Something in the AIR

CASE STUDIES

Western Australia’s Artist-in-Residence (AIR) Grants Program

YEAR 2

2010-2011

Department of Culture and the Arts
Department of Education

artsedge
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Something in the AIR Case Studies of Western Australia's Artist-In-Residence (AIR) Grants Program Year 2, 2010-2011
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The Department of Culture and the Arts and the Department of Education would like to thank the many teachers, artists, organisations and communities who shared their stories, photographs and knowledge to create an inspiring collection of Artist-In-Residence (AIR) projects in the second year of the four year pilot grants program. Most importantly, the research team of Dawn Bennett and Vicki Caulfield from Curtin University must be acknowledged for their thorough evaluation of the second year of the AIR Grants Program pilot. The findings from their report have been used as the foundation for this publication.
Message from the Directors General

The arts play a significant role in developing children’s creativity.

Our collaborative approach to the development of the arts in education for Western Australian school students is seen in the strong cross-government partnership Creative Connections: An Arts in Education Partnership Framework 2010–2014.

Creative Connections has been the key vehicle for implementing the State’s arts in education policy since 2005. Through this framework, we are committed to making the arts an integral component of children’s education. We are also committed to working together to deliver high quality, tangible benefits to students, artists, educators and communities.

The Artist-In-Residence (AIR) Grants Program pilot started in 2009 and, along with the Australia Council for the Arts, we have delivered three funding rounds to date. Through the program many local Western Australian artists and organisations have worked alongside teachers in public schools to deliver high quality arts experiences for students and school communities. Together they have developed new teaching methods and broadened participating artists’ professional practices.

This second edition of Something in the AIR profiles the seven projects funded in 2010 and completed in 2011. It follows on from the first edition which was published in 2011.

The case studies highlight the role the program has played in creating partnerships which strengthen community identity and local cultures, and in providing greater access to high quality arts education in every phase of student learning.

We hope you are inspired by the work showcased in this publication.

Allanah Lucas
Director General
Department of Culture and the Arts

Sharyn O’Neill
Director General
Department of Education
“[The AIR Project] provided a fresh perspective on the current working artist. [I] feel we inspired students to continue their own practice.”

Steve Berrick, artist-in-residence, Governor Stirling Senior High School
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Map of project locations

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8. Denmark Primary School, Denmark High School
9. Mount Barker Community College
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Southern Edge Arts

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Balcatta
Midland/Bassendean
East Victoria Park
North Fremantle
Melville
Beaconsfield

Mount Barker
Cranbrook
Albany
Denmark
Introduction

Arts Education has the transformative power to change lives. By actively encouraging greater partnerships between schools, artists and creative industries, the arts will remain vital in the future development of our communities.

Therefore, recognising the importance the arts plays in the creative development of children and young people has never been more important than it is today.

“If you link education with the arts you not only improve the quality of learning, but the quality of life itself in its many variations – from the personal, to the family, community, to regional life, and to the life of a nation.”

Evidence from extensive arts in education research from around the world and through case study publications such as *Something in the AIR* suggests high quality arts programs do help students learn “in the general program of studies through improving perception, awareness, concentration, uniqueness of thought style, problem-solving, confidence and self-worth, and motivation.”

In Western Australia, the Department of Culture and the Arts and the Department of Education have a historical commitment to the development of enriching and transforming arts and education experiences as highlighted in *Creative Connections: An Arts in Education Partnership Framework*.

Through this unique cross-government partnership, the *Artist-In-Residence (AIR)* Grants Program pilot has been delivered since 2009. This arts in education program continues to deliver artistic and academic outcomes in creative and collaborative school environments enhancing learning across the curriculum.

Through investment in the development of arts in education programs like this by government, creative industries and commercial corporations, educators, artists, and students are provided with increased opportunities to engage in creative thinking.

The child in art experiences stands up, and stretches itself, mirrors its being, discovers, searches, finds, touches, imagines, and thinks.

Participants’ arts in education experiences profiled in this edition of *Something in the AIR* are unlike any other, and should be celebrated for their creativity and innovation, and their potential to inspire educators and artists to continue to collaborate on a range of artistic projects in the future.

