

# A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

## HELEN SALMON

Dear Friends,

2018 has been a year of great change, and it has been fascinating to see the shifts in the UK Australia relationship during my first year as Country Director.

Our Asia Pacific region is in the global spotlight. As our two governments move toward stronger trade ties the importance of our multifaceted relationship is increasingly apparent. In July, I participated in the UK Australia Leadership Forum, which included a session on how we can work together to further strengthen our cultural relations across arts, education and society. Australia is now the third largest market for British arts and culture after the USA and Europe, with our universities continuing to collaborate closely on thousands of research projects.

This is a pivotal time for the UK Australia relationship. As dual citizen I am passionate about seizing this opportunity to better know each other as the modern, nuanced and diverse nations we are. My role at the British Council is to build mutual understanding and this happens best through direct people to people experience and open dialogue.

In 2018 we have frequently seen that connection embodied – be it the robust challenge and camaraderie at the Commonwealth Women of the World in Brisbane, the bonds of shared experience among Invictus Games athletes, or the ongoing impact of ACCELERATE which initiated international relationships between First Nations arts and cultural industry leaders and over 250 British artists and organisations.

This year we were proud to launch INTERSECT with Diversity Arts Australia (DARTS) and Creative Victoria. INTERSECT is seeking to create opportunity and address barriers, focusing on who decides whose work is seen, what is seen, how it is seen and who sees it. By connecting culturally diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programming decision makers we hope to support platforms for art in the UK and Australia that better reflect, resonate with and enrich our whole society. Candy Bowers said of her experience in London, “The ability to see and hear each other on a level that is rarely fostered was transformative”.

New collaborations are already emerging from INTERSECT, such as Candy’s Australian iteration of Inua Ellams’ *Rhythm And Poetry Party* (or R.A.P Party) in Melbourne; Mikala Tai’s new exhibition at 4A for Contemporary Art, *By All Estimates*, featuring UK video and visual artist Erika Tan; and Abid Hussain’s talk on The Creative Case for Diversity at Sydney Opera House.



Next year we will launch with DARTS a digital platform for better knowledge sharing on cultural diversity in the arts among practitioners and institutions in the UK and Australia. The platform will be in partnership with Creative Victoria, Western Sydney University and the Institute of Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship, Goldsmiths, University of London.

Our support for delegations to connect with UK artists continues, and this year our support has resulted in our first music collaborations with MONA FOMA and the Laneway Festivals. UK work from the British Council Edinburgh Festival Showcase and Unlimited continues to tour Australia, which in 2018-19 includes *Nassim, salt., Flight, Our Carnal Hearts, Palmyra, The Nature of Why* and *The Believers Are But Brothers*.

The focus of our work in education remains on university collaboration, supporting global mobility and promoting the British Council’s Massive Online Open Courses which have had four million enrolments in the last four years. We also support greater connections being made between the UK and Australia through our rapidly expanding exams program, support for new British qualifications, and the launch of our exams offer in New Zealand.

For the second year running an Australian woman was awarded global runner-up of the international FameLab competition at the Cheltenham Science Festival. A triumph for both Vanessa Pirotta and Women in STEM. We are delighted to be working closely with our founding partners the Foundation for the Western Australian Museum, to grow FameLab in Australia in 2019.

International collaboration and open exchange between practitioners and institutions helps to shape our cultural, political, scientific and creative landscape. At a time when fostering people to people bonds, trust and mutual respect is vitally important, we thank you for your partnership and your support.

Best wishes for the year ahead and season’s greetings,

Helen

# COMING UP IN EARLY 2019

## INTERSECT

The next milestone for the INTERSECT programme is the Australian knowledge exchange in February 2019. The British participants will learn about their Australian cohorts' working context, participate in the DARTS conference in Melbourne, and meet with arts professionals and organisations who are creating greater access and equality in the Australian arts scene. Since September the participants have been in regular contact as peer mentors.

