes in society through the influences that

were included in their productions. The company reinvented its purpose from a bi-cultural

theatre company to one which explored cross-cultural themes. Cross-cultural includes a

number of cultures in 'dialogue', crossing their boundaries to generate artistic development.

Cross-cultural experiences are ones in which the membranes of cultural forms and identities

are reshaped. The membranes give way to form new creative entities. This is complex and

difficult to articulate on a stage, nonetheless, showing bold creative leadership in 1997:

> Doppio Parallelo expanded its range of activities under the para//elo banner, giving them
>
> the 'space to work more broadly from a bicultural platform to a cross cultural platform'.
>
> Their work now draws on the group's Italian heritage as one of many ingredients in a
>
> contemporary global perspective. They are broadening the definition of what

multiculturalism means to include to work on parallel cultural experiences in the context of global Internet communications (Cope, Kalantzis and Ziguras 2003: 25).

Intercultural creative production occurs between artists of two or more linguistic and/or cultural backgrounds and, when successful, is often evident where collaborative processes are used to develop creative works. It is similar to cross-cultural, except it is a term that has become in vogue with artists working in the multicultural space as a way of contemporizing the creative practice. Intercultural does not necessarily require equality of creative input, however in contemporary arts, the term intercultural is often used to imply that all artists have some equality of creative input to effect a creative collaboration. This process is very challenging for artists more accustomed to their own practice.

In discussing the influence of cultural diversity, performance artist, Brian Fuata describes his "patchy and tentative" knowledge that led to his performances exploring his feminine role in Samoan society, as a *fa'a fafine*.

> It is a lived rather than known experience, a nickname, a family context, a child's drag act, someone else, a cultural ascription, a cyber friendship, a short film, a passing meeting, a google search, a wrong classification, an islander body. I know nothing more theoretical, official or definite (2011: 22).

Working in a collaborative mode with other artists, Fuata works interculturally and perhaps transculturally – across cultural understandings and iconographies. This mode shows that artists have become more adept and less constrained in how they interact with each other's practices:

> In relation to a notion of identity and the cultural diversity thereof, such a project reflects a contemporary arts society that is inherently diversified and acknowledging of that (2011: 23).

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This artist is making a group effort with one artist at a time, and generating his own peer support network in the process of his practice. The scope of culturally diverse forms is therefore vast, definitely not a ghetto and continues to morph as artists seek out the new while grounding the work in something they find familiar.

Conclusion

The potential for creative practices that emerge from Australia's multicultural society has, arguably, yet to be fully realised or supported to the extent it warrants. There is an expectation that 'NESB' artists have a particular role and capacity to stimulate social transformation, in part through the scope of the practices if they can work interculturally.

The historical and sociological overview of the fields that inform multicultural arts considers the conditions that support the practices of 'NESB' artists. The similarity of critical and government discourse between the UK and Australia about diversity is clear, however the UK has gone further to implement tied funding to achieve diversity outcomes. The UK government has positioned diversity in a critical role to generate a flourishing culture, and, through ACE, is rewarding those companies which demonstrate their capability to deliver that role. In Australia, however, the history of targeted funds from as early as the 1970s has seen bitter disagreements from artform boards expected to identify their role to support the artistic work of migrants. These periods of friction have led to short productive phases of traction and change for the arts in a multicultural Australia. Key productive moments include those of 1982-86, 1993-96 and 2000-2005 and are associated with articulate and politically astute ACMAC leadership, members and staff, who also recognise the importance of critical debate about multicultural issues within the arts.

The structural quandary of where migrant, ethnic, multicultural arts or AMA policy should be located at the Australia Council underlines the issue of a lack of trust in the art that

was produced by the so-called ethnic artist. Their work was labelled as 'amateur' associated with cultural maintenance and in direct opposition to the art form codes of 'excellence'. Their role was designated by Council to uphold traditional arts and crafts, which in turn raised questions as to their capacity to be artists with contemporary practices. This higher moral ground about the suitability of the label 'contemporary' is mainly applied to ethnic artists. The irony seems to have escaped Council that the majority of their funds support the performance of European classical "heritage" arts (Blonski 1994: 199). Indigenous arts are also supported towards cultural maintenance, albeit to a lesser financial extent than that of the MPA. The history establishes the tensions around the issues of trust and leadership of multicultural arts both in terms of eligible creative endeavours and questionable aesthetic assumptions on the part of the Australia Council.

Chapter II

Leading for the Arts in a Multicultural Australia

Introduction

Creative, institutional and organisational leaders are all part of the process to enliven the opportunities for the arts in a multicultural Australia. These opportunities adapt or lead to new forms of art production for artists and can generate wider audience demographic attendance, which can also foster greater social co-operation (Van de Vyver and Abrams 2017). To realise these opportunities, policies need to be in place to address prevalent and long-term issues such as underemployment of and low funding to NESB artists (chapter I). To this end, institutional and organisational champions implement policies by directing their funds and resources, while artists in the field spearhead the change that policy is designed to generate.

Leadership can be seen as operating like a well-oiled or rusty hinge to open up opportunities or close them down. Arts leadership in practice is frequently located within, and contextualised by, a complex set of political and administrative structures around funding and policy; the decisions made within these structures often affect artistic practice, but are usually made outside the realms of any individual artist's input. However, beyond this 'institutional' level of leadership, the arts are also characterised by a loose amalgam of artist networks through which creative aspects – ideas, techniques and influences – are disseminated, discussed, challenged and altered. Informal relations of established and emerging artists constitute forms of creative leadership, which may often be in tension with administrative hierarchies and organisational forms of leadership. Therefore, it is helpful to understand the

forms of leadership practices from a range of disciplines and how they appear within an artistic milieu.

'NESB' artists frequently call for more effective leadership in agencies and mainstream organisations to address their levels of support and lack of inclusion in the arts environment they wish to experience (Castagna 2017). This brings into question what kind of leadership and how it can best manifest to generate the changes that many agree need to occur. It is relevant to explore ideas about the qualities of leaders needed to cultivate culturally diverse artistic content in the Australian arts sector which contribute to a multicultural arts milieu. Those modes include distributed, relational, transformative and transactional leadership styles which are discussed in more detail below. The arts sector interest in leadership is matched by such organisations as the Australia Council. The AMA 2000 policy established MAPD, the annual university and foundation partnership-based leadership program, which combined creative production and audience development in a very practical approach for the arts in a multicultural Australia and successfully ran for eight years (Australian Multicultural Foundation n.d.). The Australia Council now funds separate courses for established and emerging leaders – usually employed in arts organisations – which include diversity amongst the topics on offer, but do not appear tailored to the needs of 'NESB' artists nor multicultural cultural practitioners (Australia Council n.d.c). Those who work in arts organisations therefore have something of a pathway in courses for leadership and development, but 'NESB' artist leadership opportunities have arguably been more ad hoc. This chapter explores several modes of leadership relevant to 'NESB' artists and the roles of friction and trust in generating the traction towards a supportive multicultural arts milieu.

Modes of Leadership

Leadership is valued as an area for research as much for its role in society as for the ongoing debates which attempt at a definition (Jackson and Parry 2011: 14). The discourse on leadership follows, and occasionally leads, changes in social organisation. As Grint puts it:

> If our future world is very dynamic, competitive and unstable, then we 'need' to provide flexible and decentralized leadership systems (2005: 9).

By connecting a dynamic environment and a decentralised mode of leadership, Grint evokes the symbiotic relationship between the need for foresight about that environment and the best way to adapt to the opportunities it presents. Contemporary leadership theories often focus on collective approaches to achieve common goals (Sorenson, Goethals and Haber 2011; Hewison and Holden 2016; Jackson and Parry 2011) and advocate the need:

> to move beyond the leader-follower-shared goal conversation, and make room for more organic, systemic, and integrative ideas and approaches (Sorenson *et al.* 2011: 36).

The idea of "integrative ideas and approaches" aim to address systemic issues by including those people affected by any given situation into processes of generating solutions and modes of implementation. These methods are at the forefront of current leadership management discourse and are useful when considering the ways in which many artists and cultural practitioners are working to improve multicultural inclusion in the arts and are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Leadership in organisational contexts is also discussed in terms of leadership and management – roles which are often unclear in the workplace. Peter Drucker argues that, "the only definition of a leader is one who has followers" and that leadership provides "inspiration and setting new directions for an organisation, whereas management involves planning and

organising to implement the objectives" (Drucker quoted in Holmes, Marra and Vine 2011: 6). The traditional view of a leader at the top of a hierarchy has been reconsidered to open up a spectrum of definitions. At one end of the spectrum, Holmes *et al.* cite Stogdill, who views it as a process to influence the "activities of an organised group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement" (2011: 12). At the other end of the spectrum, Peter and Austin (1985) provide a wider and emotive definition.

> Leadership means vision, cheerleading, enthusiasm, love, trust, verve, passion,
> obsession, consistency, the use of symbols, paying attention, out-and-out drama (and the
> management thereof), creating heroes at all levels, coaching, effectively wandering
> around. Leadership must be present at all levels in the organisation. It depends on a
> million little things done with obsession, consistency and care, but all of those million
> little things add up to nothing if the trust, vision and basic belief are not there (Peter and
> Austin 1985, quoted in Jackson and Parry 2011: 12-13).

The conventional image of leadership entrusted to the 'hero', 'heroine' or 'charismatic' figure embodied in one particular individual as the head is shifting to a more reflective role as the "soul" (or "moral" centre) of an organisation (Mendonca and Kanungo 2007: 3). Mendonca and Kanungo (2007) claim that it is the moral principles of the leader that lend credibility and legitimate the vision for the organisation. This leadership style intertwines management and leadership but significantly encourages the talents of those in the organisation to flourish (for example, by mentoring and collaborating).

An issue for the arts regarding shifting notions of leadership is the prevalent image of the artist as working solo, or as a solo entrepreneur striving to make their own work.

> Part of the problem in the cultural world is that the dominant tradition focuses on the
> individual artist and their work, failing to see that creativity in the arts depends on a

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network of cooperation among many people. Similarly, in the wider creative industries, much attention is given to the individual entrepreneur, whereas in fact, as in the arts, teamwork, networking, peer competition and cooperation are vital (Hewison and Holden 2011: 32).

The issue here is that artists need highly developed communication and cooperation skills so as to be able to effectively compete, collaborate and network with their colleagues. Within theatre and music ensembles, for example, the tendency in the arts is to valorise the 'star' talents of individuals at the expense of acknowledging those who work as part of a group or within a 'community' of artists. Grint suggests that the 'ship' (or community) has been forgotten, and organisations need to reconfigure the environment in and around the 'ship' and move away from the sole focus on the leader (2005: 33). This concept does not acknowledge, but is reminiscent of Foucault's discussions of government which use the metaphor of a ship.

> What does it mean to govern a ship? It means clearly to take charge of the sailors, but also of the boat and its cargo; to take care of the ship means to reckon with winds, rocks and storms; and it consists in that activity of establishing a relation between the sailors and the ship which is to be taken care of (Foucault 1978: 93-94).

Governing is seen as 'establishing a relationship'. It has a management role to ensure the safe delivery of sailors, ship and cargo, and evokes leadership when speaking of establishing relationships in a context-dependent environment of the unexpected.

Grint equates management to 'déjà vu', which relates to responding appropriately to a familiar situation, and conceptualises leadership as 'vu jade', meaning to be able respond to novel or completely unfamiliar situations or experience (2010:15). The lack of, or at best intermittent, leadership within mainstream arts organisations towards cultural diversity, generates the sense of (in this case, negative) déjà vu far more frequently than that of 'vu

jade' in the experience of 'NESB' artists. This presents opportunities for managers to reinforce what has worked in the past to combine with leaders who attempt new approaches. This interplay between the familiar and the unexpected, even risky, suggests a push-pull friction between the myriad calibrations that the 'NESB' artist faces in the context of the wider arts environment.

Leadership Repertoire for Multicultural Arts

The types of leadership pertinent to the arts in a multicultural Australia link to the roles to be discussed in this thesis: the creative role of the artist, the multicultural arts advocates within institutions, and the leaders who establish partnerships between arts organisations. Given that there are no major national multicultural arts companies in Australia, this thesis emphasises the individual artist and small multicultural arts organisations who take on leadership roles that may stretch beyond their capacity. These individuals and groups also interact to varying degrees with bureaucrats at the government arts agency of the Australia Council and cultural practitioners in the small to medium (S2M) and major arts organisations. The range of interactions which may lead to change in the arts environment for multicultural arts can usefully draw on the modes of distributed, relational, transformative and transactional leadership.

Distributed leadership integrates ideas and approaches by sharing lead responsibilities within a team, either as co-leaders or by switching the lead role depending on the skills required at the time (Burke, Diaz-Granados and Sales 2011: 342). This is a flexible mode which requires high level trust and understanding between each member so that the work keeps flowing. It also requires reflexiveness in the team members to 'authorise' each other as leaders. The relevance of this style in institutional leadership for multicultural arts policy development and implementation is that it enables multiple players to take on a lead role in

delivering to a broad scope of structural changes. For example, the previous institutional role of ACMAC utilised the particular expertise or insight of its artform members in constructive debate to produce well-considered strategies and policy advice across the different artform areas of the institution and with the arts sector (Australia Council 2002:12). Distributive leadership is found in creative and organisational leadership and, for example, can be seen in how media arts organisation, CuriousWorks creates 'multi-year, national, large-scale artistic initiatives that celebrate Australia's cultural diversity'. The company resources numbers of emerging artists, 'CuriousWorkers' to co-lead projects that produce work which 'defies' the mainstream stereotypical narratives (CuriousWorks 2016). This distributed form of leadership provides opportunities for CuriousWorkers with different skills to step into creative and organisational lead roles when their skill sets can come to the fore. The notion of distributed in this instance provides a hands-on approach to fast-tracked professional development within a supportive environment.

Relational leadership also stresses the relationship between people rather than power over them. Hosking characterises the relational perspective as one based in "*ethics and local (interconnected and extended) pragmatics*" that is demonstrated through an open dialogue approach (italics in original, 2011: 460-461). This type of leadership requires ongoing abilities to listen attentively and non-judgementally. A sense of "relational responsibility (rather than blaming others)" generates "space for improvisation" (Hosking 2011: 461). Generating space for improvisation is a creative act which forms the basis of collaborative artistic work. The delicacy and temporal elements of this process cannot be underestimated, particularly when cross-cultural exchange is taken into account. Such an approach, as discussed in chapters IV and VI, evoke the ways many 'NESB' artists and multicultural organisations conduct their work and presents a process that builds cultural capability by "developing strong cross-cultural partnerships" (Mar and Ang 2015: 7).

Transformative leaders are perceived as charismatic, and are valued for leading change in organisations because they generate trust in their vision (Hewison and Holden 2011: 31). This type of leader holds positional power and maintains it by persuasive and inspirational behaviours. Charismatic leadership was first used in a secular manner by sociologist Max Weber to describe authority given to those who are perceived as "extraordinary individuals [who offer] a transcendent purpose as their mission" (Conger 2011: 86). Artists are often perceived as 'extraordinary' who use their 'charisma' to transform how the world is perceived. The risk within institutions or organisations is that the legacy for change of the charismatic leader can be short-lived. This is particularly an issue for leadership succession in multicultural arts. The lower levels of 'NESB' participation in the arts sector suggest that there may be fewer opportunities to gain institutional or organisational lead roles.

Transactional leadership, on the other hand, is based on a transaction. To transact is to agree on an exchange. In its business sense, transactional leaders depend on their position and role within a company and tend towards a management style of leadership (Hewison and Holden 2011: 116). While transactional leadership is considered to be less nuanced because of its direct approach, it does require some flair for influential communication to undertake effective negotiations that generate a satisfactory transaction. The useful side of transactional leadership, particularly in the precarity of the arts, is the implied 'contract' which require explicit terms of agreement. Greater transactional leadership from the arts funding institutions, for example, would satisfy the calls for increased accountability in the major arts organisations to demonstrate diversity as part of their funding agreement.

Activating Networks

These modes of leadership share a common factor. The quality of an influential leader is increasingly based on the ability to activate networks (Grint 2010). Each of the leadership styles above have in common the potential to develop and activate networks. One of the key qualities of leadership is the ability to broker relationships that form networks. Castells in his observation of the "network society" finds that, despite the ubiquity and rapid proliferation of technological mediated communication systems:

> the intangible factor is still access to the micro-networks located in certain selective
>
> places, in what I named "milieus" (2010: xxxvi).

The value of the "micro-network" is applicable to the 'NESB' artist and the small multicultural arts organisation not only because of their size and the potential for extended international relationships, but also for the role they play in a multicultural arts milieu. In this respect networks can be open or closed, and are closed when they are perceived as a clique with tightly held membership (Carmichael 2011: 43). This can apply to both multicultural 'micro-networks', especially those that are ethno-specific, and the perception that some mainstream arts organisations are a 'closed circuit' as discussed in chapters IV, V and VI.

A network is made up of people who support and influence each other through "brokers as key actors [who] enable different patterns of social capital to develop" (Burt quoted in Carmichael 2011: 43). Social capital is widely recognised as the value attached to belonging to social groups and the ability to extend those groups. Putnam defines it as the "connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (2000: 19). He distinguishes two forms of social capital: bonding capital that functions like 'superglue' that holds groups together, and bridging capital like the metal lubricant 'WD-40' which brings people together. Bourdieu

includes an institutional component, articulating the functional level of positional influence to his definition.

> Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutional relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119).

Both concepts of social capital concern the outcomes of effective leadership and participation, but with a different emphasis. Putnam focuses on the social aspect of exchange and trust, while Bourdieu emphasises the capital aspect of resources and influence. When viewed together, these offer an insight into the role of the broker in network formation which is particularly relevant to cross-cultural and intercultural arts practice. International case studies from arts institutions and S2M companies suggest that a new form of leadership is emerging in the UK which is inclusive and network-based; it is supported by:

> the notion of 'aesthetic leadership', [that] requires new distributed leadership models. One of the key features of the Open Stage project is its engagement in the task of network-building (Glow 2013: 132).

Here, the link between creative practice, shared vision and responsibility, and the capacity to create, expand and maintain productive networks, articulates how the arts sector can remain relevant and reflexive in the work they produce. Different levels of skills are needed at different times, for example, in navigating turbulence in arts funding and at the various stages of policy and artistic development cycles. This requires the insight of the leader to consult appropriately and the foresight of the manager to put programs in place that respond accordingly and implement them effectively. Within the multicultural arts policy context, change is further complicated by shifts in political, as well as demographic realities, thus

requiring a high level of flexibility to respond to different political environments, social changes and artistic experimentation as they arise.

"Situated, strategic and transactional" (Noble 2009: 51) and "cross-cultural" capabilities (Mar and Ang 2015: 10) were identified in chapter I as attributes for navigating cultural difference and are, therefore, essential skills for those in leadership roles who champion and implement the arts in a multicultural Australia. These skills would be variously nuanced based on the type of role: whether in a creative, institutional or organisational position.

Creative Leadership

Creative leaders are artists recognised by their peers and public as artists who generate new developments in creative content to explore – in this case – diversity arising from multicultural Australia. So as to be able explore that diversity, their roles as cultural brokers require cosmopolitan and cross-cultural competencies which are recognised/advocated as essential skills to creativity in a "hyper diverse" multicultural Australia (Mar and Ang 2015; Noble 2009). These skills are demonstrated by the artists interviewed in this study, yet at times, their identities or artworks continue to meet resistance within the arts systems. This resistance raises questions as to whether each aspect of the 'culture cycles' in the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (the Convention) can be found in Australia. Such 'culture cycles' represent a value chain encompassing the multiple phases in art production from education through to production and distribution (Mar and Ang 2015: 7). The low level of employment in arts-related sectors, discussed in chapter I, indicates that 'NESB' artists are also absent from many of the decision-making areas within the culture cycles. As this thesis will explore, these artists currently generate their own opportunities and are the main producers of content to explore

and interpret a multicultural Australia. While these abilities reflect the entrepreneurial traits of 'NESB' artists, we need to be cautious when sole responsibility is placed onto underpaid multicultural artists to creatively contribute to more complex understandings of Australian society (Keating, Bertone and Leahy n.d.: 13).

Nevertheless, new modes of creative leadership develop despite, or perhaps in part from, systemic constraints. As Mar and Ang observe, the new creative modes recognise:

> cultural diversity as an inescapable interactive context to which arts and cultural workers respond in their working processes (2015: 8).

The 'NESB' artist works 'in-between' here in some ways. The context of the arts system may constrain, yet the multicultural society may inspire, and vice versa. It is through navigating and creatively activating these complex relationships that a supportive multicultural arts milieu becomes more palpable.

Intercultural Practice

One process that activates complex relationships is intercultural creative practice because it can co-produce spaces for change, through such elements as traditional knowledge exchanges as well as experimentation. One of the principles identified by Mar and Ang is that "working across cultures" or intercultural practice facilitates and promotes creative results from cultural diversity (2015: 8). Mar and Ang further identify the challenges and opportunities of intercultural practice discussed in chapter I:

> Artistic work can express this intrinsic diversity by mobilising the unpredictable interfaces of intercultural exchange, which can be found everywhere (2015: 8).

Inherent in their definition is the link between creative innovation and diversity: that it is risky and messy (unpredictable interfaces) and potentially hugely productive (found everywhere).

Chapter I described the range of creative approaches that 'NESB' artists in Australia have historically been associated with and continue to develop. The creative responses, often prompted by the tensions between the 'traditional' and 'contemporary' binaries in art discourse, are frequently defined as 'hybrid' and form the basis of the creative trajectories of many 'NESB' artists. This trajectory is a form of what Papastergiadis terms as translation whereby cultural innovation becomes apparent through a "robust process" which mutates, appropriates and reconfigures (2010: 7). This process involves a creative dialectical between forms and concepts that require rigorous inquiry and resolution to be 'robust'. In the context of migration and diversity, 'hybridising' is viewed as "when an entanglement and cultural mix is produced" and facilitates "innovating" when "the entanglement enlightens a creative cultural innovation" (Chan Kwok-bun quoted in Morató, Zarlenga and Zamorano 2015: 4). This is a friction, which I suggest below, generates energy to shine a light upon and lead to new ways to understand different knowledge systems, and as a result can enliven the arts.

In Australia, the visual arts and music have historically provided accessible forms of "enlightened entanglement" in part because they can transcend language (Throsby and Hollister 2003: 23). Visual arts, for example, have the highest proportion of professional 'NESB' artists at 16 percent, whilst composers make up 8 percent with writers the lowest at 7 percent (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 143). The artists and cultural practitioners that make up this data, however, reach beyond issues of linguistics to encompass a "language of representation … [that deals with] inclusions and exclusion in the narratives of the nation" (Gunew 2004: 19).

Cultural Brokers

Engagement in national narratives, however, is not a readily accessible possibility for all creative practitioners. The cultural broker holds a delicately balanced role in activating those all-important networks in the arts and cultural sectors. A cultural broker originally worked with people to conserve the artefacts and processes celebrated as 'folk life' and relates to safeguarding intangible heritage (Jacobs 2014). Richard Kurin, of the Smithsonian Institute, views the role as an institutional intermediary within the museum context. For him, cultural brokers also engage in a specialised form of audience development, bringing audiences and what he calls "culture bearers" together to translate and negotiate new and different cultural meanings (Kurin 1997: 17). Kapetopoulos views this as essential: in his view, arts administrators and marketers need to become cultural brokers, or seek out cultural brokers, when trying to reach Australia's multicultural audiences (2009: 13). The role of the broker in the arts becomes innovative in this example of audience development. This innovation also extends back to the artists themselves who, although not always acknowledged as such, are the primary cultural brokers (Babacan 2011: 18).

Mar and Ang observe the shift facilitated by collaborative cross-cultural processes that represented difference to one "whereby understandings of difference and diversity require some mediating process" (2015: 70). This mediation can be reasonably direct through artist exchanges yet can readily expand to encompass a vastly complex network. Gibson elaborates on the complex scope of the role within a broad multicultural arts context as someone who needs to be able to:

> broker combinations of cultural, cognitive, aesthetic and political factors; mesh a
> profusion of genres, individuals and communities; braid different strands of government
> and systems of power, different valences of allowance and impediment (2005: 272).

This lays out the daunting scope of work and articulates beautifully the set of relationships and factors that require attention and increase our understanding of what contributes to 'relational' and 'distributive' leadership. These are the skills of creative leaders which 'NESB' artists accumulate as cultural brokers. They form networks and they also articulate the need for access to influential networks to further their practice (Stevenson *et al.* 2017; Gonsalves 2017). Thus, the broker, as artist or producer, lubricates the social, cultural, economic, political and especially the creative realms of the arts towards a multicultural arts milieu.

Creative and Cultural Autonomy

The 'NESB' artist, in carrying out brokering roles, moves between creating and interpreting; these carry a form of responsibility. At some point the artist will try to assert autonomy over their practice. Creative and cultural autonomy here refers to the level of artistic control the artist can achieve through what is mostly intercultural creative practice. The need to establish and maintain such autonomy is a key challenge faced by 'NESB' artists in large part because of the stereotyping, tensions and "dumbing down … (that result from) "limits placed on 'diversity' in cultural representation" (Mar and Ang 2015: 7). One of these limits is the artist's position as representative of an ethnic group because it denies the artist:

> the relative aesthetic autonomy that is understood by white artists to be their right, an autonomy that takes as its core the idea of art and art's entire history, not a narrow anthropological notion of culture (Fisher 2010: 64-5).

The discourse of creative practice typically positions 'NESB' artists within the community arts sectors (Hawkins 1993: 86-88; Blonski 1994: 199) to the extent that multicultural arts has been seen to equate to "community arts" which sits outside the perceived canon of

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"excellence" (Kalantzis and Cope 1994: 14-19). Some artists still find this perception attached to them, even though only 7 percent of them work in a professional capacity in community and cultural development (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 143). At the 2017 *Beyond Tick Boxes* symposium, artists expressed concern that:

> their culturally specific art practices are difficult to articulate to grant assessors, art galleries and theatre producers who see their artform as part of a cultural practice, better suited to the community arts realm than the mainstream arts world (Castagna 2017).

This highlights the ambiguity that is still perceived as to what is recognised as a professional arts practice and residual stigma attached to ethno-specific practice. Regardless of their practice, 'NESB' artists and arts workers must be consummate networkers across creative disciplines and sector structures. To work creatively 'across cultures', therefore, requires minimal attributes such as confidence: confidence in their creative pursuit, and confidence to address the structures of the creative sector, and empathy to engage and communicate cross-culturally.

Institutional Leadership

The institutions in the creative sector (state, territory and federal government funding agencies) form a crucial part of the system of state patronage in the arts, particularly in the Australian context which has limited philanthropic engagement in the creative sector. The Australian subsidised arts sector is closely aligned with the funding and advisory role of the institution of the Australia Council, the key federal government arts funding agency. Institutional leadership in this thesis refers to how staff and artist peers might lead the policy and grant decision processes of the Australia Council.

Intermediaries

The internal cultures of these arts ministries and the Australia Council form their own microcosms, internal and external networks which broker resources into the sector. They make and facilitate decisions about the allocation of resources.

> Intermediaries who 'connect or disconnect' people to resources from the common purse – people who assess works of art, who select media programs, film projects or edit news – need to be able to understand a cultural milieu of increasing diversity and complexity. How do our institutions expand their corporate knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity? (Totaro 1990).

Recognition and inclusion of 'NESB' artists as professionals needs to go hand in hand with the professionalisation of institutions to be diverse in their programming, governance and staff at all levels – who not only understand, but accept their roles as institutional intermediaries. Ahmed suggests that this is a form of "institutional will", referring to the future tense, in which the institution articulates what it "is willing to do" by allocating an additional investment. The process to reach institutional commitment can be a cause of friction but contains within it the potential to be "transformational" (2012: 128).

Transactional leadership, however, is more frequently found in bureaucracies with their vertical, hierarchical structures. These types of leaders occasionally provide charismatic and even transformational leadership, but are usually associated with stability, and to briefly return to Foucault's metaphor, keeping the ship on course and the shop in profit. The impetus in bureaucracies is to maintain status quo, as Machiavelli observed:

> There is no more delicate matter to take in hand, nor more dangerous to conduct, nor more doubtful in its success, than to set up as the leader in the introduction of changes (Machiavelli 1513: 13, cited in Nadon 2013: 4).

Transactional leaders are likely to use their position as the head and resort to 'coercive' power on occasion to drive organisational change (Grint 2005: 28). A transactional business relationship relevant to multicultural arts would be one where Australia Council funding grants include conditions tied explicitly to cultural diversity outcomes in staff employment and artistic content. This approach is similar to the type of contractual arrangement operating at the Arts Council England. There are some precedents in the Australian arts context. Recently, Screen Australia has included specific gender and diversity considerations in their assessment criteria (Screen Australia 2017). Specific protocols for non-Indigenous artists to work with Indigenous artists have also been developed by the Australia Council (Janke 2016). Protocols via formal mechanisms such as these generate a simulacrum of trust or lead to an environment where trust can occur, because many of the issues regarding the relationship and outcomes have been considered and clarified. In these instances, 'transparency' is a mechanism that establishes trust.

Being Diverse

Another way to gauge the institution's internal commitment to cultural diversity is through employment data published in annual reports, because staff of diverse heritages demonstrate "*being diversity*" (italics in original, Ahmed 2012: 49). Using the current term favoured by government, recent data suggests a drop from15.4 percent in 2014-2015 to 11.2 percent in 2016-2017 of Australia Council staff "identify as culturally and linguistically diverse" (CALD) (Australia Council 2017a: 90). The Australia Council reports that 700 peers were registered over 2016-2017 to assess grant applications and of those 21 percent identified as CALD. In comparison, 25 percent were regional and remotely-based (Australia Council 2017b: 50). 18 percent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and 6 percent identified as having a disability (Australia Council 2016: 90). These staff figures indicate a

decline in staff diversity while the peer figures show that Council has maintained its efforts to include culturally diverse artist peers, and suggests that the internal responsibilities to ensure peer appointments has generated traction over time to become a matter of course within the agency.

The Australia Council can consult with and incorporate its constituency in the process of forming policy and actions. For example, until 2008, the Australia Council sought expert advice on the arts in a multicultural Australia from ACMAC. Ahmed notes the two relationships between people and committees established for advocacy and change. One aims to attract and keep diversity advocates on the important committees and the other is to have influential people on diversity committees (2012: 31). This duality presents a strategically durable way to influence change across an institution and is relevant to its governance.

Organisational Leadership

Organisational leadership, within the multicultural arts focus of this thesis, refers to those in positions of influence in arts organisations funded by the Australia Council to include and support 'NESB' artists by the use of their creative and financial resources. Arts organisations span the unevenly-subsided arts sector. They range from the S2M arts companies, including the handful of multicultural arts organisations, to the MPA companies or major visual arts museums. Arts organisations may have a broad "mainstream" remit or they may be dedicated to the specific promotion of 'NESB' artists. Calls for mainstream organisations to demonstrate cultural diversity in their people and programs are also underpinned by questions of how they allocate their resources (Castagna 2017). The issue of the ability of mainstream arts to 'multiculturalise', a useful alternative term akin to "multiculturalization" (Noble 2011: 833), comes to the fore in discussions of large flagship arts organisations, and, by the same token, the issue of marginalisation comes to the fore in discussions of smaller multicultural

arts organisations. To 'multiculturalise' can be considered as a cautious process that avoids creative exchanges being "usurped by elite culture while the peripheries remain precisely where they are" (Gertsakis 1994: 45). The danger is that of "inscribing one knowledge at the obliterative expense of another" (Gibson 2005: 273). In describing their framework for "utopian co-production" between academia and community, Bell and Pahl are also wary of practices in which "forms of knowledge co-production are diluted or repressed" (2018: 108). These concerns highlight the issues around 'shared' knowledge and critique some of the results of so-called 'mainstreaming' to increase the visibility of cultural difference in the arts. Notions of mainstreaming therefore must be treated cautiously because organisations:

> are not ready for it: to act as if mainstreaming is the case, because it should be the case, can be counterproductive because the conditions are not available in the present *to make it the case* (italics in original, Ahmed 2012: 138).

Here, the issues of timeliness, context and the organisational culture are necessary precursors to an organisation's values and programs being able to accept cultural difference. However, both mainstream and multicultural organisations have different roles and must be accommodated and supported for their respective roles. The leadership skills within mainstream arts organisations bring resources to a broader presentation of the work. The (few in number) multicultural arts organisations bring resources to develop the creative potential of the artists. Both types of organisation have the potential to establish, develop and maintain partnerships that aim to alter the balance of artworks that influence and contribute to an understanding of multicultural Australia.

The relational mode offers the potential for more creative leadership when cross-cultural, intercultural and intracultural art is being developed, and is appropriate when new

approaches to an issue involve that issue's stakeholders. Subsequently, this has the potential to result in longer-term social change.

> Leadership as a social process can be defined as a process of dynamic collaboration, where individuals and authorised members authorize themselves and others to interact in ways that experiment with new forms of intellectual and emotional meaning (Gemmill and Oakley quoted in Grint 2005: 28).

This social process is most likely to be adopted by "relational" leaders who emphasise the "quality of the relationship between the leader and the led … seen in terms of a group of people moving forward together" (Hewison and Holden 2011: 31).

The concept of 'accompaniment' is also relevant here, because it builds on the relational process and adroitly avers the artificial notion of the leader and the led. The ethos of "leadership as accompaniment" stems from the theology of liberation and Archbishop Òscar Romero's work with the campesinos of El Salvador.

> Accompaniment is a disposition, a sensibility, and a pattern of behavior. It is both a commitment and a capacity that can be cultivated (Tomlinson and Lipsitz 2013: 9).

Accompaniment is viewed as a partnership whereby professionally trained people share their skills and the person needing the skills "offer lessons of a different kind of experience" (Lynd and Lynd 2009: 93). Accompaniment resonates with creative pursuits of music, voice or performance of any kind. The use of accompaniment is apt to address issues of isolation, lack of access to the mainstream and increasing professional artistic practice for 'NESB' artists because it is based in shared experience. There is also a resonance with community and cultural development practices that engage with community issues through creative exchange

with a view to social and cultural change, to make the world a 'better place'. Accompaniment aims to create:

> new social relationships that enacted the utopian hopes that religion and radical politics
>
> had previously only envisioned (Tomlinson and Lipsitz 2013: 11).

Gibson's notion of "attunement" takes us further along this concept as a way to specifically address the range of practices, protocols and "babble of languages" that may be found in projects that are co-produced by any number of diverse artists. For Gibson, attunement is a "patient and experimental process of listening and signalling, listening and altering … (to form) hybrid knowledge" (2005: 272-273). These two concepts resonate with how those in creative and organisational roles may co-produce an expanded multicultural arts milieu.

Navigating Towards a Multicultural Arts Milieu

It could, but does not yet, follow that because we are a multicultural society, the art that is produced here reflects the complexity of our society. A multicultural arts milieu could engage with the creative potential afforded by a multicultural society. French philosophers, Deleuze and Guattari, combine the three French meanings of "milieu" of ""surroundings", "medium" (as in chemistry) and "middle"" (Massumi in Deleuze and Guattari 1987: ix). One of their propositions is that "rhythm is the milieu's answer to chaos" (1987: 314). Their depiction of milieu suggests that it temporarily arranges a constantly dynamic world. Bourdieu, on the other hand, considers that a milieu is created through social relations of those in positions of power or influence to "mirror" each back to the other:

> The relation to the social world is not the mechanical causality between "milieu" and a
>
> consciousness, but rather a sort of ontological complicity (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:
>
> 144).

Both of these depictions of milieu are appropriate for my purposes. "Milieu" is the social context in which one finds oneself and one's peers, including systems to encourage or constrain a positive creative environment.

This ideal milieu would be aided by imaginative policy which views "multiculturalism as an aesthetic issue" (Rizvi 2003: 135). Our dynamic and hybrid social realities mean that there is no one group of experts to hold the breadth of knowledge about multicultural arts practices across all artforms. Systems can be put in place to enable contributions to the governance of arts policy by 'NESB' artists. As Mosquera observes in the debates around cultural diversity, a "key point is who exerts the cultural decision and on whose benefit it is taken" (Mosquera 2003: 23).

It is the persistence of 'NESB' artists who make up an Australian multicultural arts scene, which in turn re-generates and creates the space and provenance to widen that milieu. This may be viewed as how a set of practices move into circulation (Ahmed 2012: 29-32). A continuous and contiguous history of production and presentation which alters, permeates and shifts the boundaries of how multicultural arts 'circulate' and may generate a more supportive multicultural arts milieu.

For the individual practitioner, a cosmopolitan outlook can be viewed as a personal attribute, however to produce a multicultural arts milieu, it is valuable to consider cosmopolitanism as a set of practices that can "habituate open-ness to others" or indeed produce sites that "foster forms of intercultural belonging" (Noble 2009: 51). Artist processes and presentations that are relevant to a multicultural Australia contribute to the production of such sites, which in turn foster the environment for multicultural arts practices. In order to foster such sites and practices, artists and multicultural arts organisations bring a cooperative approach to their cross-cultural creative work and involve their creative and ethnic networks.

It is reasonable to expect that the one ('NESB' artists making the work) will flow into the other (a general arts experience that describes a multicultural Australia). This is similar to the difference between intellectual and academic work as viewed by UK cultural theorist and activist, Stuart Hall:

> they overlap, they abut each other, they feed off one another, the one provides you with the means to do the other. But they are not the same thing (Hall quoted in Ang, 2015: 31)

Although describing a different set of worlds and practices, this could be seen to parallel the relationship between artist as activist and multicultural creative production as organisational change. The artist develops the organisation which in turn provides the chance for the artist and future generations to keep on developing. Ideally, this could create a supportive milieu formed from relationships between artist, "academies", agencies of government, arts organisations and their audiences.

Constraints to the Ideal

A recurring historical narrative that hinders a flourishing multicultural arts milieu is the perception that multicultural arts comes from 'NESB' artists working as community arts workers (Hawkins 1993; Blonski 1992, 1994; Gunew and Rizvi 1994). While recognised as the door through which the "ethnic artist" could participate in the subsidised arts, CACD processes are rarely valued as artistically 'excellent' because the benefits to the specific 'community' take precedence over the artistic outcomes. There is also limited profile of this work to the broader public, which in turn limits a wider recognition and creative traction. The perception that 'NESB' artists are prevalent in CACD employment is, however, now challenged by data that only 7 percent work in this area (chapter I). Nevertheless, these associations may well be activated and reinvigorated as local governments support arts and

culture as a stronger part of their activities. The *Edge of Elsewhere,* a multi-sited international and intercultural visual arts project at Campbelltown Arts Centre in Western Sydney and 4A (now the Centre for Contemporary Asian Australia Arts) in inner Sydney, brought 'NESB' and Indigenous artists into collaboration with community members to produce high quality visual arts. It is considered that the creative outcomes of this ambitious project were possible because of the "30 years of socially engaged arts activity in western Sydney" (Mar and Ang 2015: 55). The similar longevity and activity with Asian Australian visual artists gave an equal history and engagement. Both point to the value of continuous organisational leadership in multicultural arts.

The support of family peers and networks are also essential to the systems that independent artists create around themselves to shore up their precarious existence and precarious art practice.

> Precarity is the condition of being vulnerable to others. Unpredictable encounters
> transform us; we are not in control, even of ourselves. Unable to rely on a stable structure
> of community, we are thrown into shifting assemblages, which remake us as well as our
> others (Tsing 2015: 20).

Tsing elucidates precarity beyond unequal economic scenarios and emphasises the productive connections that can potentially occur between those very different to us and through "unpredictable interfaces" (Mar and Ang 2015). The existence of networks which build trust across those interfaces contribute to successful multicultural art projects. Permission from the family, for example, emerged as an important factor for second-generation 'NESB' artists in their career path regardless of their ethnic background or class status; this mirrors the findings specific to Arab-Australian male artists (Idriss 2017).

The value of peer support and networks is a common issue: for example, 50 percent of 'NESB' respondents identified their most important need as being the opportunity to meet other artists (Stevenson *et al.* 2017: 54). An isolated artist cannot share their experiences and often internalises a sense of inadequacy. The response by artists to the *Beyond Tick Boxes* workshop organised by Diversity Arts Australia (2017) raised this issue and attests to the need for the artists to have opportunities to come together and to try and make sense of their experiences. A multicultural arts milieu would see these opportunities at national, state and local levels regularly established in the arts calendar, similar to the bi-annual national Regional Arts Conference.

A persistent issue that is encountered by the individual artist that also plays out in public is that of typecasting and stereotyping. Being typecast, stereotyped, cast in minority roles or not cast at all, is a long-standing issue for 'NESB' actors in theatre and screen in Australia (Bertone, Keating and Mullaly 1998: xi). Twenty years on, a lack of opportunity remains the common experience for many 'NESB' actors (Screen Australia 2017). Lewis (2007) sparked controversy around the lack of multicultural actors (adopting Hage's (2000) term of "Third-World Looking People") on Australian stages and screens. This is a situation which, if changed, would help to re-frame the representation of Australia's national identity. Lewis argues that the frequency with which 'NESB' actors are cast in minority roles, is "akin to spatial marginalisation of ethnic groups in cities" (2014: 41). Linking these two forms of cultural and spatial ghettos crystallises the sense of invisibility experienced by many actors.

Critical Appraisal and Appreciation

All artists want exposure for their work, yet access to extended networks and avenues of support to facilitate that exposure is often absent for 'NESB' artists' careers and cultural milieus. Arts criticism is interpretation and evaluation of an art project made public. Critical

appreciation is extremely difficult to achieve in Australia, because, as arts critic and writer Alison Croggon observes, public discourse about art prefers "to shore up the status quo rather than to question, to expand, to educate, to inquire, to imagine better" (2016). There may also be a resistance to writing, discussed further in chapter IV, about 'NESB' artists, and when it does occur, often a snide comment undermines the multicultural aspect of the work. Gunew critiques a review of *Fragments*, a book of poetry by Antigone Kefala (2016) in the *Sydney Review of Books*. Gunew argues that the reviewer takes an ill-informed standpoint from which to provide an impoverished review that, without base, dismisses Kefala's work. Gunew argues this to be an example of the "stereotypic methods … (in which) many Australian writers of non-Anglo-Celtic background get treated by the gatekeepers of Australian literature" (2017).

Edge of Elsewhere, however, raised the level of critical debate through a range of media and events. The project was afforded public circulation and attention through its inclusion in three annual programs of the popular Sydney Festival of the Arts and demonstrates how the general public can be brought into dialogue with culturally diverse practices. The processes and resources dedicated to this project and the longevity of practice in the local area points to what a momentary supportive multicultural arts milieu generates, and in parallel, exemplifies the "whole cycle" of the UNESCO Convention (Mar and Ang 2015: 60).

The Role of Friction, Trust and Traction

The preceding discussion suggests that the metaphors of friction, trust and traction provide a way to consider the ways to extend a multicultural arts milieu beyond the momentary.

Encountering Friction

Friction is a force that has several dimensions. It is the "rubbing of two bodies (physical and mechanical); the resistance a body encounters when moving over one another; clash of wills, temperaments, opinions" (Concise Oxford Dictionary 1982: 393). For example, sandpaper rubbing over wood results in the alteration of both materials, oil is used to reduce friction in an engine, and disagreements or conflict can cause friction between people. All energetic exchanges will produce friction generating 'heat' as a by-product. In innovation and management studies, friction is seen to aid innovation through 'abrasion', whereby people are brought onto a project because they cause 'discomfort' and can present divergent views that may lead to new solutions. Friction in organisations can also identify when things are being made "too hard to do" (Sutton and Seelig 2017).