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1. National Education and the Arts Strategy 2004
3. Creative Connections: An Arts in Education Partnership Framework 2010-2014 can be downloaded from the Department of Culture and the Arts website at www.dca.wa.gov.au
Background

In May 2008, the Federal Government announced that $5.2 million would be provided over four years for a new initiative known as the **Creative Education Partnerships: Artist-In-Residence (AIR) Initiative**, supporting professional artists to participate as ‘artists-in-residence’ in schools, and as sessional staff in universities to improve access for children and young people to quality arts education programs.

**Arts education programs can “... better prepare workers for the twenty-first century... The skills the arts teach – creative thinking, problem-solving and risk-taking, and teamwork and communications – are precisely the tools the workforce of tomorrow will need.”**

The AIR initiative gives artists an opportunity to broaden their experiences and share their skills, while providing primary and secondary school and pre-service teachers with greater exposure to the benefits of creative practice. Additionally, the program creates opportunities for artists and teachers to work together to develop effective teaching methods and practices for the arts.

In Western Australia this initiative is known as the **Artist-In-Residence (AIR) Grants Program**. The program provides funding of $280,000 per year over the four years of the pilot and is managed by the Department of Culture and the Arts and the Department of Education through **ArtsEdge**, a key delivery mechanism of Creative Connections.

In 2012, the pilot is to complete the final year of funding with projects to be completed by the end of 2013.

Funding

The AIR Grants Program prioritises creative processes which actively engage with students and partnerships between public schools, artists and/or the wider community.

There are two funding streams available:

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**STREAM 1: Residencies**

STREAM 1 offers up to six grants of $30,000 for short term residencies for a minimum of 150 contact hours. Delivered through an open application process, STREAM 1 seeks to establish arts and education partnerships between a public school, cluster of public schools and/or teacher training institution and an individual artist or group of artists. It includes a professional learning component, further strengthening the relationships between artists and teachers, and sharing practice across the cohort of resident artists.

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5 Richard Gurin, president and CEO of Binney & Smith Inc., *Educating the Workplace through the Arts*, *Business Week*, October 1996.
STREAM 2: Collaborations

STREAM 2 encourages in-depth collaborations between arts and cultural organisations and public schools, clusters of public schools and/or teacher training institutions for a minimum of 300 contact hours.

One grant of $100,000 is administered through a two stage process (stage one: Expression of Interest; stage two: Full Proposal) and is open to arts and cultural organisations currently in receipt of triennial and multi-year funding from the Department of Culture and the Arts.  

Following a rigorous assessment process, the six successful STREAM 1 projects funded in 2010 and completed in 2011 were:

- **Balcatta Senior High School** and artist **Susan Hayes**
- **Carson Street Independent Public School** and artists **Francis Italiano, Michelle Hovane, Rebecca Bradley, Rachel Riggs** and **Barking Gecko Theatre Company**
- **Governor Stirling Senior High School** and artists **John Macliver** and **Steve Berrick**
- **Melville Primary School** and artist **Louise Snook**
- **North Fremantle Primary School** and artist **Sandy McKendrick**
- **South Fremantle Senior High School** and artists supported by **KULCHA Multicultural Arts WA** – **Darren (Daz) Reutens, Freddy Poncin, Dijibril Diagne, Tommy Truong** and **Meng Jones**

The 2010 STREAM 2 grant was awarded to **Southern Edge Arts** to work with a cluster of regional Western Australian public schools – Cranbrook Primary School, Denmark Primary School, Denmark Senior High School, Mount Barker Community College, Mount Lockyer Primary School and North Albany Senior High School.

**Impact**

The projects completed in the second year of the pilot were creatively and academically challenging for all participants.

Whilst some projects worked towards the final goal of producing a celebratory event at the completion of their project, others chose to focus on the delivery of complete programs of artistic and academic excellence and exploration of new teaching practices to build capacity amongst both teachers and students.

Schools and artists, in this second year of the AIR program pilot, demonstrated a mutual desire to discover and develop relevant high quality and sustainable arts in education programs for targeted groups of students.

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6 A full list of eligible organisations in receipt of triennial and multi-year funding can be found on the DCA website at www.dca.wa.gov.au.
“The direct hands-on nature of the experimental learning had enormous impact on students... I am absolutely confident that this AIR grant sowed the seeds of desire for MORE – more partnerships – sustainable learning through the arts.” Mrs Roslyn Hamling, Deputy Principal, Carson Street Independent Public School

Where AIR projects were concluded with a celebratory event they were warmly embraced by the wider community whose members volunteered a good deal of time to work with the students and artists. In doing so, the projects helped raise the profile of these schools and their arts programs.