Find out more: [britishcouncil.org.au/intersect](http://britishcouncil.org.au/intersect)



## MACHINE 9 AT MONA FOMA

British composer and sound artist Nick Ryan and his team of engineering and space geniuses have built *Machine 9*, an incredible machine that tracks the position of 27,000 pieces of space junk transforming them into sound as they pass overhead. Earlier this year, the British Council sent Brian Ritchie to Convergence in London, where he encountered *Machine 9* and invited Nick to MONA FOMA. The machine will be making the hidden world of space junk visible through sound – drawing attention to debris in our atmosphere and efforts to increase sustainability in space engineering.



## THE NATURE OF WHY AT PERTH FESTIVAL

*The Nature of Why* brings together an incredible ensemble of musicians from the British Paraorchestra with four extraordinary dancers to create an epic performance bursting with passion. The stage will become a site of discovery with choreography by Australian artist and the incoming Director of Arts Access Victoria Caroline Bowditch, and the world's only large-scale ensemble for professional disabled musicians, the British Paraorchestra. The production takes inspiration from the unconventional curiosity of Nobel prize-winning physicist, Richard Feynman, and his search for meaning in the world around us. *Nature of Why* will be at the Perth Festival in February.



## SAVE THE DATE: JAN TO MAR

- FameLab applications open | 7 Jan
- Vicki Amedume 'Talking Circus' at Sydney Festival | 13 Jan
- *Machine 9* at MONA FOMA | 16-20 Jan
- *The Nature of Why* at Perth Festival | 21-23 Feb
- INTERSECT Australian knowledge exchange | 25 Feb to 5 Mar
- Sydney Design Week | 1-8 Mar
- *Palmyra* at Adelaide Festival | 1-5 Mar
- Dance Massive in Melbourne | 12-14 Mar
- Five Films for Freedom online | March
- FameLab semi finals | Mar and Apr



Find out more about our strategy 'East Asia: Arts and the UK':  
[britishcouncil.org.au/programmes/arts](http://britishcouncil.org.au/programmes/arts)

# OUR WORK IN AUSTRALIA

In Australia, we are helping to redefine the long relationship between the UK and Australia at this critical moment in bilateral relations, emphasising the importance of our shared culture, values and vision for an open, diverse and more inclusive society.

The British Council in Australia creates opportunities for the emerging generation of future leaders and influencers in the UK and Australia: internationally mobile and culturally diverse people of modern, outlooking nations.

## HIGHLIGHTS IN AUSTRALIA

### ARTS

The focus of our arts strategy in Australia is on innovation and inclusion in rapidly changing cities.

In 2018, Australia launched the INTERSECT knowledge exchange programme in collaboration with Diversity Arts Australia and Creative Victoria. The programme aims to support greater cultural diversity in the arts, reduce exclusion and provide greater resources and opportunities for artists and creative leaders from culturally diverse backgrounds. The programme includes three components – knowledge exchange and peer mentoring; a digital online resource for arts practitioners and organisations in partnership with Western Sydney University and the Institute of Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship, Goldsmiths, University of London; and a touring platform that supports British artists from minority ethnic backgrounds touring their work in Australia.

Australia is the third largest market for UK arts and culture after the USA and Europe, and sends one of the largest delegation of festival and venue programmers to the British Council Edinburgh Showcase. This results in the programming of more UK work from the showcase than any other country globally, providing significant profile and opportunity for UK artists.

### HIGHER EDUCATION: FAMELAB

FameLab in Australia has attracted partnerships with museums, government bodies and universities nation-wide, supporting emerging science leaders in developing their advocacy and science communications skills. The partnerships and programme encourages people to take on careers in STEM and fosters research collaboration and mobility between Australia and the UK.

### QUALIFICATIONS FOR GLOBAL MOBILITY

Careers, education and personal opportunities are enhanced through British Council expertise in testing and assessment. Young Australians, international students and graduates are increasingly mobile, we promote British qualifications as the way to open the door to future leaders and talented workers opting to contribute to a contemporary Global Britain.