The positioning of 'NESB' artists and multicultural arts production within the Australia Council is characterised by the type of friction that makes things "hard to do" (Sutton and Seelig 2017). The causes of the frictions can arise from pressure from multiple sources, including: the federal government policies on multiculturalism; arts funding; migrant constituencies; Council staff and board members; as well as the perceptions of and by 'NESB' artists. There have been at times fierce, internal resistance as to the need for 'special treatment' of migrants, ethnics or 'NESB' artists (depending on the terms of the day) which has required articulate and influential leadership on the part of those wanting to encourage arts practices that reflect Australia's multicultural reality (Blonski 1992; Hawkins 1993; Sammers 1999).

The theme of friction and its role in generating creativity emerged through the historical accounts of the AMA policy and the constraints expressed by the interviewees, such as the lack of change in the arts sector and the typecasting of artists in terms of their background, which I discuss in chapter IV. The processes of intercultural practice and

negotiation for creative and cultural autonomy reflect how artists respond to those constraints. Anna Tsing, writing on "contingent encounters", suggests how cultures can change.

> Cultures are continually co-produced in the intersections I call 'friction': the awkward, unequal, unstable and creative qualities of interconnection across difference (Tsing 2005: 4-5).

Navigating the "awkward and unequal" and competing aspects of innovation and maintenance of cultural heritage can characterise the practices of 'NESB' artists. Innovation is a synthesis of fresh ideas into new forms of production that resonate within contemporary society. Cultural heritage is "collective memory made tangible" that surfaces through forms of "expression, maintenance, representation, recognition and renewal" (Anheier and Isar 2007: 30). These characteristics are frequently positioned as mutually exclusive binaries for multicultural arts practices yet present valuable opportunities through the capacity to generate creative responses.

The slow pace of change regarding representation is a 'glacial' friction, that grinds over and eventually alters the landscape. The outer edges (or margins) at times move more quickly and generate greater friction and heat to produce some change in the landscape, while the centre (or the mainstream) moves far more slowly. The pertinent simile for 'NESB' creative leadership of this scenario is that the margins 'melt' into a new fluid form more readily than the more static centre.

Establishing Trust

A direct definition of trust is that it is established "when you do what you say you would do" (Punt and Bateman 2018: 39). This includes fulfilling those aims ethically and confirming

whether the "processes, platforms and people" are in place to achieve those aims (Punt and Bateman 2018: 39). It is arguable that the past decades of friction, whether experienced as an 'NESB' artist, arts sector, government or its agencies, have produced a lack of mutual trust. Trust can be succinctly defined as a "specific solution to risk" (Luhmann 2000: 95) required when faced with an unfamiliar situation from which "a bad outcome would make you regret your action" (Luhmann 2000: 98). Arts funding institutions develop complicated procedures to assess and weed out, risky clients including those whose work is unfamiliar. If the artist is trusted (with the resources) and delivers on their grant obligations, their chances for repeat opportunities increase. This relationship between trust and risk is pertinent to the establishment of a multicultural arts milieu in several ways. The encouragement of the culturally unfamiliar would open up new creative possibilities and the allocation (or trust with) the resources would provide adequate support for the unfamiliar.

Weltecke also suggests that trust developed to reduce risk and views it as "culturally constructed" but may lead to an "efficiency" of cooperation.

> "Trust" can be seen as a specific combination of cultural practices, of emotional and rational phenomena, and of specific ideas and values connected with these practices and phenomena. Theories of trust might serve as a tool to become aware of the human ability to cooperate (Weltecke 2008: 391).

Trust, therefore, becomes a multi-faceted issue for some 'NESB' artists and can be developed through the process of "attunement" (Gibson 2005). Trust must be developed and present for an inter-generational, intercultural understanding that takes into account respect for the knowledge holders and, as outlined above, manage that knowledge effectively to develop "beyond" the ethno-specific norms and contexts. Mutual trust for multicultural arts needs to be evident in many directions, from the Australia Council staff and advisors, to the ethnic,

migrant or 'NESB' artist, the arts organisations and vice versa, as well as the public. If mutual trust becomes evident between these parties, the possibilities for a broader multicultural arts milieu increase.

Generating Traction

Traction describes the process whereby things can move in a desired direction by employing friction at the interface between two or more elements. Traction relies upon friction between these components or agents in a system, and if used tactically, can produce a trajectory towards a desired outcome. In the context of this research, I use traction to indicate movement towards a more supportive multicultural arts milieu. Traction in this sense is a result of a cultural and social understanding of the friction arising from the constraints and opportunities experienced by 'NESB' artists and arts multicultural organisations.

The issue is how to manage exchanges that generate 'heat' towards a positive outcome and avoid a destructive one. The process of establishing trust can determine the trajectory in a creative manner and, in time, generate traction towards something more stable and robust. The role of trust acts as a hinge which articulates and enables communication between the range of players in any given multicultural art project. There are many moments in that process where trust needs to be evident or established for an entire project to be successfully realised. Trust is publicly established when the artwork engages with and is relevant for diverse audiences. Contributions to those processes of developing traction include the research published aimed at educating artists and arts professionals alike. Publications include: *The World is Your Audience* (Migliorino 1998), *Who Goes There* (Kapetopoulos 2004), *Adjust Your View Toolkit* (Kapetopoulos 2009) and the *Multicultural Arts Marketing Ambassadors* program (Australia Council 2001: 21). Presenting culturally diverse content indicates attentiveness to culturally diverse audiences and aims to increase

the trust between creative work, the presenters and the audiences. These relationships enliven a multicultural arts milieu.

Conclusion

Despite the long-term investment in leadership courses by agencies such as the Australia Council, members of the arts sector, including 'NESB' artists, have been calling for "better leadership" (Castagna 2017; Gonsalves 2017; Badami 2017). A characterisation of a 'traditional' leader is that they require a vision or direction, the capacity to engender trust in that vision and to be able influence the group (of whatever size) to achieve their goal. The calls for better leadership raise questions about the ways in which the directions for the arts are determined, or led, and how any policies arising from those directions are implemented, or managed.

These calls suggest leadership styles which acknowledge the crucial role of relationships and reflect and assist the interconnected nature of contemporary society. Distributed leadership, for example, identifies how different skill sets in members of a group are activated to lead depending on the circumstances (Hewison and Holden 2011: 39). Relational leadership promotes open dialogue which shares responsibility between the people involved so as to generate innovative ideas. This approach suits a creative practice that innovates particularly between a range of cultures because it opens dialogue and shuts down judgement (Hewison and Holden 2011: 30). Transformative leaders are charismatic and able to galvanise people to trust in their vision. These types are possibly the more prevalent in creative arts organisations as the arts does attract those who wish to or are comfortable in 'standing out'. When the charismatic leader leaves, however, their galvanising abilities leave with them and often their changes have yet to become status quo (Hewison and Holden 2011: 29-30). Transactional leadership, on the other hand, is a useful option as it can provide a

more explicit contractual basis to tie conditions of arts funding and in that way tries to move beyond personal preference to public expectation (Hewison and Holden 2011: 29).

This thesis frames 'NESB' artists and cultural practitioners as leading the arts in a multicultural Australia, in particular those who create new meanings through their relations with cultural groups. Their need to be adaptive and develop trust so as to be able to generate collaborations responds to the constraints of persistent under-representation and lower funding allocations (Keating *et al.* n.d.). In this regard, each of the leadership styles discussed in this chapter are relevant at particular times in the full realisation of the UNESCO 'culture cycles' which will nurture a supportive broader multicultural arts milieu. Crucially, it is also through the establishment of, and access to, networks for 'NESB' artists and cultural practitioners that they will find themselves in a more generative environment. In that regard, the processes of "accompaniment" (Lynd and Lynd 2009; Tomlinson and Lipsitz 2013) and "attunement" (Gibson 2005) may be the skills worth cultivating. In all these instances issues of 'trust' (how to *generate* it) and 'friction' (how to *exploit* it to gain traction) are central.

Chapter III

Shaping the Discourse of Arts in a Multicultural Australia (AMA)

Introduction

Since the 1970s, the discourse of Australia's multicultural arts policies has been shaped through interactions of government, government agencies (principally the Australia Council), arts bureaucrats, artists and cultural practitioners. This discourse has generated several AMA policies and bursts of intense productive activity. However, the history of positioning 'NESB' artists and multicultural arts content into the Australia Council has also been characterised by frictions which are often generated by issues around 'trust' that can limit any traction. This characterisation suggests there are also limits to multicultural arts policies, and questions whether the processes and debates within Council are able "to go well beyond the instrumental" (Blonski 1992: 3). This chapter discusses barriers to policy effectiveness and locates the last two AMA policies of 2000 and 2006 within those histories of productive moments and the longer embattled and fractured narratives that characterise the arts in a multicultural Australia.

Policies and their Problems

The aims of government policy are to responsibly address issues in their spheres of influence, by articulating problems through research and agenda-setting, and offering solutions with key players and adequate resources (Rowe *et al*. 2016: 12). As a statutory agency of the Australian Government, the Australia Council is expected to develop arts-focused policies that relate to priorities set by the government. The need for a multicultural arts agenda identified in chapter I, 'Advancing multicultural arts policies, problems and practice', includes the low levels of grant allocations to and employment of 'NESB' artists, their lack

of representation in the arts, and their increasing perceptions that their ethnicity can impact negatively on their arts careers. These issues persist despite several decades of multicultural arts policies suggesting that either they may not necessarily be 'solvable' at the policy level alone or the policy implementation was flawed. The leadership characteristics which contribute to effective development and implementation of the multicultural arts agenda were addressed in chapter II, 'Leading for the arts in a multicultural Australia', and included cross-cultural competencies, relational and transactional leadership alongside the capacity to activate networks.

Rittel and Webber's typology of problems differentiates between those that are "tame" (solvable) or "wicked" (intractable) (1973: 155). A tame problem is complicated but can be addressed by research, strategy and "established techniques and processes" and solved by management responses (Grint 2005: 9). In contrast, a "wicked" problem is complex, "novel, embod(ies) no obvious resolution point… depend(s) on the viewpoint of the stakeholder and is embedded in another similar problem" (Grint 2005: 9). Wicked problems are often "ingrained" social problems often "ill-defined" by government relying upon "elusive political judgement" and are often considered unsolvable and that "[a]t best they are only re-solved – over and over again" (Rittel and Webber 1973: 160). The paradox between these types of problems is that multiculturalism is often perceived as a managerial approach to diverse populations when perhaps a wider consideration is applicable.

According to Rittel and Webber, wicked problems appeared after the industrial revolution in the late 18th century because of the increase in the diversity of populations, causes of their mobility and a wider range of group allegiances (1973: 155). While the arts are not viewed as an 'ingrained' social problem, the concept could apply when the issues of the arts in a multicultural Australia are considered.

> Wicked problems often crop up when organisations have to face constant change or unprecedented challenges. They occur in a social context; the greater the disagreement among stakeholders, the more wicked the problem. *In fact, it's the social complexity of wicked problems as much as their technical difficulties that make them tough to manage…*confusion, discord, and lack of progress are tell-tale signs that an issue might be wicked (my emphasis, Camillus 2008).

The attention to socially complex multicultural arts policy has had a technical response measured quantitatively and usually limited to the distribution of funds. However, from a purely creative perspective, the objectives of art are measured qualitatively. This is a challenge for a government arts agency in measuring their success, as it is always considered from a perspective other than the creative outcomes used by artists (Macdonnell 1992).

The other challenge facing the arts is that Australia currently has no national cultural policy. The two policies that had been developed and published were short-lived due to changes of government. *Creative Nation*, developed under Prime Minister Keating (Department of Communication and the Arts 1994), promoted a broad approach to culture that included film, media, libraries and heritage. Framed by this creative pluralism, the policy recognised Indigenous and migrant cultures as central in shaping Australia's domestic and exported identity. Twenty years later, *Creative Australia* (Parliament of Australia 2013) mutes this recognition.

> *Creative Australia* contains very limited reference to multicultural arts, and outlines no policies explicitly directed at expanding the participation of migrant or ethnic communities in the nation's arts and cultural sectors. Instead, cultural difference in the arts is referenced obliquely within a broader category of 'diversity' (Khan *et al.* 2013: 1).

The use of 'diversity' as a catch-all phrase reinforces political ambivalence about the need to support multicultural arts practice and signals a retreat from particular consideration for it. The history of the arts in a multicultural Australia has a pattern of advocacy, progress, retreat and repeat.

Traversing the History of AMA

Articulate and influential leadership has been required by those wanting to encourage arts practices that engage with Australia's multicultural society. There have been at times fierce, internal resistance at the Australia Council as to the need for 'special treatment' of migrants, ethnics or 'NESB' artists (depending on the terms of the day) (Blonski 1992; Hawkins 1993; Bowen 1997; Sammers 1999). The history of the arts in a multicultural Australia policies appear as an abrasive or lubricated continuum often generated by the associated absence or presence of 'trust'. As discussed in chapter II, this ebb and flow of trust can lead to frictions, which can characterise engagement with such sources as: the federal government policies on multiculturalism; levels of arts funding through government; the various and dynamic migrant constituencies; the different ways in which complex identities can be creatively presented; a producing arts organisation's knowledge about the range of multicultural arts practices; and the creative perceptions of and by 'NESB' artists.

Cultural researchers (Blonski 1992, 1994; Hawkins 1993; Rowse 1985; Gunew and Rizvi 1994) and government sources (Gardiner-Garden 1994) have documented the historical signposts of AMA up to the mid-1990s. Blonski's chronology elucidates the development of 'multicultural arts' policy and is prefaced with the value of their historical account. Blonski interprets these hard-won and lost debates and negotiations as:

a far more complex and difficult process of redefining culture within the bureaucratic

context of at least one cultural agency in terms of interconnectedness rather than

exclusion or oppositions. This suggests that the administrative processes and the debates

within Council have to go *well beyond the instrumental* (my emphasis, Blonski 1992: 3).

Ideally, the shifts in attitude required of the Australia Council could be more than just

'grafted on' programmes which have the potential to go "beyond the instrumental" (Blonski

1992: 3) arguably, there is a need for transformational and relational leadership styles, as

discussed in chapter II. To go beyond the quantitative statistical 'access and equity'

monitoring requires systematic and systemic change to understand a broader qualitative effect

of multicultural artistic production, and its subsequent potential to alter the Australian

cultural landscape.

It is difficult to assess any broad impacts of the AMA policy initiatives across and

beyond the arts. The Australia Council has been criticised for endorsing policy programs

which are neither measurable nor accountable in terms of outcomes (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 3).

One way to identify whether the policy has been effective may be to analyse whether the

AMA policy outcomes have gone 'beyond the instrumental' to generate longer term change

across the arts sector. The following discussion of the intentions, results and issues of the

AMA 2000 and 2006 policies identify occasions of productive moments within the fractured

narratives that locate multicultural arts discourse in the broader project of "redefining the

culture" (Gunew 1994: 1). Issues of leadership in navigating this complex context are

paramount, and generally tend to rely on charismatic approaches, however, the capacity for

relational leadership skills may produce a durational effect that can slide over into the next

phase of policy development.

The AMA Context

The role of the Australia Council is to support and fund contemporary art practices in Australia, including multicultural arts. This remit highlights the paradox whereby the vast majority of funds and, subsequently, institutional reverence are directed towards the MPA companies who produce and present what are frequently termed "heritage" arts (Blonski 1994; Eltham 2015; Pledger 2017). There is still a view that multicultural arts practices are lacking in contemporaneity because they are pigeon-holed within CACD (Khan *et al.* 2017: 19). The view that CACD is not contemporary may stem from its association with 'cultural maintenance', its claims of producing 'social cohesion' suggesting the role of community arts is to lubricate and cohere, rather than equally being shaped by critical sparks of creativity.

The Australia Council also struggles to demonstrate its claims of the centrality of difference in its funding decisions for multicultural arts organisations (see Table 4: Longevity of multi-artform company dedicated to presenting multicultural artists). Ahmed describes this experience within an institutional frame as the "gap between symbolic commitments to diversity and the experience of those who embody diversity" (2012: 29). The symbolic commitments tend to be limited to statements on webpages or paragraphs in annual reports. It is the 'NESB' artist who experiences the gap in resources. Institutional staff can also embody diversity as "diversity workers" (Ahmed 2012: 25). The unsettling nature of doing this 'diversity work', either within or upon, an institution requires enormous persistence – particularly in uncovering those habits that are "not named or made explicit" (Ahmed 2012: 25). The institution finds this work to unpick and unpack the habituated status quo against diversity as irritating because while, "habits save trouble, diversity work creates trouble" (Ahmed 2012: 27). This trouble-making is noticeable when considering multicultural arts policies and practices. Deciding what kind of trouble to make and how to make it forms the modus operandi for those developing multicultural arts policy. Most people doing 'diversity

work' therefore have an almost impossible task: to decipher the hidden intricacies of the institutional machinations which can be described as the 'black box' phenomena (Latour 1987) in which habitual processes are so ingrained they occur with limited awareness by the 'actor'. The 'diversity worker' must be able identify those habits that inhibit institutional diversity and find the leaders who will attempt to address them through policy statements and initiatives that the institution agrees to adopt.

The Origins and Development of Multicultural Arts Policy 1973-1999

The historical accounts of the first few decades of the development of federal cultural policy in Australia (Rowse 1985; Macdonnell 1992; Johanson and Rentschler 2002; Craik 2007) refer to 'ethnic' or 'multicultural' arts, but other than Blonski (1992, 1994) and Hawkins (1993), rarely look in any depth into the multicultural arts policies. Appendix 2 outlines a chronology of multicultural arts policy at the Australia Council until the present time. Craik (2007) proposes a timeline that captures Australian cultural policy development:

- pre-1900 settler culture emphasising nostalgia and a new beginning;

- 1900-39 state cultural entrepreneurship;

- 1940-54 the era of national cultural organisations;

- 1955-67 organisational patronage (government funded specialist bodies);

- 1967-74 policies of growth and facilitation;

- 1975-90 access and equity and community cultural development;

- 1991-95 diversity, excellence, cultural policy and cultural industries;

- 1996- the review cycle and a return to neo-patronage.

Craik identifies multicultural arts content appearing as part of the developing national cultural narrative from 1975 onwards. It is worth noting the exceptions to this, such as the

establishment of the Musica Viva national chamber music organisation, Romanian immigrant Richard Goldner, in 1945 (Musica Viva n.d.). Goldner is the cultured migrant who generated creative experiences in his new post-WW2 home and, as such, represents the 'potential' rather than the 'problem' version of the migrant and the arts.

Ethnic 'communities' are positioned as a problem from the naissance of the Australia Council. The first executive officer, Jean Battersby, appointed in 1973, acknowledged the existence of, what was then termed, 'ethnic minorities' and, in step with the times, their right to uphold their 'traditions'. Their place is firmly 'other'. According to Rowse, Battersby also equated ethnic minorities as a barrier to expanding connections to the arts alongside distance, complex bureaucracies and "indifferent attitudes to the arts" (1985: 52), and argues that, for her:

> ethnic difference appears as part of a list of obstacles to be dealt with in the Arts' reach out to the community. The term 'community' in her book embraces a great variety of policy issues. Collapsing 'difference' into 'distance' helped to preserve this misunderstanding (1985: 52-53).

These early dilemmas of where and how to best deal with 'ethnic minorities' reinforces their characterisation primarily as a 'problem', as opposed to a creative 'potential' within the newly formed federal arts agency (Blonksi 1992: 3). The early and predominant structure of the Australia Council consisted of a governing board mostly made up of chairs from each of the artform boards which in turn were made up of expert peers. All members to Council were appointed by the government. Ethnic or multicultural arts did not have a separate section or board, but did have an advisory committee made up of NESB members usually from each of those artform boards.

In her aptly-titled essay 'Persistent Encounters: the Australia Council and multiculturalism', Blonksi (1994) identified three durational phases in the development and retraction of the arts in a multicultural Australia between 1973 and 1994. The first phase (1973-1982) identified ethnic artists through extensive fieldwork by the Ethnic Arts officer. Council dealt with the need for access through the establishment of the community arts committee as part of its structure (Hawkins 1993). However, it was widely considered even by critics that the small amount of funding allocated to community arts was going to be ineffective. Almost immediately, in 1975, community arts included some version of an 'ethnic arts' dialogue within its purview (Blonski 1992: 15). Despite persistent internal advocacy by community arts director, Rosalie Bower, and the brief appointment of an EAC and a Multicultural Arts Committee, there was no subsequent development of policy because it was "regarded as a low priority" (Blonski 1994: 199). In 1978, the report commissioned by the federal government, *Post-Arrival Programs and Services to Migrants* (also known as the Galbally Report), recommended that the Council initiate more active engagement with, and support for, ethnic communities and artists. The evaluation in 1982 by the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs was highly critical of the Australia Council who was goaded into action as a result (Blonski 1994: 200).

The second phase (1982-1986) saw rapid change in multicultural arts policy. A Council-wide policy resulted in major structural reform with dedicated staff to oversee the suite of changes. The internal changes specified lines of reporting and monitoring, use of incentive funds to be matched by the artform budgets, staff awareness and research into multicultural arts policy development. Communication strategies included definitions of multicultural projects and ethnic artists, promotional publications and artist conferences. The results were increased staff confidence, clarity of roles and remits, increased recognition across all artforms for multicultural artists, and a tripling of funding towards multicultural

arts, even though it was a small fraction (3.1 percent) of the annual Council expenditure (Blonski 1994: 201).

A third phase (1987-1989) is one of hiatus and push-back by internal power brokers regarding multicultural arts. This was a period where heated debates 'raged' about the Australia Council artform boards grant funding criteria of 'professionalism, excellence and creativity'. The artform boards were resistant to being told to develop multicultural arts projects and how to allocate their funds, and instead successfully argued that Council should abandon their centralised multicultural incentive funds. A recommendation from the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs that the Council increase its efforts did not occur due to funding cuts and a management review. Attention to multicultural arts did continue, however, so that by the end of 1989, the term "Arts for a Multicultural Australia" was first adopted. The new branding of the AMA policy was based on the view that the term "multicultural arts was problematic and even meaningless" (Blonski 1994: 201-2). The implication is that 'multicultural arts' could refer to all arts practices, and also that not all NESB artists wish to be viewed as 'multicultural'.

A fourth phase can now be distinguished between 1990 and 1996. This phase can be characterised by rebranding, deeper institutional embedding and demonstrating relational leadership through closer working relationships with the states' arts agencies (Blonski 1994: 202). The AMA 1993-1996 policy is distinguished by a period of national research and report writing, conferencing and the publication of what remains as the definitive text, *Culture, Difference and the Arts* (Gunew and Rizvi 1994).

Blonski's retelling identifies lengthy periods of internal and external friction across many levels within Council, beginning from the disagreements from the 1970s when each artform board was expected to specify their role in assisting migrant artists. Historically, these periods of friction have led to short productive phases of traction and change. Those

phases have been characterised by trusting working relationships between the program manager, the ACMAC chair and the director of either the community arts or policy and planning, depending on the location of the AMA policy work in the organisation. The supportive influence of the Council Chair and the CEO are essential. Key productive moments are associated with articulate and politically astute ACMAC leadership, members and staff, who also recognise the importance of artist involvement and critical debate about multicultural issues within the arts.

The decades between the 1970s and the 1990s would be characterised by the Australia Council through their annual reports as one of steady, increased inclusion. There is little to suggest in these reports that this inclusion was a result of any external pressure. However, it is more realistic to portray these decades as a series of frictions in part caused by a lack of mutual trust, which is multi-directional and needs to reciprocated (Weltecke 2008). Trust therefore needs to be evident from the Council to the 'ethnic', 'migrant', 'multicultural' or 'NESB' artist and vice versa. When trust is evident between these parties, the increase in adequate traction can improve the multicultural arts milieu because a supportive environment should lead to more creative production.

Persistent Frictions

From the outset, a consistent friction was demonstrated by the ongoing structural issue as to whether 'ethnic arts' should reside solely in community arts (itself a cause of friction) or be integrated throughout the artform sections, and whether there should be special programs of support. The Australia Council has been described as a "territory marked by competing cultural discourses" (Blonski 1992: 3) generated in the debates between artform silos and institutional priorities; elite practice and community engagement; general public and politician's awareness of the arts. The structural quandary underlined the issue of a lack of

trust in the art that was produced by the so-called 'ethnic artist'. Providing access was often interpreted as a barrier to achieving excellence because it opened the way for amateur artists to have access to limited resources. The 'ethnic artist' role had been designated as upholding traditional arts and crafts, which in turn raised questions about their capacity to be artists with contemporary practices (Hawkins 1993: 120). These early days saw the tensions established around the issues of trust and leadership of ethnic arts both in terms of eligible creative endeavours and questionable aesthetic assumptions on the part of the institution.

The location of multicultural arts policy work within the Australia Council was also a cause for friction. Throughout the decades between 1975 and 1999, responsibility for AMA shifted back and forth between the community arts section and the more centralised policy section (when such a section existed). Historically, both sections had agreed understanding of debates leading to policies for inclusion (Hawkins 1993: 87-88). When AMA was located in the Community Arts Board (CAB), or the Cultural Development Unit (CCDU) as it was variously known, it had strong advocacy at the Council table through the Chair, but limited influence across the entirety of the Australia Council. When AMA was positioned centrally within the Strategy and Policy (Strategy) division, the staff member had greater leverage through access to the Council Chair and as a central area of internal structural influence. Throughout the 1990s, a semblance of stable structural positioning had been achieved for AMA through its inclusion in the Strategy, even though seen by some as a rupture from the "supportive environment of community arts (whereby the position) was given a broader range of policy duties" (Sammers 1999).

The annual reports of most government institutions present their public narratives of 'achievements' without airing their internal debates. Former Australia Council Chair, Hilary McPhee, provided this account:

By 1982 a Multicultural Policy was adopted, a fund set up and the position Multicultural

Arts Officer created. In 1988-9 this overall expenditure on multicultural arts was 3.7% of

the Council Budget. In 1993-4 it was 11.6% and has all the hallmarks of being one of the

most successful policy initiatives implemented by the Australia Council (McPhee 1995).

The policies incorporated the government approach of disseminating multilingual

communications about their programs, appointing 'NESB' assessors and advisors as part of

the institutional workings and presenting staff awareness programmes (Hawkins 1993: 87).

Appointing 'NESB' peer assessors and staff champions remain the main strategies of the

Australia Council today. The internal statistics demonstrate their commitment towards

institutional inclusion. The decade of the 1990s saw first (the migrant or 'NESB1') and

second (the children of those migrants or 'NESB 2') generation 'NESB' artists at levels of 16

to 18 percent as grant assessors and 26 to 29 percent of staff. Grants approved to the artists

and communities appear to settle at the earlier target which saw an increase from 3 percent in

1986 to "a peak of 14 percent in the mid-90s" and 8-9 percent in 1999 (Sammers 1999).

However, these steps of progress were not adequate for multicultural arts to become

'embedded' across institutional practices. There is a significant downward trend, for

example, in times of institutional stress, usually caused by reduced funding appropriations

from government. When government appropriation is reduced, multicultural arts falls off the

agenda (Blonski 1994).

AMA 1993 articulates the results of crucial debates about who determines

'excellence', and how best to encourage greater access to services and deliver equity of

resources. This policy challenges the prevalent notions of excellence by rejecting "narrow

definitions of excellence, culture and artistic practice" (Australia Council 1993: 3). This

statement was made prior to the release of *Culture Difference and the Arts* (Rizvi and Gunew

1994) and can be seen as an emphatic concern of consecutive ACMAC Chairs during that

time, Sneja Gunew and Fazal Rizvi. Gunew was also one of the authors of the second volume on writers: *Access to Excellence: A Review of Issues Affecting Artists from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds* (Papastergiadis, Gunew and Blonski 1994). As well as issues of impact on mainstream arts companies, communication, access and equity, the relationship between Indigenous and 'NESB' artists was highlighted as one of the intentions of that Arts for a Multicultural Australia policy (Australia Council 1993: 2). The discourses about 'excellence' and the creative potential arising from collaborations between Indigenous and NESB artists continued into the AMA 2006 policy.

The 1993 policy also articulates the scope of characteristics of the 'NESB' artist and what constitutes a multicultural arts project. The definitions are re-produced here in full as they remain the most current definitions because these remain the most detailed Australia Council published definitions and attest to the array of options that could attract funds to art projects:

- of first generation artists – Australian artists born in a non-English speaking country and whose first language is not English;

- of second generation artists – Australian artists born in Australia of overseas-born parents from a non-English speaking background;

- that involve a majority of immigrant artists of non-English speaking background or second-generation artists;

- ethno-specific arts projects of an ethno specific group;

- conducted by a multicultural arts organisation;

- from non-arts ethnic or multicultural organisations whose primary objective is specific work on the multicultural nature of Australian society;

- whose main objective is to promote cross-cultural awareness;

- targeted at ethno-specific communities in general;

- whose content relates to the multicultural nature of Australia and where the art production involves a majority of artists or groups of non-English speaking background;

- that explore and enhance cultural links between Australia and other countries or regions, in particular the Asia-Pacific region (Australia Council 1993 7-8).

The other persistent issue is the capacity to evaluate the policy. Former director of the community arts section, Christine Sammers criticised the lack of mechanisms to 'coerce' decision makers as well as the accompanying lack of evaluation and accountability.

> There is therefore little knowledge of the impacts of programs, targets, peer representation and other mechanisms on NESB artists employed, changing content of artworks audience access or other key objectives (1999).

This lack of knowledge highlights the debates that surround establishing what works as a multicultural arts strategy and how best to make improvements. It also explains the sense of "déjà vu" (Grint 2010:15) experienced by so many 'NESB' artists and cultural practitioners.

AMA 2000 Policy

The most recent Australia Council multicultural policies are those of 2000 (Australia Council 2000) and 2006 (Australia Council 2006a). The AMA 2000 policy brought together tradition and innovation and profiled individual artists' practices as well as their roles in the community. By taking this focus, the policy attempted to alter perceptions of multicultural artists as only being relevant in a community setting with its attendant low status in the arts world. But as Stevenson (2000) notes, the arts agenda continues to inadequately deal with the creative priorities of ethnic minorities.

The 2000 AMA policy coincided with Prime Minister Howard's tenure between 1996 and 2007. Howard was known for his lack of investment in multicultural issues, epitomised in his lack of use of the 'm' word of 'multiculturalism'. The arts portfolio received limited attention under Senator Richard Alston, however any budget cuts were foreshadowed and were in alignment with most other portfolios. Philip Ruddock was the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs between 1996 and 2003, during which time he oversaw the development of the offshore refugee detention centres and had limited engagement with the cultural side of his portfolio. This period also saw the rise of Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party, built on a platform which claimed that Australians feared and mistrusted Asians (Marr 2017).

Despite this federal government's retreat from the earlier pluralist version of multiculturalism, this was nevertheless an extremely active period for the AMA policy. Lex Marinos completed his term as deputy chair of the Australia Council and chair of CCDB and ACMAC which led to the recently elected Coalition Government's appointment of television script writer, Deborah Klika as chair of CCDB who subsequently also chaired ACMAC and Youth arts.

The Structural Prominence of ACMAC

For over a decade since its establishment in 1989, the role and composition of ACMAC had been stable. The committee's role was to develop and monitor the implementation of the AMA policy:

> To make recommendations to Council on any issue which may affect the full expression
> of cultural diversity in the work of the Australia Council. This long-standing Advisory
> Committee is made up of members from each artform Board as well as three members

appointed by Council who are external to the workings of Council. The Chair of the

Committee is a Council member (Australia Council 2002: 12).

There were 25 members of ACMAC between 1998-2002, which demonstrates the awareness

of 'NESB' artists by both the federal government and the Australia Council. It is also a

salient reminder that the source of influence and leadership of ACMAC was due to its

composition and focus, whereby peers from each artform section came together to discuss the

AMA policy issues, both broadly and in reference to their artform area of expertise. The

ACMAC minutes from 1999 record their intention to, in their words, "re-vision" the AMA

policy to give it a more strategic focus, and to improve the relationship with 'NESB' artists

having identified the "strong need to re-establish trust with the sector and Council leadership

on AMA" (Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee n.d.).

In 1999, the development phase of AMA 2000 saw NESB artists being asked what

their expectations were from an AMA policy. There had been some fragmentation of the

sector caused by the CCD removal in 1998 of funding for multicultural arts officer positions

in local councils and the NSW multicultural arts organisation, Multicultural Arts Alliance.

This had resulted in a sharp decline in level of trust in 'NESB' artists' perceptions of the

Australia Council's interest and ability to include them as part of the arts in Australia

(Positive Solutions n.d.). Policy development, therefore, occurred through a range of

communication channels including national consultation in the form of surveys, forums and

face to face interviews with artists and cultural practitioners engaged in multicultural

activities across the range of artforms.

Arts consulting firm, Positive Solutions, was engaged in 1999 to better understand the

professional development needs of 'NESB' artists. The responses included views that

development of the arts in a multicultural Australia should be taken up widely across the arts

sectors (Positive Solutions n.d.: 17). Further, issues about leadership were expressed, ranging from state government agencies who saw multicultural arts as "too disparate", to individual artists who did not agree that there was a "multicultural arts sector" (Positive Solutions n.d.: 27). Also, several issues resonated with NESB artists who articulated the need for networking opportunities along with the recognition of prior experience and broader arts participation, including this statement:

> "I want professional development opportunities and am pretty clear about what I want and need. I would like it very much if someone took it upon themselves to provide opportunities which are not bogged down in 'community arts' models or targeting 'beginners'" (Positive Solutions n.d.: 17).

Comments such as this highlight artists' sense of disenfranchisement, and a lack of inclusion or recognition of their abilities. It also identifies expectations of professional development opportunities which take into account the complexities and changes in the 'NESB' artistic environment which may be overlooked by such large bodies as the Australia Council.

A survey circulated to Australian artists requested feedback about the proposed aims and strategies under consideration before finalising the 2000 AMA policy. At times, ACMAC members must have felt somewhat beleaguered because their November 1999 minutes record that the members were encouraged by the openness of the respondents who had also expressed surprise that Council would even be interested in their comments. The themes articulated by artists went beyond the usual issues of funding to include such matters as communication, relationships and critical discussion:

- a desire and need for direct human contact with the Council
- a desire for information and material from the Council about AMA
- strong support for greater liaison with the state and territory arts agencies

- the need to promote, fund and encourage work

- the need to promote critical discourse with all parts of the sector including major

  organisations (Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee n.d.a).

The research for the 2000 AMA policy focused on 'NESB' artists and the broader arts sector. It was developed over two years through consultations internally with ACMAC and staff and externally with artists and arts organisations. In 2005, the Council engaged consultants from Effective Change and Victoria University to undertake a national evaluation of the policy. This full policy cycle from consultation to evaluation is one of the intense periods of focus that reinvigorated the AMA policy.

Policy Intentions and their Results

The eighteen months of research, consultation and strategic planning by ACMAC and regular reports to Council and executive staff resulted in a commitment of $2.08 million between financial years 1998-99 and 2003-04 to deliver the policy objectives. As ACMAC chair, Klika had successfully navigated improvements in activities, communication and trust between the multicultural arts sectors and the Australia Council. In this instance she demonstrated relational, charismatic and transactional leadership to influence and negotiate this outcome. The challenge was to effectively deliver the raft of strategies with two full-time staff and the cooperation of other areas across the Council. As Gunew notes, the "uneven" implementation of multicultural arts policy often frustrates the "arts bureaucrats and artists themselves" (1994: 1). In this context, having two full-time staff demonstrated the relational model of leadership to develop excellent relationships with the arts sector, especially those committed to multicultural arts were essential for generating the momentum needed to implement the suite of initiatives. It also demonstrated 'distributed' leadership by injecting funds into the multicultural sector to deliver the range of initiatives.

The AMA 2000 policy developed a framework approach to deliver long-term strategies through skilling, promoting and engagement that could also operate across the Australia Council's objectives. While the term 'multicultural arts milieu' may not have been used at this time, those three areas for attention all aimed to have a positive effect on the environment in which 'NESB' artists worked.

The MAPD program, managed by the Australian Multicultural Foundation and Kape Communications, for example, partnered with RMIT University to deliver on the 'skills' platform; it began in 2002 and ran until 2011. The executive programme delivered an annual, national, accredited and creatively focused program on modest funding from the Australia Council of, for example, $86,476 in its first year (Australia Council 2002: 113). The scope of MAPD has yet to be matched in its content and approach to multicultural leadership to which the alumni pages attest. Those attracted included:

> cultural managers, arts marketers, community arts specialists, producers, curators and artists who desired to build their skills in utilising cultural diversity for audience development, community partnerships, marketing and targeted communications: project development and international collaborations (Kape Communications 2011).

Skilling and promotion were enabled by initiatives to produce and present high quality and well-profiled artistic practice and content through the Cultural Diversity Clusters (CDC) with Flinders University and kultour (the touring network formed by state-based multicultural arts organisations). ACMAC only ever ventured directly into the creative space once through the CDC. Making creative opportunities was a priority of the committee, but much harder to negotiate with senior arts development management, as it was seen as a form of creative 'interference' into the realm of the artforms. ACMAC's approach was therefore to infiltrate the edges of creative production, to form alliances that would inevitably engage in hybrid

artforms through the acceptance of multicultural arts practices. The aim was to bring a number of 'NESB' professional artists from different disciplines together to have their collaboration facilitated by experts with access to production infrastructure. The intention was to move beyond an approach of one-off projects, and to generate relationships that would lead to on-going platforms.

> The aim of the Clusters concept was to stimulate relationships between well-resourced organisations to form partnerships for creative research and development which would lead to 'flagship' works which are multicultural in content (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 32).

One partnership was supported over several years, with the Australian Performance Laboratory (APL) at the Flinders University Drama Centre, partly because of the potential to influence curriculum in tertiary education about devising multicultural content. Nine established artists mentored a group of emerging artists and worked with a team of researchers considered experts on "intercultural and intracultural arts practice" (Australia Council 2005: 55). The artists worked intensively on their individual and combined arts practice united by the theme of 'death'. The artists included comic Hung Le, set designer Mary Moore, digital puppeteer Wojciech Pisarek, media artist Rea, dancer Yumi Umiumare, sculptor Hossein Valamanesh, photographer William Yang and performer Anna Yen (Australia Council 2005: 55).

There was some criticism from Australia Council artform managers, as I recall, that the CDC project would fail because it was stimulated by ACMAC, and did not come from artists' expressed desires. A curious observation, given that ACMAC was made up of artists. The artists invited to CDC were challenged to collaborate across unfamiliar art disciplines. The result was that each made a separate contribution that flowed together as a visual and

performance work; *Undiscovered Country* premiered in the inaugural OzAsia Festival. The piece did not aim to:

> invoke a disparate display of multicultural art practices, but a resonance with the
>
> universality of feelings and memories invoked by death ('OzAsia 07' 2007: 16).

Working in a 'laboratory' mode is now a reasonably common approach for artistic collaborative processes. Working directly with better resourced arts organisations has since been taken up by 'NESB' artists and groups as a successful model.

The aim to improve engagement with 'NESB' artists included forums held in conjunction with other Australia Council or arts sector events and regular electronic *AMA Bulletins*. Within the broader arts institutions, engagement also took the form of invited presentation luncheons. One such event was held in November 2004, where all CEOs and chairs of major performing and visual arts companies were invited to a presentation by Richard Kurin, director at the Smithsonian Institute in Boston (Kape Communications n.d.). Kurin also presented public lectures across Australia as part of the broader MAPD programme, who introduced the term 'cultural broker' to NESB artists and multicultural arts practitioners. Kurin effectively gave a name to the complex work undertaken by 'NESB' artists, and in so doing, located and endorsed it within a broader, international context of parallel activity.

In partnership with arts organisations and universities, ACMAC funded two significant conferences. One was held in 2001 and was entitled *Globalisation + Art + Cultural Difference – On the Edge of Change*, and to build on the momentum of the first, a second was held in 2004, *Empires, Ruins and Networks: Art in Realtime Culture*. Both conferences resulted in publications which were supported by ACMAC. *Complex Entanglements: Art, Globalisation and Cultural Difference* (Papastergiadis 2003) and

Empires, Ruins + Network: The Transcultural Agenda in Art (McQuire and Papastergiadis 2005) remain the most recent substantial Australian publications with essays dedicated to multicultural diversity and the arts.

The evaluation of the 2000 AMA policy, begun in late 2004 and completed in May 2005, found that the conferences were the most recognised initiative followed by kultour, the national touring organisation. The level of recognition achieved by these two 'boutique' conferences indicates the cutting and leading edge focus of the field, the concepts, the presenters, as well as the opportunities they presented for discussion and networking. These conferences differed in their scholarly focus from the management focus of those conference events usually supported by the Australia Council, such as annual marketing summits. The benefits for artists included rare national networking opportunities and the increased peer support which can flow from these. The intention of both conferences was to open up the ways in which multicultural arts practices could be perceived and underpin those understandings through the critical publications.

Issues Arising from the Policy Review

The challenges of how to measure cultural change were foremost in the consultants' evaluation (Keating *et al.* n.d.). It is even more of a challenge to evaluate an arts policy that interacts with multicultural Australia. The 2005 evaluation of the 2000 AMA policy used triangulated research via a survey (to 1,000 members of the arts sector drawn from every third grant applicant over a certain period); 200 interviews conducted nationally; and analysis of ABS and confidential Australia Council data. The degree of equitable distribution of resources is one measurement of a policy whose aim is to increase cultural production. At the Australia Council, in the 1990s and during AMA 2000 the grants to NESB artists and

multicultural arts organisations hovered at 8 percent and matches the nominal target set for a few years in the early 1990s (Sammers 1999; Keating *et al.* n.d.).

A continuation of the AMA policy was strongly endorsed by 73 percent of respondents. The relevance and need for the policy was supported by 41 percent of respondents who thought the arts were "closer now than five years ago to adequately reflect multicultural Australia", and supplemented by 31 percent who thought there was still "a long way to go" (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 23).

> There is strong support for an AMA policy from artists, arts organisations and policy makers. The support is 'altruistic' and across the board. Beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries alike agree on this issue (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 6).

The AMA 2000 policy was considered by some to be ground-breaking, because it:

> represented a shift in how the arts in multicultural communities were viewed. It has long been recognised that the arts play a significant role in promoting social cohesion, social policy goals, economic growth, and shaping a nation's sense of identity. However, prior to the introduction of this policy, multicultural arts were typically seen as involving cultural retentive activities which had their roots in expressions of migrant cultural traditions. The introduction of the policy heralded the beginning of an era in which culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) Australians were seen as integral to the fabric of the Australian arts sector (Rentschler, Le and Osborne 2008: iv).

Those comments position the 2000 policy as an attempt to go 'beyond the instrumental' and articulate the complex cultural perspectives often directed to a NESB artist.

Despite the commentary, feedback and institutional rhetoric around inclusion, cultural difference and culturally diverse arts practices, the overriding analysis from the evaluation is

that the AMA policy appears to be 'tinkering at the edges'. The authors argue that NESB artists are not accommodated outside the grant process of the artform boards. There is no specific multicultural arts board, nor targets that the artform boards must meet, nor expectations that they develop specific AMA initiatives (Keating *et al.* n.d.). The review also found distinct perceptions of the need for, and value of, multicultural arts awareness across the arts.

> The contention was that not only should there be an AMA policy, but that the policy should be 'the umbrella policy', acting as a central base from which policy and strategy formulation occurs. There was a strong concern that the policy had been marginalised over the years and that this trend, from the Australia Council, was continuing.
> In contrast, the only forum at which the value or relevance of the policy was questioned was the focus group held with a selection of Australia Council members, managers and artform board representatives. A minority of participants were critical of the on-going need to pursue the policy, displaying what Professor Andrew Jakubowicz described as 'a bored air of frustration' in reference to film industry 'heavy hitters'' resistance to arts and multicultural policies (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 30).

Crucially and paradoxically, according to the consultants, the 'NESB' artist was not found to be central in the AMA 2000 policy initiatives.

> One of the gaps found in the policy and its implementation is the lack of a broad brush approach to support the greater participation of artists. The evaluation repeatedly heard stories of NESB artists, frustrated by their lack of success in securing Australia Council funding. The demographic analysis highlights that NESB artists, particularly first generation NESB artists are under-represented in the group of grant recipients. The data is complex and indicates some variations in the experience of first and second generation

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NESB artists and variations across the artform boards. Taken together, the results

highlight that there are some structural barriers to accessing funds (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 4).

Their analysis of the 2001 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data of 10 broad categories

of artistic occupations is based on the comparative rate of 14 percent of 'NESB' people in

general professional employment and points to the potential issues around language:

NESB artists were adequately represented in only two of the artistic occupations, viz.

designers and illustrators, and visual artists and craft professionals. Authors and media

presenters had the lowest NESB representation, at just over half the percentages

expected. NESB musicians, who fared better, were still under-represented.

Table 2 below compares expected and actual levels of representation of NESB artists.

Table 2: Expected and actual levels of representation of NESB artists		
Category	Expected level of representation %	Actual level of representation %
Designers and illustrators	14.0	15
Visual artists and craft professionals	14.0	14.6
Photographers	14.0	11.7
Artists and related professionals n.f.d	14.0	10.9
Film, TV, radio and stage directors	14.0	9.4
Musicians and related professionals	14.0	9.2
Actors, dancers & related professionals	14.0	8.8
Journalists and related professionals	14.0	8.5
Media presenters	14.0	7.5
Authors and related professionals	14.0	7.5

(Keating *et al.* n.d.: 26).

This is significant in light of the points made in Chapter II, noting that the lower levels of professional representation across professions that are language based as well as the impact on lower arts-related incomes.

Alongside the issues of income and representation, one of the crucial recommendations made by the evaluators was to de-couple innovation from multicultural arts practice. While acknowledging that "cultural diversity is seen as a driver for innovation in the arts field", they as argued it to be an additional hurdle and burden for NESB artists to also bear the responsibility to innovate (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 6). The low levels of funding and arts workforce participation, in the consultants' views, attested to the need to go back to 'core principles' of how a 'NESB' artist could be accepted into the arts in Australia.

Communication had improved between the artists, multicultural arts groups and the Australia Council, however many artists expressed concern that any criticism of the policy would be misunderstood and lead to its demise. Possibly because of this, few artists are directly quoted in the report, but their comments are analysed:

> The experience of difficulties accessing funding, the difficulty of articulating culturally specific or exploratory work continues to be a hurdle for NESB artists. If the notion of innovation is rested on the shoulders of a group of artists already experiencing structural disadvantage the policy will continue to struggle to be understood, implemented or enshrined (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 14).

The precarious existence of the state-focused multicultural arts advocacy and presenting organisations (which program and present performances or exhibit visual art), such as Nexus Arts in South Australia ('Nexus Arts' n.d.) and Multicultural Arts Victoria ('Multicultural Arts Victoria' 2015), which in 2005 were still to be found in each state and territory, were noted as an important access point into the arts sector for many 'NESB' artists.

They provide a vital focal point for multicultural arts across the country, but the organisations are too often balancing on the financial brink for their potential to be reached (Keating *et al*. n.d.: 4).

This precarious environment for NESB artistic engagement is discussed in chapter V.

AMA 2000 Policy Evaluation Conclusions

The consultants who reviewed the AMA 2000 policy found that there was overwhelming support "across the board" for the policy, but that the policy lacked a context in which it operated, and therefore the justification for such a policy was assumed. This was not just a finding for the AMA policy but was a criticism levelled at other policy statements released by the Australia Council (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 4). Successful gains had been made through the critical conferences, subsequent publications and the touring initiative.

Despite the complicated framework of the AMA policy, one of its greatest strengths is the policy development cycle which was followed through – including research base; the consultative development process and its suite of multifaceted strategies (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 6).

The consultants identified lower participation rates and incomes for 'NESB' professional artists and identified a particular danger in expectations of 'NESB' artists and innovation, alongside the consultants' recognition that diversity is considered to be a main driver of innovation. A total of 94 recommendations were distilled down to a handful during a time of internal upheaval in the 2005-6 restructure of the Australia Council. Council chose not to publish the evaluation report. The AMA policy was renewed in 2006, but the recommendation to strengthen the work and its position within Council was not supported.

AMA 2006 Policy

John Howard would remain Prime Minister until the end of 2007, when Kevin Rudd was elected as Labor Prime Minister. Labor retained power for a further term when Julia Gillard was elected as Prime Minister from 2010 to 2013. The Minister for the Arts and Sport during Howard's tenure was initially Senator Rod Kemp followed by Senator George Brandis, who remained in the post until 2007. Musician and environmentalist, Peter Garrett, was appointed Labor Minister for the Arts and Environment from 2007 to 2010. When the Liberal-National Coalition was elected into power in 2010 with Tony Abbott as Prime Minister, Senator George Brandis was re-appointed to the Arts portfolio. The Gillard government's *Creative Australia* policy disappeared when the Abbott government came to power, in effect leaving AMA 2006 policy as the most recent, formal government statement on multiculturalism and the arts. In 2015, when Malcolm Turnbull took on the Prime Ministership, he promoted Senator Brandis to Attorney-General and appointed Senator Mitch Fifield as Arts Minister to dampen the 'enthusiasm' Brandis had demonstrated for greater control over the arts budget (Eltham 2015, 2016).

Multiculturalism remained in ambiguous political favour for both ALP and the Coalition during the post-Howard years. There was still commitment to the policy but with little attention paid to it. 2014 onwards also saw the resurrection of One Nation Party elected to four Senate seats with Pauline Hanson claiming: "I am back but this time I am not alone" (Marr 2017). From time to time her party holds the balance of power and is feted by the ALP and Coalition alike, who do not speak out against her anti-Muslim ideology and is considered by some of those politicians to have become "sophisticated" (Marr 2017).

During 2005, the Australia Council and some of its artform boards were in turmoil caused by an internal restructure begun in 2004. This upheaval included an unsuccessful

attempt to end both, the Community Cultural Development programme and New Media Arts, and saw the dismantling of Policy Communication and Planning into a much smaller section of Strategy (Australia Council 2006: 13). Within this context, the Council had to decide whether to endorse the next iteration of the AMA policy and accept the recommendations of the evaluation. My recollection is that although soon to complete their appointments the Australian Council chair, lawyer, university vice-chancellor and philanthropist, David Gonski, and the CEO Jennifer Bott, both understood the importance of multicultural arts practices and ties to ethnic heritages that were important to them. Bott had also been acknowledged for the work undertaken as part of the AMA 2000 policy by international arts councils.

In the midst of this volatility within the agency and the arts sector, ACMAC chair and music teacher, Christine Pulvirenti, steered the results of the evaluation through an "unpredictable" Australia Council (Usher 2005). There was much negotiation over multiple drafts, recommendations and levels of expected expenditure. The need for such high-level persistent fine-tuning with Council's executive, chair and deputy chair and within the context of organisational upheaval demonstrates the policy had yet to become part of Council's 'business as usual'. Ahmed describes the work of "diversity practitioners" as developing techniques to embed diversity:

> or making diversity given [which] requires institutional recognition of the value of diversity [which in turn] requires time, energy and labour (Ahmed 2012: 29).

There was enormous time, energy and labour expended by the Australia Council's "diversity practitioners", with staff and the ACMAC chair working to ensure the AMA 2006 policy was endorsed with financial commitment to the continuation of ACMAC, MAPD, kultour and an

allocation of $600,000 over three years to boost the scope of three multicultural arts organisations.

Businessman James Strong, was appointed Chair in 2006 and Kathy Keele, previously from Telstra and Qantas, took up her appointment as CEO in February 2007. On completion of Pulvirenti's term as ACMAC chair, former BBC broadcaster and active regional arts advocate, Nicola Downer (AM), was appointed as Chair of ACMAC. By June 2007, the short-lived Strategy section had been absorbed into a governance section and the AMA role (which by now had to demonstrate more responsibility across arts and health, regional and other areas) was moved into the newly formed Community Partnerships section, developed from the politically strategic CACD sector response to the 2005 restructures. The AMA role had come full circle back to a more expanded community section of Council, and by 2008, along with other 'social' policy areas, AMA would become one of several areas under the umbrella of the Cultural Engagement Framework (CEF) (Australia Council 2016d).

The Structural Position of ACMAC

Evaluators of the 2000 AMA policy identified challenges faced by ACMAC regarding the recruitment of members, compliance of artform boards and the capacity of board peers to represent AMA issues, recommending that:

> No case was found for disbanding the Committee. On the contrary, it was felt that the role of ACMAC should be strengthened, drawing in more Council members and external advisers (Keating *et al*. n.d.: 4).

The senior executive team appeared to focus on only one component of the recommendation, and removed ACMAC's networked peer base through the artform boards and adopted a new structure which drew only from external experts. In spite of the successful funding of ACMAC (and MAPD and kultour) for another three years, this can be seen as a moment

leading up to ACMAC's eventual dismantling at the end of 2007 (Australia Council 2009: 48-49). It can also be seen as a precursor of things to come. Another institutional shift dismantled the artform boards in 2013.

Even though the members appointed to the artform boards were knowledgeable and articulate experts for the arts in a multicultural Australia, removing the 'NESB' connection to each of the artform boards, significantly reduced ACMAC's influence. The members in 2006-2007 were theatre director, Teresa Crea (SA), international cultural facilitator, Professor Amareswar Galla (ACT and Queensland), state multicultural officer, Walter Gomes (WA), arts centre director, Kon Gouriotis (NSW), academic Professor Andrew Jakubowicz (NSW), multicultural arts consultant Fotis Kapetopoulos (Victoria) and local council officer Tiffany Lee-Shoy (NSW). However, they were not all experts about the grant assessments and machinery of the Australia Council. They were also not given the opportunity to meet with other peers or Australia Council staff on a regular basis. Their power was also diminished because they were not appointed by the government. Their traction within the systems of the Australia Council was curtailed. The membership of ACMAC was now only by direct invitation from the Australia Council. This compared to previous government appointments to artform boards. The final reference to ACMAC in the 2009 Australia Council Annual Report barely acknowledges its role over four decades.

> The committee comprised experts in area of multiculturalism and the arts in Australia and internationally. In April 2008, the Council adopted a cultural engagement framework, of which the arts in a multicultural Australia policy is a part. As part of the framework, the Council agreed to convene advisory groups to assist in the development of initiatives and strategies as required (Australia Council 2009: 48-49).

In this approach, the Australia Council decides when, and under what circumstances, advice will be requested. The implications of this are discussed in chapter V.

Policy Intentions and their Results

The Australia Council's vision in 2006 was that "Australia's dynamic cultural life and practices are embraced, celebrated and created by the diversity of our cultures" (Australia Council 2006). Their stated commitment is to support and promote "a strong arts sector that effectively reflects Australia's cultural diversity, by integrating the objectives of its Arts in a Multicultural Australia (AMA) policy through the delivery of its activities" (Australia Council 2006).

The AMA 2006 policy highlights the Council's vision of 'the diversity of our cultures' through the areas of leadership, participation and creative production including between Indigenous and NESB artists. The first regarded leadership (as discussed in chapter II) to increase culturally inclusive leadership by ensuring governance is a culturally inclusive process, integrating multicultural aims in each of the Council's activity areas, and increasing culturally diverse representation in the arts. The second enabled the participation in the arts for all Australians by delivering specific audience and market development strategies, increasing awareness of and access to the Council's programs, and brokering and engaging in partnerships. The third supported the development of creative content which reflects a multicultural Australia by encouraging cultural inclusiveness, supporting multicultural arts industry infrastructure and content development and encouraging creativity which spans the spectrum of tradition and innovation. The fourth encouraged creative interfaces between Indigenous and 'NESB' artists by facilitating cultural exchanges (Australia Council 2006).

A major focus of ACMAC was to demonstrate its national advocacy role and to broker partnerships to support multicultural arts industry infrastructure. ACMAC had a clear link beyond the Australia Council to power and influence. Chair, Nicola Downer's personal influence and positional leadership enabled a day-long event *Multicultural Arts: Cultural Citizenship for the 21st Century*, which was hosted at Parliament House, Canberra in November 2007 (Australia Council 2007). The arts symposium event featured heads of state arts agencies, cultural theorists and artists, and including live performances by a range of artists. The event received an unprecedented amount of political attention, evident in the venue of Parliament House, coupled with the attendance of high-profile politicians, including the Assistant Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Teresa Gambaro, the Arts Minister Senator Brandis, and the former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer. No other arts event has received this level of political attention since. This strategic event associated AMA in a public manner with something highly valued by the Australia Council – political influence.

> Organisations can be considered as modes of attention: what is attended to can be thought of as what is valued; attention is how some things come into view (and other things do not). Diversity work involves the effort of putting diversity into places that are already valued so that diversity can come into view (Ahmed 2012: 29).

Ahmed describes how influential positioning can smooth the path to increase the profile of an issue. The word 'effort' is crucial here, because it signals that the attention is unusual and not an everyday transaction. The location of the event and the access to parliamentarians demonstrated Downer's influential leadership and attracted high-calibre artists, arts bureaucrats from each state, academics and commentators. Facilitated roundtables reinforced nationally relevant themes and concerns across the arts sector. These included to: ensure the centrality of the multicultural arts policy to the creative landscape; improve the diversity in

governance of major cultural institutions; increase the capacity of the small to medium sector to build the creative capacities of diverse communities; identify needs and trends in national multicultural arts in research programs; create highly visible pathways across the spectrum of multicultural arts; include 'NESB' artists in cultural dialogue and decision-making; develop strategic partnerships and ensure access to adequate funding (Australia Council 2007).

The 2007 objectives expand upon and articulate more clearly those of the AMA 2006 policy. The language is active and more specific and benefitted from focussed consultation that relational leadership modes can provide. This process highlights the value of consulting widely across the Australian arts community, academics and politicians when determining future AMA directions. Wide consultation was considered the strength of the AMA 2000 policy and it also applies in this instance to the AMA 2006 policy. In 2018, these 2007 objectives remain on the Australia Council website as the only reference to the arts in a multicultural Australia.

Issues Arising from the Policy

Verifiable data assists in identifying trends in the policy landscape. An annual internal AMA report produced from the 1980s to around 2006 by the Australia Council's senior policy staff included successes and challenges as well as statistics on success rates from each section of Australia Council. Monitoring the success rates for AMA included an acknowledgement of the ongoing internal debate about 'coding' (that captures data about grant applicants) to differentiate projects made all by 'NESB' artists, or by more than 50 percent of 'NESB' artists. The reports had multiple uses, including facilitating staff and Board member engagement with AMA matters. These reports provided opportunities for institutional leaders at a range of staffing levels to display their relational leadership capabilities – including with their colleagues, artists and multicultural organisations. The reports also resulted in the

enhanced coding of grant applications, to which I contributed as a staff member, through a new dashboard with streamlined coding processes for program staff who were able to generate the reports after each grant assessment meeting. However, to date, no AMA reports have been made public by the Australia Council. The only longitudinal public data on 'NESB' artists is the Macquarie University Economics Department research into individual artist's incomes undertaken every five years (Throsby and Hollister 2003; Throsby and Zednick 2010; Throsby and Petetskaya 2017). Those results corroborate the AMA 2000 evaluation results and tell the stark story of low participation and arts-related income of 'NESB' artists discussed in chapter II.

The diminution of Council support for AMA continued with the 2006 shift in the make-up of ACMAC membership and its subsequent disbanding late in 2007. The rationale given by CEO Kathy Keele was that ad-hoc consultations could be held on an as-needs basis (Australia Council 2009: 48). This historical account demonstrates sharp decline from 2007 of the AMA navigational and advocacy leadership roles at the Australia Council. The lack of institutional commitment was signalled when the long-term structural prominence of ACMAC was reduced.

The Australia Council did not provide funds to support critical discourse within AMA 2006. In the absence of an updated policy which would have been expected around 2011, a useful comparison point for how 'NESB' artists perceive their situation in the arts 'scene' generally can be seen in the Artlink *Multicultural Arts Issue* (1991) and the Artlink *Diaspora Issue* (2011). The titles of the two issues reflect a move away from identifying with the term 'multicultural' and can be seen as an attempt by the magazine and guest editors to re-position the discussion. The 2011 issue includes six articles which feature 'NESB' artists and their art practices; the majority of the articles have either an Indigenous art, international focus or align with geographically-specific art projects (such as Minto in South West Sydney).

The language is also more apolitical but the 2011 articles nevertheless emphasise that multicultural influences are central elements in the artists' works. Artist, curator and former director of the then 4A Centre for Contemporary Art, Aaron Seeto, for example, highlights the continuing paradox of cultural difference within artistic production in a multicultural Australia, regardless of the incredible levels of activity:

> To a large extent, experiences of cultural difference are either over-determined or entirely absent from contemporary Australian art discourse. Australian culture has yet to understand the impact that intercultural experiences have had on its evolution, and how the anxiety of locality – how we perceive, articulate and imagine the cultural histories which result from specific geography and history of this continent – impacts how we understand our art history and imagine its future (2011: 25).

Seeto is echoing the twenty-five-year-old call by Blonski for the arts in Australia to go "beyond the instrumental" (1992: 3). Seeto suggests that policies have been ineffective in any broad impact on the main art galleries aside from a narrow interpretation of what might be accepted. Seeto raises the perception that questions of multiculturalism, identity and naming are unfashionable in the contemporary arts scene:

> In more recent times, marked by fluidity, ease of cross border movements, communication and globalisation, when the terminology of multiculturalism arises, there's always a faint groan. Recently a young critic said to me that the term Asian-Australian was past its usefulness (2011: 28).

"Past its usefulness" is likely to be a prevalent perception, and one which has accompanied discussions about multicultural arts policies since their development. While he recognises that this is difficult policy terrain for young artists to navigate, Seeto observes that the conditions which give rise to the need for them have not been erased, as:

it is not as if the issues of xenophobia and political parity have been addressed, or that

cultural difference is well understood by the institutions that frame contemporary art in

Australia (2011: 28).

This suggests that a deeper engagement to address the ignorance on the part of contemporary

institutions is still required. As is often the case, it is the artist who provides a deeper

engagement as the institutions' policies offer little beyond rhetoric or a narrow view of the

politics of multiculturalism. Seeto is critical of the strictures of policy formation around

cultural difference and yet, more importantly in many ways, suspects that:

> art world structures in Australia are inadequate to interrogate and conceptualise art
>
> practice that arises from its own history of diaspora and migration (2011: 31).

The other artists in the 2011 Artlink issue describe their fluid identities, and focus on their

practice, but do not address policy. In discussing the influence of cultural diversity,

performance artist, Brian Fuata, describes his collaborative working mode with other

individual artists. Fuata also attracts other artists working across cultural understandings and

iconographies. This is a mode in which artists have become more adept and less constrained

in how they interact with each other's practices and demonstrate their agency in the creative

cycle.

> In relation to a notion of identity and the cultural diversity thereof, such a project reflects
>
> a contemporary arts society that is inherently diversified and acknowledging of that
>
> (Fuata 2011: 23).

This artist engages with one artist at a time, and generates his own peer support network in

the process of his practice. The value of professional creative networks is consistently raised

as an important need for 'NESB' artists (Positive Solutions n.d.; Keating *et al*. n.d.; Stevenson *et al.* 2017).

For others, the thematic of freedom of expression and 'displacement and exile' continue to be present, for example, in the work of Iranian-Australian migrant artists, Nasim Nasr and Siamak Fallah. Nasr, relinquishing her practice from her place of origin, now works with a different thematic making:

> art from the unseen; from my memories. Living in Australia feels like I am in exile, this is something I cannot do inside my country. Now I've got my freedom I am happy, but there is a displacement between my past and my present. I am not really free from these things – they are always with me like a shadow (quoted in Harms 2011: 46).

Melbourne-based theatre director and former ACMAC member, Bagryana Popov, continues to draw on the relevance of storytelling as the mode for one of her works, the adaptation of the novel, *Café Scheherazade* by Australian author, Arnold Zable.

> What makes it urgent? Melbourne is an extraordinarily diverse city, there are so many different ethnicities, histories, faiths, in our society. Yet there are still sometimes – bewildering to me – questions raised about the value of multiculturalism and diversity. The urgency is to celebrate the people and to listen – to the stories from different lands – and how they are integral to our experience of Melbourne (Popov, quoted in Andrew 2011).

Christos Tsiolkas, one of Australia's most well-known and commercially successful 'migrant' writers, is not ambivalent about his cultural heritage and discusses his sense of responsibility as a 'migrant' (Tsiolkas 2013). It is this awareness of responsibility that carries forward the aesthetic and social leadership of the NESB artist.

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AMA 2006 Conclusion

During the implementation stage of AMA 2006, the Australia Council concluded its historical relationship of sustained engagement with NESB artists as artform board appointments and expert policy advisors. Regardless of how fraught the engagement was, ACMAC had been a mainstay of the Australia Council's work which enabled a space for complex creative discourse at the Australia Council. ACMAC was a regular conduit between the sector and contributed to the multicultural arts milieu. Pulvirenti demonstrated tenacity to steer the evaluation to a successful result for what appears to be the final AMA policy. The last ACMAC chair Nicola Downer used her 'charismatic' and 'positional' leadership to host the highest profile event for both ACMAC and Australia Council at Parliament House, Canberra. The aims for multicultural arts policy developed at that event can be found on the Australia Council website, but no other references to AMA.

Conclusion

The periods in which traction around the AMA policy are demonstrated are few and short-lived. Blonski (1994) suggests that any increased attention to access and equity issues regarding multicultural Australia as a result of government directives to the Australia Council is undermined when government reduces its allocation to the arts. The hypothesis that the Australia Council's interest in multicultural policy waxes and wanes in line with the federal government's interest in multiculturalism (Sammers 1996). This is not necessarily born out, given that one of the most productive periods for AMA (1998-2005) was under the Howard Government and that the most political access gained was during his tenure. An alternate argument is that, when times are financially robust, multiculturalism in the arts may benefit, but when times are financially constrained, it falls off the agenda. This suggests that creative practice and infrastructure for multicultural arts are not considered 'core business'. To limit

support for an ideal only when there are 'surplus' funds to do so, is not leading, it is opportunism at the expense of long-term change. It also indicates that the Australia Council has yet to move "beyond the instrumental" (Blonski 1992: 3) in relationship to its 'NESB' constituents. Effective leadership in this arena has been evident when the sources of friction are managed so that adequate levels of trust facilitate the subsequent traction for change.

The AMA 2000 and 2006 policies (and, to a large extent, those preceding them) have similar overall objectives to promote, support, engage with and develop arts sector capacity for multicultural arts. The sector, when consulted also has similar objectives (as seen in the roundtable outcomes at the *Multicultural Arts: Cultural Citizenship for the 21st Century*). These issues have been in circulation since the 1970s, for nearly half a century. And there is little evidence to suggest that withdrawal from support for the AMA policy under the guise of 'mainstreaming' has been either timely or of use.

This returns to the issue of leadership discussed in chapter II – to direct policy processes within the Australia Council requires astute attention to the politics of policy formation. A wide range of leadership attributes are required and need to combine charismatic, adaptive and relational modes. The skills of 'attunement' – those of listening and responding to signals – are an important element of leadership within an institutional framework. These skills of attunement are not necessarily standard leadership repertoire, but when applied to the policy development processes of an agency, they have the potential to become a potent force which can cut through institutional lethargy.

There is a startling difference between the support – from the Australia Council and the multicultural arts sector – for the genuine attempts to implement the ambitious wide-ranging strategies of the AMA 2000 policy, and the winding down of these continuing strategies which was overseen by the Australia Council executive staff throughout the AMA

2006 policy. The removal of the structural significance and prominence of ACMAC signalled a slow grinding diminution of any legacy for multicultural arts at the Australia Council.

Two more distinct phases can be now identified for the arts in a multicultural Australia, that build on those discussed in the section 'The origins and development of AMA policy 1973-1999' in this chapter. A fifth phase of AMA 2000-2005 of significant investment in a raft of strategies aimed to improve the conditions and capacity of the multicultural arts. The sixth phase of AMA 2006 has an indeterminate end, but could be placed at 2007 with the dissolution of ACMAC, or at 2008 with the introduction of the CEF. In addition to the winding down of ACMAC, the sixth and final phase witnesses the gradual diminution of structural influence and the end of the major initiatives such as AMA conferencing, MAPD and kultour.

The leadership for AMA has now shifted away from the Australia Council and into the arts sector. None of the AMA policies remain on the Australia Council website. The sole reference to multicultural arts which remains is to the 2007 event held at Parliament House. This situation means that those artists and creative leaders who take on the mantle of leadership for creative multicultural diversity have had to develop other strategies to ensure creative production and longevity to widen the sphere of partners and supporters beyond the Australia Council.

Chapter IV

Creative Leadership: the Agency of the 'NESB' Artist

Introduction

Australia's multicultural society is yet to be adequately reflected through its art. Although many artists may be ambivalent about labels such as 'multicultural' or 'NESB' or 'CALD' it is they who contribute significantly to an arts scene that engages with the diversity of Australia's population, which in turn generates the space and provenance for further possibilities of a supportive multicultural arts milieu. As the previous chapters demonstrate, given the extent of the challenges and barriers faced by 'NESB' artists, there is a limited multicultural arts milieu in Australia. In this and the following two chapters, I argue that consistent creative and organisational leadership in culturally diverse arts production and presentation will produce a flourishing milieu as discussed in chapter III. The artists who show distributed, transformative and charismatic leadership also enable the milieu to creatively expand. Creative leaders are those individual practitioners who push artistic boundaries and, by doing so, may provide inspiration and opportunities for other artists.

Ideally, a multicultural arts milieu is one in which artists are located in and examine the "shifting and entangled diversities" (Ang, 2011: 788) and the "practices of exchange" that "facilitate the continuation of intercultural relations" (Noble 2009: 51). Such a milieu expands the notion of "diasporic spaces within which much of the contemporary arts were produced by the so-called NESB artists" (Rizvi 2003: 231). My use of the idea of a multicultural arts milieu aims to capture and convey the creative, intellectual, social and

multicultural context within which mainly 'NESB' artists produce their work. Ideally, it nourishes and sustains the continuation and development of their practice.

The role of creative leadership is the focus of this chapter and is essential to forging a supportive milieu, and vice versa, the milieu is essential to fostering effective leadership. This chapter discusses the claim that new modes of creative leadership develop despite, or perhaps in part from, systemic constraints that respond to "cultural diversity as an inescapable interactive context" (Mar and Ang 2014: 8). Those artists who respond to the opportunities of cultural diversity show creative leadership that builds a multicultural arts milieu. The issues and opportunities that impact upon their practices in that process include trust, visibility and equitable power in an environment where, for many, little has changed despite the presence of multicultural policies. Their challenges do not align with research, discussed in chapter I, that claim that 'NESB' artists perceive more advantage than disadvantage arising from their backgrounds (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 145). The artists in this study, which extended across several generations, were most forthcoming about their challenging experiences. I argue that the characteristics of creative leadership that emerged through those experiences include creative and cultural persistence, cross and intercultural competence, brokering skills, self-starting motivation, and political and social awareness.

Chapter III highlighted the inconsistency of attention to the AMA policy, which was at times directly informed by 'NESB' artists and the position of multicultural arts, but more often eroded by periods of institutional disregard. The barriers to change include a lack of comprehension and recognition by mainstream art institutions, inconsistent levels of critical engagement by arts media and the small pool of 'NESB' artists. Despite this pattern of systemic instability, the eleven artists in the empirical research successfully produce work even though the majority experience a tension arising from their ethnic identities. But rather than see this solely as a burden, this thesis explores a number of key themes - making

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creativity from friction, establishing trust through legitimacy and developing support and networks – to suggest something of their experiences. The theme of creativity from friction captures the constraints of being typecast or limited in some way by one's background, issues of creative and cultural autonomy and intercultural practice. The section that follows on establishing trust works to address constraints around opportunities for progression such as critical appraisal and funding. The discussion of developing support and networks addresses family matters and combats cultural and geographic isolation. All of which contribute to developing a more sustaining multicultural arts milieu.

The artists interviewed for this study view their creative production as having the potential to reconfigure the symbols within society. This chapter argues that such ambition is 'creative leadership' and examines some of its characteristics exemplified in the case studies. A practice-based study of the intercultural performances of Annalouise Paul will be used to amplify the challenges and persistence of the artist. While this may seem to be overstating the effect of a usually small art project often relegated to the side-lines, such incremental contributions reflect the possibility towards a more significant transformation.

Creativity from Friction

The theme of friction and its role in generating creativity emerged through the accounts given by interviewees of the constraints they experienced, including the lack of change in the arts sector exemplified by the typecasting of artists in terms of their background. The processes of intercultural practice and negotiation for creative and cultural autonomy reflect how artists respond to those constraints. As discussed earlier, in writing of "contingent encounters", Tsing suggests how cultures can change through "new arrangements of culture and power" (2005: 4-5).

Many 'NESB' artists pursue and negotiate "new arrangements of culture and power" against the odds. The creative open-ness of unpredictability (the contingent) is used to generate possibilities of exchange with the artists taking the responsibility to increase the level of culturally diverse creative production, making meaning from the "friction" they experience when navigating the contestations of multicultural Australia. As Gunew comments, they are "dwelling on the small negotiations of everyday sociality" to germinate and develop creative benefits (2017: 37). Those small negotiations form part of the artist's ability to create opportunities despite their experience of low levels of change in the arts world.

Stasis

The paradoxes of inclusion in multicultural Australia, discussed in chapter I, may stifle aspects of a dynamic cultural life, with Australia's creative potential yet to match the "richness of intercultural encounters in contemporary suburban settings" (Noble 2009: 48). I argue that there appears to be major obstacles across the arts sectors specific to 'NESB' artists. Change can and has occurred elsewhere in other areas of 'diversity' in the arts. Film director Rachel Perkins, for example, sees that Indigenous film and arts have achieved parity in Australia but sees little change for 'NESB' artists, in particular for Asian-Australian artists (Radio National 2017). Lex Marinos, the most experienced research participant in this study, is a performer, presenter, writer and director for screen, stage and radio (Marinos 2014). Referring to the stagnancy over the past 45 years, Marinos observes that:

> I thought as a nation we probably had matured to be much more reflective of the society
> we have. And it's not so. You don't see it on our main stages, and you certainly don't see
> it on our TV and film (L. Marinos 2015, interview).

Marinos views the arts' ability to reflect multicultural society as still in its infancy and society being the poorer for it. A more mature arts industry, he suggests, would be able to express the richness of cultural diversity and would learn from an historical perspective to enable change. Annette Shun Wah, the Director of CAAP, interprets the prevalent history of typecasting as in stasis:

> When I look back now and compare [to the 80s], it's still the case that people of Asian background don't get roles on television or the stage, or are limited to very few specific stereotypical roles (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview).

Both Marinos and Shun Wah express frustration, a lack of "satisfaction" with their career based on visibility. Marinos is exasperated as to the number of times he has made these points to no avail. He does not "want to be that whinging wog" which suggests that he would be too irritating and a cause for discomfort by the mainstream art world. The "whinging wog" or the 'irritant' repeats the problem and experiences the friction characterised by banging one's head against the 'brick wall'. As the complainant, Marinos steadily grinds against the status quo, needing more persistence as institutional resistance increases (Ahmed 2012: 26). The lack of change over so many decades in the performing arts suggests avoidance of difference has become institutionalised. Marinos represents the way the creative leader continues to articulate the issues of representation because diversity can only be considered as part of the status quo, "when it ceases to cause trouble" (Ahmed 2012: 27). A multicultural arts milieu characterised by persistent critique for change, however, may not want to cease causing trouble. The inquisitive and diverse art practices that could emerge from the dynamic nature of migration patterns to Australia may see both welcome and challenging opportunities for creative disruption.

One of the issues for the arts in a multicultural Australia is the need to recognise it as an ongoing project that responds to the issues and opportunities of the day. It is not something to be solved at a point in time. Gunew makes a different distinction about "trouble" regarding the politics of attitudinal change whereby "politicians cannot afford to be too out of step with public opinion, whereas artists cannot afford not to be" (Gunew 1994: 1). The role of the artist, therefore, is perceived to continually question and shift the status quo where possible.

Typecasts: "send us an Asian, a Greek or something"

Typecasting and stereotyping, often based on appearance, however, exemplifies the lack of change. Being typecast, stereotyped, cast in minority roles or not cast at all, is a long-standing issue for 'NESB' actors in theatre and screen in Australia (Bertone *et al.* 1998: xi). *A Change of Face*, the 1998 SBS documentary series, dealt with "the conspicuous absence of diversity on Australian screens" and was acclaimed for critiquing how people from "'non-Anglo Celtic backgrounds were ignored, stereotyped and miscast'" (Ang *et al.* 2008: 164-165). To counter the lack of diversity seen on television, SBS produces contemporary drama narratives with "migrants and their stories at the centre of the action" (Ang *et al.* 2008: 138). Nevertheless, a lack of opportunity remains the common experience for many 'NESB' actors (Screen Australia 2017). Lewis interprets the frequency of 'NESB' actors to be cast in minority roles as "akin to spatial marginalisation of ethnic groups in cities" (2007: 41). Linking these two forms of cultural and spatial ghettos crystallises the sense of being barely visible. The slow pace of change regarding representation is a "glacial" friction which steadily grinds away to eventually alter the landscape. The outer edges (or margins) at times move more quickly and generate greater heat to change the landscape, while the centre (or the mainstream) moves far more slowly. The pertinent simile, whether as an artist or a spokesperson, is that the margins 'melt' (burnout) more readily but also are more dynamically productive than the static centre.

Marinos is an artist with a successful career who is also aware of the need for more open, creative opportunities. In over 40 years of performing, he has only ever been cast "as a wog", and unreasonably blames himself:

If I had been a better actor, perhaps I could have surmounted the systemic impediments. Yet, I do find it curious that every 10-15 years there is a call for more colour-blind casting and more diverse artists (L. Marinos 2015, interview).

The repetitive calls indicate lack of change and affirm the role of the arts to represent the diversity of Australians. Marinos questions whether the decision makers with the power to program are the best equipped to deliver arts programs that capture Australia's diversity.

I wasn't prepared for the fact that it would be as difficult as it was and still is, as a NESB artist. When I was starting out, there were also two other young actors from Greek backgrounds. I would get called George or Nick, who were the other two guys, and they would get called Lex. It suddenly occurred to me that as far as casting directors went, we were interchangeable. We were wogs (L. Marinos 2015, interview).

Marinos' experience in 1970 echoes that of Annalouise Paul in 2015. Paul is a dancer, choreographer and actor who has been practicing internationally for over 30 years, uncovering her cultural heritage of "two strains of Jewish" through her Sephardic father and Ashkenazy mother. Paul recalls her early experiences with actors' agents saying: "'well, you're only ever going to get cast as an ethnic'", and not knowing what that meant. In London, she was cast as Indian and in Los Angeles as Indian, Italian and Filipino. Back in Australia being typecast remains an issue:

As an actor, it's pretty much the same as it was 30 years ago. Two weeks ago [May 2015] an agent sent through a casting brief which was - can you send us 'an Asian, a Greek or something, not Caucasian' [laughs] (A. Paul 2015, interview).

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Actors such as Marinos and Paul, therefore, experience a form of invisibility in a career based on visibility. They are not recognised as their individual selves by agents and are therefore not valued as individual performers. Such a lack of valuing within the 'star' focused industry raises questions as to whether the arts system is able to open up sufficiently to support them.

Paul's experience highlights questions about who decides what diversity on screen is and how it should be represented. A casting agent saying "send us an Asian, Greek or something" expresses disinterest and implies a crude understanding of cultural heritages and is merely complying with a call for more diversity. To be compliant involves "meeting the minimal requirements", whereas to "fulfil the requirements" moves beyond compliance (Ahmed 2012: 106). Compliance can lead to a tokenistic approach of "just ticking the box", a disengaged response that is frequently identified with multiculturalism in the arts. Australia does not have 'quotas' for diverse casting or content, so actually there are no boxes to tick, simply those that gather data for grant statistics.

Despite this fact, the box continues to be seen as a "potent contested symbol" as it represents a range of responses to calls for change in the arts industry. It is seen by some to diminish the creative work of 'NESB' artists, by others as an appropriate tool for affirmative action but is commonly used by those who lack the understanding as to how the work "fits into the larger artistic landscape" (Castagana 2017). When it diminishes the creative output or is not understood, 'ticking the box' produces a constraining friction. When it seen as useful to affirm diversity, the 'tick' can generate a productive form of friction. As with successful targets for gender equity, the litmus test would be whether an affirmative quota would contribute to a supportive multicultural arts milieu.

The industry claims a lack of professional actors as the reason for the lack of diversity which then prompts calls by industry for more training (Castagana 2017). Marinos trains acting students from diverse ethnic backgrounds whose experience:

is pretty brutal because they find it difficult to get an agent, and when they do, they're

told that there's nothing for them. Or they might get rung up to play a greengrocer or a

taxi driver or a terrorist or something. But they won't play the doctor or the lawyer or the

boy next door (L. Marinos 2015, interview)

This resistance from industry means 'NESB' actors require persistence and self-confidence to

proactively erode some of the small cracks and demonstrate creative leadership to make a

change for themselves and for others. Ahmed analyses the brick wall of resistance as an

"institutional limit" that is invisible until encountered (2012: 199). The artists are aware of

the imposed limits often expressed as the wall or a "closed door". Writer and radio

broadcaster Sunil Badami, urges 'NESB' artists to "make a new door" because for him,

persistent attempts to break through existing doors are no longer worth the effort (2017).

Making a new door in this sense invokes the agency and creative leadership of the individual

practitioner to forge new pathways for themselves and importantly for others to use. The

value in the networking forums at which Badami spoke is that the solutions, regardless of

their apparent simplicity, are shared amongst the artists present which validates their

individual experiences and can leverage a positive group response. This is a form of

relational leadership which builds from a set of relations and expands to influence others to

achieve the aims of the group.

A Crack in the Doorway

Not all doors are firmly closed. Konstantin Koukias, a "Greek-Tasmanian composer" trained

at the Tasmanian and Sydney Conservatoriums for Music. He is the Artistic Director of the

innovative small opera company IHOS Opera now based in Amsterdam. He accepted the

advice of mentors as to the creative opportunities afforded by his Greek background:

Peter Sculthorpe said to me: "Konstantin if you want to become a composer you should use your Greek heritage to give yourself a point of difference". So I started to study Byzantine church music (K. Koukias 2015, interview).

Sculthorpe, an Australian composer, positions Koukias within his ethnic minority which is akin to the typecasting previously discussed. He also elevates this minority as one with unique creative potential which is a form of a "reified category of ethnicity" (Noble 2011: 830). The potential of ethnic artistic heritage as a creative "point of difference" also gives rise to a form of creative cosmopolitanism through a bi-cultural practice that hybridises, in this case, the traditional Byzantine with contemporary composition. In Koukias' case, the work appears purposefully reified and elite. The work, however, is also accessible to the public and therefore accommodates the broader cultural processes discussed in the Introduction of 'people-mixing' that contribute to an 'everyday cosmopolitanism'. This capacity for an artistic 'avant-garde' (at the forefront of new processes) to be relevant to culturally diverse audiences brings the work into an everyday dialogue that contributes to a vibrant multicultural art milieu. Koukias is recognised by his peers for his contribution but it remains to be seen whether his work will enter the Australian artistic vernacular.

Koukias turned his cultural background to creative advantage and has had a "supportive and positive experience" as an artist. He has, however, also found conflicting expectations as to how he should position himself within the multicultural arts context by fellow Greeks. He describes the reception of *Days and Nights with Christ* (1990), based on his brother's experience with schizophrenia and is considered his "breakthrough piece" (Westwood 2017).

That's what launched the company. IHOS is Greek for 'sound'. People were coming up to me, mainly Greek people, saying 'how come you're in a mainstream festival? You should be in a multicultural festival' (K. Koukias 2015, interview).

These conflicting expectations constitute a form of 'friction' that goes against the current. One pushes into notoriety in the mainstream and the other pushes against the low profile of the multicultural tributary. These frictions may also characterise the career of the 'NESB' artist, and those such as Koukias, manage to keep them in balance. The use of his heritage and family history joins unusual or unfamiliar forms in contemporary classical repertoire. This form of bi-cultural hybridity is fairly well established now, but in 1990 it was experimental. The push-pull between who should "own him" regarding the multicultural or the mainstream festival indicates a sense of loss on the part of the multicultural programmer, struggling to gain audience and funding traction through the inclusion of contemporary, challenging work. Koukias is demonstrating his creative leadership through extracting the most opportunities from the creative tensions and establishing his own experimental opera company.

Stereotypes from Beyond Centre Stage

Opportunities for creative expression are further complicated when geographical location is intertwined with ethnicity. A forceful friction, suggested as striving against barriers in theatre and film, tries to break through the issue of whose voice is heard and which artists make the work. *The Finished People* (2003), directed by Khoa Do, is an independent low budget film about youth homelessness in the Western Sydney suburb of Cabramatta. It is often cited by people from the area as having its own 'voice' as distinct from being made by directors from "places like the Eastern Suburbs or with a bit more money who would monopolise those stories and speak on behalf of us" (videomaker, Sean Ly). Vinh Nguyen, a 24-year-old freelance videographer studied at University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and whose parents came to Australia as Vietnamese refugees wants more control over the narratives.

I don't want to talk to my parents about the war, what was being a boat person like? I

think that's degrading. It was a tough time, and we will never forget what happened in

1975. They've been here for 30 years, it's time to create new memories and experiences

(V. Nguyen 2015, interview).

He has been freelancing for five years, mainly on Western Sydney community arts projects,

and in 2015 received his first local government community arts grant of $4,000.

I never thought of myself as multicultural. I identify very strongly with Western Sydney,

and that equates with multicultural. It is such a mouthful to say: I am a multicultural

artist from Western Sydney. I just say I am from Western Sydney (V. Nguyen 2015,

interview).

Nguyen expresses confusion and dismay at the array of labels that could be attached to him.

Western Sydney has a high proportion of 'NESB' artists (Hanna 2012: 5) and several arts

centres that activate their culturally diverse artist populations (Knight 2013). The majority of

artists who live in Western Sydney identify proudly with their location; they see it as a badge

of honour and creatively safe (Stevenson *et al.* 2017: 15). Nguyen exemplifies how 'NESB'

artists often navigate their identity around labels to suit their situation. The belief that because

he is ethnically different, he is therefore 'multicultural' reinforces his experience of being

'other' when outside his home. Nevertheless, he navigates those borders applying self-

restraint to remain mute in the face of taunts about his Bankstown (an outer suburb of

Western Sydney) home:

Immediately it's jokes about getting shot, getting stabbed. You know, racism types. And

it sucks but I'm forced to smile sometimes, just to keep any opportunity for jobs. Or

make a slight in-joke about it (V. Nguyen 2015, interview).

Nguyen's perception is that he might be accepted if he represses a jarring retort to the slur; this is an example of a reverse form of 'tolerance' on the part of the 'tolerated', another familiar experience. As Hage points out, the intention behind multicultural tolerance is a form of "symbolic violence" whereby "domination is presented as a form of egalitarianism" (2000: 87). There is an assumption by the Sydneyites (considered by themselves to be the in-group in a position of power) that they can make jokes at Nguyen's expense. There is also an assumption that there will be no retort because he is not in a position of power as he is trying to extend his career into Sydney. A more "everyday" interpretation could view these exchanges as lubricated friction, of an unwritten, yet scripted interaction of "banter" to accommodate Nguyen.

To read Nguyen's networking excerpt as an example of 'everyday cosmopolitanism', discussed in chapter two, includes "situated and strategic practices of transaction in specific contexts" (Noble 2009: 46). The exchanges between Nguyen and his potential colleagues are strategic within a shared context of arts networking in the urban centre of Sydney. In the form of banter, they are testing the potential for relationship, through a friction akin to slipping and rolling that generates momentum. The exchange also demonstrates the paradox of multicultural Australia, as discussed in chapter I, whereby those of diverse cultural backgrounds can experience inclusion and exclusion simultaneously (Ang and Noble 2006: 19-21).