# OUR PARTNERS

Thank you to all our partners in 2018, all who lend their support and expertise to our projects.

- Accessible Arts NSW
- ACMI
- Adelaide Festival
- Adelaide Fringe
- Arts Access Victoria
- Arts Council England
- Arts House
- Australia's Science Channel
- Biennale of Sydney
- Big Sound
- Brisbane Festival
- British High Commission
- Commonwealth Games
- Creative Victoria
- Curtin University
- Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation
- Diversity Arts Australia
- Edith Cowan University
- Goethe Institut
- Greater Escape Festival
- Inspiring Australia
- McCusker Foundation
- Melbourne Festival
- Melbourne Fringe
- Melbourne Writers Festival
- MONA FOMA
- Murdoch University
- Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences
- Museums Victoria
- National Gallery of Victoria
- National Sound and Film Archive
- National theatre of Parramatta
- Next Wave
- Perth Festival
- Queensland Museum
- RMIT University
- Sydney Festival
- Sydney Writers Festival
- Theatre Works
- University of Technology Sydney
- Western Australian Museum
- Western Sydney University
- Woodside

And the hundreds of British artists, academics that work with us every year.

### CONTACT US

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# 2018 HIGHLIGHTS



## FAMELAB AUSTRALIA

2018 Australian FameLab winner Vanessa Pirotta astounded audiences with her revolutionary work with drones collecting whale snot. Vanessa was a Global runner-up in the international competition, the second year in a row that an Australian woman has been named runner-up in the FameLab finals.



## SUPPORTING FESTIVALS

We supported British productions at leading Australian festivals including Selina Thompson's acclaimed production *salt.* at Next Wave Festival, the powerful *Not Today's Yesterday* by classical Indian dancer Seeta Patel at Adelaide Fringe Festival, and the dynamic National Theatre production *Barber Shop Chronicles* from Inua Ellams at Sydney Festival.



## WOMEN OF THE WORLD

As part of the Commonwealth Games cultural program, the Brisbane Powerhouse was taken over by the global festival Women of the World (WOW). WOW brought together women from over 20 countries in the Commonwealth to share their stories. We supported two speakers at WOW 2018, Margaret Busby OBE and Jayanthi Kuru-Utumpala.



## SUPPORTING FILM

We brought standout films to Australia in special screenings around the country, including the *Five Films For Freedom* series to celebrate of LGBTQ+ programming and short-film, and the groundbreaking *They Shall Not Grow Old* from Peter Jackson as part of a global campaign to mark the centenary of Armistice.



## SUPPORTING LITERATURE

We were proud to support outstanding British writers in Australia, including Yrsa Daley-Ward, Angela Saini and Juno Dawson. The writer's talks covered a diverse range of subjects including hunger, trauma, desire, race, sexuality, addiction, writing for young adults and uncovering science's failure to understand women.



## THE CREATIVE CASE FOR DIVERSITY

Arts Council England's Director, Diversity Abid Hussain spoke at the Sydney Opera House making *The Creative Case for Diversity*. Hussain has been instrumental in implementing meaningful changes in areas of access and equality in the UK arts scene.

## MAKING CONNECTIONS THROUGH DELEGATIONS



## CONVERGENCE

CONVERGENCE showcases new work from innovative performers working with the latest tech and trends. The British Council brought together a delegation of promoters, festival organisers and producers to generate ideas and connections at the festival, including Music Curator at MONA, Brian Ritchie.



## THE GREAT ESCAPE

Dream Wife brought their empowering attitude, cutting riffs and scream-dreamy vocals to audiences across the country. The three piece were spotted at the Great Escape Music Festival by programmer, Travis Banko as part of the British Council Music Showcase.



## UNLIMITED

Five Australian delegates were supported by the British Council and Creative Victoria to attend the Unlimited Festival to develop their international connections, partnerships and possible collaborations. The delegates also took part in the inaugural Unlimited Symposium, a disabled-led discussion.