Regardless, Nguyen is active in his agency as he possesses aspects of the 'insider'. He knows when and where to attend freelance media networking events in Sydney and does not suggest that he is ignored. He displays traits of the "creative aspirant" that require an:

> awareness of, and ability to play with the symbolic codes around style and taste within
> youth-based, subcultural creative scenes to increase their chances of success in the
> creative industries (Idriss 2018: 71).

Nguyen networks as a self-employed media artist who experiences the socio-economic disadvantage associated with Western Sydney. He associates creative freedom as a benefit of living in Western Sydney in both "aesthetic risk-taking and cultural difference" (Stevenson *et al.* 2017: 15). His aspirations are equivalent to many of the sole trader creative entrepreneurs who have a pragmatic approach to generating income from their "creative" enterprises. They manoeuvre their careers to earn a "decent" living rather than "retain some romantic association with 'arts for art's sake'" (Idriss 2018: 97).

Across three generations of actors, Marinos, Shun Wah and Paul share experiences of invisibility. Koukias and Nguyen are one generation apart and share similar class and isolated geographical backgrounds. They are, however, at different historical and creative places within the arts spectrum. Koukias successfully employs and promotes the cultural forms of his contemporary classical composition drawn from his Greek heritage, demonstrating experimental multicultural arts practice. Nguyen aspires to become a documentary filmmaker to give 'voice' to his ideas and those of the members of his local community. The more likely trajectory for him will be one of short-term employment contracts and volunteer video work. He seeks freelance work in Sydney, and having received a community arts grant, has not completely abandoned creative aspirations but will begin by taking a "safer, less risky career path validated from within the ethnic communities" (Idriss 2018: 91). This validation comes from families and community groups and is linked to the capacity to generate income from media production, as distinct from pursuing a more financially uneven career in the arts. Nguyen has had to reconsider his artistic trajectory and is attempting to bridge the gap between Western Sydney and Sydney as a Vietnamese Australian media producer while judiciously navigating within the more familiar spaces of his ethnic community.

Intercultural Practice

In another part of the multicultural arts milieu is the independent professional artist, who adopts an intercultural approach as discussed in chapter I. For the 'NESB' artist, intercultural can mean those who work across aesthetic codes and cultural codes of identity (Idriss 2018: 141). Hossein Valamanesh is an established Iranian-Australian sculptor and painter who exhibits regularly and whose work is included in many Australian visual arts collections. He graduated from Tehran's School of Fine Art Painting before migrating to Australia in 1973 where he later completed his Fine Arts degree at the then South Australian School of the Arts.

> Multicultural Australia meant that I was able to express certain ideas from that. Those works were very much to do with a different dwelling, different place. And then you bring that otherness to the view of the thing (H. Valamanesh 2015, interview).

Valamanesh carefully navigates away from being the other while drawing on its creative potential. He does not see himself as 'other', yet he uses 'otherness' to make work. He has generated a different practice from his "political art making in Iran" to a calmer "more personal approach, more to do with emotions and feelings and memory".

Valamanesh echoes many artists who re-locate themselves and their whereby the importance of "country, longing, belonging and inclusion" are linked with "memory, history, lived experiences but also imagining the future" (Babacan 2011: 15). His approach draws on aesthetically recognisable forms associated with the Iran of his memory and is intercultural because of inflexions relevant to his current context. Valamanesh views his work as having the "flavour of what I am and where I come from" but he resists Iran as the only touch stone and hopes his ideas go "beyond the idea of being from one place". *The lover circles his own heart* (2003), a contemporary sculpture based on the poem of the same name by the 13th Century poet Rumi, is an enlivened entanglement. A simple structure of the 'skirt' evokes the

whirling dervish, yet in the dimly lit gallery setting its disembodied movement evokes a ghost-like and graceful reminiscence of the Iranian meditative sacred dance. Another reading of this work is as a futuristic metaphor for tradition and contemporary elisions that question whether the machine can adequately replace the mesmerising intention of the dervish.

Koukias' intercultural work is also based on cultural symbols, in his case that of family musicology:

> I incorporated Byzantine chant in my early works, recording elderly Greek women, including my mother, singing thousands of years old folk songs. I mixed them within contemporary classical genre, incorporating pre-recorded tape and treatment of sounds, words and themes. Cultural, Greek themes (K. Koukias 2015, interview).

Both Valamanesh and Koukias demonstrate innovation through enlivened entanglement by sensitively bringing one form of culturally specific traditional expression into dialogue with a new context. This process suggests a careful massaging in vision and sound and as a form of cultural brokerage discussed in chapter I (Kurin 1997). Both Valamanesh and Koukias exemplify creative leadership; the individual practitioner through whom other artists may take succour and inspiration, because they push creative boundaries. As individual artists who have achieved recognition, Valamanesh and Koukias also evoke "charismatic leadership" (chapter II) because they inspire, drive the project and demonstrate the benefits of creative risk-taking. They also are the ones who take or are given prime credit regardless of others who worked on the project.

Valamanesh and Koukias also exemplify creative leadership because they maintain their creative and cultural autonomy discussed in chapter II. Neither compromises their practice nor become limited by others' cultural ignorance. Their niche artforms run the risk of

staying niche, but their potential to influence art's history and contribute to a multicultural arts milieu outweighs that risk.

Koukias' and Valamanesh's ethnic and cultural heritage was the starting point for their creative practice and fed their success in the mainstream arts. Both artists qualify their success; they feel that their careers cannot be too prominent, cannot have too much "star-quality", that they must somehow sit back slightly. Koukias left Australia because, stifled without the support from agencies, his practice had to go elsewhere. Valamanesh attributes his success in part, by staying almost under the radar and not having grand ambitions to be too famous, but to work consistently and steadily.

> I don't think my work was ever in the hot top ten or whatever. I never became too fast, too famous, too rich. I'm ambitious, but I just felt like things had to come to you as well (H. Valamanesh 2015, interview).

Valamanesh's reflection demonstrates the quality of persistence and a quiet yet striving ambition that steadily edges along. It is also difficult not to read his description as one that fits the image of the 'ideal migrant' who contributes to and 'integrates' into society and takes advantage of the permitted "articulation of diverse cultural forms and makes use of the services of the state to assist him" (Hage 2000: 83-84).

Both artists can also be seen as mediating between 'cultures'. Mar and Ang observe a shift in art processes towards mediation to generate "understandings of difference and diversity" (2015: 62). Mediation is found in the role of an "intermediary" (Totaro 1991: 12) "cultural broker" (Kurin 1997: 17) and assists in cultural translation. These modes of translation suggest a type of relational leadership or attunement capable of cultural interpretation that builds a flourishing milieu.

Knowledge of the socio-political as well as a creative context is also essential to transact these relationships. The calibre of these relationships in this case requires the artist to be adroit across several positions not all of which are readily achievable. One is an ethical position about how to produce "understandings of difference". Another is the consideration of aesthetics as to what will be produced, and another regards the position of the 'NESB' artist, as to how can they produce it, and where it can be presented to the public. Each of these positions engages in "practices of cultural translation" (Ang 2003: 33).

The constraints and opportunities presented through the issues of creative and cultural autonomy complicate the context and working processes of the artist. Trust is implicit yet must be earnt by the artist in the creative context of cultural translation. Trust re-surfaces regarding public presentations of the artwork that involve a different set of structures in the artworld.

Establishing Trust through Legitimacy

The issues of creative autonomy, translation, experimentation and typecasting discussed in the previous section raise issues around trust between the artist and their presenters and critics which inform considerations of legitimacy of the arts sector. As discussed in chapter II, establishing trust will support creative risk taking that increases the exposure of the artist and their work. Establishing trust encompasses the opportunities artists experience for creative career progression through the 'legitimate' processes of public presentation, published critical writing and funding. The discourse of creative practice typically positions 'NESB' artists within the community arts sectors (Hawkins 1993: 86-88; Blonski 1994: 199; Idriss 2018: 142) to the extent that multicultural arts have been equated with "community arts" (Kalantzis and Cope 1994: 142). The result of this perception is that their art is not viewed as legitimate or validated as mainstream or

traditional artforms. This perception persists, even though, as shown in chapter I, 'NESB' artists actually have low levels of employment in community arts (Diversity Arts 2017; Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 30).

There is far less commentary about the relationship between 'NESB' artists and those arbiters who present and profile artworks in major spaces and events. Within the context of creative leadership, gaining access to arts structures will enhance the legitimacy of the artist's work and develop expertise and support for other artists. The roles of intermediaries and cultural brokers take on a different level in this phase of the 'culture cycle'; generating pathways into the mainstream (or at least a large tributary) to attain recognition beyond an ethno-specific community audience which can limit creativity if only framed within "normative communal terms" (Idriss 2018:153). To be included in art networks that generate trusting creative relationships continues to be identified as an important need (Stevenson *et al.* 2017: 54). Demonstrating the skills and know how to generate trust within funding and presenting agencies forms part of the leadership role of the 'NESB' artist because of the public engagement with decision-makers and presenters.

The Invisible Milieu

S. Shakthidharan is a writer, director, musician and composer based in Western Sydney. He is also the Executive and Artistic Director of CuriousWorks, established in 2006 to produce digital media within long-term community projects (CuriousWorks n.d.). He established CuriousWorks over a decade ago, a company known for its community engagement programs that utilise the digital storytelling process to evolve the everyday experiences of cultural diversity. As Trimboli describes:

its digital interventions are a mélange of new media and community-based art practices

incorporating aspects of the conventional digital storytelling genre in a fluid fashion

(2016: 14).

This "mélange" led to the successful low budget feature film *Riz*, which was programmed in

the 2015 Sydney Film Festival and was well-received (Morellini 2015). Shakthidharan

suggests that alongside the visible indicators of stereotypes, there are less visible

considerations such as the underlying challenges of the ethical and ethnic contexts for artists

who work interculturally:

> The initiatives that intend to help artists from multicultural backgrounds, never look at all
>
> at the surrounding things we have to do to ensure equitable power, to ensure that
>
> community respect and cultural understanding are done properly. And I feel like unless a
>
> policy tackles the full task then it will always fall short (S. Shakthidharan 2015,
>
> interview).

The skills to accomplish the "surrounding things" are rarely made explicit because the types

of negotiation, care and responsibility within an ethno-specific or multicultural context are

not necessarily part of the arts vocabulary or mind set and can, therefore be "invisible".

Artists are not taught how to develop trusting relationships as part of formal creative arts

courses. 'NESB' artists are perceived to acquire this capacity informally through their family,

peers and possibly through participation in ethnic community cultural activities. Idriss argues

that the challenges of creative self-expression (familial, class, geographic and creative

isolation) are such that Arab-Australian artists retreat to community arts through "capturing

'authentic' stories as representatives or authority figures of the local community" and that

this at least generates some control over the stories they produce (2018: 142 - 143). To work

against these cultural blindspots is a point of tension and a marker of creative leadership,

albeit often an invisible one, that requires respect and understanding, based in the development of trusting relationships.

"I would like a culture in which people trusted me more"

The linked issues of navigating intercultural constraints and understandings - issues that rarely appear on the mainstream radar - therefore also provide creative opportunities. In Shakthidharan's case this can be likened to the persistent erosion to widen creative cracks against near invisibility. Shakthidharan acknowledges and draws on his relationship with members of his community but aims to create his own door to a wider audience and have his work critiqued, "as art is intended to be, in the public realm" (Idriss 2018:142). Shakthidharan's experience comes from pitching concepts to mainstream theatre companies and highlights issues he has faced as a contemporary artist. Despite having been awarded and successfully delivered on many grants, he perceives that he is still not trusted and therefore struggles to achieve his artistic vision.

> As an individual artist, I would like a culture in which people trusted me more. People keep telling me I'm ambitious and 'that's an amazing idea, but it's going to be difficult'. But what they're saying is – 'your idea is different from my lived experience and for me to understand it, is difficult. And it seems really ambitious' (S. Shakthidharan 2015, interview).

This excerpt articulates difficult relations with managers and directors of arts organisations and funding bodies. The lack of trust congeals around the patronizing turn of phrase which acknowledges his 'amazing idea' yet in the same breath relegates it to the too-hard basket. The issue may be one of ignorance on the part of mainstream directors. His concept has been limited because they, the experts, know what is achievable, and it would be too challenging to realise the project as he envisions it. Here Shakthidharan describes a disconnect between

his creative ambitions and the inability of mainstream theatre directors to adequately 'trust' his ideas. In this manner, Shakthidharan expands the context of cultural translation to include the ways he can translate himself into the broader theatre scene.

Shakthidharan's experience of the 'disconnect' may also stem from the predominance of the Western canon and "whiteness" in Australian theatre. Lewis (2007) sparked controversy in her description of the lack of multicultural actors on Australian stages and screens, an experienced theatre academic identified the issue as the source of content.

> The crucial omission is playwrights. It is unremarkable that white writers write plays about white characters that are cast with white actors. That's not cultural conspiracy, just life. Non-white writers, if there were more of them, would write other kinds of plays, and casting them would involve different choices (Meyrick n.d.).

A performing arts professor, Meyrick dismisses any systemic issues as an overreaction by labelling them a "cultural conspiracy" yet fails to suggest why there are not more "non-white writers". His comments arguably demonstrate the dearth of understanding 'NESB' artists experience because of ignorance on the part of influential directors in the performing arts sector. To a certain extent, Meyrick's response typifies the prevalent 'laissez-faire' attitude towards 'NESB' participation in the arts. He identifies the issue of not enough "non-white writers", however, relies on the vague notion that in the undefined future more "non-white writers" may somehow find their way into the theatre pantheon. His comment is another variation on the 'it will take time' trope discussed in chapter IV.

The lack of understanding also arguably relates to ignorance of different cultural forms. Mainstage companies, masking their lack of understanding of different forms, revert to the label of too ambitious to avoid dealing with different forms, more readily understood as outside their scope of experience. Similarly, "ambitious" is a double-edged term often used

in the conservative areas of the arts to invoke issues of creative (and therefore assumed, box office) risk. Curiously, "ambitious" is rarely used in its leadership sense of going beyond the usual. Artistic ambition is a challenge between the artist and their artform, but becomes a different set of challenges when ambition shifts into the relation between the artist and the gatekeepers of organisational managers, funding bodies and presenters. For Shakthidharan, being told that his concept "seems really ambitious" is an early warning about the uncertainty around 'untested' (or untrusted) culturally diverse art product for inclusion in a company's program and suggests an amorphous yet tangible barrier to creative innovators who reference aspects of multicultural Australia.

In contrast, an exemplary relationship of creative trust can be found in Koukias', *Pentakostarion*, commissioned by Jonathon Mills for the 2010 Federation Festival of Melbourne. The piece toured to the Chicago Cultural Centre and draws on ancient liturgical languages of Greek, Latin and Hebrew through ritual chant and instrumental effects, in this case, hand crafted bells, several played underwater during the performance.

> Beautiful commission. Beautifully funded. Jonathon gave me open slather. When I asked for a set of 61 bells in quarter tones, Jonathon being Jonathon said, "Yes, why not" (K. Koukias 2015, interview).

The "Yes, why not" in Koukias' experience explicitly identifies the trust inherent in enabling rigorous intercultural creative production. A vibrant multicultural arts milieu would therefore expand the opportunities for ambitious creative risk taking by 'NESB' artists.

Critical Appraisal and Appreciation

The role of critical appraisal discussed in chapter II assists in generating trust in an artistic work, however many critics are challenged to be able engage with multicultural content. Part of the issue stems from the lack of dedicated writing on multicultural artists. There are more,

albeit intermittent, pieces published on the politics surrounding multicultural arts than there is about the work by 'NESB' artists. A successful essayist, Peter Robb, for example, in writing about Greek-Australian actor Alex Dimitriadis, adopts the attitude that if the content has a multicultural aspect to it, it must be "worthy":

> For a film that was earnestly multicultural and calculatingly mass market, *The Heartbreak Kid* was surprisingly good (2012:103).

The implication that a multicultural focus equates to being "earnest" or politically correct and therefore not compelling or aesthetically valuable in its own right, undermines public trust in the creative content. This tendency in the critique of multicultural content applies across artforms. Koukias's *To Traverse Water* (1992), for example, was successfully received in Sydney and Melbourne, but the critics did not feel that they should do their research:

> Deborah Jones wrote a wonderful review of it but said something like 'it's all Greek to me' - which I found quite offensive (K. Koukias 2015, interview).

A similarly dismissive comment in otherwise supportive criticism was made by a previous state gallery curator Ian North, a "trusted" commentator, who expressed surprise at Valamanesh's early level of success:

> *Dwelling* [1980] is worth emphasising not only as, in effect, Valamanesh's first major public sculpture, but because of its oddity. It made no concession to ameliorate its out-of-placeness or its unabashed multiculturalism, a term then coming confusedly into Australian currency. Remarkably, Valamanesh has persuaded his audience over the last three decades to accept the appurtenances and signifiers of Iranian visual culture in his work as he established his vision ever more firmly, operating not from ethnic ghettos but within the mainstream of Australian art (2011: 7).

The view that Valamanesh would usually be considered as part of an "ethnic ghetto" undermines his trusted status as an artist in the mainstream. Given North's influential position his comments might have been more circumspect. Valamanesh questions whether there is "such a closed shop? A closed community of so-called multicultural artists?" He reinforces the benefit artists receive from discussions around their work:

> I've got enough good dialogue with people who look at my work, and people who write about or exhibit the work, that I feel like I'm not talking into the void (H. Valamanesh 2015, interview).

This sense of connection to other artists and commentators is invaluable for the individual creative practitioner. This chapter now turns to the ways in which creative leaders work with their personal supports to continue practicing.

Support through Networks

Art as a "tangible" career or work option is frequently discussed through an economic lens (Gerber 2017). However, the theme of support and networks identifies family matters, isolation, and access to sustainable and productive peer networks as constraints and enablers in the artists' experience.

Family Matters

Familial and cultural networks sometimes offer alternative relationships of leadership, trust and support beyond those purely within the arts sector. Two-thirds (66 percent) of 'NESB' artists place a much greater importance on the support provided by their spouse or partner to assist their career than those from English-speaking backgrounds (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 147). This suggests that there is a wide social and cultural context that the 'NESB' artist must consider if they wish to develop and display creative leadership. The majority of

the interviewed artists acknowledged the crucial negotiations with family members about entering the arts. Several postponed their creative career until they completed the family approved tertiary qualifications, usually in the fields of law, commerce or medicine. Permission from the family emerged as an important factor for second-generation 'NESB' artists in their career path regardless of their ethnic background or class status; this mirrors the findings attributed to Arab-Australian male artists (Idriss 2017). Some artists negotiated the conditional support of family:

> My folks agreed that I could have a year to see if I could make some kind of a living out of acting. And I'm happy to say 45 years later there's still a job on the horizon (L. Marinos 2015, interview).

24-year-old Sean Ly shot from an unemployed "bedroom musician" to a youth arts organiser for Fairfield Council and Assistant Director on CuriousWorks' feature film *Riz*. He has since enrolled in a Tertiary and Further Education course to gain a Youth Worker certificate; he has an instrumental view of the arts as a "vehicle for us to promote our side of things". He senses that members of the Cambodian community in Cabramatta would frown upon a creative career:

> Sections of my community would discourage me from arts. They don't see art as a true career. It's not a labour job, or it's not a desk job. It's not something tangible, but it's still a lot of work, and it tires you out. Like if that's what they see as proper work then the arts are definitely proper work (S. Ly 2015, interview).

This excerpt highlights the perceptions as to what constitutes "work". Ly appreciates the time and often arduous labour that artists invest in their practice as distinct from the perception possibly held by community members that artists live a free floating "bohemian" lifestyle. This concept is not considered by Arab-Australian artists from Western Sydney who see art

as an income generating enterprise (Idriss 2018: 97). These findings can be applied to other ethnic groups as well. Ly may not have been encouraged to be an artist; but having experienced "long periods of unemployment" he will no longer pursue a fulltime arts career. He prefers to involve art in the more acceptable community sector because "that's where I want to make a career to support myself in the future". Employment within local council has its own challenges but carries the allure of stable employment.

To facilitate arts projects as distinct from making them is a frequent route for practitioners and partly explains the low numbers of professional 'NESB' artists. The lower level of arts-related employment is also reflected in Ly's decision to become a council youth worker. This pragmatic response to the vagaries of a creative career is understandable and contributes to the low representation in the arts discussed in chapter I.

The issue of family support also cuts across class. Anna Lau struggled to gain permission from her mother to be a playwright. Lau is a young woman of Taiwanese-Malaysian parentage who arrived in Australia when she was a one-year-old. She, like most of her friends, gained an offer into tertiary law or economics, however, she negotiated to study International Relations because of the "proximity to people's stories". Ashamed of her Chinese background as a schoolgirl, Lau exemplifies Ang's insight that "if I am inescapably Chinese by descent, I am only sometimes Chinese by consent" (Ang 2001:51).

> I don't identify with migrant experiences because having grown up here that's never been my story. Asian arts tend to be suitcase stories rather than second-generation arts, so I feel like there's a lot of creative leadership needed to change arts relevance to me (A. Lau 2015, interview).

By differentiating herself from her parents and their "suitcase story", of unknown arrivals in a strange landscape which were a feature of 1980's Australian representation of migrants, Lau

foregrounds the inter-generational friction of different cultural experiences. Lau persisted in an arts career after seeing inspirational theatre, even though it was not her milieu:

> It is hard to believe that Asian families would send their children to a specialist arts high school. I would have loved to continue Visual Arts and create a major work. I would have loved to attend a Performing Arts School. But, it would never have been my choice. Perhaps this has something to do with the lack of Asian-Australian artists on our national landscape (Lau n.p.).

Linking the lack of family encouragement to the lack of Asian-Australian artists identifies two vicious cycles that reinforce the lack of cultural diversity on stage. The underrepresentation of Asian-Australian artists conveys the difficulty of a career in the arts and this low number of role models reinforces low take-up. The arts are considered a poor career choice due to the lack of reliable income and low social standing. This in turn discourages the uptake of arts training thereby perpetuating the low numbers. It is claimed that the motivation for Chinese-American parents against "risky" creative careers is not solely financial, but because they:

> involve subjective evaluation, thereby making their children vulnerable to bias. By contrast, careers in medicine, engineering, law or pharmacy require higher credentials which protect their children from the usual types of discrimination (Lee 2014).

This subtle reason extends the value the migrant places on education to increase social mobility. The careers favoured by the parents are seen to reduce the economic *and cultural* vulnerability of their children. This perception may alter with subsequent generations and as the benefits of the arts and creative thinking become increasingly recognised.

Shakthidharan's Tamil Sri Lankan background also instils self-reliance and economic responsibility. His mother is a performer and choreographer who did not want him to select the arts because she was keenly aware of their lack of stability.

> In my community, your own life is not what should come first. My uncle and anyone in my family thought it was stupid to get into the arts because it's a pretty dumb place if you're trying to look after a number of people financially (S. Shakthidharan 2015, interview).

Shakthidharan managed those competing expectations by covertly enrolling in a university media degree as a first step on the path to realising his vision to get "other" stories told. The financial constraints placed upon him have proven to be beneficial as the CuriousWorks company began with an independent (of government) income stream to deploy as the company sees fit.

To pursue an arts career in these situations hints at personal struggle in which family trust is compromised in some way. It is an early sign of the persistence required, to undertake the tertiary degree as the family wishes, but find a degree that satisfies them creatively in some way. These negotiations develop relational leadership skills through the management of negotiations and the central role of relationships beyond the drive for an individual artistic career.

Isolation – "I thought they were only my issues"

Isolation was a topic raised frequently by the artists; a finding echoed by 50 percent of 'NESB' artists from Western Sydney who identified more opportunities to meet other artists as their most important need (Stevenson *et al.* 2017:54). The creative leadership consequence is that those artists who recognise this need may draw on it to create networks with other artists for social and creative support. This may be one area that distinguishes a 'NESB'

creative leader because it shows an ability to change adversity into an advantage. An isolated artist cannot share their concerns and therefore often internalise a sense of inadequacy.

> Looking back, I thought they were only my issues. I didn't realise it was systemic and what that means in terms of policy and infrastructure. It's very isolating. It diminishes your belief in what you think you can do. I think that's why I left [Australia]. I saw it as being very narrow-visioned. And coming back I realised - something's really wrong here. How is it that it can still be this hard? Is it still me? (A. Paul 2015, interview).

These feelings are not easily expressed in public forums, and therefore rarely get aired, however Paul is describing a milieu that does not support her. The poignancy in Paul's: "is it still me?" is that she worked successfully overseas for many years. This highlights the necessary capacity of the artist to adapt, adjust and create their own milieu. A productive milieu implies the existence of structures that enable risk taking and supportive contexts to flourish.

Lau articulated a different type of professional isolation when she finally began playwriting. It became a point of difference from her Asian-Australian friends who all studied commerce, law or medicine and were not sure what playwriting was or why anyone would want to do that. Lau felt like "a pioneer because I didn't know anyone who did it, except for me". As an artist in residence at Shopfront Theatre, a youth co-op theatre in southern Sydney, she found the first stages of the creative processes completely strange:

> I just felt like such a black sheep. Like the Artistic Director and the other artist in residence would just sit down and say 'For today's session I'm just going to play'. And I'm like - what is this concept of play? [laughs] I want to sit down and plan! (A. Lau 2015, interview).

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Lau articulates the lack of exposure to artists in her life which until that point had been driven by careers based on action plans, focus and deliverables. While these are necessary to be an artist they need to be balanced in proportion to the creative process. The idea of 'play' to Lau is indulgent, an indulgence with which the other resident is clearly familiar. Lau experiences conflicting emotions. She expresses pride and confidence as a 'pioneer' alongside rejection and isolation as a 'black sheep' in her first foray into the world of playwriting. The way an artist responds to these scenarios suggests the friction of 'breaking into', which paves the way for them to become a creative leader. Lau's isolation takes the form of "cultural remoteness" (Idriss 2018:71) whereby her upbringing and acculturation did not match the expected behaviours and styles of her new creative milieu. Role models may help to overcome this remoteness.

Role Models – "They get proud by association".

Exposure to role models instils confidence; this can happen even within a small experimental arts scene, Super 8 film and tape loops, as media artist, Couros explains:

> There was another Greek guy there who was the most articulate person I'd ever met. He became a role model because I thought – wow, how can someone from our cultural heritage be that lucid, articulate, and intellectually challenging (K. Koukias 2015, interview).

It seems 30 years on, the same proud moment of recognition through ethnicity can occur. Valamanesh recognised the importance of leading by showing:

> I go to high schools to talk where there's lots of young Iranian or Afghani. I can speak the language. They get really excited to hear that even someone from Iran has made it [as an artist] here. And they suddenly put their chest up, "Oh he's from Iran. I'm from Iran". They get proud by association (H. Valamanesh 2015, interview).

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Moments such as these can be small but significant in the future choices of these children. Despite Valamanesh's claims that he has been included in the arts in Australia, he hints at the students' sense of isolation when he uses the word "even", suggesting the rarity that someone from Iran can "make it".

All artists want exposure for their work, yet access to extended networks and avenues of support to facilitate that exposure can challenge the resolve of the artist. Shakthidharan also expressed his distance from access to trusting relationships in the influential spheres in the arts such as "the big end of town" of the MPA and the funding bodies. He wants to be the one who is trusted with the financial resources to see his theatre work to fruition. The artists' experiences suggest an image of different planes of access that form the structure of the arts but which tend to operate independently and not readily engage with each other. Rather, they seem to slide over one another. The mainstream is comfortable in its place in the central current, and to some extent the 'NESB' is comfortable in the tributary of the community artsworker. It is more likely to be the independent 'NESB' artist who interrupts the current of the mainstream by their creative leadership whether it be shown through the recognition of their artistic work, developing networking capacities with other artists or negotiating productive working relationships across the arts sectors; all of which play into an improved multicultural arts milieu.

Productive Peers

The support of peers and networks is essential to the systems that independent artists create around themselves to shore up their precarious existence and art practice.

> Precarity is the condition of being vulnerable to others. Unpredictable encounters
>
> transform us; we are not in control, even of ourselves. Unable to rely on a stable structure

of community, we are thrown into shifting assemblages, which remake us as well as our others (Tsing 2015:20).

Tsing elucidates precarity beyond unequal economic scenarios and emphasises the productive connections that can potentially occur between those who are different to us and through "unpredictable interfaces" (Mar and Ang 2015). The existence of networks which build trust across those interfaces contribute to successful multicultural art projects and milieu.

Lau is a confident young woman, but her experience of isolation extended through each stage of her forays into playwriting. Unlike the other artist in residence, she had no-one to call on when it came to finding performers to read her script.

> All her friends were actors and all part of that industry. She just had to put it on Facebook to get like a hundred responses for actors. None of my friends are from that industry. I asked - do you have anyone left over that I could use? (A. Lau 2015, interview).

This tale indicates that Lau had neither the social, professional nor cultural contexts to activate her presence in the arts. Her determination to supersede these constraints is commendable. Shopfront is a workshop-based, performing arts organisation for young people in southern Sydney, and is considered an accessible route for young playwrights but appears to have been unable to stretch enough to incorporate Lau adequately in 2014. By 2017 still only two 'NESB' artistic facilitators can be identified from the pool of 16 which limits their ability to deliver on their rhetoric of access (shopfront 2017). It was not until Lau attended programs developed by Contemporary Asia Australian Performance (CAAP) that she met artists with whom she could identify as mentors and peers.

These examples identify a 'push back' sensibility of the artist who, regardless of the nature of the gesture, contributes to a multicultural arts milieu. The artist must also push forward.

Persistent Creativity – *Mother Tongue*

Mother Tongue is a long form choreographic work that presents an "eloquent dance-poem on war, cultural tolerance and healing" (Paul 2018). Initiated by Paul in 2007 and presented at Bangarra Theatre, Sydney in 2014, the seven-year process exemplifies the persistence required of a creative leader through the iterations of investigation and logistics that lead to a public presentation. The independent artist must be resilient, being able to reaffirm trust in themselves and their creative engagement with their work. The account that follows is the trajectory of an intercultural work approximating an "everyday" sense of the work involved. The use of "everyday" needs qualification because the artistic result is not of the everyday, it may draw on the everyday through the proximity of diversity, but art is an abstracted and condensed expression of everyday encounters. *Mother Tongue* elicits how creative leadership responds to the barriers faced in that process.

I have selected Paul as an exemplar because of the challenges at every turn to produce a major performance work as an independent practitioner with limited infrastructure support which demonstrates agency and her creative leadership. She has ambitions for other artists, beyond her individual practice to establish the first intercultural dance company. Her extensive performing career is another reason as it includes acting, dancing and choreographing. Her experiences provide an opportunity to gauge the application in Australia of UNESCO's 'culture cycles', the value chain encompassed by education through to distribution (Mar and Ang, 2014:7) and highlights potential interventions relevant to 'NESB' artists.

Paul's intercultural practice began by choreographing and performing a 'fusion' of contemporary and flamenco dance and continues to refine what it means to produce intercultural dance by working with other performers. *Mother Tongue* was the third part of a trilogy supported through Parramatta based Western Sydney Dance Action (Form Dance Projects n.d.). This support dance organisation, now Form Dance Projects, was part of the "culture cycle" as it provided modest financial and administrative support in the crucial early stages of her process. Their description downplays her challenges:

> Her enduring fascination with other cultures investigated questions of identity and intersections between cultures through cross-cultural dance/music relationships (Form 2008: 9).

This text demonstrates the complex descriptions of intercultural art through floating signifiers – symbols or terms open to wide interpretation that rally people around a commonly understood issue. The term "questions of identity", for example, rallies those who see themselves in the minority; "cross-cultural" elides the issue between crossing ethnic identity and cultural forms (for example, contemporary and traditional music or dance). This collision of terms occurs within the arts because of confusion between ethnic identity as subject and the different cultural forms of art. Paul is positioned as a cosmopolitan art connoisseur whose source material "fascinates"; her work is thus presented as a pleasurable representative of multicultural Australia. The risky result of her "fascination" could be critiqued as part of the "discourse of enrichment" whereby cultural engagement (in both senses of the word) including those of food and dance, take the form of a multicultural fair (Hage 2000:119).

The various "ethnic" stalls of the fair are perused by and enrich the "real Australians, the bearers of the White nation" (Hage 2000: 118). Paul's position can be considered within the contemporary and changed version of the fair, whereby migrants (one assumes non-

English migrants) also want to be enriched but are "blocked" by the White multicultural fantasy that aims to maintain a central role in apportioning access (Hage 2000: 118). The controlling role produces, as we have seen earlier, a barrier for artists and occurs through the bureaucratic and mainstream organisations. Hage's analysis falters when applied to artistic attempts to engage with cultural diversity as he digs through the layers of cultural mistrust. Art requires that mistakes must be able to be made. Faltering also produces moments of vulnerability for the artist. In this faltering, the artist may demonstrate creative leadership. Such vulnerable processes suggest the sociological use of the term "quotidian transversality" in which opportunities from the everyday, or the quotidian, open up and reconfigure through interchange, or the "transverse" (Wise 2009: 23). Drawing on Cockburn and Yuval-Dais (1999) Wise claims that transverse provides an opening that goes beyond the hybridity of exchange or assimilation of merging with dominance, and is therefore useful to the arts.

> [Transverse] highlights how cultural difference can be the basis for commensality and exchange: where identities are not left behind, but can be shifted and opened up in moments of non-hierarchical reciprocity, and are sometimes mutually reconfigured in the process (Wise 2009: 23).

Such moments of reciprocity can become available in the tangible yet fleeting forms of performance. In the first of Paul's trilogy, *Isabel*, flamenco dance and tabla percussion explore Queen Isabel of Spain's notions of power and colonialism in 1942. The second part of the trilogy, *Game On*, broadened the historical approach to produce a conversation between a tabla player and a contemporary dancer in which Paul questions "how extreme cultures coming together can communicate?".

Everyday cosmopolitanism is evoked by a "conversation" and complicated when held between "extreme cultures". Paul articulates an inherent, almost abrasive, friction she

engages with on a creative level. Each artist challenges the other in both tradition (flamenco and tabla) and form (dance and percussion). In this example, the transverse shows that the interchange causes friction, it is not "smooth" (Carmichael 2011: 65). Different creative knowledge sets come together to challenge the performers and take a risky path because the creative results are unknown. Even as choreographer, Paul cannot control the creative "conversation". The physicality of the performers highlights the dynamic interaction on stage and exemplifies the creative use of "unpredictable interfaces" that arise from multicultural Australia (Mar and Ang 2014: 8). *Game On*, is bicultural, and therefore, more easily grasped by an audience. The interface through the individual forms of flamenco and tabla are reasonably familiar to Australians. The unpredictable aspect is they are not usually in the same performance. As a bicultural performance, which in fact most "multicultural arts" tend to be, *Game On* takes an incremental step towards a multicultural art project.

Paul approached kultour (see chapter seven) for touring support to widen the audience for *Game On*, to discover she was excluded because there was no New South Wales (NSW) member. This realisation took her into the realm of arts politics for more than two years in forming Groundswell as a lobbying force to generate support for the re-establishment of a NSW multicultural arts organisation (Paul 2010; Koubaroulis 2014). Within that advocacy role, her practice continued, albeit at a much slower pace. This deviation is not uncommon amongst 'NESB' artists who find they must be politically directed towards structural change to improve their pathways.

Proceeds from a school's tour funded *Game On* at the Sydney Opera House. In 2011, Arts NSW and Department Foreign Affairs and Trade toured it to India whereupon it won two awards: Australian Arts in Asia and the Export Award. On the back of that success, Paul began work on *Mother Tongue*, a "body percussion" piece with Bobby Singh, Miranda Wheen, Greg Sheehan, Albert David and Tatai Porhono. The work is concerned with

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reconciliation and understanding between cultures. Paul kept coming up against controversy, and lack of appreciation or understanding of her intercultural style and the content:

> There was controversy about why I wanted to use six, seven, eight different cultures; why I was using Albert David, an Aboriginal artist and why body percussion, my answer was why not? The Australia Council wanted to see their familiar styles of contemporary dance, and couldn't imagine how it was going to look. A dance organisation said it was going to look like a variety show. At the other end of the spectrum, presenters were saying 'just put them all onstage together and jam.' There was a lot of extreme views about how culture should come together – so the smash-up idea of jamming and fusion: do whatever and then the elitist: 'is it going to look messy?', the aesthetic around it was in question (A. Paul 2015, interview).

The use of the adjective "extreme" this time is personal, regarding her aesthetic choices. Here Paul steps towards a multicultural and intercultural (in both social and cultural meanings) work. Paul was offended by the presenters' suggestion to jam, a loose technique of turn-taking associated with non-classical music, because she considers it devalues her skills as a choreographer. Their responses bring into sharp relief the lack of support for risk-taking. Luhmann's definition of trust as a "specific solution to risk achieved within a familiar world" applies here (2000: 94). The systems that fund development and presentation were not prepared to be part of Paul's solution. They did not trust her approach. She was not part of their milieu.

Mother Tongue fell prey to the "yo-yo" funding of small grants. There was a mini-crisis within the artistic team, frustrated the project was not developing and Paul was at a crossroad. She no longer knew "whether it's meant to be a narrative or more abstract, and it went belly up for a little while." A Bundanon residency provided the necessary creative space. Paul received some funds from Arts NSW and Bangarra provided their venue. Paul

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was proud that the dancers could be paid from box office, crowd funding and the bar. An exit survey and "vox pop" with audience members shows the culturally diverse audience members and their opinions, such as "this can really go places" and "it was ex-cell-ent" (YouTube 2015).

Limited critical engagement by mainstream media means artists rely on niche funded arts magazine such as RealTime for critical appraisal. The result was a slightly clumsy metaphor of a wildlife park:

> Kinetically, *Mother Tongue* is a sculpture park of rich, exotic forms coming from Torres Strait, Chile, Indonesia, West Africa, Brazil and India. Since Paul does not innovate from appropriation, strict fusion or exploding [sic] traditions, and maintains the integrity of colliding cultural forms, her seeking "new choreographic futures" for intercultural dance proves an admirable challenge. There are moments in *Mother Tongue* when movement and gesture founded on the primordial geometries of collective motion and sound sublimely commune towards a unique horizon (McNeilly 2014: 33).

To arrive at that sublime point took seven years work and relied on multiple sources of inspiration, resources and income. Touring is the next phase in the culture cycle. kultour had ceased touring culturally diverse work (discussed in chapter VI), and mainstream organisations such as Performing Lines and events such as the Australian Performing Arts Market are expected to take on that role, but were guarded in their response to Paul's work. Paul was warned by the project director of the International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts, the Australia Council funded network that matches "market development aspirations of Australian artists with opportunities and resources" (Australia Council n.d.b):

"You're ahead of your time. Australia's never going to get it, get out". And I just thought
- I don't know if I'm ahead of my time or Australia's just way behind it (A. Paul 2015,
interview).

The project director's comments do not show leadership and are another version of being
considered "too ambitious". The project director abrogates responsibility of her role to
champion ambitious projects and shut the door against Paul's aspirations with alacrity.
Mother Tongue highlights gaps in the full application of UNESCO's "culture cycles" notably
the risk-averse nature of support for the arts by funding bodies in development, presentation,
national and international market development. Paul's project is multicultural in content and
concept; it generated positive audience response and delivered a professional outcome,
mainly on a volunteer basis over several years. The processes of *Mother Tongue* demonstrate
the principals identified by Mar and Ang but where challenged when intersecting with the
arts "industry" (2014:8-15). The diverse cultural and creative backgrounds of the artists
underpin *Mother Tongue*, and thereby work 'across cultures' and develop 'cross-cultural
partnerships'. The full spectrum of the 'culture cycles' is hindered by concerns expressed by
sector gate-keepers confronted by the concept of *Mother Tongue*, signalling their reluctance
to support and program the work. The symbolic role and reception of this performance are
also part of the culture cycles. The audience response to *Mother Tongue* reinforces its
relevance, but only after surmounting the barriers presented by the funding agencies and
dance experts.

Paul demonstrates her leadership towards a multicultural arts milieu by seeking
partners to establish the first national intercultural dance theatre company in Australia,
similar to Bangarra.

It will be multi-nation, here's that word - multicultural. Multiple cultural expressions. As
a creative leader in that role, I would seek advice and support from those around me; it's

about having multiple viewpoints that are working towards the one thing (A. Paul 2015, interview).

Creative Leadership

Analysis of the paired themes of friction and creativity, trust and legitimacy and support and networks demonstrate the constraints and opportunities that 'NESB' artists can experience pursuing a creative career. This section consolidates the characteristics of creative leadership identified by the artists in this study regarding the creative content that informs and draws upon multicultural Australia.

The artists interviewed for this research attempt to understand how best creatively, politically, financially and pragmatically navigate, and intervene, in the arts system:

Creative leadership now is about finding and working with individuals within the systems who have a mutual vision with you. Finding the resources to do that, because that's separate to project funding (S. Shakthidharan 2015, interview).

Creative leadership is about producing and presenting work that is relevant.

Being able to create something that resonates with people. I haven't seen anything in Australian arts that resonates with me (A. Lau 2015, interview).

Lau was not alone. Only one interviewee identified a recent Australian artwork as satisfying, although many could provide an international example. Creative leadership for a younger second 'NESB' generation is based on a different set of experiences. As a daughter of migrants, Lau rarely sees her generation presented on stage and screen, a highlight being Benjamin Law's Chinese-Australian sit-com series on SBS (2017). For Nguyen, creative

leadership changes perceptions and enables a closer appreciation of people in new and contrasting situations.

> Recently Dad went to the Fringe Festival. I cannot imagine any other Asian parent in their sixties going to a Fringe Festival. That is a good story. That is about creating contrast and clashing of different cultures, and seeing the result (V. Nguyen 2015, interview).

Nguyen contemporises his father and is keen to articulate new narratives of someone who is open to his new life. Nguyen places his family inside an arts scene (which he considers unusual and potentially risqué) and views the creative potential as 'clashing' to produce unexpected outcomes.

> It's about taking risk. It's about speaking out. I'm an advocate as well as an artist, by just speaking out. It's about taking people with you and adding value to something that's already there. It's about pushing things beyond what's expected (A. Paul 2015, interview).

This is a direct example of creative friction. For Paul there is a political edge to leading creatively as well as going beyond the expected norms. Valamanesh and Koukias are amongst those artists who found their creative edge via their ethnicities in relation to the Australian context. Valamanesh creatively leads by doing: "to just show that it can be done, from my honest view as an artist".

Conclusion

Navigating the friction between the competing aspects of innovation and the maintenance of cultural heritage can characterise the practices of 'NESB' artists. Innovation is a synthesis of

fresh ideas into new forms of production that resonate within contemporary society. Cultural heritage is "collective memory made tangible" that surfaces through forms of "expression, maintenance, representation, recognition and renewal" (Isar and Anheier 2007:30). These characteristics are frequently positioned as mutually exclusive binaries for multicultural arts practices. This chapter has analysed the ways 'NESB' artists push this binary "beyond what's expected". By doing so they demonstrate creative leadership through the persistence required in the face of stereotyping barriers. The artists in this chapter demonstrate the principles that promote diverse cultural expressions by producing work which comes from "working across cultures" and being able to develop "cross-cultural partnerships" (Mar and Ang 2015 8-10).

The majority of the artists in this study faced challenges in the broader "industry" aspects of success particularly by being programmed, presented and promoted (Mar and Ang 2017:11-14). They all support and recognise their contribution of relevant artwork to Australian society despite the lower rates of financial support from the state sponsored arts programs (Mar and Ang 2017:15-16). The income gap from their art practice is lessening, however the number of professional 'NESB' artists remains at half that of the participation in the overall workforce (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017:142). This suggests that the reasons for the glacial pace of change in the arts include the resistance to include 'NESB' artists by the arts industry "leaders", the paucity of resources for culturally diverse infrastructure, and the challenges to navigate away from the negative perception as to the value of an arts career in Australia.

Despite this context, there are artists who have developed and maintained a career in the face of such odds who demonstrate creative leadership through their agency within the Australian arts sector. The range of attributes of these artists includes the ability to cross between and adapt accordingly to different cultural spheres. Those cultural spheres include the possibility of communication across intergenerational changes; a practical understanding

of the delicate tactics and strategies required to navigate their immediate cohort of friends and family and that of the arts sector in its myriad aspects; being prepared to participate in the inevitable link between arts and politics which will confront them at some point, in particular that of issues of inclusion in the arts; being prepared to push the boundaries of the canon and to creatively adapt aspects from their cultural heritage to which they have intimate access. These adaptive elements use relational, distributive and charismatic leadership modes through the needs of the artist to activate the relationships that enable their practice.

Chapter V

Challenges of Institutional Leadership: Reluctance in the Australia Council

Introduction

Policy development can be a site where creative leadership translates into institutional leadership – as is the case with NESB artists who have participated in ACMAC and as advocates for the arts in a multicultural Australia. Chapter IV discussed the creative leadership capacities of NESB artists and this chapter articulates how these can inform institutional leadership through participation in governance and policy development. Staff in institutions and art practitioner peers can both demonstrate institutional leadership for multicultural arts practices, and this is ideally demonstrated when the strategic aims of the agency and those of multicultural arts policy are linked. This chapter analyses some of the challenges and contradictions experienced by NESB artists when they become affiliated with the apparatus of a government arts agency, specifically the Australia Council. In particular, I explore the empirical data which underpins the central role of ACMAC in formulating the AMA 1996, 2000 and 2006 policies and the implications for sector leadership caused by its dissolution in 2007.

A multicultural arts milieu is most likely to flourish when there is active engagement and leadership by institutional funding bodies. This engagement includes options of governance, the ability for internal champions to progress change, the ways external expertise is accommodated on a regular basis and how advocates gain experience. Institutional leadership in this context also refers to positional leadership, as discussed in chapter II; I explore how these leadership ideas apply to the experience of two chairs and several

ACMAC members who describe their combative experiences of governance within the Australia Council. I also discuss how relational and distributed styles of leadership were displayed by ACMAC to manage these experiences, while transactional styles of leadership were more likely to be displayed by the Australia Council. This chapter also presents a critique of the Australia Council's Cultural Engagement Framework (CEF) which is promoted as delivering greater internal and external accountability across all diversity areas. These institutional issues of leadership are explored through the friction arising from governance, the use of expertise to garner trust and the crucial role of networks to produce traction.

Adapting Friction into Governance

Consultative groups provide expert advice to confirm or adjust institutional aims and strategies. The political pressures which can often underpin the need for a policy response can generate internal debates regarding strategy implementation and, in so doing, highlight the potential for friction in governance. One of the remits of diversity advisory committees such as ACMAC is to identify where adjustments (of whatever scale) need to be made. In hierarchical, rule-bound institutions, such adjustments (a result of friction in the first place) may also generate friction as response. The internal institutional development of a policy that, in the end appears as a neat summation of intentions and actions often comes about through 'robust debate' and compromise. It can be a 'gritty' experience because policy development tests the boundaries of influence and power between advisors and the institution. As Tsing points out:

> difference can disrupt, causing everyday malfunctions as well as unexpected cataclysms. Friction refuses the lie that [global] power operates as a well-oiled machine (Tsing 2005: 6).

Policy statements in the arts are often presented to the public as the result of a smooth process of identifying issues and addressing gaps. However, internal processes are more likely to be charged with difficult debates. Challenges to the image of their smoothly running institution mean that the institutional leaders may 'open the door' to discussing the challenge in question – in the case of the Australia Council, cultural diversity in the arts – or they may push back as a form of "profound resistance" (Blonski 1994: 206). As discussed in chapter III, the engagement by those in Australia Council leadership roles towards issues of cultural difference in the arts appear to have generated a significant moment in each decade of its existence. These moments included: 1) the establishment of an advisory committee in 1975; 2) the first multicultural policy proposals adopted by Council in 1985; 3) ACMAC-led national discourse about multiculturalism in 1994; and 4) significant resources invested across discourse, artistic and market development in 2000. Each of these productive phases resulted from creative and institutional frictions which required energy to (re-)establish the AMA agenda and also generate the subsequent momentum for its ongoing delivery. This history suggests an institutional pattern which begins with disregard, which in turn prompts criticism from practitioners, and which subsequently catalyses the institution into developing a response, and sometimes a process, for change.

The Mirage of a Legacy

The chairs of ACMAC held positional leadership roles. As government appointees, one of their main remits was to steer the issues raised by their committee to be approved at the level of the Australia Council Board – the highest level of internal governance and decision-making group in the Australia Council. ACMAC was usually chaired by the chair of the CCD. This was the case for two research participants: actor, Lex Marinos and comedy script writer, Deborah Klika. As government appointees they can be described as 'political' chairs because this is:

the world of some art boards. They are a play between heroes, politics, power and personal

crusade, where being visible and speaking out oscillate with invisibility and discretion

(Rentschler 2015: 106).

Rentschler depicts the tension in arts governance leadership between public profile,

government expectations and attending to a constituency. These are roles that the ACMAC

chairs had to juggle with other members of the Australia Council governing board, members

of ACMAC, the complex and changing constituency in the 'multicultural arts' sector all in

relation to the government of the day. This chapter presents a rare insight into the experience

of two people in governance roles at the Australia Council.

Marinos established his creative leadership as an actor and multicultural advocate.

This role merged with his institutional leadership during his roles at the Australia Council as

deputy chair and chair, respectively, of the CCD and ACMAC. The AMA policy area is also

a site in which the creative leadership of NESB artists can merge with institutional

leadership. In such contexts, their creative leadership is stimulated by social and political

engagement which may inform their practice as well as develop advocacy capabilities. This

process can also move them into the spotlight as candidates for institutional leaders in a

governance role. Being uncharacteristically circumspect, Marinos describes his time as

ACMAC chair from 1995 to 1999 as "stimulating but very challenging and frustrating" (L.

Marinos 2015, interview). Klika, ACMAC chair from 1999 to 2002, more pointedly recalls

the experience as one of a "fight", but was heartened in 2015, to find the 2000 policy still

online:

> It's good that it had some staying power beyond my time, because a concern one has
>
> when one goes through such a process of fighting for such a policy, is that once you go,
>
> the policy disappears. But it was worth the effort (D. Klika 2015, interview).

This comment is telling in a number of ways. The metaphor of a 'battle' is illustrative of the antagonistic process Klika experienced within the institution. It highlights the AMA as a site of struggle and implicitly positions the Australia Council's leadership in equally 'combative' roles. Her reference to "such a policy" suggests that the battle had become an anticipated and ingrained process. Klika also voices the concern that the pressure brought to bear by a 'champion' may dissipate when they leave the institution, with staff in executive roles retreating from, rather than continuing to implement changes across the institution. The institutional rhetoric of support for greater diversity often relies on the charismatic and committed individual to present the appearance of a committed institution, yet without such champions there may well be "no commitment at all" (Ahmed 2012: 135). Ahmed describes diversity champions as those appointed as "diversity practitioners" who can also "teach us about how we inhabit institutions" (2012: 19). That is, the champion needs first to be able understand the specifics of the internal "institutional life" – a complex task which requires observation and relationship-building before their role can become effective. The scope of the challenge for the "diversity worker" is to manoeuvre through the institutional structures and cultures often built to resist change.

According to Sirkin, Keenan and Jackson (2005), four elements which contribute to effective institutional change are: project duration, particularly time between project reviews; performance integrity, or the capabilities of project teams; the commitment of both senior executives and staff and; the additional effort the employees need to make to cope with the changes. The authors' key argument is that all four factors need to work in concert to deliver change. Yet they are difficult to track because integrity, commitment and effort are all intangible and often need to be underpinned by consistent and effective leaders. While a chair appointed for a maximum of four years may be able to adjust institutional commitment for a limited period, they are reliant on subsequent leaders after they leave. Uneven support has

dogged the history of the arts in a multicultural Australia, as discussed in chapter III. The Australia Council's leadership continues to appear reluctant to maintain its ambit (or commitment) of transforming the arts in Australia to better represent its multicultural society.

Transformational leadership (discussed in chapter II) therefore, when challenged by complex issues, may prompt a return to the previous status quo. The inbuilt mechanism that requires fixed-term appointments to decision-making roles, including ACMAC, the governing members of the Australia Council and executive management – can also limit the momentum for change and meaningful legacy. Effective institutional leadership could exist in a productive relationship between both, transformational and positional leaders. Councillors need the leadership of the bureaucracy to be able to activate and negotiate change throughout the various staffing levels of the institution, while bureaucrats need the vision and influence of the councillors to maintain the relevance of the institution.

The ACMAC chair had to find respect at the Council decision-making level, while also engaging with the staff of the institution. This positioned the ACMAC chair role as a central, institution-wide relational leader in a space to increase the likelihood of longer-term change. There was a brief time when this did occur within the Australia Council. During the development of the 2000 AMA policy, Klika was ACMAC chair and Dr Margaret Seares was Executive chair – both the chair and the CEO of the institution. The combined positional leadership of both women in influential roles and relational skills who spent time within the institution initiated changes that would lead to a decade of resources allocated to implement an effective AMA policy.

The era of joint support for AMA continued when Jennifer Bott was appointed as CEO (1999-2006). Bott described Klika as "thoughtful, strong and pragmatic" and also acknowledged the "fight" (J. Bott 2015, interview).

It was not sort of schleffed [passed] off as a kind of irritant or whatever. I respect

Deborah for that. I think she had to fight for that. Then it filtered from the Council down

in many ways. It made a lot of difference once AMA was taken very seriously at the

governance table (J. Bott 2015, interview).

It was a significant challenge, therefore, to have AMA considered "seriously" as a priority

amongst competing priorities and contexts, beyond a slightly irritating friction that could

easily be dismissed. In her interview, Bott reinforced the hierarchy in the Australia Council,

but also observed a change in the members of the governing body. Klika's use of both

relational and transactional styles of leadership temporarily altered the status quo of

governance. This change supports the experience of a battle, but also the attitudinal shift

which enabled adequate resources to implement nation-wide AMA 2000 initiatives.

The Australia Council approved an unprecedented $2.08 million for AMA initiatives

over six years, averaging $350,000 per annum (Keating *et al.* n.d.b: 31). When averaged out,

the sum appears modest, however, the forward budget agreement-in-principle (conditional

upon similar levels of funding from government) over six years is a commitment that is yet to

be repeated. Subsequently, however, the Australia Council read Keating, Bertone and

Leahy's 2005 review of AMA 2000, their recommendations to strengthen and commit long-

term allocations to subsequent AMA policies were not endorsed.

The Reluctant Institution

The management of AMA within the institution is indicative of another way of, as Bott puts

it, being "taken very seriously"; this presents opportunities for positional and transactional

forms of leadership. Each of the many (six or seven) institutional levels require positional

leaders who comprehend the issues and support the momentum for AMA strategies for arts

sector transformation. Long-time senior bureaucrat at the Australia Council, Executive

Director of Arts Funding and Engagement, Frank Panucci, observes that, while it is now easier to "articulate the diversity conversation", environmental limits remain in place.

> Those famous two steps forward, one step back; you feel that a lot of times in that [multicultural] space. Part of it is about the arts and cultural space that, like a lot of these areas, are fundamentally determined by the general public and political discourse. While you think you have made the progress in a specific area, you can't remove it from the context within which you operate (F. Panucci 2015, interview).

Awareness of context is an essential understanding required by any leader. Panucci is aware of the lack of traction, but deflects the reason for structural barriers in the arts onto society and government, which alleviates the Australia Council of any institutional responsibility. Klika, on the other hand, addressed the Australia Council's institutional responsibilities and achieved an unprecedented commitment to AMA during Prime Minister Howard's term, one characterised by a government that dismantled inclusive multicultural values and support structures (Ho 2015: 38).

Different approaches to change are expressed in the interviews with previous ACMAC chairs, Marinos and Klika. These range from actively negotiating a positive impact where it can, to taking a laissez-faire approach and leaving the outcome to 'market' or society. The motivations for Marinos and Klika to maintain their efforts stem from their respective leadership for change, but these are articulated through different approaches. Their criticisms view policy intervention as being either inadequate or overbearing. Klika's view of the role of arts policy is that it should not override creative intentions or be too prescriptive:

> What I hope policy does is shift people's ways of thinking to be relevant to today's society. But I also recognise that sometimes policy can go too far and we find it difficult to decide if it's good or bad art because it's been ticked off under a policy. That's my

problem with policy; sometimes you can't tell whether it's the cart or the horse in front

(D. Klika 2015, interview).

Marinos' view is that the policy levers are not direct enough. He argues that the Australia Council's lack of conviction for AMA shows through its unwillingness to ensure major companies address their consistently low levels of engagement with NESB artists.

> The AMA policy is given some regard, but not pursued with much conviction. It's as though having the policy in itself is enough, to say 'this is what we've done'. But it's rarely implemented. If they do audit the major organisations for instance, I'm unaware that they have conversations that say – your representation is very low and do you have any strategies to redress that? (L. Marinos 2015, interview).

The conundrum is that having a policy "to point to" can alleviate the pressure on action, because it takes the place of "doing" (Ahmed 2012: 86). Whether policy outcomes should be tied to government funding is a perennial discussion of quotas, compliance and the use of taxpayers' money. It frustrates many like Marinos to see structural change avoided by such major organisations, as the state theatre companies. Indeed, the issues of government funding and quotas and policy remain a live topic raised several times at a 2017 NSW symposium on cultural diversity in the arts (Gonsalves 2017).

As a performer, Marinos remains close to the issues and observes improvements in other contexts which fuel his thoughts regarding the lack of comprehensive change for the arts in multicultural Australia.

> Many companies have had an outstanding record with opportunities for Indigenous artists and I think that's a laudable thing. But it puzzles me, because it seems odd that the same thinking doesn't carry across to cultural diversity, in which areas they're lamentably woeful (L. Marinos 2015, interview).

Marinos and Klika articulate a fundamental schism about implementation methods. Klika is tentative about over-prescribing to artists while Marinos advocates prescribed outcomes to organisations. However divergent their views, they both chafe against the Australia Council for what they argue is a lack of seriousness in addressing the barriers experienced by NESB artists.

> Council was a bit reluctant to implement policies they claimed to believe in, but stopped short of implementing in any meaningful way. It was never a demand that was placed on companies in terms of employment (L. Marinos 2015, interview).

The methods of policy implementation, therefore, highlight the discord between intentions and the methods of delivering those intentions. Discord can inhibit change in a bureaucracy concerned about negative attention, particularly negative attention from the politically influential chairs of major companies who are frequently affiliated with government in some way. However, there have also been small signs of change, with such companies as the Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC) and Belvoir Street recently advertising 'diversity' projects. The MTC Connect program is in partnership with Multicultural Arts Victoria and aims to bring young people of culturally diverse backgrounds into the company as marketing and programming advisors (Melbourne Theatre Company 2014).

Klika feels that institutional responsibility falls short in maintaining the steady momentum for change and advocating to government on behalf of NESB artists:

> The Australia Council has to keep doing that work for those seeds to flower twenty, thirty, forty years on. I get depressed when they just maintain a status quo because that's easier, and they don't push the envelope with government (D. Klika 2015, interview).

Klika's comments conceptualise a succinct institutional leadership role for the Australia Council. The chances for this role to flourish, however, have diminished significantly since

the disbanding of ACMAC. The impact of a void where once consistent advice was provided has impacted on the institution in several ways. It is difficult to keep abreast of developments in the multicultural arts sector because the structured opportunities for 'NESB' artists to provide regular input across all artforms no longer exist. Subsequently, on the occasions when 'cultural diversity' may come onto the agenda, it is unlikely that all Councillors (the Australia Council board members) have had exposure across all the issues and artforms, or can speak with any confidence about the arts in a multicultural Australia. Executive staff members therefore become the default advisors, most of whom are also unlikely to have in-depth knowledge of cultural diversity.

The embattled experiences of Marinos and Klika as two ACMAC chairs appointed by different governing political parties illustrate the Australia Council as a site of struggle regarding AMA. Disbanding the expert advisory function of ACMAC removed regular opportunities for the Australia Council's Board to engage with issues that affect 'NESB' artists. Both chairs describe the unwillingness of the institutional leaders within the Australia Council organisation to advocate to government on behalf of NESB artists, or to require that any organisations with secure Australia Council funding demonstrate and address 'cultural diversity'. These are two ongoing and unresolved leadership issues within the institution regarding the degree and means of intervention required to increase multicultural arts activity in Australia.

The Fragility of Funding

Australia Council's main responsibilities are to disburse government funds to the arts through a national process of grant application and peer assessment. A positive outcome of a successful grant application is where "money is translated into cultural artefact" (Hawkins 1993: 133). The steps of an application include being aware of: funding guidelines;

approaches to and negotiations with arts funding staff members; comprehending and applying the guidelines for a submission; and awaiting the final decision. Each of these steps produce pressure points in the interactions between the applicant and the institution: how to interpret the guidelines which have taken staff innumerable rounds of meetings to agree upon; what kind of questions to ask the staff members who are trained to deliver information in a particular way; and then the intensive work required to produce a completed application; followed by the machinery of processes (software and human) at the other end which produce a result.

The application process is one where the Australia Council collects data about each applicant's background. The *Australia Council Annual Report 2015-2016* indicates for example, that: disability attracted $375,000 in dedicated funds; twenty-one percent of grants were awarded to regional artists or organisations (Australia Council 2016a: 48); and $9.9 million in funds were awarded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists or organisations (Australia Council 2016a: 61). However, the Annual Report made no mention of dedicated funding for multicultural artists or organisations. Despite multiple requests to the Australia Council since commencing my research, specific data on grants awarded to NESB artists has not been provided. This suggests a lack of transparency around this data. I have instead had to extrapolate information from various published Australia Council reports to build a picture of Australia Council funding to NESB artists.

Australia Council's 2016-2020 corporate plan (Australia Council 2016b), however, does provide a statistic on support to NESB artists and organisations.

> Since inception, [1973] more than 14% of the grant funding allocated through our programs has gone to culturally and linguistically diverse groups. In 2015-2016, $3.1m was awarded to artists and arts organisations who identify as belonging to culturally and linguistically diverse groups (Australia Council 2016b: 7).

Three possible data scenarios emerge when the figures from the Australia Council 2015-2016

Annual Report (2016a: 17) are intersected with those in the Australia Council Corporate Plan

(2016b: 10):

- If all grant funding is considered (including those to Major Performing Arts [MPA] organisations), NESB support equates to $3.1m/$173.8m= 1.8 percent.

- If most funding is considered (excluding those to Major Performing Arts), NESB support equates to $3.1m/$66m = 4.6 percent.

- If only Australia Council grant funding is considered (excluding MPA and Government initiatives), NESB support equates to $3.1m/$50.6m = 6.1 percent.

These calculations are inferred from the Australia Council's published statistics for

"CALD artists and organisations" and expenditure reporting, and present a *raison d'être*

behind the announcement of a target of "14% of funding [to be] allocated through our grant

programs to projects by people from culturally and linguistically diverse groups" (Australia

Council 2016b: 8). This transactional aim does not provide details as to how a 14 percent

target will be achieved.

Navigating the System

One of the inhibiting factors for individual NESB artists may be the lack of familiarity with

the bureaucratic processes of applying for funding. In the late 1990s, Arts Queensland

demonstrated leadership by 'accompaniment' through a series of innovative grant writing

workshops in an attempt to even out the playing field:

> They delivered a series of workshops where the multicultural artists would act as a
>
> funding panel to assess [anonymised] real grants. It honed in on the technique of writing

a grant. Afterwards, there was a 70 percent increase of grant applications from

multicultural artists – that's huge (P. Couros 2015, interview).

Reversing the hierarchy of expertise on excellence improved 'NESB' artists' comprehension

of how to prepare better grant applications. Increased numbers of grant applications illustrate

the workshops' success; the workshops can also be seen as opportunities for artists to develop

creative leadership. The value of any grant, beyond the money, is the recognition by peers

which signals the levels of trust in the NESB artist's ability.

Gaining that recognition is further complicated by the perceived hierarchy between

genres within a specific artform. The aesthetic hierarchies perceived between innovation and

cultural maintenance has produced friction during grant assessment meetings. A Dance Board

and ACMAC member observed:

how an excessively marked interest in innovation undermines the possibility of funding

other types of work dealing with cultural heritage. Cultural maintenance was viewed as

both a matter of the group the applicant belonged to, and of the way the application was

structured (Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee n.d.a).

This excerpt articulates the perception that innovation and heritage are mutually exclusive

which the AMA 2000 policy attempted to address by profiling the links between tradition and

innovation (Australia Council 2000). This excerpt also highlights that the need to be able

articulate such aesthetic connections apply mainly to NESB artists. This issue was raised

again in 2017 by NESB artists. For example, dancer and choreographer, Aruna Gandhi

recently noted that she feels that her lack of success in arts grants applications is because her

Bharatanatyam practice is considered neither contemporary nor innovative (Castagna 2017).

When faced with the low level of funding and a lack of employment opportunities in

the creative sector, some artists have taken the entrepreneurial response of establishing

creative enterprises (Idriss 2018: 95-117). CuriousWorks, for example, established a fee-for-service role, drawing on the media technology skills of those in the company. This income stream supported their other aims to deliver not-for-profit projects with community partners, because even secured grants were inadequate to deliver all the ambitions of a project.

> Your ideas are bigger than funding anyway, and so it has to be supported elsewhere. This is in the context of not being from a middle class where you only have to look after yourself. So you have to have a solid business model (S. Shakthidharan 2015, interview).

The issue of class raised in this quote points to the uneven family support for creative pursuits experienced by NESB artists discussed in chapter IV. Shakthidharan's solution to maintain a "solid business model" exemplifies a pragmatic response to the friction caused around levels of funding, but also points to the strategies and efforts being made to maintain the business.

The fragility of funding to the small to mediums sector increases because the state art agencies and the Australia Council agree that if one agency stops funding a company, the other will also 'defund' them. Koukias had kept his experimental opera company IHOS in production for 25 years on small organisational funding. Several years ago that persistence looked successful.

> We'd just opened a massive opera at MONA [Museum of Old and New Art] with seven sold-out performances and all on budget, when IHOS got de-funded. It was only a matter of time before the State would pull the plug and I couldn't keep begging from patrons. I had to rely on a lot of teaching to survive because I was only ever on a stipend of $10,000 a year (K. Koukias 2015, interview).

These two examples reveal the tenacity of the NESB artist to manoeuvre around low levels of institutional support. Both companies provide enormous creative opportunities for many

NESB artists and any reduced capacities, as in the IHOS de-funding, impact negatively in a ripple effect.

Support for the arts in Australia fractures along the lines of historical privilege. Marinos is highly conscious of the inequity in funding and accountability that quarantines the major performing arts companies from failure compared to the vagaries of funding experienced by the creative risk-takers of the small to medium companies:

> The majors are the ones who've been able to parlay their position with sponsorship and subscriber base and can most absorb any cuts. The money should go to those smaller independent companies who are trying to do new work and advance the evolution of the arts (L. Marinos 2015, interview).

This highlights the tense struggle for funds, particularly in the small to medium sector, where the creative risk takers are often located (Stevenson *et al.* 2017: 12; Eltham 2016). A low-risk approach to questions of excellence reinforces this tension. A model put forward by Kalantzis and Cope proposes turning the current funding model on its head. They suggest that, because the low-risk emphasises the known, artists and organisations with proven track records should be provided with short-term funds, whereas high-risk artists with future potential could have a "long-term venture capital approach" (1994: 31-32). Given that many NESB artists are perceived to be high risk, this approach, albeit utopian, could reverse the trend of lower support for their work.

Fewer multicultural arts organisations are now federally funded. Since 2016 only seven of the 128 funded organisations (5 percent) have a specific multicultural arts focus and received $1.6 million of the allocated $28 million (6 percent) (Australia Council n.d.a). This shows that the Australia Council still struggles to communicate effectively or demonstrate relational leadership across the increasing diversity of Australia's population (Australian

Bureau of Statistics 2017). This is a leadership issue which will need to be transparently addressed if they are to increase their grant approvals to 14 percent for NESB artists and groups (Australia Council 2016b).

For institutions like the Australia Council which are attempting to engage with such diversity, strategies of "accompaniment" (Lynd and Lynd 2009: 93) or "attunement" (Gibson 2005: 273) could be employed. As discussed in chapter II, accompaniment respectfully shares skills while attunement adjusts for dissonance, tries to pick up less common signals, and sets up a feedback loop with the aim of developing trusted relationships. The frequency and manner in which the institution tunes in to the messages of artists and advocates indicates how 'seriously' an issue is taken. In the case of AMA, the amount of influence the institution is prepared to exert upwards and outwards is another indication of its leadership intentions. The past decade has seen a paradoxical shift by the institution – away from providing regular opportunities to meet with the 'NESB' artists while simultaneously attempting to develop a cohesive approach to diversity issues through the CEF.

Cultural Engagement Framework – Between Aspiration and Implementation

Within the Australia Council, all social diversity policy areas have come under the umbrella of the CEF since 2008. The CEF views diversity as a "great cultural asset that leads to greater artistic vibrancy and innovation" (Australia Council n.d.b) and resonates with the instrumental productive diversity argument (Cope and Kalantzis 1997; Bertone 2002; Ho 2015: 37-38). The 2011 iteration of the CEF foregrounds legislative compliance. The Australia Council claims a transformational leadership role through summarising the CEF's remit as: integrating strategies for artistic excellence across the diversity of Australian society; encouraging societies' participation and enjoyment of the arts; and ensuring Council services are socially and culturally inclusive (Australia Council 2011).

The framework is not described as a policy but as a "mechanism" to engage with diversity and increase "the relevance, dynamism and reflection of contemporary Australia through the arts". "Diversity" is specified by the Australia Council as encompassing "first nations people, children and young people, older people, people with a disability and regional and remote Australia, and with a focus on disability" (Australia Council 2016a: 52). The focus on disability aligns with government legislation. The CEF principles include diversity: through respect and interaction; dialogue: through access to resources; artistic excellence: to produce greater artistic vibrancy; inclusiveness: to encourage mutual respect and harmony; belonging: to generate a sense of identity; and community building: to strengthen communities (Australia Council n.d.b). The aims to foster artistic vibrancy and harmony are inspirational, if generic, values. The ideals appear achievable because actions such as dialogue, encouragement and interaction can be demonstrated by Australia Council staff, even though these are difficult to gauge. Whether the principles are sufficient to generate shifts in Australian cultural life is questionable, given that the crux of the CEF remains one of resource allocation and that ten years after its inception, the detail and timing to enliven the CEF is yet to be published.

The institutional responsibility for the CEF sits with the Executive Director of Arts Funding and Engagement, Frank Panucci, who views it as a 'breakthrough' in the maturation of the Australia Council.

> The CEF has put a way of structuring and talking about itself internally, in a different space than when we were doing the Arts in a Multicultural Australia policy. At times I think some parts of this organisation thought AMA was either an imposition or somewhere they could push stuff to. There's nowhere to push things anymore. If you don't address it in this place, then there'll be someone that will ask the question of why it wasn't addressed (F. Panucci 2015, interview).

Panucci acknowledges the institutional shunting of responsibility for AMA identified since the 1970s. To "push" articulates the energy expended to avoid engaging with AMA. The description to "push stuff" captures the internal friction of institutional responsibility. However, the CEF notwithstanding, the current absence of dedicated institutional responsibility for AMA brings into question the capacity to generate traction. In reality, there may be little difference between the perception that AMA was an "imposition" and the quasi-policing role of CEF champions to "ask the question".

The internal institutional focus of the CEF requires the ideal proposition of active endorsement by all staff, led by 'champion' advocates. Another intent of the CEF claims to stimulate change in the arts sector; this is relevant to Marinos' question about how the major arts organisations are encouraged to perform. Panucci claims that a productive shift has occurred within the 'open' grants programs:

> The alignment in the general programs to the needs of artists of cultural diverse
> backgrounds is better than it was ten or fifteen years ago. At times you still need specific
> interventions. But that becomes a resource question. So we have to be vigilant in
> monitoring the outcomes (F. Panucci 2015, interview).

This statement is arguably inaccurate about the support to CALD artists on two fronts. The alignment to their needs has not improved because they remain underfunded as suggested by the data in chapter II and also, earlier in this chapter. Panucci's statement also suggests that monitoring is the main mechanism to understand the experience of NESB artists in the absence of dedicated resources. The CEF is an institutional internal model and difficult to prise open, but those in a close outer circle can provide some perspective.

Executive Director of Carriageworks Arts Centre, Lisa Havilah, suggests those who claim a "lack of resources as a rationale do not have diversity at their core" (L. Havilah 2015, interview). Pino Migliorino, a specialist in multicultural business advancement, is the only

consultant to have formally reviewed the CEF. He views the 2015 federal budget decision (to move significant funds from the Australia Council back to the Department of the Arts) as fatal to the CEF implementation: "I thought, that's [the CEF] off" (P. Migliorino 2015, interview). This raises questions about the centrality of the CEF. Migliorino found that the CEF had 'compartmentalised' each of the areas for attention and had become what he described as "an internal mechanism" limited to human resources. The issue of internal resourcing also came to the fore:

> There are leaders in the executive as well as project officers, who want to be employed fulltime to do this work, but can't because they have to do other jobs. The philosophy of creating this in terms of an 'on top of' approach doesn't work (P. Migliorino 2015, interview).

The scope of "cultural diversity" leadership for CEF has therefore been limited within the institution. Panucci argues that "CEF champions" will deliver the CEF aims, however, Migliorino's observation is that "there's a policy void right now. And no-one's championing it. I have not heard anyone talk about arts for a multicultural Australia" (P. Migliorino 2015, interview). Alongside the issue of resources (human and financial), relational leadership is required to identify and embed diversity principles in Australia Council work practices.

> Fundamental principles should be driving the organisation. What are the access principles? And in those access principles, the organisation will tend to deliver across what is fundamentally a very narrow band. So this becomes remedial (P. Migliorino 2015, interview).

The term "remedial" suggests both a 'back to basics' corrective action and the process of triage, associated with an emergency to remedy a crisis or collapse. Both actions identify the

severity and level of priority of the situation before treatment. "Remedial" implies the institution is retro- rather than pro-active:

> We know that non-English artists and audiences are not engaged yet. So they require
>
> quite specific tactics (P. Migliorino 2015, interview).

Attending to the needs of specific groups generates friction between competing priorities, but Migliorino further argues that the institutional support must meet the "infrastructure needs and cultural competency in the existing services" of NESB artists.

Migliorino identifies two significant gaps that the institution needs to address for cultural diversity to thrive, gaps that Tsing articulates as falling between aspiration and reality:

> We must make do, enmeshing our desires in the compromise of practical action. The
>
> bridge we stepped off is not the bridge we stepped upon. Yet to cast away the memory of
>
> the first bridge denies desire. To pretend it is the same as the second bridge is the baldest
>
> lie of power. It is only in maintaining the friction between two subjectively experienced
>
> bridges, the friction between aspiration and practical achievement, that a critical analysis
>
> [of global connection] is possible (2005: 85).

NESB artists "make do" with less funding and with fewer employment-based arts networks than their ESB peers. The corporate history or memory of AMA initiatives resides in two or three remaining staff members who could be considered as those on Tsing's "first bridge". Those on the second bridge are arguably those staff 'champions' who act as the intermediaries expected to understand, promote and monitor the stated aims of access of the CEF. The CEF may be future-oriented but monitoring alone will not generate future change. As with any policy area, a negotiated agreement requires leaders to establish the agenda and associated research and provide vision, aptitude and internal political experience.

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The manner in which the Australia Council profiles its support for cultural diversity contributes to a multicultural arts milieu and underpins the trust NESB artists can have in it through the distribution of its funds. Within the ten years since the introduction of the CEF, the term "multicultural" has all but disappeared from Australia Council documents and been replaced by "cultural diversity". In the Council's 2016-2020 corporate plan, the word "multicultural" is completely absent, while "cultural diversity" appears once. Further, from early 2018 onwards, the AMA policies have disappeared from the Australia Council website. This inability by the Australia Council to acknowledge its previous corporate role around AMA, to use the term "multicultural", and the absence of a cultural diversity action plan, all indicate institutional reluctance to engage with this sector of the arts. This reluctance can also be seen more broadly as a refusal by the current Australia Council leadership to pro-actively engage and take action on the issues of this sector.

Establishing Trust through Expertise

Regular engagement with advisory experts within the institution can test or generate trust in the institutional processes and also develop trusting relationships between staff and peers. I argue that should this occur, a more permeable institution is created which maintains its relevance across the arts sector.

The ACMAC Member

The ACMAC model was central to maintaining momentum for AMA because it held a robust internal position with external links to advisors and experts. An ACMAC member held some increased status and legitimacy because they engaged in broader debates beyond the assessment of grant applications. The government appointed members for a three-year term to an artform board, and then NESB artists were invited onto ACMAC (Keating *et al.* n.d.:

49). ACMAC was the only committee with formal links to other artform board members. Despite being the only NESB artists at grant assessment meetings, their positional leadership was increased because they had access to two Council chairs – their own artform and ACMAC. Many recall the productive and convivial atmosphere of ACMAC meetings despite having, at times, tense policy debates.

ACMAC members were exposed to a rigorous, if informal, training ground, which increased their capacity to articulate expert knowledge about art practices in a multicultural Australia. It also increased their ability to discuss the issues, develop and critique the effectiveness of AMA strategies under consideration. Multicultural audience consultant, Fotis Kapetopoulos, recalls the experience as one of relational leadership within the 2006-8 committee as:

> exceptional, as it was not ideologically bound, as much of this area can be, but rather had a vision to make diversity an essential creative and economic focus of the arts. There was a diversity of people, with divergent views who came together as experts (F. Kapetopoulos 2015, interview).

There are now very limited formal opportunities, if any, for this level of national professional development for advocates for the arts in a multicultural Australia that directly link to the Australia Council.

The link to peers on other artform boards elevated the standing of the 'NESB' artist, even if they were initially uncertain or ambivalent about what it meant to be an ACMAC member. Then theatre director, Teresa Crea, was an ACMAC member during the early 1990s, one of the more progressive eras for AMA policy implementation. She recalls the combined experience and knowledge of practitioners and academics as productive for the institution.

The leadership was most effective when the committee was chaired by individuals with a deep philosophical understanding of the field with a mix of practising artists. Simply ticking a NESB box was not enough for leadership and guidance on this complex issue. The committee acted at times very much as a 'brains trust' identifying issues and potential strategies to support and articulate AMA policy. It was one of the few places where issues of policy and practice were discussed at a deeper level (T. Crea 2015, interview).

Crea articulates the value of the creative leadership of 'politicised' 'NESB' artists and the institutional leadership of academics; together, they broadened the conceptual thinking of ACMAC, and, by extension, that of the art form boards. This relational leadership drew on the collective skills of the members. Academics contributed to institutional leadership through their capacity to analyse policy issues which can impact 'NESB' artists' experiences. This knowledge base of practice, theory and policy enabled the committee to bring together a range of political, historical and practical perspectives critical for formulating long-term strategies. The comments by Kapetopoulos and Crea suggest that ACMAC demonstrated characteristics of distributed leadership (discussed in chapter II) which rotates and draws on the different skills of the members to lead as needed. When displaying distributed leadership, ACMAC can also be seen as a highly functional network.

An alternative perspective suggests that ACMAC brought tokenistic legitimacy to the Australia Council, and was more like a "paper tiger" (L. Marinos 2015, interview). Curator and 1990s ACMAC member, Nikolas Tsoutas agrees:

It was a political excuse to have the Arts for a Multicultural Australia because it sounded right for both parties [Australia Council and multicultural advocates]. They were paying lip service to multiculturalism rather than addressing the need for change (N. Tsoutas 2015, interview).

These multiple perspectives highlight the institutional and multi-faceted 'tug of war' characteristic of AMA. ACMAC members demonstrated intellectual, cultural and artistic leadership across all artforms that was not achieved elsewhere in the carefully guarded silos of the artforms. Yet, on the other hand, ACMAC was a place to "push stuff" to, and not given enough power or resources to actually effect the change it continually articulated over the decades. Regardless, the legacy of ACMAC resides in the numbers of artists who were exposed to ways to conceptualise and act on diversity in the broad scope of Australian arts. That legacy is significant because it built confidence in those members as creative leaders who could also learn about and attempt to influence the direction of an institution. In this manner, despite its apparent reluctance to deal effectively with some of the issues raised by ACMAC, the Australia Council demonstrated a level of institutional leadership through its support of ACMAC.

Tension at the Business End

Peers are discipline experts who are brought into the sphere of the institution to provide advice or assess funding applications. In this process, artist peers become trusted experts via their recommendations on the awarding of a grant. There is overwhelming endorsement by the arts sector and the Australia Council for the principle of peer assessment and arm's length decision-making from government (Parliament of Australia 2015). The empirical research for this thesis has highlighted the different ways in which trust is conferred or dismissed through the institutional processes, much of which has revolved around behaviour and discourse. As Bourdieu notes:

> This crossing-point between experience and expression is where the professional
>
> producers of discourse come in; it is here that the relations are set up between the experts

and the laymen, the signifiers and the signified. The dominant language discredits and destroys the spontaneous political discourse of the dominated (Bourdieu 1984: 461- 462).

The process of "destroy(ing) spontaneous … discourse" applies to the microcosm of an assessment meeting. It encapsulates committee members' experience of a muted discourse, if not silence, when outside the supportive environment of an ACMAC meeting. Within the arts grant assessment process, for example, all peers are nominally considered to be 'experts', however, what Bourdieu calls the "professional producers of discourse" invariably take the lead. Within the ACMAC framework, one 'NESB' peer attended each assessment meeting. Regardless of their creative expertise, their vocabulary and expressions sometimes differed from those of other peers; in such cases, influencing funding choices away from the familiar was a challenging task. To be able to articulate an alternate discourse which challenges the dominant one in the context of a meeting is a precise skill beyond advocacy. It requires relational leadership to establish trust and respect with other peers.

Although writing of cultural taste, and not about government grant assessment processes, Bourdieu succinctly captures their political dimensions:

> The science of taste and cultural consumption begins with a transgression that is no way aesthetic: it has to abolish the sacred frontier which makes legitimate culture a separate universe, to discover intelligible relations which unite apparently incommensurable 'choices' (Bourdieu 1984: 23).

To transgress is to cross into unfamiliar and often unacceptable territory. To assess an arts grant is a cultural-political-economic act in which discussions of aesthetic merits are subsumed beneath budgetary considerations. In the case of ACMAC and the roles of individual peers in grants assessment processes, their commentaries can be seen as transgressions which challenge the "separate universe" (Bourdieu 1984: 23) of what is

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conceptualised as legitimate culture. Tensions build because, as the only 'NESB' artist at grant assessments, there are assumptions (by everyone else in the meeting) of cross-disciplinary multicultural arts knowledge and expertise across the range of applications. The issue of whether the NESB artist and their knowledge is trusted by the other peers depends on the experience of those others peers and the ability of the group to unite "apparently incommensurable choices" (Bourdieu 1984: 23) – which is usually achieved at some point in the meeting. The 'NESB' artist's presence and the assessment group's final recommendations are then used to legitimise grant allocations by the Australia Council.

Assertive persistency is required to counter the conflicting pressures in the elite atmosphere of those meetings. ACMAC members noted they also felt like outsiders at such grant assessment meetings. This feeling was even acknowledged by those with extensive organisational experience and expertise, including Tsoutas, a previous director of several contemporary arts organisations. Tsoutas recollects:

> You were sort of stigmatised. You were there, not really to be able to engage and represent the whole oeuvre of the policymaking in the OzCo [Australia Council] or visual arts or whatever, because you were limited to talking about multiculturalism. The question of trust was ever present. The problem was that they couldn't easily dismiss me because my vocabulary exceeded the bounds of the cultural discourse (N. Tsoutas 2015, interview).

As a practitioner expert in the area of multiculturalism and the arts, Tsoutas was well-positioned to articulate issues of multiculturalism, art and policy and processes; this included an acute awareness of how he was perceived both, in meetings and within the overall process. Tsoutas' experience reflects Bourdieu's argument regarding the ways dominating discourse is adopted by the dominated (1984: 462). However, in this case, the expert whose knowledge "exceeded the bounds of cultural discourse" was required to be more erudite than the other

experts in the room. This is a rare skill in Australia, where the education that develops knowledge of multicultural issues is unlikely to be found in the arts academy nor in the informal mechanisms through the family life of many ethnic artists (Idriss 2018; see also chapter IV in this thesis).

The Question of Targets

Complementing the requirements of setting directions and developing policy, was the requirement of monitoring the progress of grant and initiative successes. For most of its existence, ACMAC reviewed an annual AMA report which included statistical data. This was even though, as Crea states:

> The struggle for and against 'quotas' and 'definitions' of NESB was a constant –
> difficult, but necessary. There were too few other avenues to help quantify what was
> happening in the field (T. Crea 2015, interview).

This requirement for ACMAC was established since its inception, with the data intermittently being made public. Hilary McPhee, Australia Council Chair (1994-1997), however, claimed success in setting and achieving significant increases in grants awarded to NESB artists and multicultural organisations.

> In 1988-90 policies and programs were reviewed and developed into the Australia
> Council's Arts for a Multicultural Australia policy which set a target across Council of
> raising expenditures overall on multicultural arts development to 7.5% of the Council
> budget. In 1988-9 this overall expenditure was 3.7% of Council Budget across all
> artforms. In 1993-4 it was 11.6% and has all the hallmarks of being one of the most
> successful policy initiatives implemented by the Australia Council (McPhee 1995).

Marinos, as chair of the CCD board, challenges whether the level of expenditure was across all artform boards. This query is also endorsed by Hawkins (1993: 118). Marinos argues:

> NESB artists were very strongly over-represented within our fund, and it managed to make the under-representation in the other funds look better than they were (L. Marinos 2015, interview).

The AMA targets could also be limiting, and not simply because they were much lower than Australia's demographics.

> Once you reached that quota, it was cut, so it was no longer about merit. If a NESB applicant was assessed later in the meeting, they were chopped because they were not in the milieu of [Australian arts]. Your name automatically, whether you're first or second [generation NESB], put you into that multicultural thing and they had Buckley's [no] chance of getting any funding (N. Tsoutas 2015, interview).

Targets within the Australia Council's model were a point of compliance to limit a result to a maximum rather than minimum quota; this is described by Ahmed as a "minimalist cop-out phrase" (2012: 106). Compounding that minimalist ceiling is whether the target reflected the multicultural composition of Australia. In 2015, the Australia Council's view was that targets were too complicated because of the increasing complexity of Australian demographics.

> An agency would not be able to go down a target road unless they were in an environment where targets were considered to be an appropriate way of doing things. Wouldn't you be saying – targets [for] around that demographic of people who are within the first five years of their arrival in this country and the most difficult period of settlement? (F. Panucci 2015, interview).

Linking the issue of targets to an 'appropriate environment' allows the institution to evade the question of targets and appears to close it down as an option for consideration. Panucci, however, articulates some of the nuances that would need to be considered at a micro policy level in order to engage with the increasing complexity of cultural diversity through migration and intergenerational change. Notably, twelve months after my interview with Panucci, the Australia Council advised that it is now aiming for 14 percent grant allocations to 'CALD' artists and organisations by 2020 (Australia Council 2016b). This shift is an internal one, and not one prompted by any political shifts in their context. This implies an awareness of lagging performance and the need to show institutional leadership again for multicultural arts. It brings into question the issue of trust between the Australia Council and its companies, because it incorporates a tacit acknowledgement that the arts sector is performing below par where multicultural arts are concerned. The institution shows transactional leadership which appears to be an effective form for an arts funding agency with limited resources to engage more broadly with the sector. For transactional leadership to be effective, however, specific transactions need to be articulated. The announcement that there is a target of 14 percent would be more convincing were it accompanied by transparent expectations of what the institution requires of its funded organisations. ACE for example, publishes results of company inclusion in programming and employment, their expectations for organisational cultural diversity and produces materials to assist organisations in achieving those expectations (Arts Council England n.d.a).

Post-ACMAC Peers

The evaluators of the 2000 AMA policy identified challenges faced by ACMAC regarding the recruitment of members, compliance by artform boards and the capacity of board peers to represent AMA issues, recommending that:

No case was found for disbanding the Committee. On the contrary, it was felt that the role of ACMAC should be strengthened, drawing in more Council members and external advisers (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 4).

The senior executive developed a new structure that drew only from external experts invited onto the committee. As discussed in chapter III, this 'relaxing' of the committee appointments may have indicated a shift to 'NESB' artists becoming 'adhoc' advisors. Peers are now contracted on a rotating basis for several assessment meetings. Media artist, Panos Couros, an ACMAC member during the development of the 2000 policy was an invited peer in 2016, and advised that he found negligible multicultural awareness at the three assessment meetings in which he participated.

Because if it wasn't for me in that room – particularly for the Literature round, some really outstanding writers from non-Anglo background would not have been considered. I had to put a case for them, saying: 'This is what makes the fabric of our society, to understand our own separate and combined mythologies and backgrounds. So this is really important work. Why aren't you even considering it?' All of a sudden we got four NESB artists up in the top six or something like that (P. Couros 2015, interview).

The first issue raised by this statement is that ACMAC was folded prematurely. One of the outcomes of ACMAC was the increased capacity of both novice and experienced 'NESB' artists to assess and advocate for quality arts projects, particularly multicultural art projects. Another issue suggested is that Australia Council staff members are either inexperienced or inattentive to CEF issues within this new system of short-term peer appointments. This may explain why there were no briefings about CEF areas at the meetings in which Couros participated; this, in turn, would reinforce the lack of knowledge about CEF on the part of the other assessment peers. A third issue flagged is future professional development

opportunities for novice advocates and assessors – to both, develop the skills and abilities of advocacy and peer assessment, and also to critique the overarching values still evident in the arts. Couros demonstrated leadership in speaking up in support of work that he considered marginalised within the assessment process. His was a style that arguably developed through multicultural advocacy experience with Arts Queensland and his time with ACMAC.

ACMAC acted as an informal professional development opportunity for artists to hone their skills in advocacy and sector leadership. ACMAC was diluted when it was decoupled from the arts board model to an external expert-only panel, because the responsibilities held by ACMAC were positioned at a distance from the main business of grant assessment. This has reduced opportunities for novice multicultural advocates. The eventual disbanding of all artform boards replaced by short-term peer appointments has not redressed that imbalance. The 19 percent of 'CALD' peers (Australia Council 2016a), cannot all be assumed to have adequate and informed experience about multicultural arts policy and discourse. The capability for multicultural advocacy relies on bold, knowledgeable, articulate and experienced peers who can advocate within the strictures of the institution. This range of capacities are found in the transformational, transactional and relational leadership styles which are all needed at different times, even in the same grant assessment meeting.

Traction Afforded through Networks

ACMAC also facilitated bringing NESB artists and cultural practitioners into local and international dialogue through discourse and exchange. ACMAC initiatives have included conferences, publications and roundtables to enhance the traction for multicultural arts practices. ACMAC encouraged critical thinking because it placed AMA discourse within the wider sphere of the arts.

Traction through Critical Discourse

ACMAC members from the 1990s identified the need for critical discourse in Australia and proactively used their role to stimulate discussion in the arts.

> One of the reasons Council was unable to make any informed decision was because there was limited literature generated from within Australia. ACMAC decided to fund a publication which was the first one that tried to define, or engage with the discourse. *Culture and Difference in the Arts* is a critical publication (N. Tsoutas 2015, interview).

ACMAC remained proactive in this aspect of its role. Such initiatives enabled ACMAC members and other Australia Council staff to keep abreast of AMA issues and how the field (including practitioners, academics and bureaucrats) were addressing the arts in a multicultural Australia. The 2000 ACMAC body was able to broaden the scope of the discussions in *Culture, Difference and the Arts* (Gunew and Rizvi 1994) by commissioning two international conferences. As discussed in chapter III, Globalisation, *Art + Cultural Difference – On the Edge of Change* held in Sydney in July 2001, and *Empires, Ruins + Networks* held in Melbourne in April 2004 (art-in-society n.d.). The networks and positional leadership of Tsoutas at NSW contemporary arts centre, Artspace, Papastergiadis at the University of Melbourne and ACMAC working in concert enabled lively engagement with ideas of multiculturalism and creative difference in Australia.

The evaluation of AMA 2000 found that these were amongst the most recognised initiatives of ACMAC and the "majority view was very positive" (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 39). The continuation of the conferences was seen as "consistent with the leadership role of the Australia Council" (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 4). Both conferences aimed to develop "intellectual and artistic frameworks for Australian multicultural arts within an international context" (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 32). The conferences generated traction for the artists when they saw themselves amongst their NESB peers, which, for many, was their first experience of this.

Opportunities for NESB artists to come together nationally have since declined, but are well attended when they do occur. Crucially, the scale and scope of the 2002 and 2004 conferences is yet to be repeated.

After the second conferences, ACMAC hosted a roundtable with the local and international conference presenters to generate additional strategic input into the AMA policy. An internal report summarised the first roundtable. Facilitated by Annette Shun Wah, the participants (a veritable 'who's who' of cultural diversity practitioners and theorists) considered future prospects through two main discussion points. The first was to "break down the dominant perspective which governs cultural industries", and the second was to "deal with cultural difference beyond the categories of 'multicultural' and 'indigenous'" (Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee n.d.b).

The roundtable developed practical suggestions based on the conference debates to gain greater traction for the arts in a multicultural Australia through art practices and positioning "cultural difference" as the site of change:

> 1. The aesthetic question of cultural difference needs to be fore-grounded. In promoting work dealing with cultural difference we need to look at the quality of the work rather than just ticking boxes, counting heads and filling quotas.
> 2. Cultural difference is the hub. Cultural difference is the cutting edge of history.
>   (Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee n.d.b).

The first point places aesthetic developments that engage with cultural difference at the centre of the debate and outside the paradigm of the quota. American artist, advocate and an *Empires, Ruins + Networks* conference presenter, Coco Fusco advised the group to orchestrate both narratives: the need for quotas (to generate grant income) and the disavowal of them (as cultural critique). The second centralises cultural difference and positions cultural

diversity as the mainstream in Australia and as a driver for change. During the roundtable, presenters expressed the view that a historical transformation was taking place catalysed by issues of cultural difference; however, this is a transformation that is yet to be found in Australian cultural institutions.

One ambitious proposal which arose from the roundtable was to develop a workshop on *Art + Cultural Difference + Global Collaboration* aimed at maintaining a strong level of critical dialogue, and at facilitating collaborative art projects within a national network of artists, academics, funding agencies and sponsors (Appendix 3). In effect, the workshop aimed to establish an Australian version of iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts n.d.) a London-based research and exhibition centre for cultural diversity (discussed briefly in chapter I). The partnerships to be brought into the workshop were envisioned as community organisations, cultural producers, donors and sponsors, universities and art colleges, state and federal arts agencies and public galleries and art institutions. The value of the proposed workshop model was that it could be scaled up or down and can be applied as a partnership model for culturally diverse SME. This process of discussing and developing the workshop project encouraged relational leadership between the participants to equitably share knowledge and ideas to reach beyond their own specific interests.

The Struggle for an Australian Multicultural Arts Company

One measure of success for a multicultural society would be that of an internationally recognised multicultural arts company, such as the UK models of Akram Khan, iniva and Rich Mix. However, several attempts to establish such a flagship in Australia have all foundered.

The proposal of the *Art + Cultural Difference + Global Collaboration* workshop was not taken up by ACMAC. ACMAC considered that their existing AMA initiatives had

adequate momentum to match the intentions of the roundtable. This was the first failed

moment to establish an independent cross-disciplinary flagship for the arts in a multicultural

Australia. One ACMAC member described the roundtable discussions thus:

> I could have been at an ACMAC meeting working on our policy. I found no major
>
> differences in the roundtable discussions. In fact, the discussion reinforced our direction,
>
> especially the incubator project we are working on, and many comments echoed
>
> responses to the current Planning for the Future [corporate plan] document (Australia
>
> Council Multicultural Advisory Committee n.d.b).

Aside from resourcing issues, this comment points to a shortcoming in leadership by

ACMAC. At the time, members believed that their committee's existence and position of

influence within the institution was sufficient to generate change. From this perspective, the

members lost sight of long-term and sustainable ways to generate traction. The potential

offered by the workshop proposal did not gain traction, and the associated networks were not

leveraged into action. Within the Australia Council it appeared there was a reluctance to be

bold and ambitious and ACMAC began to tailor its aims much more modestly, but not before

delivering its highest profile political event.

The last chair of ACMAC, Nicola Downer, facilitated an attempt to generate

confluence for AMA with state and federal governments. As noted in chapter III, the

Australia Council presented *Multicultural arts: cultural citizenship for the 21st*

century, a one-day symposium held at Parliament House, Canberra in 2007 (Australia

Council 2007). Downer arranged unprecedented access to the federal arts, citizenship and

foreign affairs ministers. The day-long event was one of the first times NESB artists had

performed in Parliament House. It had been decades since state and territory arts managers

had come together in discussions with artists and cultural practitioners to spearhead strategic

partnerships for multicultural arts. It was not uncommon for those agencies to meet, but this was the first in a long time that they had all come together to impress the benefit of multicultural arts practices.

The opportunity to meet federal parliamentarians drew the CEOs of state and territory government arts departments. The event increased the positional leadership role of the Australia Council amongst the multicultural sector and was claimed to have generated greater traction at each state's arts agency, which "would look more closely at their existing multicultural policies and programs" (Australia Council 2007). At this time, aside from Arts Victoria, most arts agencies did not have a multicultural policy, In the time since this event, aside from Arts Victoria, most agencies have not developed one.

Downer used her political influence for the benefit of the AMA policy rather than the Australia Council in general. She demonstrated positional and charismatic leadership in doing so. It was to prove to be the last major event for ACMAC. Gouriotis, a former director of Casula, recalls being inspired by Downer's positive energy for ACMAC, and although an Australian Labor Party member, and against prevailing perceptions, commenting on the appointments of Klika and Downer claims that the "Australian Liberal Party did more for ACMAC than the Australian Labour Party" (K. Gouriotis 2017, email). This comment acknowledges Klika and Downer as positional leaders (both had influential relations within the Australian Liberal Party) and relational leaders who advocated for AMA within in their own political environment, which was one openly challenged by governmental messages about multiculturalism.

While the aim for state arts agency partnerships did not eventuate, the idea of developing a national incubator, centre for research or workshop nevertheless persisted with subsequent ACMAC members and staff. As part of the AMA 2006 policy, staff commissioned a scoping study to determine the demand for a flagship or 'hub' event space to

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focus national and international attention, critical acclaim and build on developments in artistic practices which explore multicultural Australia. An arts consultant with over forty years' experience, Justin Mcdonnell, undertook this study. On this occasion, it was artists in the field who rejected the concept of a 'flagship' event or space on the grounds it would take scarce resources away from already under-resourced artists.

> The practices are considered to be too diverse to be embraced within any one "flagship" organisation. A multiplicity of hubs that might contribute, in time, to a national focus could be of value. Yet even there, the concept of "hubs" was felt to be overly mechanistic. Process and pathway were preferred (Macdonnell n.d.: 1).

The respondents saw the 'flagship' approach as too interventionist by the Australia Council and criticised the (assumed) redirection of scant resources would come at the expense of grants to NESB artists.

Another attempt to cohere practice and theory around the arts in a multicultural Australia was with the reinvigorated Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre launched in early 2008. The opening exhibition, *Australian,* reimagined Casula as an international centre for cultural diversity in the arts.

> *Australian* projects an Australia that is beyond the horizon, an Australia that is shaped by multiple cultural identities, types of knowledge and the social conditions that are transacted at the moment of intersection within the common space of the public sphere (Tsoutas 2010: 6).

This was a strong opening statement whose thematic articulated the question as to what it is to be an Australian and its implications within the multicultural context of the Liverpool region and beyond. Interestingly, in his scoping study of 2008 regarding the potential for a

multicultural arts flagship, Macdonnell recommended that the Casula model be adequately resourced to deliver its vision as a 'centre of excellence'.

> Uniquely at the moment in Australia, Casula Powerhouse seeks to value and contextualize the art within a cultural framework so that is sometimes celebrating art and artistic processes but at the same time wrestling with dilemmas of Australianity beyond the simplistic trope of "one Australia" and through that seeking new interpretations of our culturally complex society (Macdonnell n.d.: 11).

The consultants who reviewed the AMA 2000 policy and the consultant who scoped out options in 2008 for a multicultural flagship all provided a series of targeted recommendations, none of which were accepted by the senior leadership of the Australia Council. Casula is an example of a moment where the Australia Council arguably held the potential traction to support a national flagship, only to flounder at the outset. In 2008, the Casula Powerhouse Board confirmed its new direction and accepted its name change to 'Casula, the International Centre for Contemporary Culture'. The remit of the revamped Casula was to bring local government, the Liverpool area's multicultural population and an international arts focus under the one roof (N. Tsoutas 2015, interview). But despite Macdonnell's recommendations that Australia Council support this expanded role that Casula wished to pursue, (Macdonnell n.d.), the proposal for Casula did not progress neither at the Australia Council nor at Casula itself. Tsoutas argues it was a "missed opportunity to reinscribe the culture that we live in" (N. Tsoutas 2015, interview).

Tsoutas' vision "to reinscribe the culture we live in" can lead to a productive result when cultures interact expressively. To 'reinscribe' means rewriting and re-presenting our cultural artefacts as:

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diverse and syncretic. It takes multiple forms of expertise and brings them down to size. Individuals, including scientists [read artists], politicians, and activists, apply their eclectic perspectives in forming projects of nature [read art] making. We might begin by identifying distinctive confluences of knowledge, as well as the nodes of practice and discourse informed by these confluences (Tsing 2005: 113).

In the process of locating and utilising "confluences" leaders emerge who may have the capacity to generate traction for change.

International Policy Leadership Discourse

The last international event to profile the arts in a multicultural Australia was co-hosted by the Australia and British Councils in March 2008. *Making Creative Cities: the value of cultural diversity in the arts* included presentations by Keith Khan, the then-Head of Culture for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Professor Marcia Langton, and several former members of ACMAC (British Council 2008). ACMAC had been dismantled by this stage but AMA policy was still in place. The British Council demonstrated its desire for transformational leadership regarding art and cultural difference in the Asia-Pacific region in its approach to the Australia Council on this issue. The Australia Council in turn provided relational leadership by activating its networks of speakers and artists for this event.

The event brought together Australian and British artists whose work explores cultural difference and workshopped issues with artists, cultural practitioners and academics. Three themes were explored: ideas of different types of leadership, albeit undefined; support for creative production; and participation in creative cities. The theme of "good leadership is not about one model" identified the need to move from a focus on individuals to the capacities of whole communities; to embed diverse groups and young people in decision-making processes rather than asking the occasional 'opinion'; to identify intercultural

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innovators; and to expand support beyond managerial leadership into "intercultural, intellectual community, teaching and creative leadership" (British Council 2008: 7). Each of these criteria gesture towards the generic idea of leadership. However, as the arguments in this chapter show, different leadership is needed for different points of the policy cycle and the types of leadership influence depend on one's position in the arts sector.

The Current Role of External Advisors

Opportunities for NESB artists to become 'embedded' at the Australia Council have since declined, and, as I have argued, has also reduced the structured instances for professional development, such as developing skills required for institutional leadership as external advisors. Artist, practitioner and small business owner, Shakthidharan (discussed in chapter IV), for example, notes that he is often asked to provide his 'opinion', but that he is often dissatisfied with the lack of results.

> We need to acknowledge corporate history, research what worked well in the past. Pay
> all the organisations who have been working from a lived experience at grassroots level
> for a long time to have an action-focused program. We get invited to where everyone
> talks about all their great ideas and nothing happens. It's like we're on this treadmill of
> issues that come up every two or three years. What are these things we talk at? And then
> the talks disappear, with no objective result. At a [recent Community Partnerships Key
> Producers] roundtable we asked Australia Council to come up with a concrete plan to
> match diversity on screen and stage within the next ten years. Not how we'd "like" to,
> but how we "will", starting today. You say these things, but then it disappears (S.
> Shakthidharan 2015, interview).

This interview excerpt details the absence of traction by the 'participating peers' in an arts funding institution which no longer seeks consistent advice from multicultural experts in the

arts. It is a tactic to casualise expertise that gives the appearance of 'consultation'. The lack of traction stems from the inference that the issues are the responsibility of organisations previously known as "Key Producers" which had four-year contracts with the Australia Council Community Partnerships Board.

By querying "what are these things we talk at?", Shakthidharan identifies the lack of clarity as to whose role it is to lead and which way to lead in. The Key Producers are expected to be leaders in the community arts sector but were not in a position to lead or effect systemic change within the Australia Council. The Australia Council does not provide them with the resources or entry into the world of the major Australian art centres, but there is the tacit expectation that intransigent issues such as a lack of diversity across narrative and performance arts can be, if not solved, then managed, by financially vulnerable community arts organisations. The Australia Council demonstrates the appearance of interest by occasionally bringing arts sector positional leaders together, but appears slow to utilise their input or produce an accountable action plan, thereby reducing trust and the likelihood of traction.

Conclusion

ACMAC demonstrated positional and transformational leadership when it engaged with critical thinkers around issues of cultural difference. The committee demonstrated this in a number of directions. It led through its position at the Australia Council by its direct engagement with critical discourse. It showed relational leadership for the arts sector and Council staff by providing many opportunities to network and engage in critical discussions of cultural difference. It aimed for transformational leadership by utilising international expertise to unravel some of the complex issues the committee faced and included these results in recommendations to the Australia Council.

Institutional leadership for the arts in a multicultural Australia could be demonstrated by consolidating earlier policy achievements and continuing to identify current issues and the manner in which they will be addressed. This chapter has shown the reluctance on the part of the Australia Council to refresh and develop their direction for the arts in a multicultural Australia, the importance of which is underlined by Klika, a former board member of two national institutions.

> The ABC, the Australia Council should show that leadership. Diversity is an evolving beast, and we should be encouraging the evolution, not encouraging the arrestment of multiculturalism. So yes, I think there's plenty of room for leadership at the institutional level (D. Klika 2015, interview).

Leadership is a familiar term in the arts, but it is often used without qualification, which lends it a rhetorical quality which verges on the meaningless. Hewison and Holden (2011) provide a road map of leadership styles that can be included in a 'tool kit' but do not approach the issues of leading for diversity in the arts. This chapter has elaborated on several types of leadership for the arts in a multicultural Australia demonstrated through interactions within the institutional frame of the Australia Council.

Transformational leadership may be more appropriate for those who hold positional leadership at the executive and board level. This includes the more familiar type of personality-dependent charismatic leadership found in the arts, but runs a high risk of delivering only short-term changes based on the leaders' length of tenure. Distributed leadership was demonstrated by ACMAC as it enabled members' lead roles to be shared according to the skills of the group and to take into account its fluid cross-cultural and multi-artform membership. Relational leaders enable a vision and create trust in its delivery (Hewison and Holden 2011: 31). This chapter has highlighted the value of relational

leadership that places the leader (for example, previous chairs and some members of ACMAC) in a more central position of developing the necessary relationships to enable others to take on the responsibility for change, and thereby generating a longer legacy.

I argue that several leadership characteristics are present in in the interface of the 'NESB' artist and the institution. Their role is one in which the creative leadership capabilities become relevant for institutional leadership capacity. I have shown that the Australia Council's current model of drafting in expert peers on art and multiculturalism on an as-needed basis, requires that these peers need to be experienced, articulate, knowledgeable and bold about supporting creative production and content by 'NESB' artists. The decision to terminate ACMAC has left a knowledge and experience vacuum within Australia Council processes that are unlikely to be recovered. Additionally, the current approach of short-term peer appointments appears inadequate as a 'training ground' for NESB artists to develop the range of characteristics needed to be effective multicultural arts advocates within institutional environments.

The advocacy work of Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) the small organisation with a national diversity remit which replaced the kultour multicultural arts touring network discussed in chapter VI, brings NESB artists together in different parts of Australia to stimulate the discourse of diversity absent for several years. Regardless of the extent of external pressure that DARTS may exert on the Australia Council, it is unlikely to equal the internal traction of an institution-appointed advisory group, because DARTS cannot hold institutional positional influence.

The Australia Council has published two statements to address inequity in the arts. The first is to reach a target of 14 percent grant expenditure on CALD, however, it is yet to publish specific strategies on how it aims to achieve this goal. The second is broadly directed across areas of social diversity in the CEF and provides additional funds to the major

performing companies to develop CEF –focused projects. As discussed in chapter III, Shakthidharan expressed disappointment that the funds will not flow to those in the S2M who have the on-the-ground experience of working with artists of diverse backgrounds and can extract value from small budgets. These two initiatives may go some way to address immediate symptoms of inequitable use of resources, but may not be adequate to produce the systemic change which the multicultural arts sector wants to see (Castagana 2017).

The question of adequacy brings into question whether the CEF, as it currently works, is an effective mechanism for generating change for the arts in a multicultural Australia. The Australia Council continues to demonstrate its reluctance. As Migliorino observes, the positional leaders within the Australia Council need to agree on the principles needed to focus the institution's long-term attention towards cultural difference (Migliorino 2015, interview). This level of vision and commitment is yet to be apparent, and is furthered hindered by a lack of dedicated roles of internal 'diversity champions'. This internal staff role – of champions who represent each diversity area of the CEF – may be theoretically viable, but the danger is that it is as an 'add-on' to their prime staff role, and there is dissipated potential for them to show institutional leadership.

One result of this institutional reluctance to engage with a multicultural society, is that artistic activity continues to be produced in small, almost boutique scenarios. The next chapter turns to the leadership role of the NESB artist when partnering with major and mid-tier arts organisations on their own terms, to show how multicultural creative practice pushes into greater circulation and thereby amplifies the current multicultural arts milieu.

Chapter VI

Organisational Leadership: Expanding the Multicultural Arts Milieu

Introduction

Organisational leadership, in the context of this thesis, refers to the mainstream or S2M arts organisations that combine their influence and resources with those of 'NESB' artists or multicultural arts organisations to produce and present new work. Creative and organisational shifts occur in the arts environment when these partnerships become part of an organisation's regular program of activities. 'NESB' artists are able to challenge the conventional art binaries of 'tradition' and 'contemporary' and disrupt the temporal trope that creative change 'will take time'. As Papastergiadis observes of diasporic and Indigenous visual artists working in the mainstream:

> Their practice and status question the dominant assumption on the relationship between traditional authenticity and contemporary culture and test the limits of artistic agency and institutional structures (2005: 40).

To "test the limits" is the basis of the creative process and can also challenge the capacities of arts organisations to manage difference. The artists confront issues of creative compromise and how to work within an unfamiliar structure. Organisations confront the challenges of new forms and content of production and how to engage with different audiences and expand their existing audiences. I argue that the energy generated through these interactions and processes can also lead to systemic change. I also argue that there are different modes of leadership and different approaches within those modes. In particular, the leadership modes discussed in chapter II, including relational, transformational and transactional are all pertinent here. The

different ways these leadership modes can manifest include through processes of attunement, accompaniment and charisma. This chapter analyses how new forms of creative partnerships change the ways in which NESB artists can work with the mainstream arts or their tributaries to produce and present their work. I argue that the arts sector generates a refreshed multicultural arts milieu when creative and organisational leadership are consistently combined. The milieu can re-form to accommodate creative leadership for multicultural arts practice as they exist and evolve.

This chapter brings a focus onto arts organisations, the crucial infrastructure platform which enables the development and presentation of creative work. In so doing, it asserts that it is 'NESB' artists themselves who show creative leadership to "make a new door" (as discussed in chapter IV) which enables them to work in concert with those arts organisations with the capacity to produce their work. The artists navigate the void left by the significant redirection of federal and state funding away from multicultural arts organisations (see table 4 in this chapter) and also, the absence of a national creative hub for multicultural arts (see chapter V). Demonstrating both boldness and attunement, 'NESB' artists work in conjunction with established arts organisations to expand the creative opportunities and leadership skills for themselves and the wider artist community.

The confluence of productive creative and organisational leadership can improve diverse art production and produce creative possibilities for 'NESB' artists, along with the active dissemination of their work. The case studies in this chapter include: the development of the relationship between independent artist Shakthidharan within the infrastructure of a major producer and presenter, Carriageworks; the struggle by kultour for multicultural organisational independence which demonstrates the development of trust found in collaboration; a small company, CAAP, which generates traction through successfully joining forces with an arts industry organisation, Playwriting Australia (PWA). This chapter

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explores how small, creative and organisational interventions can open up artistic practices to produce new and innovative artforms and different narratives about Australian society.

Turning Friction towards Sustained Interaction

Sustained and productive interaction between 'NESB' artists, arts organisations and audiences generate creative opportunities that respond to the challenge of how to go "beyond the instrumental" (Blonski 1992: 3). The issues of long-term change that gave rise to this challenge remain as valid today as ever, as Blonski comments:

> We felt that a deeper engagement was essential, but the concern also was how fragile this could be long-term. We were working within a period where there was a lot of writing and very interesting work being created. But we were all aware of how fragile this was. Building long-term support - financial, infrastructure, intellectual - was important but the question was, how to do it? (A. Blonski 2017, email).

The skill to develop successful long-term support and relationships, to be able to work in concert, requires all parties to do the "work" of diversity (Noble 2009: 51) – to take the extra care and attention to produce a creative product or outcome that is more than a token presentation. Inclusion in a programme can risk being tokenistic if the artist inhabits "institutional spaces that do not give you residence" (Ahmed 2012: 176). A lack of residence can produce forms of tokenism in which cultural difference simply becomes a form of exotica to be savoured by the mainstream population, as a form of "cosmo-multiculturalism" (Hage 1997: 14). Hage refers to the results of this as:

> multiculturalism without migrants: a multicultural reality made of institutions that seem to exist without any migrant subjects to sustain it. In the process, it is somehow

'forgotten' that multiculturalism in Australia is, or at least *ought to be*, above all about

migrant lives and inter-cultural interaction (1997: 17).

This forgetfulness is still to be found in many arts organisations today and in their audiences.

A more collaborative mode, by comparison, enables and presents art which enhances the

work of 'NESB' artists by placing it within the arts sector, not outside of it. The artist and the

organisations are active in producing creative 'intercultural interaction'. If consistently

maintained this method will generate artistic legacies that mobilise a more dynamic

multicultural arts milieu and one which can be better linked to 'mainstream arts' as well as

profile 'marginal arts'.

Making Multicultural Content Resident in Australian Art

The steps towards generating substantial accommodation for multicultural arts practices

afforded by intercultural interactions could begin by identifying "confluences of knowledge,

as well as the nodes of practice and discourse informed by those confluences" (Tsing 2005:

113).

To identify such nodes is to identify the places of creative communication and

production that position and enable NESB artists to generate the creative and economic

"equitable power" that Shakthidharan (discussed below) wants to experience. Identifying

how these "nodes of practice" resonate with the range of practices NESB artists engage with,

particularly those at the most precarious creative edges, brings the contemporary into

dialogue with ethnic and migrant traditions. Smith sees contemporary art not as "persistent

modernist formalism" (2006: 695-696) but in the internal changes in the art of the 1960s and

1970s from a "world reshaped by decolonisation and incipient globalisation" (2006: 696). An

appropriate articulation of the 'contemporary' for the concerns of this thesis is exemplified by

curator Okwui Enwezor's 2002 *Documenta 11*, an international exhibition held every five years. *Documenta 11* was based on ideas of "transculturality and extraterritoriality" and was

> less a receptacle of commodity objects than a container for a plurality of voices, a
> material reflection on a series of disparate and interconnected actions and processes
> (2002: 55).

The concept of 'accompaniment' discussed in chapter II is helpful here; accompaniment joins individuals and groups with those with power and influence to generate new ways to achieve change. The crucial element is that accompaniment is an equal process whereby the skills and knowledge are equally valued. 'Attunement', also discussed in chapter II, presents another way to progress intercultural interactivity through close and adaptive listening. Three concepts discussed in chapters II, IV and V of 'confluences of knowledge', 'accompaniment' and 'attunement' suggest the leadership can interact and contribute to an expanded multicultural arts milieu.

Enduring Enthusiasm – A Counting and Cracking

Imagine a scenario where an independent 'NESB' artist is invited to make a work with a producing and presenting arts organisation. This opportunity raises issues of how to negotiate and present creative content that is outside the mainstream canon. For the organisation, this is a means to directly support the creation of work, to expand their repertoire, to be relevant in Australia, and to diversify their audience. The following case study looks at the collaboration of aspiring playwright Shakthidharan and Carriageworks, a major art centre and venue in the gentrified inner suburb of Redfern in New South Wales. Their project is an example of cultural innovation whereby:

the emphasis is on the creativity of the artist in the generation of innovative work to extend the focus of cultural expression (Mar and Ang 2015: 6).

Extending that focus is enabled by at least two principles: firstly, enhancing inclusive curatorial processes, and secondly, supporting a diversity of cultural expressions (Mar and Ang 2015: 7). As an arts organisation, Carriageworks does both through its Associate Artist or Resident Company projects. Carriageworks CEO, Lisa Havilah, aims for the organisation to be inclusive and creatively relevant to its social and cultural environment, and aims to:

support local artists to work more ambitiously around scale and audiences, and put their new work in the right contexts. And then place them within a program with international artists that might make pathways for them (L. Havilah 2015, interview).

Havilah's achievements are endorsed by the arts sector. The director of Sydney Chamber Opera, a resident company at Carriageworks, commented: "Carriageworks has come to be seen where contemporary art is at in all its manifestations" (Symonds quoted in Taylor 2017).

Havilah began her career by establishing an artist-run initiative in Wollongong in southern NSW and she has held influential roles at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in Liverpool and at the Campbelltown Arts Centre. As Carriageworks CEO, Havilah introduced a number of initiatives into the remit of Carriageworks' activities, which contribute towards artists' professional development. These include the establishment of the intermediary role of co-producer, and providing associate artists with access to professional networks, mentoring, and time and space in which to develop a piece. While artist-in-residence programs offered by many organisations across all artforms provide space and time for artists to develop new projects, Carriageworks offer the artist the space and opportunity to do a presentation at the end of their residency, even if their art work is still in progress. Shakthidharan was selected as the inaugural associate artist from 2013-2015 because he seemed:

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like an artist who would take advantage of a high level of support and mentorship. I was

interested in what he would develop and what he represents regarding Western Sydney

and how he works internationally (L. Havilah 2015, interview).

In these three points Havilah supports Shakthidharan's creative ambitions, identifies the

relevance of Western Sydney for many NESB artists and values the potential to expand

international relationships because of his ethnic background. Collaborating with

community, growing up in the digital revolution and working in Western Sydney all

influence Shakthidharan's modes of creative production. Of relevance to this thesis is

how Shakthidharan bridges his practice(s) into a professional career as a playwright. As

an artistic associate at Carriageworks, he gained access to mainstage organisations

through a combination of dedication, connections and opportunities. His productive

residency led to negotiations with mainstage theatre company Belvoir Street for an epic,

multigenerational play set in Sri Lanka and Australia.

> Through their journey, we see a Sri Lanka riven by, but no means surrendering to,
>
> violent divisions – and an Australia transforming of, but also transformed by, the people
>
> that flee to its shores (CuriousWorks n.d.).

A Counting and Cracking has seen many iterations since its first development grant in 2009,

but Shakthidharan has stayed true to his original intention to encompass four generations of a

family's resettlement from Sri Lanka to Australia. Maintaining the epic narrative format

could be considered a literary form of the "vernacular cosmopolitan" (Gunew 2017) and

acknowledged in creative terms as "not an easy road" (Gunew, Olubas, Chakraborty,

Trimboli and Muraca 2017: 596). The concept of the "vernacular cosmopolitan" as proposed

by Homi Bhabha is a "'cosmopolitan community envisaged in marginality', a border zone"

(Bhabha quoted in Werbner 2006: 497). The term can be stretched to encompass the exchange of family and community-based knowledge as a way of extending openness through artworks by NESB artists. Even though Gunew's focus is on cultural diversity and literature across a range of diasporas, her observations translate to playwriting about vernacular cosmopolitanism, particularly when she describes literature by migrant writers as:

> a palpitating absence, you feel it, quivering and these absences are clamouring to be
>
> made visible (Gunew *et al.* 2017: 595).

The evocation of clamour suggests a friction that demands attunement as well as accompaniment to publish more NESB writers. Making these absences visible is the intention of collaborative processes described in this chapter which join creative aspirations with organisational support and know-how. Those stages leading to greater visibility can be tenuous for the NESB artist:

> Lisa [Havilah] read the play, no one would read it because it's 190 pages long, and gave
>
> it to Chris Mead, Artistic Director of Playwriting Australia and [who at that time
>
> worked] in the [Carriageworks] building. Chris loved it, but he moved to MTC
>
> [Melbourne Theatre Company]. Meanwhile, Carriageworks supported a development of
>
> the play, and Eamon Flack, [Director of Belvoir Theatre in Darlinghurst NSW] came to a
>
> reading both through my pestering Belvoir and Carriageworks' contacts. I didn't realise
>
> at the time, but he liked it. We also had a reading with Melbourne Theatre Company, but
>
> I think they thought it was one bridge too far (S. Shakthidharan 2015, interview).

This comment highlights several aspects of development and production in theatre production. The decision-makers frequently move on and only occasionally bring projects of interest with them. This instability produces a stop-start scenario for artists seeking the right partners to see a project to completion. Keeping track of existing partners, and the need to

find new ones requires persistence and ability to maintain a high level of enthusiasm for the project. It also demonstrates tenacity in staying true to the original impetus. Sustained effort is required to maintain momentum, which for the NESB artist, as Ahmed observes, "might appear to others as stubbornness, willfulness or obstinacy" (2012: 186).

For Shakthidharan leadership "at our end of the spectrum" – that is, not the MPA or the "big end of town" – means being able to achieve a mutual vision despite setbacks, differences, and to avoid the creative danger of repeating the same style and type of project. His persistence aims to effect long-lasting change in the arts sector by establishing how to navigate difference in the arts.

> Success can be gauged by finding a mutual vision with people who are very different from you. Sometimes people in SMEs or groups of multicultural artists will band together, and they'll find solidarity with each other, but they're polarising. Sometimes you have to figure out the difficult way to work with people who are very different to you because that's the only way it will change. Otherwise, you end up accepting that is how it is, and that your only role in all of this is to complain. And I don't want to be that person. I want equitable power (S. Shakthidharan 2015, interview).

Shakthidharan wants action. He eschews the essentialised role of the "whingeing wog" (L. Marinos 2015, interview) and tries to work with people who are "very different to you". In this context, he speaks of working with people in very different organisational structures as well as different socio-political, cultural and creative perspectives. His analysis of what will make change draws on the 'permeable' quality of the relationship between organisations and people. He goes further in identifying what he feels will not work – in particular that, "banding together" will not be enough to produce change. Although multicultural arts organisations do successfully "band together" to support and find "solidarity with each other", Shakthidharan thinks this is no longer enough. He feels it is important that those in

leadership roles in multicultural arts organisations and engage with those in positions of power to negotiate "equitable power". This constitutes a challenge that writer Olubas describes an "impossible negotiation" (Olubas in Gunew *et al.* 2017: 588). The situation is one in which NESB artists are the only ones to make particular culturally diverse work, but at the same time, the industry perception is that "you don't need anything special, further time or attention because you already have it" (Gunew *et al.* 2017: 588). Attention is, however, required and includes economic, infrastructure and dramaturgical input around the aesthetic considerations of the work.

Shakthidharan observes that when a director is mounting a Shakespearean work, for example, the familiarity of the text means the director need only consider aesthetic and production values: "They're like – aesthetically what am I trying to do here? That's all they need care about" (S. Shakthidharan 2015, interview). In a similar vein to Annalouise Paul's concerns (chapter IV), the aesthetics of intercultural work brings to the fore a range of new considerations that Shakthidharan thinks must be treated carefully.

> My background is Tamil Sri Lankan, and is influenced by classical Indian aesthetics and subcultures from south India, which is the Tamil connection. In Tamil classical aesthetics, there is an interrelationship between mood, humans and the environment. The question is how to subtly get the aesthetics of the cultures that are contributing to that work into our productions (S. Shakthidharan 2015, interview).

Shakthidharan touches on some of the areas to which he must be attentive. He acknowledges the challenge of using finesse to generate a classical *mise-en-scène* within a contemporary work. However, to subtly "get" the subcultural aesthetic, identifies a hierarchy of cultural artefacts that cannot be represented so subtly. In his description, subtlety appears as a type of friction in which the aesthetic elements slide over one another, when in fact, epic family

narratives may require more bumps and circumnavigation to bring their dynamics to life. No reason is given for the need to be subtle, but it does suggest a tension as around the question of *how much* ethnicity can be presented on the mainstage. This is similar to the criticism that the dominant culture will complain about "too many" Asians/Moslems/Syrians (Hage 2000: 39). This aesthetic issue also resonates organisationally because as the 'placement' NESB artist in a predominantly Anglo-Australia company, Shakthidharan may be challenged to "fit in" and might not adequately "bring in" his perspective if the performing arts environment he is working within "rewards a focus on a dominant Anglo perspective" (Caprar 2018). Regardless of Shakthidharan's final choices and possible compromises, his point highlights how these details preoccupy the 'NESB' artist when making a work they hope will become part of the Australian mainstream canon.

The cultural specificities of Shakthidharan's work, therefore, require a translation across cultural modes that are unfamiliar to most audiences. The vehicle of four generations of a Sri Lankan (Tamil) Australian family suggests, at first, a bi-cultural piece that brings different dimensions of social, political, economic and cultural experiences into dialogue with each other. However, the potential for other layers to emerge through the matrix of 'mood, humans and the environment' presents an opportunity for an aesthetic exploration which produces a hybrid outcome that goes beyond just an encounter between two cultures. To a large extent, Australian theatre has accepted the somewhat prescriptive vehicle of the first-generation migrant family "suitcase" story (Kelly 1998). In the case of *A Cracking and Counting,* the involvement of several generations alters that paradigm to complicate migration patterns and its impacts. It also has the potential to utilise the range of Tamil and Tamil-Australia aesthetic ethos as a way to portray the experiences of migration to Australia.

Visual artist, Tania Bruguera (cited in Donovan 2011), refreshes considerations of aesthetics to draw out the ethical dimensions of a cross-cultural or intercultural practice.

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Bruguera's work concerns the 'role of the artist in society' in relation to organisational processes. She identifies a shift towards a greater ethical consideration as to how artists access the resources of major arts organisations. Issues of how ethics are taken into account in aesthetic decisions acknowledge the increased complexity for an artist like Shakthidharan, when developing a new intercultural family epic. This is a type of relational leadership utilised by many 'NESB' artists as they engage with their sources of inspiration and utilise the infrastructure of an organisation unfamiliar with those sources.

The major organisations involved in the development of *A Counting and Cracking* include Carriageworks (Carriageworks 2015) and inner-city Sydney theatre company, Belvoir Street Theatre (Belvoir St Theatre n.d.). A forthcoming phase of the project between Shakthidharan and Belvoir may mature the Tamil and Tamil-Australian aesthetic so that it contributes to a more robust multicultural arts milieu and alter how creative and organisational leadership becomes apparent. This approach is one way to provide "meaningful, committed, resources, [in the] long-term process of shifting existing power dynamics" in Australian theatre (Canas 2017). As Shakthidharan says, "I want kids to be able to read my work as part of their curriculum. I had nothing like that growing up" (S. Shakthidharan 2015, interview).

The friction in the evolution of *A Counting and Cracking* is one of subtle and steady sharing of experiences between a seasoned company director and an emerging playwright with a particular knowledge of cross-cultural media production. It is a friction that lends itself to crafting creative outcomes, rather like the slow and steady process of wood-carving. The play is slated for the 2019 Belvoir season and, because it is still in development, cannot be discussed in any detail. However, CuriousWorks profiles the play thus:

> This is a stylised, epic drama about love, violence, silence and hope in families – all from
>
> the perspective of the insiders. In presenting the vastly different worlds of Sri Lanka in

the mid-late 20th century and Australia in the early 21st century, *A Counting and Cracking* ultimately shows how much we have in common – between generations, countries and ourselves – and the surprising consequences that flow from that.

Writer/Co-Director: S. Shakthidharan; Director Eamon Flack (CuriousWorks n.d.).

The use of "surprising consequences" aims to generate curiosity and suggests there may be something riskier beyond the safe trope of "commonality". The credit includes Shakthidharan as co-director; this signals a triumph because co-directing formed part of his early negotiations with Belvoir. Shakthidharan was not a playwright who would simply hand his text over, as many do, but wanted to co-direct to maintain cultural appropriateness and the 'spirit' of the work. Shakthidharan's claim for equal power has thus taken a step in what he perceives is the right direction. Belvoir may consider what they need to do to have more works like his in the pipeline so that such co-produced plays become 'business as usual' rather than the occasional burst of attention. The company may also reflect how this project has impacted the organisation and what they may carry forward into future programming.

The exchanges of expertise need to consider both the artist and the company. Both parties are trading technical, cultural and ethical knowledge. Both parties are experiencing and overcoming small frictions and simultaneously learning from each other. Both parties are also learning how to trust in private and then trust creatively in public. Shakthidharan has had to invest as much in training Belvoir in epic Tamil-Australian aesthetics as Belvoir has had to train Shakthidharan in the constraints that make a theatre production of that scale successful. This case demonstrates those "unpredictable interfaces" (Mar and Ang, 2015: 8) as an intercultural exchange that produces both creative and cultural outcomes. It also represents a public outcome in a traditional theatre space, which is another interface to be navigated in bringing new audiences to the theatre (Kapetopoulos 2004). These creative constraints shape the final work to increase audience and creative reach while understanding that to:

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recognise diversity requires that time, energy, and labor be given to diversity. Recognition is thus material as well as symbolic: how time, energy and labor are directed within institutions affects how they surface. Diversity workers aim to intervene in how the institution surfaces (Ahmed 2012: 29).

As to how the creative precariousness of *A Counting and Cracking* may "surface" in the theatre world has been a case study in complexity, negotiation and persistence. In 2018, Shakthidharan can now say, after more than ten years, that the play is slated for 2019, and that "so far, so good, things are developing well and overall it's been a great experience". He also notes:

> Eamon [Flack] is directing, I'm writing and co-directing. The creative process has been excellent as we've met as equals and developed the work with respect for what it needs to be (S. Shakthidharan 2017, email).

This comment indicates that Shakthidharan's relational leadership and 'diversity worker' role in combination with the efforts on the part of Belvoir have been productive. Belvoir receives funding for their productions, however, *A Counting and Cracking*, requires additional funding suggesting that this type of work has yet to become 'business as usual'.

> It has been tough raising the money for the work as it is so ambitious – it's a family epic with a big cast. Both companies are operating out of their "business as usual" paradigms to make a project like this happen, which have required persistence and flexibility from both of us (S. Shakthidharan 2017, email).

There is also a danger that Shakthidharan is, to an extent, a volunteer creative on the project; this is a power imbalance in employment yet to be righted for the majority of NESB artists, as discussed in chapter I.

Shakthidharan was the beneficiary of a Carriageworks residency that went the extra step when Havilah 'brokered' an introduction by recommending his work to Belvoir. In this sense, Shakthidharan and Havilah are both diversity practitioners, "people who want diversity *to go through the whole system*" (italics in original; Ahmed 2012: 29). Shakthidharan wants to have his play produced on his terms on the mainstage and promoted as such. Havilah claims that Carriageworks uniquely programmes artworks across the spectrum of what constitutes 'diversity':

> I don't think, other than Carriageworks, there's a major cultural institution that holds diversity at its core. And I think that's a big issue (L. Havilah 2015, interview).

This case study is one in which resilience and persistence have gone hand in hand – as has the vision and proactive brokerage on the part of Havilah with Belvoir Theatre. Persistence is a necessary attribute of the diversity practitioner (Ahmed 2012: 30). For Shakthidharan, in the instances of working with Carriageworks and the subsequent segue to Belvoir Street, he was a recruit who could "both renew and restore" the organisation (Ahmed 2012: 39). *A Cracking and Counting* has the potential to renew the relevance of Australian theatre, extend to a broader audience and restore the creative dynamics in theatre production. This illustrates Shakthidharan's relational leadership with the wide range of players including his extended Tamil-Australian family unused to the 'western style' theatre. The process of 'accompaniment' is present in the equal sharing of skills and knowledge between director and playwright. The process of 'attunement' is evident in the playwright working with his extended family to develop the play and in particular his attempt to bring their aesthetics to the mainstage. The overall intention appears to be establishing productive relations at the centre of both the creative project and the organisation.

Establishing Trust through Organisational Collaboration

The capacity to activate networks is viewed as a core leadership skill (see chapter II). Being isolated from arts sector and creative networks is a consistent theme articulated by 'NESB' artists. This is supported by 1998 research (Positive Solutions n.d.) which identified the need for peer support and artistic opportunities. These factors, coupled with a lack of contact between the fragile, overworked, state-based multicultural arts organisations led to the AMA 2000 policy initiatives aimed at alleviating these issues (Keating *et al*. n.d.). This section analyses one such initiative: kultour, a national program which promoted the work of NESB artists and multicultural arts content and demonstrated capacity building for leadership in multicultural arts practices. I argue that the previous benefits to 'NESB' artists and organisations through a dedicated national multicultural touring network are not entirely satisfied by occasional inclusion in mainstream arts touring programs.

The Funded Network – **kultour**

kultour was one of the significant funded initiatives of the AMA 2000 and 2006 policies which brought creative and organisational leadership elements together. This national network exchanged artworks as a way for organisations to support each other and to expand their experience and that of the artists through a working relationship (kultour 2015). kultour was established to address the isolation of 'NESB' artists and multicultural arts organisations through peer interaction and national touring programmes. It existed as a network across Australia from 2001 to 2014 (Diversity Arts Australia 2018a). The program was established to give legitimacy (see chapter IV for a discussion on the use of legitimacy in this thesis) to NESB artists and their support organisations. The kultour network aimed to alleviate some of the tensions between the multicultural specific organisations and the better-resourced arts mainstream. It exemplifies distributed leadership, discussed in chapter II, in which members

are called upon to play to their strengths and lead as the project requires. I suggest that being part of a network increases artists' confidence and helps artists form functional relationships from which they can identify opportunities and form collaborations that lead to new creative endeavours. "Network expertise" includes brokers who are "located on the margins of communities or well-placed information keepers [who can identify] opportunities to broker" (Carmichael 2011: 49). This expertise:

> represents relational competencies that emerge through co-evolution of individual and
> distributed cognitions (Hakkarainen *et al*. quoted in Carmichael 2011: 49).

In this context, the kultour members are multi-sited brokers who distribute their knowledge to realise opportunities for creative presentation.

This national network brought together professional artists who perform, exhibit and develop community-based workshops to audiences and community groups via a structure that provided cross-cultural brokerage skills. kultour presented an annual national and (occasional) international touring program in all disciplines of Australian contemporary multicultural arts for 11 years. This program supported artists in professional development via opportunities for their work to reach new audiences. In turn, audiences were exposed to a wider range of art practices through a professional quality program.

kultour, in contrast to mainstage arts organisations which focused on a particular artform (for example literature, visual or performing arts), worked with artists from different cultural backgrounds and across all artforms, an ability and burden placed upon most multicultural arts organisations. Working across all artforms produces a wide range of understandings within a multicultural arts organisation, but also heightens the risk of diluting the creative attention given to any one form. This historical pattern of multi-artform multicultural organisations may stem from the low numbers of 'NESB' artists across

different artforms but also reinforces their need for supportive relationships while pursuing an art career.

Initially, kultour formed an informal national network and subsequently became a company "dedicated to the touring of innovative and unique Australian multicultural arts" (Kapetopoulos 2004:13). Its membership of multicultural arts organisations remained significantly stable between 2001 and 2007 and then grew and evolved. Northern Rivers Performing Arts chaired the network for many years and Multicultural Arts Victoria also played a significant leadership role as the network host by providing space, resources and professional advice. Carmichael observes that, for "networks to function and be sustained for any length of time, a key issue is that of trust" (2011: 43). Trust needed to accumulate between members and with touring venues, arts organisation and artists. Table 3 below identifies the member organisations which established kultour in 2000.

Table 3: Member organisations in the establishment of kultour in 2000	
Company Name	Location
Belconnen Community Arts	Canberra, ACT
Brisbane Ethnic Music and Arts Centre	Brisbane, Queensland
Browns Mart Theatre	Darwin, Northern Territory
Kulcha Multicultural Arts of Western Australia	Perth, Western Australia
IHOS Opera	Hobart, Tasmania
Multicultural Arts Victoria	Melbourne, Victoria
Nexus Multicultural Arts Centre	Adelaide
Northern River Performing Arts (NORPA)	Lismore

Kapetopoulos 2004: 15

Most of these organisations managed their own venue or had arrangements with partner presenters and presented multi-arts programs. By 2004, the kultour network had expanded to include Carnivale multicultural arts festival (NSW), Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, Liverpool (NSW), Footscray Community Arts Centre, (Victoria) and the Australian Asian Artists Association (Sydney) (Kapetopoulos 2004: 15).

The stated aim of kultour was to expand the professional experience of 'NESB' artists and arts managers through a working relationship based on artistic exchange. The underlying intention was to develop and strengthen trust over time between the state multicultural arts organisations, and to increase their capacities to identify their constituents' needs as well as straddle their organisational brokering roles. The national 2010 kultour symposium, for example, included contributions from practitioners and organisers and raised issues of leadership. Alongside tensions about the benefits or otherwise of mainstreaming: "we should end this multiculturalism business and just be mainstream" (Anatolitis 2010: 42), artist Khaled Sabsabi articulated the need for activism claiming that, "arts leadership is a resistance against the way things are" (Anatolitis 2010: 42). The skill of the artist is to play to such contradictory elements, and the skill of the network is to navigate them.

Another intention of kultour was to increase the legitimacy of multicultural arts organisations (to artists and funding bodies) as a national body dedicated to improving multicultural arts practice and profile. The knowledge they shared would also provide support to each other; increase the profiles of artists, member organisations, and the overall profile of multicultural arts more generally. kultour thus demonstrated a holistic approach to participation, artist development and audience development (Keating *et al*. n.d.: 4). Kapetopoulos found that this required a sophisticated blend of abilities.

The network is held together by trust and knowledge. As a knowledge network, kultour members exhibit convergent mental models, adept at working in culturally complex environments (Kapetopoulos 2004: 14).

Each multicultural arts organisation would select artists' works to tour at an annual meeting, based on agreed quality, level of interest, capacity and logistics to present the work; this was also considered an opportunity to gauge the creative developments in the field. The kultour meetings also provided a rare occasion for members to meet face-to-face, raise issues and discuss solutions. A review of the network in its first years conveys some of the complexity of these meetings:

At meetings, members negotiate between style and genre; contemporary and traditional artforms and hybrids; their understanding of audiences and constituents; communication strategies; timing; presentation modes and most importantly budget (Kapetopoulos 2004: 16).

The members' support and investment of time and effort into the network stemmed from addressing the practical and perceptual aspects of kultour.

As a touring network it is a good thing – I was surprised when the Australia Council initiated it. Playing Australia has gone down a mainstream path, and we need a touring network which can present quality work of a culturally diverse nature. It is a program which can redress some of the problems of the past in the areas of multicultural arts. When I think of kultour, I visualize quality multicultural arts (kultour members quoted in Kapetopoulos 2004: 16).

One such "quality multicultural arts" project, *Opposite My House is a Funeral Parlour*, was a solo dance piece by dancer and choreographer, Naree Vachananda. In 2006, kultour presented this work in Melbourne, Lismore, Fremantle and Campbelltown. *Opposite My*

House is a Funeral Parlour contemplates a journey of death meditating on the Buddhist concept of the cyclical flow of life and death, with the performance structured using the journey of the Greek archetype, Persephone. The artist describes the connections:

> The idea of mortality is not only philosophical but also cultural. As a Buddhist trying to collect my thoughts about mortality, I looked at various streams of Buddhism … I found the Buddhist idea of cyclic flow of life and death was parallel to the myth of Persephone (Vachananda 2004).

The publicity blurb described it as follows: "Don't expect black costumes, white powder or saffron transcendence. This dance of death is uncompromisingly contemporary" (Multicultural Arts Victoria 2006). The work was a collaboration between Darwin-based composer Edward Kelly and multi-media designer Yeap Heng Shen from Malaysia. Author, Jenny Joseph, permitted the use of excerpts from her book, *Persephone*, reinforcing the cross-cultural foundation of the work.

This dance work is one among many from the range of artforms presented by kultour. It conveys how artists experiment beyond the conventional binary of what constitutes either 'contemporary' or 'traditional' dance. Further, kultour acted as an intermediary by exercising combined organisational and creative leadership by delivering audience outreach and workshop presentations. For example, Kulcha (the then Western Australian multicultural arts presenter) enhanced their community audience base and engaged two other companies in Perth and Fremantle, thus extending their cultural credibility and the repertoire and experience of their partners. While in Perth, Vachananda presented a workshop for dancers with the Strut Dance Company and performed in conjunction with Deckchair Theatre Company. The work attracted reviews in *RealTime Arts*, the arts review broadsheet:

Vachananda is a daring, able choreographer with a strong presence and this work offers a provocative glimpse of the kinds of sustained solo work that can still exist outside the larger streams of dance in Australia (Baily 2005).

The tour of *Opposite My House is a Funeral Parlour* exemplified how kultour operated well beyond the norm of the 'fly-in – fly-out' tour syndrome.

The next stage of kultour's development aimed to consolidate its role as partnership brokers between artists, major presenters and arts organisations by broadening the skills of its board of directors to include touring expertise and presenter influence. By its very structure, a network is stronger than the sum of its parts. Mar and Ang (2015) identify five principles for increasing the diversity of cultural expression. In their view, kultour exemplifies the third principle of aiming for "cultural sustainability through industry-based approaches" (2015: 23). Adopting an industry-based approach and demonstrating their capacity and legitimacy to manage and direct a tour, strengthened the external perception of the organisation. As a national network, kultour also profiled the existence of a multicultural arts sector across each state and territory and enabled a platform for commentary on issues of cultural and political concern (kultour 2011; 2016).

The platform of kultour could not match the strength of other organisations in the industry, in part because low levels of support afforded to multicultural arts organisation members resulted in a general economic fragility. The 2005 evaluation of the AMA 2000 policy found that, despite the appropriateness of kultour being situated within multicultural arts organisations:

There are inherent tensions when expectations of high quality are located within the context of an under-resourced sector. The funding base of some kultour organisations is precarious at times, where 'survival' issues overtake long-term strategic goals (Keating *et al.* n.d.: 4).

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The warning about the loss of small organisations to the network was prescient. Between 2000 and 2015, the number of multi-artform multicultural arts organisations across Australia had reduced by over a third as summarised in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Longevity of multi-artform multicultural arts organisations		
Company Name	State	Longevity
Footscray Community Arts Centre	VIC	1974-
Darwin Community Arts (formerly Brown's Mart)	NT	1970s-
Carnevale multicultural arts festival	NSW	1976-2004
Kulcha	WA	1983-2013
NEXUS Arts (formerly NEXUS Multicultural Arts Centre)	SA	1984-
Multicultural Arts Alliance	NSW	1988-2000
Brisbane Ethic Multicultural Arts Centre (merged with Queensland Multicultural Centre in 2013)	QLD	1990-
Multicultural Arts Victoria	VIC	1991-
4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Arts (previously Asian Australian Artists Association 4A)	NSW	1996-
Contemporary Asian Australian Performance (previously Performance 4A)	NSW	1998-
kultour	VIC	2000- 2014
Diversity Arts Australia (advocacy)	NSW	2015-
Groundswell (advocacy)	NSW	2011-2014

Table 4 shows the eleven artform companies dedicated to producing or presenting multicultural arts. Of these, seven remain in 2015; this represents a 36% attrition rate and demonstrates the dismantling of dedicated creative entry points for many NESB artists.

Around 2008, tension regarding the role of kultour came to the fore and continued during its lengthy transition into Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) which was completed in early 2017. A former kultour manager saw the need to shift responsibility to the wider arts sector because of the exhaustion from doing all the "heavy lifting" in circulating multicultural artworks (Mar and Ang 2015: 110). However, the challenges to DARTS are significant because the processes and politics of encouraging other organisations to increase their culturally diverse programming require as a minimum: resources, influence, co-operation and a substantial change in current risk-averse attitudes. The issue of responsibility for multicultural arts characteristic of institutional settings (discussed in chapter V) is also found between organisations that struggle with issues of mainstreaming; this highlights the delicate nature of cooperation between creative and organisational leaders. Accompaniment and attunement can be useful processes in assisting this cooperation.

To Advocate or Practice

An organisation's ability to adapt to changing environments also requires a particular type of responsive and visionary leadership. Director of Darwin Community Arts and a former kultour member recalls that the Australia Council "told kultour some years ago that it's no longer an initiative regarding touring" (B. Ramilo 2015, interview). kultour was 'told' to transition from a network that linked "cultural grassroots, the arts field, governance and policy spheres" to their "new ambit" of advocacy (Mar and Ang 2015: 113).

The move to an advocacy role and away from the creative stimulation that characterised kultour's remit did not happen lightly. The network resisted their new role, preferring instead to try and manage both roles, grounded in the:

fusion of quality aesthetic practice and the emergence of different practices and expressions, and using these stories in their arguments for inclusive arts practices that

reflect the diversity of Australian society and its cultural contexts. That is perhaps why artist development continues as a key organisational interest, rather than pursuing a purely aesthetically neutral advocacy and service role (Mar and Ang 2015: 113).

This shift into the politics of advocacy, whilst valuable, erodes the more difficult role in art production that argues, for example, that producing quality art is actually the best advocacy. As Ramilo states:

> You need to demonstrate that cultural diversity in the arts is a good thing. So me personally, I'd rather just make things. I'd rather have more productions, more recordings, more shows, more books – that demonstrate that this work is good (B. Ramilo 2015, interview).

Part of kultour's role change can be tracked through the different sections of the Australia Council which managed their contract. Executive management decided to 'internally mainstream' the kultour initiative from the AMA policy manager to other departments. This resulted in varying degrees of comprehension by staff as to the needs kultour was meeting, and subsequently varying responses as to the best approach. The danger of being an initiative of the Australia Council was that kultour was always beholden to them. Compromising with Council generated friction between the members:

> Multicultural touring should be taken up by the other touring organisations also funded by Australia Council, which of course makes sense – they should be responsive to cultural diversity as well. I heard that Multicultural Arts Victoria, BEMAC and Nexus want to set up their own touring circuit, and I support that. They don't think that the other touring organisations will at this point meet all the needs and desires of the companies and artists who want to tour multicultural arts products. I don't know if Performing Lines and the other organisations are really up to it. I don't know how

culturally diverse the decision-making bodies of these organisations are or whether they understand the need to represent cultural diversity or not, because I mean it doesn't come automatically (B. Ramilo 2015, interview).

Performing Lines (PL) is a development, production and touring company for independent Australian performing artists (Performing Lines n.d.a). Ramilo's statement underlines the tension that is held in place between the capacity of the 'mainstream' to comprehend and deliver to the aspirations of 'NESB' artists, the audiences who may be attracted to their work, and audiences who are unfamiliar with their work.

Mainstream, Tributary or Edge

It is possible to view the shift in kultour's mission to that of advocacy as an important philosophical change that shifts the focus from a 'minority' multicultural sector, to one which profiles diversity across the entire arts sector. That is, if there was adequate infrastructure to produce and present work by NESB artists. "Mobilising the unpredictable interfaces of intercultural exchange" (Mar and Ang 2015: 8) captures the essence of the work to be done in the arts in a multicultural Australia by whomever undertakes it. The "interfaces" are multifarious, can be supportive and include all aspects of a creative project from concept to audience response. The multicultural arts milieu would benefit from having a range of multicultural organisations, including ones that tour and advocate. However, in the multicultural arts, it is often an 'either/or' scenario which indicates the limits of that milieu.

Who takes on responsibility for, and leadership roles in, multicultural arts have been perennial issues in the arts sector since the 1970s, as discussed in chapter III. The low level of support of 'NESB' artists by the major companies reinforces the notion that 'mainstreaming' for multicultural practices is not 'automatic' and highlights issues in the processes of inclusion, and organisational leadership. Characteristic tensions for the artists include those

of gaining entry to, and then 'fitting in' with mainstream arts organisations, or choosing to find creative networks which may have less profile, but which are more supportive. Artists in Far North Queensland, for example, expressed the value of a "multicultural arts network" to support their "artistic development" (Babacan 2011: 18). Even though it is expected of them, the mainstream organisation may not yet have the capability, and although discussing universities, Ahmed's comments are also relevant to mainstream arts organisations.

> Mainstreaming, even as an ideal, becomes a problem in the sense that universities are not ready for it: to act as if mainstreaming is the case, because it should be the case, can be counterproductive because the conditions are not available in the present *to make it the case* (italics in original, Ahmed 2012: 138).

The issues of timeliness, context and conditions for cultural diversity are necessary precursors before an organisation's values and programs can be considered culturally diverse. Ramilo's statement that "it doesn't come automatically" respects the myriad knowledges that are in play, at times under tension, within multicultural practices. Georgina Sedgwick, of the Darwin Festival, reveals how some practices developed and activated networks through kultour. These included careful observation, and an ability to broker opportunities between artist experimentation, the local community and audience context:

> I can't just bring an artist in; get their trust; tour the work, and then after a year the engagement's over. You get to that point where you're a year or two into the engagement and you're just starting to get momentum and see the possibilities (Sedgwick quoted in Mar and Ang 2015: 108).

In December 2014, the kultour board of directors closed their presence in Melbourne and announced a move to Western Sydney. The state of Victoria has two successful arts organisations dedicated to cultural difference: Multicultural Arts Victoria and Footscray

Community Centre. While a move to NSW might address the absence of a NSW dedicated multicultural arts organisation and could attract different sources of funding, arguably, the high calibre of creative and organisational leadership for multicultural artists in Victoria was key to kultour's successful functioning. The kultour board responded to the issues of lack of organisational support for culturally diverse artists in NSW by relocating to Western Sydney, with its high concentration of 'NESB' artists (Hanna 2012).

The challenge for kultour, coupled with what may be an impossible remit of national advocacy for an under-resourced organisation, was to 'encourage' a range of subsidised touring organisations resistant to increasing diversity in their programming. In 2015, a multicultural arts centre staff and kultour member observed the unwillingness of touring agencies to make the effort required to diversify their marketing or audience, describing those agencies as market-driven and unconvinced that a market existed for a multicultural focus in their programming. If one tour was not as successful as expected, the touring agency developed what the staff member described as a 'dampened enthusiasm' to showcase further multicultural artworks.

Another element in this issue is the tension to remain a marginal artist against the push towards the 'mainstream', as Ramilo observes:

> Artists appreciated having an organisation that toured their work because possibly no one else will. No one else appreciated the importance of what kultour did. However, some of us – myself and Aaron Seeto in particular – said we don't want to be part of the mainstream, we like being on the margins. That's an aesthetic thing as well. Some of us don't want to be in the mainstream arts sector automatically (B. Ramilo 2015, interview).

A previous touring partner, Artback NT, expressed a similar strategic position, that being on the "'margins of things, is a far more interesting place to work'" (cited in Mar and Ang 2015:

111). The relationship between kultour and touring artists reflects trusting negotiations based on knowledge and processes focused on how to tour multicultural arts (Mar and Ang 2015: 111). This level of intercultural understanding underpins the potential for an artwork to be part of a capacity-building process that goes beyond solely a presentation. By contrast, established touring companies such as PL develop work to sell into a mainstream arts market. Their website profiles the available work for international and national tours. In 2017, PL developed and promoted some NESB artists for touring, including the dance work, *A Faint Existence*, by performer Kristina Chan and multimedia work, *Crawl Me Blood*, by APHIDS. *IllUMEnate* by Layle and Majnun is a performance in development with Western Australian PL Associate Producer, Zainab Syed (Performing Lines n.d.b).

These projects suggest PL has taken up some of the 'heavy lifting' of touring and demonstrates that they value cultural difference in the arts. In 2017, touring may form part of their contract with the Australia Council, which as Ramilo observes, is "admirable and legitimate" (B. Ramilo 2015, interview). However, the 'mainstage' touring approach taken by PL may compromise how artists can engage in an extended manner with the local audience. The previous description of Vachananda's tour and the reviews of kultour highlight the intense labour invested in their touring partnerships that went beyond a scheduled presentation in a particular venue (Kapetopoulos 2004; Keating *et al.* n.d.; Mar and Ang 2015).

The Australia Council decision to terminate kultour's active touring role and transition to advocacy also meant it was reclassified as 'service' organisation, perceived by some to be the least vital component in the arts system and therefore less crucial in times of financial duress. The general funding environment at the time of writing this thesis included an estimated 70 percent reduction in funding to individual artists (Croggon 2016). The S2M sector was also hard-hit and DARTS (previously kultour)

CEO confirmed that they had been "unsuccessful for 4-year organisational funding announced in 2016" (L. Nahlous 2017, email).

Crucially, the great majority of funding is provided to the major performing arts companies. Shakthidharan (also discussed in chapter IV) criticised this Australia Council approach to funding, characterised by its implications that major companies are more 'trustworthy' with the funds. The perception is one where those with the cultural expertise (multicultural arts organisations) lose their funding while major companies receive more to deliver multicultural arts that are more palatable to mainstream audiences. A 'push-pull' tension occurs regarding the value of 'going mainstream'. The danger is that it limits the multiplicities of practice that have characterised multicultural arts in the past decades to shrink into a narrowing perception of what mainstream companies and their usual audiences consider acceptable.

This case study of kultour exemplifies a history that is littered with the rise and demise of support for Australia's multicultural arts. kultour was the only national multicultural, multi-artform organisation in Australia. There were myriad opportunities offered by kultour as a national network of multicultural arts organisations, including: facilitating high profile national tours of multicultural artworks, promoting creative leadership for artists, and facilitating organisational leadership within the member organisations. And yet, there was no effective support for kultour to reach its full potential. The legacy of kultour is that the supportive relationships between the state-based multicultural organisations remains in place and that they may also continue to work together. The structural potential for national multicultural organisational leadership is still viable, albeit in a different form. With this in mind, I argue in the next section, that the link between creative production and organisational influence remains the most viable way to

generate traction for multicultural arts practices and is exemplified by the partnership between CAAP and PWA.

Traction Gained through Confluence – the Longer-term Productive Partnership

The mission to enter into dialogue with the arts mainstream and broader society formed the mandate of a small arts organisation established in 1996 – the Asian Australian Artists Association. CCAA is now the visual arts arm of this organisation while CAAP is the performance arm which became a separate entity in 1998. In 2015, CAAP began a partnership with an industry organisation, Playwriting Australia (PWA), a national company that develops new plays. Both organisations share the aim of developing and producing Asian-Australian performing arts content for the mainstage. The high level of trust established in this partnership generates traction on the mainstage.

Activist Beginnings

The predecessor to CCAA and CAAP, 4A: the Asian-Australian Artists Association, began in a humble upstairs room in Liverpool Street, in Sydney's CBD. The impetus for its establishment was two-fold. One was to actively resist the rise of anti-Asian racism emerging in Australia at that time (Ang and Stratton 1998; Hage 2000; Marr 2017). This is an example where the friction in the socio-political environment brought artists together to counter that negativity. Secondly, its creative aims were to promote Asian-Australian art in the context of increasing interest in Asian art and to critique the absence of Asian-Australian artists in the Queensland Art Gallery's inaugural 1996 Asia-Pacific Triennial. This is an example where the friction between the international interest and the domestic lack of recognition by mainstream arts organisations motivated Asian-Australian artists to build an alternative platform. These were the "unambiguously political and activist origins of 4A", with the

persistent aim to be a "lightning rod" for Asian-Australian and international visual artists, academics and curators (Hore-Thorburn 2017). At the 20th anniversary symposium of the CCAA held in Sydney in late 2016, questions about the Centre's relevance re-surfaced. Ang contextualised the current climate, including the re-election of nationalist politician Pauline Hanson, as:

> 'a far darker situation' indicated by the enormous backlash against cosmopolitanism, diversity, and the ascendency of Trump, the Brexit movement and others. The present situation is in many ways more dangerous than it was in the nineties and more problematic (Hore-Thorburn 2017).

Ang provides an account of the context for organisations such as CCAA and CAAP to provide counter-narratives to those of mainstream arts organisations and media. CCAA is the only funded visual arts organisation in Australia dedicated to cultural diversity. Their success is in part attributed to maintaining its artist-centred focus. Or as visual artist Lindy Lee described: "its fidelity to its artists and community" (Hore-Thorburn 2017). Such fidelity is more likely to be found within the agility of the S2M arts organisations.

The Ripple Effect

The intense difficulties faced by Asian-Australian performers and live theatre producers, alongside low resourcing levels, goes partway towards explaining why CAAP has taken longer than CCAA to establish itself. CAAP is a small organisation with a barely remunerated Executive Officer position, many volunteers and philanthropic support for project delivery to increase the number of Asian-Australian performances to reach broad audiences.

CAAP is dedicated to making exceptional contemporary Asian Australian work for all audiences. We engender greater cultural diversity in Australian performing arts by producing cross art form theatrical works of the highest quality, in partnership with major festivals and flagship companies (Contemporary Asian Australian Performance 2016).

Writer, performer, producer, dramaturg and Executive Producer of CAAP, Annette Shun Wah, views the role of CAAP as telling stories and seeing different perspectives that:

examine what it is to be Asian-Australian in contemporary Australia. There's not very much work that reflects or explores that (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview).

The organisation's strength is their willingness and commitment to band together as a group of Asian-Australian artists, and to connect and match with like-minded creative and entrepreneurial partners. Shun Wah describes the company's influence as one which produces "ripple" effects through their productions and partnerships. The impact of this "ripple" both erodes the resistance to cultural diversity demonstrated by larger performance companies, and generates the energy to produce more.

While CAAP is a clear example of the benefits of the approach of banding together criticised by Shakthidharan, Shun Wah nevertheless shares his view of the role of the activator (an artist who works productively with friction) which demonstrates creative influence, despite size.

We are only a tiny company, but it's good to be there, to influence and have that ripple effect through the sector. I know I can't do a great deal on my own. Our little company only makes one or two works a year. It's a fantastic effect if we can work with the other people who want to tick that [diversity] box but haven't quite worked out how to do it (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview).

Shun Wah articulates an alternative to the typically derogatory and assumed tokenism associated with "ticking the box" (Diversity Arts Australia 2017b). In doing so, she provides a hint as to her flexible style of leadership and openness to develop a range of partnerships. Her claim to be able to assist those who are interested in diversity but do not yet have the capability identifies her readiness to engage, a readiness which is likely to be reciprocated. She demonstrates transformational leadership in her charismatic personality and relational leadership in the relationships that extend from the small organisation. CAAP engenders trust and increases traction when successful works are produced for the main stage.

CAAP's success is evidenced by the theatre productions programmed by the Sydney and Darwin Festivals such as *In Between Two*; *The Serpent's Table*; *Yasukichi Murakami – Through A Distant Lens*; *Stories Then & Now* and *Who Speaks For Me*? *The Serpent's Table* included experienced commercial Asian-Australian artists such as web designers; for many, this was their first opportunity to explore their cultural heritage.

> The artists brought their personal backgrounds to the performance and found it so liberating because in the other work they've done until now they haven't been able to utilise any of that (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview).

Shun Wah's statement points to the issue of creative isolation as well as the lack of historical record of performances and narrative Asian-Australian artists have to draw upon. The paucity of Australian cultural and creative history of multicultural, cross-cultural or intercultural arts practices turns the discourse into a vicious cycle. CAAP has devised a suite of strategies to effect change in a number of ways. A range of programs aimed at stimulating and sustaining artists include the: *Asian Australian Performance Directory*, *Longhouse Networking Program* and *Lotus Playwriting Project*, undertaken in partnership with PWA (Contemporary

Asian Australian Performance 2016). This well-crafted suite of programs supports artists in maintaining their creative stamina through professional development and peer support.

Fundamental Change – **Lotus Playwriting Project**

The partnership between CAAP and PWA is located within the 'UNESCO culture cycles' whereby each stage in the cycle towards a final presentation is designed to contribute to culturally diverse art production. These stages include the "diverse modes of creation, production, dissemination, distribution and access" (UNESCO quoted in Mar and Ang 2015:11). The work undertaken by CAAP flows through all those processes and addresses a criticism levelled at "fashionable diversity" where:

> Diversity is restricted to aesthetic presentation, rather than a meaningful, committed, resourced, long-term process of shifting existing power-dynamics (Canas 2017).

The shift in the arts towards increasing diverse presentations requires structural change deemed to "take a long time", according to CAAP's partner on the *Lotus Playwriting Project* (*Lotus*), PWA Artistic Director, Tim Roseman.

> Our plays are very white, very middle class. Last year [2013] there were six plays on the Australian stage not written by white people. Every company I speak to is itching to put on a play by that Cambodian-Australian playwright, but it isn't there (Radio National 2014)

Roseman's insights and enthusiasm are genuine and demonstrate elements of organisational leadership. However, the trope, "we want to make a fundamental change, but it will, of course, take time" mitigates against the processes to make that change (Radio National 2014). He appears to accept his colleagues' ignorance as to the structural problems captured by their "itching to put on" what "isn't there". His colleagues have been irritated or made aware of

their lack of contemporary programming style regarding that Cambodian-Australian, but take no responsibility for the fact they cannot find such a play nor attempt to address that situation. Roseman saw a gap in the market which PWA could address, but needed an expert partner, which was CAAP.

The *Lotus* concept nurtures a new generation of Asian-Australian writers to address the low numbers of their published plays that currently can be counted on "the fingers of one hand" (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview). *Lotus* develops the artists' trust in themselves via increased confidence and peer support. When their work reaches a certain stage, producers from main stage organisations are able to trust their work and then begin to work with those writers. In under a year, *Lotus* generated play readings from 12 writers at Brisbane's La Boite Theatre, Melbourne's Malthouse Theatre and Parramatta's Riverside Theatre. Shun Wah is confident that the combined programmes run by CAAP will have another 12 completed, full-length plays by Asian Australian writers in under three years (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview).

One aspect of a culture cycle is the research and development phase. Preparatory phases are needed to gain the interest and commitment of writers of Asian-Australian backgrounds to attend the program. The partnership between CAAP and PWA has been successful in part because the leaders of both organisations are committed to changing the face of Australian performance and because they straddle roles of creative development and service organisations. The description of PWA could equally apply to CAAP:

> I think we're an artistic-led company, servicing the rest of the industry by providing
> them with amazing new plays (T. Roseman 2015, interview).

This synergy deepens when Shun Wah's and Roseman's skills combine to work "across cultures". Roseman brings experience from the United Kingdom, also discussed in chapter II, which he sees as probably a "good generation or so ahead of what's happening in Australia

because they are moving away from the deficit model" (T. Roseman 2015, interview). PWA employ culturally diverse staff and use a process of decision-making for programming which engages with artists of relevant cultural backgrounds. This collaborative approach is also evident in their business planning.

> In our last [strategic plan], we had a section called 'our diversity projects' and I've taken that out because as long as you have your work and your diversity work, you're silo-ing and you're still living in the realm of otherness. So we make a statement that all of our projects speak to cultural, linguistic, social, political, regional diversity (T. Roseman 2015, interview).

This statement encapsulates the long-term changes the organisation is committing towards diversity. When allocating certain projects, a "diversity" label, PWA maintained those projects' status as a side bar, an add-on. Changing their 'mission statement' may assist the company to translate that into action whereby expressing the intention activates attention to it as a "hopeful performative" (Ahmed 2012: 67).

Roseman also knows that "cultural parity [is yet to be achieved, and that PWA need to] create programs that speak directly" to particular marginalised groups (T. Roseman 2015, interview). He acknowledges the expertise that CAAP brings to delivering PWA's aims. For example, there was a low response to a call-out by PWA for Asian-Australian artists to attend a workshop on playwriting. When CAAP did their call-out for the inaugural *Lotus*, over 30 people attended, numbers which have been replicated across capital cities. CAAP also engages across a wide artistic spectrum that includes "writers, bloggers, poets, actors, musicians" (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview). Roseman believes that "the only rule of theatre is that content dictates form" (T. Roseman 2015, interview) meaning that *Lotus* is not about making multicultural stories fit into what might be a mainstream canon or aesthetic. The style

of the performance of the work will depend on the content that is being explored. Both parties, therefore, are bringing an open perspective to the playwriting process which directly benefits the presentation outcomes.

An early presentation phase for *Lotus* is PWA's annual Playwriting Festival which, in 2016, included four play readings developed through the Lotus program: *Site Rubiyah* by Katrina Irawati Graham, *Squint Witch* by Shari Indriani, *My Father Who Slept in A Zoo* by Ngoc Phan and *Entomology* by Natesha Somasundaram (Playwriting Australia 2016). *Lotus* delivers to the joint aims of CAAP and PWA for long-term change but crucially, also highlights how creative capacities can build relatively quickly. The 2015 *Lotus* project in Brisbane had works picked up by niche theatre company La Boite, new writing theatre Playlab and the mainstage Queensland Theatre Company – "even before we finished the second stage" (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview). *Blue Bones*, written by Merlyn Tong, was presented by Playlab and went onto win six of 2017 Matilda awards for Queensland theatre including the Brisbane Lord Mayor's best new Australian work (Matilda Awards 2017). While the ensuing publicity could have acknowledged CAAP more roundly, successes such as these have placed their processes in the spotlight and are likely to inspire others.

A potential risk despite the industry accolades, however, is the lack of tertiary recognition or accreditation for such informal professional development. Shun Wah responds to such concerns by pointing out the lack of playwriting courses in Australia and the lack of cultural depth on the curriculum. The professional training streams, where they do exist, tend not to engage in multicultural content development. Many NESB artists in tertiary education also undertake some parallel training because they look for content that resonates as well as for career opportunities. Some Asian-Australian artists who have completed courses at the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA), for example, also undertake projects such as *Lotus* at some point in their career:

When I talk to students, who come fresh out of NIDA or wherever, they're full of optimism after just graduating, and don't think they need to bear the culturally diverse tag because they know they're smart and talented. But about two years later they come back [to me], having realised the opportunities that rightfully should be theirs, are not there (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview).

Lotus is unique because it steps the writer through as many stages of development as possible: from writing to non-professional and then professional readings onto industry presentation. A philanthropic foundation, recognising the value of *Lotus*, has committed three years of support which ensures program delivery and freedom from the processes of grant applications for Australia Council and other funding, along with their associated criteria and constraints. The Foundation's support enables *Lotus* to be an "in-depth, longer term, serious intensive workshopping and mentoring" program (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview). Nevertheless, CAAP's low levels of remuneration maintains the inequitable power structure in the arts industry. CAAP creates content to be taken up by companies funded to present such work, but who do not necessarily contribute financially to CAAP's processes. In this way, the well-resourced companies reap the benefits without necessarily contributing to the research and development processes of the playwright. It is the philanthropic support to CAAP that enables the *Lotus* workshops to "ripple through" the arts.

A Virtuous Cycle

The creative success of *Lotus* extends beyond the initial bi-partisan partnership, delivering several phases in the culture cycle across many arts organisations. That joint vision extends the capabilities for CAAP and PWA to generate an engagement beyond the occasional, one-off experience. In this way, *Lotus* has led a virtuous cycle to increase the production of multicultural arts, the phases of which can be described as:

Artist > CAAP identifies a viable creative process for change > PWA recognises their diversity gap and seeks ways to address it > CAAP and PWA in partnership > initial play development > workshops > play reading by professional actors and directors > showcase to performing arts industry > selection by mainstage > public presentation > possible national or regional tour > increased profile of artists and companies > increased relevance to diverse audiences > contribution to a multicultural arts milieu > more Asian-Australian artists are involved. See Appendix 3 for a graphic representation of this organisational change cycle.

This cycle draws on relational and transactional leadership and uses the skills of attunement and accompaniment to develop an alternative trajectory in the Australian arts. The cycle depicts the practical outcomes when creative and organisational leadership work in concert. In the case of *Lotus*, the initial partnership seeks to widen Asian-Australian artists' capacity to link directly with 'industry' or the mainstage. Alongside Roseman's critical assessment of the situation in Australia, Shun Wah's leadership drives *Lotus* with skill, patience and perseverance.

> Big companies are now seeking our partnership or collaboration. The aim is for the entire sector, all of us, to respond and learn how to be more culturally diverse in what we do. To create work that's more relevant to the Australian society as it is today and in doing that, maybe attract more diverse audiences (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview).

Shun Wah's relational leadership is tangible. She creates opportunities for other artists beyond her immediate sphere and through CAAP programs onto the mainstage. Her experience is also tangible – she has been working in the area of multicultural performance, presentation and writing since the mid-1980s, and brings that experience to ensure long-term changes. As such, she brings her extensive knowledge and experience as a cultural and creative broker to envisage, promote and enact change. CAAP has recently been selected as

one of the Resident Companies at Carriageworks which provides stable accommodation and a high-profile venue for their programs (Taylor 2017).

Despite their active partnership in changing the multicultural arts milieu, neither Shun Wah nor Roseman expressed a close link to the Australia Council's CEF or arts policy. Because of her long-term engagement with multicultural arts practices, Shun Wah is aware of the AMA policies, the loss of companies such as Carnivale and the retreat from multiculturalism as a government focus, which:

> got replaced for a while by a push towards youth arts and so suddenly the big focus was on a lot of stuff for young people, which was fantastic. But then it's as if you can only deal with one priority at a time. And I think, as a nation, we could be a bit more sophisticated than that (A. Shun Wah 2015, interview).

Subsequently, her vision for a multicultural arts milieu is one that extends across age, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. To be sophisticated suggests both a more complex conversation and exploration of, as Ahmed suggests, how diversity is "circulated" (2012: 81). To ensure and facilitate the circulation of creative diversity occupies Shun Wah and Roseman outside the realms of policy.

> I've never had a conversation about arts policy with any practitioner in the two and a half years that I've been in this job. A real problem regards the conditions of funding. The Australia Council believes that it's up to arts companies to decide what they want to do and how to spend their money. I firmly believe in quotas and not incentives (T. Roseman 2015, interview).

Roseman articulates the combative friction between legislating for change or laissez-faire, similar to the debates articulated between Marinos and Klika in chapter V. Roseman wants funding to be dependent on an organisation's strategies to alter the "white hegemony of this

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culture. It is way more important than the risk management or marketing section!" (T. Roseman 2015, interview).

The cause for concern, however, as expressed by Shakthidharan in chapter IV is the increasing direction of funds towards mainstage organisations – particularly given those organisations' risk-averse track records towards generating distinctive multicultural artworks. The Australia Council has adopted the incentive approach to the major performing arts companies; it offers a grant that only the MPA are eligible to apply for and requires them to deliver to one of the diversity options across the CEF (see chapter V). The disregard for the small multicultural organisation may go deeper. The shrinkage of support to multicultural organisations means that the next generations of 'NESB' artists have limited options via which to gain the experience to keep the multicultural arts baton active and in circulation. The demographic context is changing rapidly in Australia as more and more people are now culturally diverse, and implies that what the 'multicultural arts sector' means today cannot be the same as in the 1980s.

CAAP and PWA demonstrate an agile ambitiousness which responds to the opportunities in the current Australian society for Asian-Australian performance and opens up possibilities in a structured and detailed approach that is also fluid and creatively responsive to the interests of the artists with whom they work. This form of relational leadership can be seen in both Shun Wah and Roseman, yet is differently nuanced. Shun Wah's version may be slightly more attuned, as she helps to bring the creative material into reality, while Roseman's may be more linked to accompaniment, as the steps are taken towards presentation on stage. In these ways a "community takes shape through the circulation of diversity" (Ahmed 2012: 81) that expand the possibilities available in a multicultural arts milieu.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how artists and organisations take up the leadership mantle to devise new ways of working for and in multicultural arts production and presentation. These methods of working combine both creative and organisational forms of leadership, whereby an exchange of knowledge occurs between artist, cultural broker and organisation. I argue that both creative leadership and organisational leadership working in tandem are pivotal to any new social and civil contract, and need to be led by 'NESB' artists who are essential contributors to a multicultural arts milieu. Creative leadership improves diverse art production; organisational leadership improves its dissemination and when working in concert, they extend those outcomes across each segment of the arts. Processes such as 'attunement' (Gibson 2005) and 'accompaniment' (Lynd and Lynd 2009) enable attentiveness that extends the modes of leadership. The observation that in "being spoken, and repeated in different contexts, a world takes shape around diversity" (Ahmed 2012: 81) contributes to the relational style of leadership most suited to achieve those outcomes. Ahmed articulates a principle relevant to an expanding multicultural arts milieu: that the uptake needs to occur across the range of arts organisations and artists. However, as this thesis shows, multicultural arts practice can be a tremulous zone, which spins on the head of a pin and requires persistent pushing into place. It is through the intercultural artistic processes used by 'NESB' artists that increased participatory outcomes for diversity are shaped. Through the shared processes found in the modes of relational and distributed leadership analysed in this chapter, the arts can participate in the 'creation of a world'.

Conclusion: Towards a Supportive Multicultural Arts Milieu

Introduction

Despite over 40 years of multicultural arts policy, this thesis has shown that the issues of participation by 'NESB' artists and arts practices that reflect multicultural Australia remain fraught. The introduction to this thesis explores the problematics of the term non-English speaking background or 'NESB' because it positions those with that 'label' as linguistically incomplete in terms of the dominant English language. While acknowledging this issue through the use of quotation marks, at the same time I use it precisely because it positions the 'non' as a distinguishing factor and as a way to "reinscribe the negativity" (Papastergiadis *et al.* 1994: 128). This thesis has considered diverse notions of leadership to analyse the challenges faced by the sector, and to also help foster greater participation by 'NESB' artists and multicultural arts practices. This thesis provides artists and artsworkers with a record of their multicultural historical precedents and scalable options for professional pathways. It provides bureaucrats and decision-makers with theoretical discourses and case studies that demonstrate innovation.

The thesis presents the relevance of transactional, transformational, distributed and relational modes of leadership to successfully navigate the perennial issues associated with cultural difference in the arts towards a supportive and supported multicultural arts milieu. It shows that the practices of 'accompaniment' and 'attunement' enhance these leadership modes because they extend the possibilities of how trust can be established between individuals, institutions and organisations. Trust is seen as the hinge which alters the artists' experiences of friction to generate traction for change in multicultural arts policy and practices. The idea of a multicultural arts milieu helps to understand the issues in the cultural,

social and political environment experienced by artists, and helps to think about doing things differently to increase 'NESB' participation in the arts.

This thesis argues that transactional, transformational, distributed and relational modes of leadership could be increasingly activated to realise the creative potential offered by Australia's increasing ethnic diversity. Transactional leadership articulates expectations and ties the use of resources, including public funds, towards increasing the production and presentation of multicultural arts practices. The thesis suggests that funds should also be directed towards 'NESB' artists and groups rather than the current practice which favours 'diversity' funds to the MPA companies.

Transformational leadership employs charismatic personalities to effect change in groups or organisations by mobilising others' momentum towards high-profile, but often short-term, change. The charismatic personality role in the multicultural arts sector is the representative who speaks up and out. Distributed leadership shares and alternates the lead role, depending on the skills needed to generate change. It can be found in multicultural arts groups or advocates whose resources are thinly spread, but who have a high degree of internal trust amongst group members, as was the case with kultour. Relational leadership impacts longer-term change because it is based in relationship-building across all levels of an organisation to identify and resource others to address specific issues. This mode of leadership is especially relevant in the institutional settings of policy development and implementation as in the AMA 2000 policy process. Relational leadership can generate change in established arts organisations that are challenged to maintain attention towards cultural difference in the arts, as is the case with *Lotus* program of CAAP and PWA in relation to mainstage companies.

This thesis also argues that each of these modes will benefit from 'accompaniment' and 'attunement'. The concept of accompaniment used in the thesis draws on Lynd and Lynd

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(2009: 93) and recognises the skills and life experience that each person brings to the process of participation. In the case of a playwright and the mainstage theatre director, for example, this mutual recognition will enhance equitable knowledge sharing to benefit both artist and company. Attunement is adapted from Gibson's (2005: 272) observations concerning the complexity of understanding across multiple cultural experiences. Attunement provides a way into sensitive adjustments and amplification of issues and practices that also benefit intercultural practices. These modes and traits are all capabilities that develop through experience and supportive networks, and are most likely to be found in people in the arts already committed to seeing change in the multicultural arts milieu. The problem then is how best to see these capabilities develop to a greater extent as leadership capacities for multicultural arts practices.

This thesis considers three domains of arts leadership: creative, institutional and organisational. The thesis argues that institutional leadership is waning and that subsequently change towards a productive multicultural arts milieu is most effectively achieved through exercising creative leadership in combination with organisational leadership. Creative leadership refers to the role of individual artists in making new pathways for their colleagues. Organisational leadership refers to the role that leaders in arts organisations can bring to the extension of their programmes and influence towards a productive and supportive multicultural arts milieu. The most productive types of leadership that generate this influence (and within a tangible timeframe) bring the creative leadership of 'NESB' artists into partnership with resourced arts organisations resulting in organisational leadership for the arts in a multicultural Australia. This idea moves beyond the 'placement' method, where an artist resides for a time within an organisation, to a partnership model in which the knowledge, experience and networks of each partner are shared and work in tandem to produce and present artworks that reflect and respond to a multicultural Australia.

Policy, Problems and Practices

This thesis has focussed on the relationship between Australian arts and cultural policies and the fostering of creative practice of 'NESB' artists. The thesis concludes that there is no longer explicit national policy directing attention to 'NESB' artists, many of whom take up the mantle for broader arts sector change through their own practices. Subsidiary discussion points explored whether Australian multicultural arts policies enabled the 'mainstream' to change or whether the artists continue to work in marginalised spaces. The AMA 2000 and 2006 policies aimed to address issues of participation of 'NESB' artists through kultour, MAPD and regular conferencing. These initiatives no longer exist and therefore it is a number of artists who continue to drive change. Many, such as Shun Wah, Koukias and Valamanesh, prefer to be considered as part of the 'mainstream' while others, such as Ramilo, prefer to stay on the margins which they view as a much 'more interesting place to be'. The research established that the role of the focussed multicultural arts organisation, such as kultour and CAAP, is valuable in generating a supportive networked environment that can broker the artists into wider exposure.

Other topics emerged in the thesis research regarding practice, including the ways in which artists maintain their arts practices and how they draw on their hybrid and multiple identities to describe, influence and critique Australia's cultural landscape. These art practices prompted questions about the types of leadership that foster the expression of the complexity of identity in contemporary Australia.

Other points were raised which were beyond the scope of this thesis. As is to be expected, 'NESB' artists participate to a greater extent in non-linguistic-based artforms (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 147). However, fluctuating and low levels of their participation are curiously found in the community arts sector (Throsby and Zednick 2010:

24; Throsby and Petetskaya 2017: 143). The data on community arts participation is in contrast to the historical and current arts sector perception that 'NESB' artists work predominantly in ethnic communities (Gonsalves 2017). These findings would benefit from further research because they raise questions regarding the changing levels of 'NESB' artist participation, and also the extent to which ethnic communities' arts engagement is being creatively facilitated.

The Multicultural Arts Milieu

The idea of a multicultural arts milieu is a new use of the concept developed in this thesis. My use of the term 'milieu' refers to the social context of organisational and informal networks which encourage or constrain a creative environment. It is the environment which helps define, organise and maintain the relations of interaction in any given context. A supportive multicultural arts milieu resources and engages with the creative potential afforded by a multicultural society.

As the research progressed, the idea of a multicultural arts milieu developed as a means of analysing the lack of change for inclusion in the arts expressed by so many 'NESB' artists. A milieu moves the discussion into a different register beyond that of individual's experience, the responsibility of the arts organisation and beyond a focus on institutional relations typically foregrounded in arts governance. The artists who were interviewed over the course of this research, at whichever stage of their careers, appeared confident in their creative and personal identities, but articulated issues of perception and lack of knowledge in their arts environment (such as those discussed in chapter IV). Those issues included being ethnically typecast on stage or screen or through their practice, balancing the expectations of the creative use of their cultural heritage, a desire for peer and family support networks and an industry which lacks an understanding of their practices. A multicultural arts milieu can be

used to gauge changes within that environment, such as whether the milieu can encompass the increasing numbers of artists who express multiple identities, and also how artists keep pace with changes in intercultural arts practices. The concept of a multicultural arts milieu contests the perception that multicultural arts are outmoded and static, and provides a way to locate the dynamic shifts of arts practice. The idea opens up possibilities across the arts spectrum for practitioners to consider how they may wish to contribute to an environment that holds all the aspects of the UNESCO "culture cycles" in play (Mar and Ang 2015: 11). A supportive multicultural arts milieu could become an open invitation to participate, to provide spaces for collaboration, negotiation, new ideas and active profiling of multicultural arts work.

The idea was also developed in part through the reluctance by the Australia Council to engage in a transparent manner with multicultural issues (as discussed in chapter V). A supportive multicultural arts milieu does not deny, but conceptually offers a chance to move from the history of embattled discourse (even if, for some artists, their experience may remain embattled) to opportunities for the Australia Council to exert an influential role beyond that of the "instrumental" (Blonski 1992: 3). The most agile approaches contributing to the milieu are those discussed in chapter VI, whereby creative and organisational leadership combine to make a systemic difference (charted in appendices 4 and 5) as to the development, production and presentation of culturally diverse arts. The impetus for this particular case study's process was stimulated by the friction caused by the marginalised position of Asian-Australian actors and performance on the mainstage. This concluding chapter reflects on the role of friction and the function of trust to generate traction towards sustained change in the arts and the modes of leadership that can cultivate that traction.

Creative Use of Friction

The metaphor of 'friction' contains the potential for productive and creative results as a source of inspiration and innovation; it is used in this thesis to explain some of the creative, social and political experiences of 'NESB' artists working in Australia today. The practices reveal creative choices across a complex spectrum of arts and artforms. Despite this, many mainstream major performing arts companies retain a heritage arts view of multicultural arts, holding a historical association with cultural maintenance which demarcates it from mainstream arts (Blonski 1992; Hawkins 1993; Khan *et al.* 2013). Some artists, even international experts in specific traditional artforms, feel that the arts industry continues to see them as relevant primarily to ethnic community cultural maintenance (Gonsalves 2017). One response of this assumption is that, over the decades, 'NESB' artists have explored artistic innovation through a spectrum of creative processes. The spectrum discussed in chapter II ranges from ethno-specific, intra-cultural, bi-cultural, intercultural, cross-cultural and, more recently to transcultural categories. These 'multicultural arts' or 'hybrid' practices are at the forefront of collaborative practices able to engage with the complex multiplicity of Australian ethnic and cultural identities. This thesis argues that the creative developments by artists who engage across ethnically-defined cultures dynamically increase the multicultural arts repertoire. This thesis provides an insight into the range of that repertoire, often developed through a creativity arising from friction between cultural forms, whether innovative or traditional, and positions these practices into a more 'everyday' experience of how art-based cross-cultural interactions can occur.

Far from seeing friction as inherently problematic the thesis argues that, the nature of artistic practice and multicultural challenges to settled notions of identity, show how friction can be creatively, organisationally and politically productive. I argue that the frictions around

multicultural arts policy recur in cycles, and that these begin when artists critique their creative environment and the funding institution, which nationally is primarily the Australia Council, acknowledges and directs attention their issues. This attention invariably wanes when the Australia Council shifts its focus elsewhere; historically, this cycle repeats itself when faced with the continuing issues raised by 'NESB' artists. Television and stage actor and presenter, Lex Marinos, notes that the calls for change by practitioners within the performing arts industry occur every four or five years (L. Marinos 2015, interview). This thesis has shown that the institutional cycle takes around ten years, because each decade since the 1970s has seen a renewed advocacy push by practitioners for change, a cycle that has recently begun again (Diversity Arts Australia 2017).

The contributions that arise from discourse and advocacy are valuable but this thesis suggests that the most effective impact occurs through the presentation of artworks which successfully engage with Australian cultural difference. In this way, the artist takes on a socio-political as well as creative leadership role in the multicultural arts milieu; this, in part, requires the ability to develop trusting relationships with any number of agencies and partners.

Establishing Trust

The thesis has foregrounded the productive nature of friction and suggests that it is most likely to be productive when there are: established relations of trust with the multicultural arts milieu and the wider arts scene; relations of trust between artists; and between artists and key organisations within the sector. This is a role for "cultural brokers" (Kurin 1997: 17) which involve artists and dedicated multicultural arts organisations initiating and persisting with the brokering processes that establish trust.

The function of trust in this thesis has been to tease out some of the intercultural relationships as well as gaps between the 'NESB' artist and the mainstream arts sector. Up until the recent past, arts policy has been used to address those gaps, but increasingly the gaps are taken up by the artists to manage. This thesis has explored the use of trust as a way to productively engage 'NESB' artists' experiences in changing the dynamics of the arts sectors. Trust has been most succinctly defined as a "specific solution to risk" (Luhmann 2000: 95). This is a definition which justifies the inclusion of trust across the full spectrum of the arts sectors including the artist, funding institutions and presenting organisations. In its most basic definition, "trust is established when you do what you say you would do", and in an ethical manner with the "processes, platforms and people" in place (Punt and Bateman 2018: 39). Taken in an even wider sense, there is the potential for significant outcomes when trust is reciprocated because "theories of trust can serve as a tool to become aware of the human ability to cooperate" (Weltecke 2008: 391).

The issues raised by the interviewees highlight numerous occasions where there is a need for trust in the arts. Interviewees advised how experiences of a lack of trust in their creative endeavours can be correlated to a lack of understanding on the part of 'arts gatekeepers' across facets such as: devising content, securing funding, presenting and marketing. This thesis argues that the potential for a broader multicultural arts milieu expands when trust is evident between the artist, institutional staff and advisors, arts organisations and the public.

Methods to Generate Trust

This thesis argues that there are several methods that the arts can employ to increase participation of 'NESB' artists. Some methods suggest simulacrums of trust are more suited to institutions and can be stimulated through transactional means such as conditions on

funding. Other approaches stimulate more trusting working relationships through different means of organisational interactions.

The Australian screen sector, for example, has successfully used quotas to improve gender parity (Castagna 2017). An approach adopted by the ACE stipulates the conditions of socio-economic inclusion in the awarding of a particular arts grant (Arts Council England 2018). The Australia Council has not used quotas for multicultural arts practice since the late 1990s. However, implicitly acknowledging their low levels of funding, a recent Australia Council strategic goal aims to reach previous levels of 14 percent of their funding towards 'CALD' artists and organisations by 2020. They have yet to publicly state how this will be achieved (Australia Council 2016).

Another method of trust combines transactional and relational forms of leadership, such as the protocols for non-Indigenous people working with Indigenous artists. These protocols address issues of respect, behaviour and intellectual property (Janke 2016) and are transparent and transactional because they explicitly articulate the conditions under which this kind of cross-cultural work can occur.

Another way to acknowledge trust is through a relational mode of leadership which can be seen in the use of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), whereby the parties enter into an agreement which they jointly develop based on agreed and perceived mutual benefits. MoUs are developed after a period of familiarisation which has led to greater understanding between the parties.

Opportunities to increase familiarity may also establish trust because of the increased exposure of the artists to the sector leaders and vice versa. Previous AMA-supported examples with those aims included the kultour multicultural arts touring program, and the Multicultural Arts Professional Development program (discussed in chapters II and V). The

work of CAAP discussed in chapter VI provides a conduit for trust between Asian-Australian writers and mainstream creative producers.

Trust needs to be evident between the artist and the institution and can be found through the exposure of 'NESB' artists as assessment and advisory peers. The role of the Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee (ACMAC) had, during its years of operation, been effective in developing generations of artist advocates and stimulating sector-wide critical discourse. As discussed in chapter V, the process to equip 'NESB' artists as peers and advocates within the institutional setting of the Australia Council has yet to be replaced. Further research would be valuable into the establishment of a structured program to ensure those capacities can be well-developed in future generations.

In these ways, trust acts as a hinge which articulates and enables communication between the range of players across any given multicultural art project. This thesis considers several moments when trust is most apparent and most challenged, and argues that the results of establishing trust can generate traction towards a robust, ethnically-diverse arts sector.

Generating Traction

Traction suggests both grip and movement. It can be generated through the creative use of friction in conjunction with a trusting environment. This thesis argues that processes of generating traction will lead to longer-term change and reduce cycles of limited change. The main idea developed through this thesis is that traction is generated when 'NESB' artists and arts organisations with aligned goals work together, utilising and acknowledging their different sets of expertise, resources and influence. Long-term traction will also depend on issues of equitable resourcing and the development of platforms to enable succession of leadership roles. Both issues are yet to be resolved for 'NESB' artists and multicultural arts organisations. The work entailed in maintaining the partnership momentum must be

financially validated, otherwise the 'NESB" artist or multicultural arts organisation will always be the unsustainable 'volunteer' in the process. I argue it is the artist and cultural practitioner whose persistence leads to creative, institutional and organisational change by revealing the dynamic nature of Australian identities and asking the arts sector to engage with the creative potential of multicultural Australia.

The successful transitions into the mainstream afforded through the case study discussed in chapter VI, the *Lotus* programme, highlights how swiftly creative capacities can build when the leaders of the organisations share similar values and aims. The skill bases of both organisations working in concert encompass the full range from development through to presentation of the "UNESCO culture cycles value chain" (Mar and Ang 2015: 11). The creative and organisational leadership roles demonstrated through the *Lotus* programme go beyond an economic value chain proposition. The plays resulting from the *Lotus* project exemplify how those processes combine "economic and symbolic values that radiate in unpredictable ways" (Mar and Ang 2015: 12). Some of those unpredictable ways include audience reception and how that reception depends on presentation and marketing context. Most significantly, this process for the production of performing arts can be adapted to other art spheres, to provide an alternative to the traditional 'placement' model of one 'NESB' artist in a large organisation.

The thesis argues that the 'pathway' processes and range of partnerships developed by CAAP and PWA in the *Lotus* program reinforce a productive phase towards the next step in a professional career, recognition by industry and programming that expands audiences. The creative and organisational skills of the artists share the characteristics of persistence; steadfast adherence to their vision and flexibility in its realisation; highly nuanced negotiation skills and a commitment to change beyond their immediate sphere. The artists and the multicultural arts milieu to which they contribute form what Ahmed describes as the

'backbone' of diversity work (2012: 139). Such artists take on the responsibility for diversity in the arts as they wish to see them, rather than engaging only with often-tokenistic options offered by institutions or mainstream organisations suffering from "equity fatigue" (Ahmed 2012: 90).

> Because diversity and race equality are not already mainstream – because everything is "not okay" – we need support, specialisms and drivers. Practitioners or experts provide a backbone. When mainstreaming is taken up as if it describes what already exists, then mainstreaming is used by the organisations to avoid appointing specialists in the area, or indeed to avoid giving diversity and equality the additional support that it needs (2012: 139).

The avoidance Ahmed observes regarding mainstreaming applies to the scaling back of dedicated multicultural arts programs which began in 2008 with the end of support of ACMAC and the low participation rates of NESB artists (see chapters II and V). Chapters IV and VI highlight methods that successfully intervene in the prevailing temporary 'one-off project' nature of multicultural arts practice in Australia to establish more visible pathways. These pathways are examples of creative and organisational leadership working in concert and demonstrate a new version of the 'backbone' of Australian multicultural arts practice in which a more robust multicultural arts milieu could emerge. Chapter IV asserts that it is the 'NESB' artists themselves who show leadership to "make a new door" to gain entrance to the arts industry (Badami 2017). Chapter V analyses a range of frictions caused by the types of consultation with artists as leaders and peers at the institutional site of the Australia Council. The chapter argues that, over the last decade, the Australia Council has retreated from a previous leadership position through a lack of any 'cultural diversity' strategies that encourage greater participation by 'NESB' artists. The significant redirection of federal and state funding away from multicultural arts organisations (see table 4 in chapter V) is

compounded by the absence of an identifiable national creative centre or hub for producing arts in a multicultural Australia. Chapter VI discusses the benefits of NESB artists and groups that work with receptive arts organisations which have the capacity to produce their work.

Recent History of the Arts in a Multicultural Australia

Chapter III addresses the gap in the history of the AMA policy since the late 1990s by providing an account of the aims, results and issues arising from the AMA 2000 and AMA 2006 policies. A summary timeline of how the overall arts in a multicultural Australia have developed is provided in appendix 2. The AMA 2000 policy brought together tradition and innovation and profiled individual artists' practices as well as their roles in the arts and wider community. By taking this focus, the policy attempted to alter perceptions of multicultural artists as only being relevant in a cultural community setting with its attendant low status in the arts world; this was a purposeful shift which has been acknowledged by researchers (Rentschler *et al.* 2008: iv). The various prongs of this policy addressed a spectrum of issues through: the professional and creative development program of MAPD; the national multicultural arts organisation network of kultour which toured multicultural arts practices; and two international conferences with associated publications and expert roundtable discussions. The AMA 2006 policy identified its renewed focus in the areas of leadership, participation and creative production, including between Indigenous and 'NESB' artists. The Australia Council allocated three-year funding to three multicultural arts organisations to increase their presentation and promotion skills and hosted symposium events. *Making Creative Cities: the value of cultural diversity in the arts* was the last formal AMA international event. Held in conjunction with the British Council in 2008, the forum pointed out the value of different leadership modes for cultural difference in the arts. This thesis has

taken that a step further and identified some relevant modes of leadership in three domains of the arts.

Creative Leadership

This thesis uses three domains of arts leadership to explore the tensions associated with the participation of 'NESB' artists and the fostering of multicultural arts practices. The artists demonstrate creative leadership, for example, in their capacities of social, creative and political agency within the Australian arts sector. Alongside their hybrid identities, 'NESB' artists also develop capacities to navigate differences arising from intercultural (in terms of artistic practice as well as ethnicity), intergenerational and linguistic spheres. Their navigation of the arts industry is often from a marginal position which, in the past, has prompted an almost inevitably political response towards change in the arts. These political responses include: pushing the boundaries of traditional, conventional and perceptions of the canon, and creative adaptations of their cultural heritages. All of these elements are aspects that define a multicultural arts milieu. Creative leaders take on the additional mantle to shift that milieu to one which provides greater support and understanding of their arts practices.

Throughout this thesis, the theme of creativity from friction identifies creative leadership as a key driver contributing to a multicultural arts sector. Creative leadership includes those artists who lead "just by making art", as Valamanesh, the visual artist discussed in chapter IV, observed. However, I argue that creative leadership is more evident in those who also create spaces or pathways for other artists – whether as mentors, through peer networks or establishing arts organisations to increase creative opportunities for 'NESB' artists. Individual artists are often seen as torch-bearers of cultural translation, a perception that both reifies and implicitly limits how many artists of similar 'NESB' backgrounds can carry such a torch. Papastergiadis observes that arguments for expanding the "cultural

boundaries of art (are accompanied by a) fetishization of the alterity" of the marginalised artist who acts as translator between periphery and the centre (2000: 134). He also observes that recognition of the influence of those individual artists has not been met with similar arts educational and industry frameworks to understand the significance of cultural differences (Papastergiadis 2000: 134).

I argue that creative leadership is demonstrated when the artist recognises the need to forge some of those frameworks, and in doing so, goes beyond their own practice. In this way, the charismatic and transformational form of leadership mostly associated with individual practitioners is altered through a closer attentiveness to the needs of other artists. This suggests the iterative communication process through "attunement" (Gibson 2005: 271), a process I also argue is relevant across all domains of leadership, and is particularly appropriate in the complex environments which stimulate the practices of 'NESB' artists.

Institutional Leadership

The conceptual understanding of institutional leadership in this thesis refer to those needed for both management and advocates. Transactional leadership clarifies responsibilities and relational leadership is likely to generate a culture that will see those responsibilities embedded in the most effective ways. Chapter V explored both, the internal management responses of the Australia Council and how 'NESB' artists' interactions with that management led to adjusted policy responses for the arts in a multicultural Australia. Three traits can be discerned in the institutional response over the historical arc of the Australia Council from the 1970s to the 2010s. The first trait is that multicultural issues are discarded in times of financial constraint and internal instability, which suggests that the arts in a multicultural Australia are not a core area of concern. When the will is present to address uneven responses to the creative potential of multicultural Australia, it is linked to a second

trait of sustained support for and use of multicultural advisory committees (Blonski 1992: 1-5). A third trait demonstrates engagement by the Australia Council when being directly informed by 'NESB' artists as part of the institution's overall strategic direction, as was the case with the AMA 2000 policy.

During the implementation stage of AMA 2006, the Australia Council concluded its historical relationship of sustained engagement with 'NESB' artists as artform board appointments and expert policy advisors. Regardless of how fraught or fruitful that engagement had been, ACMAC had been a mainstay of the Australia Council's work that made a space for complex creative and policy discourse. According to the empirical research for this thesis and discussed in chapter III, ACMAC provided a regular conduit between the arts sector and the Australia Council, contributed significantly to the discourse for multicultural arts and was central to the direction taken by the institution. This thesis argues that Australia Council's decision to end ACMAC in 2008 is linked to its subsequent decline in leadership for multicultural arts. As at May 2018, a policy response from the Australia Council regarding the arts in a multicultural Australia has yet to be fully articulated.

When a history is neither documented nor critically reflected upon, the risk of unproductive circularity of debates and repetitive institutional responses increases. When the research for this thesis began in 2014, the AMA 2006 policy was the extant statement on the Australia Council's approach to the arts in a multicultural Australia. By the end of the study however, references to multicultural arts policy have disappeared from the Australia Council's website; this also shows their institutional retreat from this area. The goal to increase grants to 'CALD' artists is not accompanied by a published 'cultural diversity' plan; this signals that AMA 2006 is their final policy, until a change of leadership may prompt a different institutional approach.

Organisational Leadership

Cross-cultural competencies have been shown in this thesis as essential skills for navigating a 'hyper diverse' multicultural Australia, and that the cultural aspects, such as the arts and media, of multiculturalism that attract the most resistance to long-term inclusion. This thesis argues that it is the artists from diverse ethnic backgrounds who are taking the responsibility of increasing the level of culturally diverse creative production. This is most effectively achieved when leaders of arts organisations form partnerships to equitably share knowledge and resources to develop and present new multicultural arts content.

Several ways that traction can be generated are found in the leadership modes evident throughout the case studies explored in this thesis. In chapter IV, the writer and director, Shakthidharan, drew on the infrastructure of a major arts presenter, Carriageworks. The development phase has lasted over a decade and is still not complete. This points to Shakthidharan's persistence and negotiations with mainstage companies to co-direct his play; demonstrating transformational leadership because of the charismatic personality of this artist. This case study exemplifies a persistent friction which eroded the resistance to eventually develop equitable trust. The caveat is that the trust will not be equitable until the issue of remuneration is addressed for 'NESB' artists. kultour was a successful example of distributed leadership that activated networks, that foundered in the face of funders' expectations around 'mainstreaming'. In chapter VI, I explored how the small performing arts company, CAAP, led by actor and director, Shun Wah in collaboration with arts industry organisation, PWA, led by arts manager, Roseman, fast-tracks the work of Asian-Australian writers into the performing arts mainstage arena. Shun Wah demonstrates creative leadership in the form of accompaniment through the creative enabling processes. Both Shun Wah and Roseman display organisational transformational leadership through the partnerships developed on behalf of aspiring artists.

Conclusion

The concept of a more productive multicultural arts milieu forms from the space that is opened up through multicultural arts practices and discourse. It is also partly formed by having to address the inadequacies within this space, whether it is in the area of policy, discourse or practice. The milieu holds a number of tensions in play: institutional and mainstream diversity 'fatigue' which lead to occasional token responses rather than systemic change; low financial and creative participation rates of 'NESB' artists; continued advocacy of NESB artists; and formation of delicate partnerships between organisations dedicated to improving the conditions in the multicultural arts milieu. In the last twelve months, a productive shift can be discerned in theatre through the increased numbers of scripts which are presented on stage. This shift, partly documented in this thesis, has been led by a handful of determined 'NESB' artists over the past several years to address their ongoing marginalised position in the arts.

This thesis has explored the creative responses through artists' agency, including their interactions through governance in the federal arts institution and the opportunities for swifter change in the profile of creative content through organisational partnership. The projects presented in this thesis are not large in scale but are influential in their potential scope. Their ability to scale up is dependent on understandings of the finesse of their niche approaches. Taken one by one, each project can be seen as small wins, but in combination they show the resilient capacity of the artists to continue the 'fight' and, in confluence with mainstream organisations, energise a productive multicultural arts milieu.

This thesis has argued that there has been limited success in conventional forms of the occasional placement of an 'NESB' artist into a mainstream arts organisation, or even as part-time 'champions' within the federal funding agency. The significance of the partnership

between CAAP and PWA (discussed in chapter VI) is that both companies maintain their specific creative and organisational identities and capabilities to achieve mutual aims. Multicultural Arts Victoria (MAV) is the most successful multicultural arts organisation in Australia in terms of longevity and current traction in secured funding that provides appropriate remuneration for staff and artists (Multicultural Arts Victoria 2018). A national equivalent for multicultural arts practices could expand the MAV remit and partnership approach into a national focus. Such a national equivalent could take the form of an artform 'flagship' company as envisioned by Paul through her ambitions for the *Theatre of Rhythm and Dance* project (Paul 2018), or take up the blueprint of the far broader *Art + Cultural Difference + Global Collaboration* Workshop (outlined in appendix 3) which proposed that academics, bureaucrats, artists and organisations partner in dialogue and action to see a more supportive multicultural arts milieu.

General leadership courses are proliferating in the arts in Australia and would benefit from a critical assessment to identify the extent to which the curriculum addresses the arts in a multicultural Australia, or whether the tendency is to replicate the standard management practices of arts industry. The UK's Clore Foundation arts leadership program, for example, has developed curriculum that has diversity as its central aim (Clore Leadership Foundation n.d.). The range of leadership issues to be addressed in Australia includes addressing the capabilities required as a 'NESB' peer assessor and multicultural arts advisor. The opportunity to gain that experience has diminished significantly with the disbanding of ACMAC and the introduction of short-term peer assessors.

Capacity-building within the institutional setting is also accompanied by the palpable need for 'NESB' artist networks. The need for access to supportive peers continues to be raised specifically by 'NESB' artists (Stevenson *et al.* 2017: 54). The reinvigoration of national opportunities to develop current critical discourse could go part way to addressing

this issue. The previous conferences and publications supported through ACMAC remain a key legacy, but have not been revisited on a similar international scale since the 2004 *Empires, Ruins + Networks* conference. The artistic opportunities afforded through the friction of an increasingly diverse society remain at the cutting edge of cultural production that would benefit from well-curated conferencing and publications.

Despite the proactive and creative energies of the artists, the findings of this research indicate that the issues for the arts in a multicultural Australia have not diminished. The 'NESB' artists in this research lead the arts sector across creative, institutional and organisational activities in several ways. They do the 'work' that symbolises the complexity of cultural identities. They do the 'work' to negotiate with the mainstage and gallery directors and engage diverse audiences. They are entrepreneurial. They have to be – there is limited government support for their work. They carry the burden and take the risk of untangling the representation of complex Australian lives.

This thesis has been framed by meta-themes of leadership across three domains of the arts sector and the relationship between practice and policy and the environment that surrounds the artist. The thesis explores the experiences and creative endeavours of the artists and the ways their artworks articulate complex understandings and how they creatively lead as artists, citizens and activists, as 'ethnic' and Australian. Organisational leadership can be seen in artists and arts organisations who work towards a different multicultural arts milieu: one which is supportive that expands the aesthetic canon of the arts to include their practices and also a different Australia, which is both more inclusive of difference and more open to engagement with creative work. Institutional leadership for the arts in a multicultural Australia policies articulate a quest for change but the processes need to be carefully tailored, well supported and continual. The thesis presents art sector examples of "detailed attention to the very *process* of creating a sense of 'we' in the face of our heterogeneity" (italics in

original, 2003a: 33). I argue it is the artists who make creative meaning from the 'friction' caused by the contestations and negotiations of multicultural Australia and gain the trust to generate traction for structural change.

Appendix 1

Participant Biographies

Interviewees

Jennifer Bott. Interview date: May 20, 2015.

Bott is Director of the Portrait Gallery Canberra ACT and was CEO of the Australia Council.

Panos Couros. Interview date: September 9, 2016.

Couros is a freelance media artist and sound designer.

Lisa Havilah. Interview date: May 27, 2015.

Havilah is CEO of Carriageworks which is a contemporary multi-arts centre based in Redfern, Sydney.

Su Hoyle. Interview date: July 7, 2015.

Hoyle was Director of England's Clore Leadership Programme.

Abid Hussain. Interview date: July 7, 2015.

Hussain is the Senior Manager for Diversity at Arts Council England, the national development agency for the arts in England.

Deborah Klika. Interview date: May 8, 2015.

Klika is academic and television comedy script writer. She is a former chair of Australia Council's CCDB, ACMAC and Youth arts.

Konstantine Koukias. Interview date: August 17, 2015

Koukias is a 'Greek-Tasmanian' composer and the Artistic Director of the experimental opera company IHOS Opera now based in Amsterdam.

Anna Lau. Interview date: August 17, 2015.

Lau is a playwright and blogger and a young woman of Taiwanese-Malaysian parentage. Lau was working as a receptionist at the Sydney Theatre Company.

Sean Ly. Interview date: May 28, 2015.

Ly is 24-year-old Cambodian-Australian was a youth arts organiser for Fairfield Council and Assistant Director on CuriousWorks' feature film *Riz*. Ly has since enrolled in a Tertiary and Further Education course to gain a Youth Worker certificate.

Vinh Nguyen. Interview date: May 28, 2015.

Nguyen, a 24-year-old freelance videographer studied at University of Technology Sydney and whose parents came to Australia as Vietnamese refugees.

Lex Marinos. Interview date: May 12, 2015.

Marinos is a Greek-Australian actor, presenter, writer and director for screen, stage and radio. He is former deputy chair of the Australia Council, chair of CCDB and ACMAC.

Pino Migliorino. Interview date: April 5, 2017.

Migliorino is Chair and Managing Director, Cultural Perspectives Group.

Frank Panucci. Interview date: May 20, 2015.

Panucci is the Executive Director, Arts Funding and Engagement, Australia Council for the Arts. The Australia Council is the federal government's arts funding and advisory agency.

Annalouise Paul. Interview date: May 5, 2015.

Paul is a dancer, choreographer and actor who has been practicing internationally for over 30 years. She established *intercultural dialogues* in 2011 and established Groundswell in NSW.

Bong Ramilo. Interview date: May 6, 2015.

Ramilo is the Director of Darwin Community Arts (DCA) and a musician.

Ramilo was a member of kultour.

S. Shakthidharan. Interview date: May 5, 2015.

Shakthidharan is a community engaged artist and playwright. He is the founder and creative director of CuriousWorks.

Annette Shun Wah. Interview date: June 3, 2015.

Shun Wah is the Executive Producer at Contemporary Asian Australia Performance, Sydney. She is a broadcaster, writer, producer of television and theatre.

Tim Roseman. Interview date: June 9, 2015.

Roseman is the CEO of Playwriting Australia. He is a director, dramaturg and producer.

Playwriting Australia develops and champions new Australian stories for the stage.

Nicholas Tsoutas. Interview date: April 5, 2017.

Tsoutas is a visual arts curator and was a member of ACMAC.

Sandar Tun. Interview date: December 9, 2015.

Tun is an emerging community arts worker at DCA.

Hossein Valamanesh. Interview date: December 9, 2015.

Valamanesh is a visual artist born in Iran and graduated from the School of Fine Art in

Tehran in 1970. He exhibits frequently in Australia and overseas.

Email Correspondence

Annette Blonski is a script writer and film director.

Her email communication was received on September 9, 2017.

Linda Cooper is director of Ninti One and was a member of ACMAC.

Her email communication was received on December 14, 2016.

Teresa Crea is a Research Associate at the Centre for Creative and Cultural Research at the

University of Canberra and was a member of ACMAC.

Her email communication was received on December 19, 2016.

Connie Gregory is a literary editor and was a member of ACMAC.

Her email communication was received on December 19, 2016.

Kon Gouriotis is a freelance arts writer and was a member of ACMAC.

His email communication was received on February 28, 2017.

Fotis Kapetopoulos manages Kape Communications and was a member of ACMAC.

His email communication was received on December 4, 2016.

Tiffany Lee-Shoy is a Manager at Fairfield City Council and was a member of ACMAC.

Her email communication was received on December 19, 2016.

Lena Nahlous is the Director of Diversity Arts Australia.

Her email communication was received on 30 August, 2017.

S. Shakthidharan's email communication was received on October 19, 2017.

Appendix 2

Table 5. Chronology of multicultural arts policy at the Australia Council	
Year	Multicultural arts policy stage at the Australia Council
1967	Prime Minister Holt established the Australian Council for the Arts as part of the Prime Minister's Department with an allocation of $4.6 million (Gardiner-Garden 2009: 1).
1968	First meeting of Australia Council for the Arts Chaired by Dr. H.C. Coombs
1973	Prime Minister Gough Whitlam established the Council (based on the British and Canadian models) with 24 Councillors and seven boards: Aboriginal arts, crafts, film and television, literature, music, theatre and visual arts with funds of $14 million (Gardiner-Garden 2009: 2).
1974	An Ethnic Arts Committee was formed and chaired by Evasio Costanzo (Gardiner-Garden 1994: 16).
1974-5	The Community Arts Committee distributed $44,682 to "ethnic projects" which was 4.5% of their total budget for 1974-1975 (Hawkins 1993: 42).
1975	The Australia Council Act was legislated as a statutory body. The Ethnic Arts Committee was disbanded (Gardiner-Garden 1994:16).
1976	Staff surveyed support for ethnic arts in Australia for the Australia Council (Blonski 1992: 7).
1977	Prime Minister Fraser announced a Community Arts Board would be established (Gardiner-Garden 1994: 15).

1975-78	Australia Council trebled assistance to ethnic groups (Australia Council 1978: 9).
1978	The *Galbally Report: A Review of Post-Arrival Programs and Services for Migrants* found the Australia Council was "deficient" and recommended increased connections with "ethnic communities" and redress budgetry inequalities for "ethnic arts" (Gardiner-Garden 1994: 16).
1980	A committee met twice to consider Council's response to the Galbally report but did not institute "programs or policy initiatives". (Blonski 1992:7)
1982	Institute of Multicultural Affairs found Galbally's recommendations not addressed (Blonksi: 1992:6).
1982	Council accepted Galbally's recommendations and employed an ethnic arts officer. $250,000 dedicated to ethnic arts activity to be matched by the Boards (Australia Council 1982: 17-18).
1985	Terminology shifted from "ethnic" arts to "multicultural" arts coincided with the establishment of the Multicultural Advisory Committee. The central Incentive Fund allocation for multicultural arts was reported to be $1,030,000 in 1984-85 (Australia Council 1985: 36).
1986	Multicultural arts were defined during this time as the "practice of artistic traditions (popular, folk, or high arts) of immigrants and people descendant from non-English speaking backgrounds". $1.3 million or 3 percent of Council funding supported the multicultural arts policy (Jupp in Bennett 2001: 269).
1988	A national conference, *Arts Policy for a Multicultural Australia,* held in Adelaide, a joint initiative of the Multicultural Artworkers Committee of South Australia, the CCDU and the Office of Multicultural Affairs (Australia Council 1988: 22-23).

1990	Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee (ACMAC) established by membership of each artform board and ATSIA to develop policy (Australia Council 1991: 12).
1991-92	The Council's overall AMA expenditure for the year was 8.8 percent (Australia Council 1992: 21).
1991-92	The Australia Council and the Office of Multicultural Affairs co-sponsored the National Arts for a Multicultural Australia Working Party composed of all state arts funding authorities and Ethnic Affairs Commissions to develop AMA policies across Australia. This was endorsed by the Cultural Ministers' Council and the Immigration and Ethnic Affairs Ministers' Council (Australia Council 1992: 22).
1993	Arts for a Multicultural Australia 1993 policy released. "It is increasingly acknowledged that Australia derives enormous advantages from its cultural diversity" (Australia Council 1994: 27).
1999	Council released a draft discussion paper in the lead up to the next AMA policy. ACMAC noted that "over the past decade the field, and even the definition and use of the term multiculturalism has broadened to encompass a wide variety of arts practice and content" (Jupp in Bennett: 2001: 270).
2000	Arts in a Multicultural Australia 2000 launched. The key characteristics of the AMA policy include a five-year strategic vision that is outwardly focused and applies real investments in the field (Australia Council 2001: 21-22).
2000-2005	More than $2million in dedicated funds to AMA initiatives is expended (Keating *et al.* n.d.).
2002	*Art + Globalisation + Cultural Difference* international conference held in Sydney

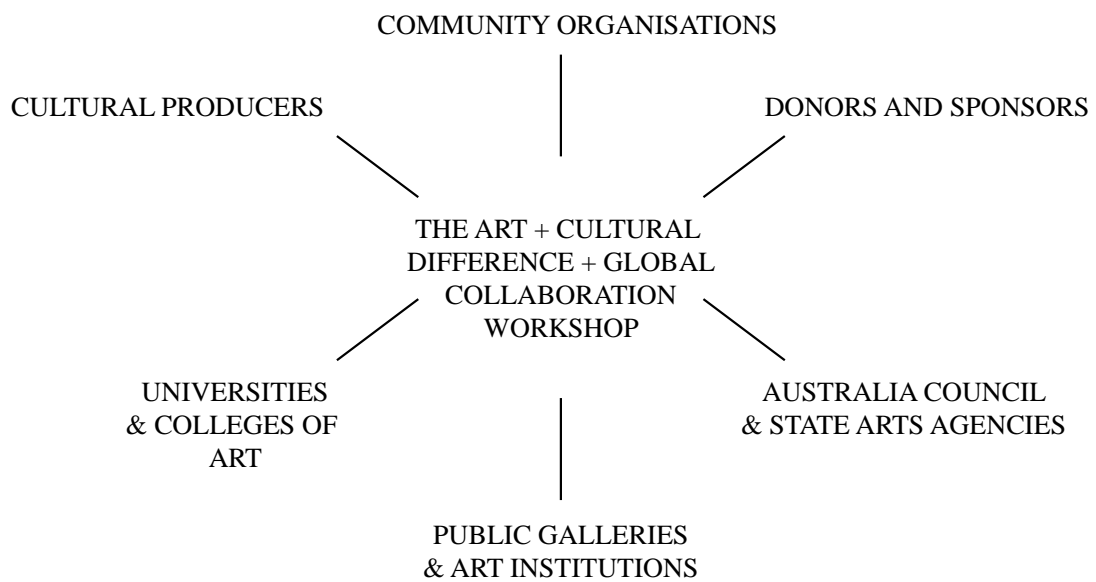|	
	(Papastergiadis 2003).
2003	*Empires Ruins and Networks* international conference held in Melbourne (McGuire and Papastergiadis (eds) 2004).
2004	A review of the AMA policy began in July to assess the extent, to which the objectives were achieved, current issues in the field, and strategies for 2005 (Australia Council 2004: 17).
2004	The Australia Council met all of its applicable key performance indicators against *The Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* (Australia Council 2004: 50).
2005	AMA 2000 Evaluation report presented to Council.
2006	ACMAC develops AMA 2006 policy. Australia Council ratifies AMA 2006 policy with $600,000 over three years (Australia Council 2007).
2007	*Multiculturalism for the 21st Century* held at Parliament House in November. Senior bureaucrats from each state and territory, academics and artists attend. (Australia Council 2007).
2007	ACMAC is disbanded in December (Australia Council 2009: 20).
2008	The Cultural Engagement Framework (CEF) introduced and includes the arts in a multicultural Australia (Australia Council 2009: 20).
2009-2011	The Australia Council and the then Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission partner in a $660,000 initiative with Muslim Australians, to build cultural participation, skills and mutual respect (Australia Council 2009: 20).
2011	The Australia Council Corporate Plan contains two 'multicultural' references.

	'Diverse' however occurs many times and with reference to a range of administrative, strategic or artistic pursuits (Australia Council 2011: 39, 42).
2014	Increased participation in the arts in underrepresented communities includes: regional Australia, disability, young people, cultural diversity, emerging communities, Indigenous people, and remote Indigenous communities" (Australia Council 2013-14: 24).
2016	The Corporate Plan aims for 14 percent target to 'CALD' artists (Australia Council 2016b).
2017	Major Performing Arts companies can apply for increased funds to work with artists across all diversity areas (Australia Council n.d.e).
2018	The AMA policies are no longer found on the Australia Council website.

Appendix 3

Figure 1: Art + Cultural Difference + Global Collaboration Workshop

1. Partners in the Art + Cultural Difference + Global Collaboration Workshop

COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

CULTURAL PRODUCERS

DONORS AND SPONSORS

THE ART + CULTURAL
DIFFERENCE + GLOBAL
COLLABORATION
WORKSHOP

UNIVERSITIES
& COLLEGES OF
ART

AUSTRALIA COUNCIL
& STATE ARTS AGENCIES

PUBLIC GALLERIES
& ART INSTITUTIONS

(Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee n.d.b).

Appendix 4

Figure 1: CAAP and PWA. Cycle of change using creative and organisational leadership

Artist ⇨ CAAP identifies
a viable creative
process for change ⇲

PWA recognises
their diversity gap
and seeks ways
to address it ⇲

⇧ CAAP and PWA
in partnership

more Asian-Australian
artists are involved

⇧ ⇩

contribution to a initial play
multicultural arts milieu development

⇩

⇱ workshops

increased relevance ⇩
to diverse audiences

playreading by
⇱ professional actors
and directors

increased profile
of artists ⇱
and companies

showcase to
performing arts industry

⇱ possible national
or regional tour ⇲

⇱ public presentation ⇦ selection by
mainstage

Figure 2: Cycle of change using creative and organisational leadership

NESB artist group
identifies a viable
creative process
for change

s-m org recognises
their diversity gap

seeks ways
to address it

both form
a partnership

more NESB
artists are involved

initial project
development

contribution to a
multicultural arts milieu

workshops

increased relevance
to diverse audiences

engagement with
other artists

increased profile
of artists
and companies

showcase to
arts industry

possible national
or regional tour

public presentation

selection by
mainstage

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