“The North Fremantle Primary School staff and council have been working hard to raise the image of our school in the local community. The program did wonders towards our improved public image. We have had much positive feedback about many aspects of the programs we now offer and the AIR grant was integral to this progress. A significant indicator is the significant increase in student enrolments with student numbers this year being the highest they have been in the last decade.” Mrs Fiona Kelly, Principal, North Fremantle Primary School

The conclusion of this round of AIR projects shows that strong bonds between public school project management teams, participating artists and arts and cultural organisations are continuing to be forged. Collaboration is critical to the success of artist in residence projects and the teams who completed projects in 2011 were notable in this regard and highly likely to strengthen their partnerships in the future.

“Would we do it again? YES! But not until we stop basking in the glow of this year’s project.” Mrs Betty McNeill, Principal, Melville Primary School

A Snapshot of the Second Year

- **1,175 students** participated
- **29 artists** took part in projects funded through STREAM 1 and 2
- **3,176 contact hours** (collectively by all artists) were completed
- **62 per cent of grant funds awarded** across all projects went towards gainful employment of professional artists
- **30 per cent more secondary students** took part in AIR projects than in the first year of the pilot in 2010
- **7 of the 8 curriculum learning areas were addressed** across all projects

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7 Note: Figures are approximate and based on the data supplied in acquittal reports and evaluation report.
Balcatta Senior High School

Keywords:
Science, Innovation, Cross-curriculum

Priority areas
- Creative Processes
- Partnerships
- Innovation & 21st century technology
- Professional Learning
- Regional & Remote
- Indigenous
- Young people at educational risk
- Disability
- Cultural difference & diversity
The partnership

Balcatta Senior High School strives to create a vibrant and nurturing learning environment for its students to excel in academic, sporting, cultural, community and leadership roles. With more than 540 students from Years 8 to 12 (in 2011), Principal Mrs Anna Kristancic recognises the importance of keeping students highly motivated by providing a regular program of creative challenges for them to enjoy.

The school is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence across all learning areas and has a strong reputation in its Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Visual Arts program.

In continuing to encourage and extend creative exploration amongst its GATE students and build on the strong relationship with the North Metropolitan Education Region Primary Extension and Challenge (PEAC) based on the same site, an idea developed to create a visual arts peer-mentoring program involving PEAC students in Years 5 to 7 whilst at the same time enlisting the expertise of Australia’s leading forensic anthropologist and facial reconstruction artist.

The project

The development of this unusual AIR project started at the Balcatta PEAC where Dr Susan Hayes had conducted Art, Anatomy and the Skull workshops in the past. From this association with PEAC, Susan called the high school to propose a unique arts partnership.

Focusing on GATE in the Visual Arts program, the school wanted to extend the learning opportunities of its Year 10 students in particular. The AIR project would enable these students to further explore 2D drawing and experiment with 3D clay facial reconstruction. In addition, students would have the opportunity to investigate the art of photographing the skull; and, understand anatomical art basics which underlie portraiture.

Skulls in Schools as it became affectionately known, was developed in collaboration from start to finish between Balcatta’s Head of the Arts Learning Area, Ms Jamie Arkeveld and artist Susan Hayes. The program provided the GATE students with hands-on instruction in the reconstruction of facial features using clay on a replica skull. The classes were considered somewhat experimental; the teaching approach employing a unique blend of scientific information about the anatomical structure of the human face with the artistic process of drawing and sculpting facial features.

The school purchased multiple replica skulls and Skulls in Schools classes were delivered on Mondays and Saturdays over eight weeks during Terms 2 and 3, 2011. Under the leadership of PEAC Coordinator, Mr Lance Byfield, Monday classes involved both GATE and Year 5 PEAC students who worked in pairs. Mentoring pairs were then rotated allowing the artist to first instruct the GATE students, who were then able to share their knowledge with the younger PEAC students.
“While I had hopes that the experience would be a positive one, it provided far more than I had anticipated. The support by the Principal, Anna, the Head of Art, Jamie, and her fellow teachers, particularly Nathan and the Saturday morning GIFTED crew, was exceptional, and their enthusiasm remained high throughout. This naturally transferred to their students who seem to follow the attitudes of those who teach them, who were prepared to take some risks, have some fun, and work very hard to get where they wanted to be. In short, while I know from experience that working with Lance [Byfield] and the PEAC students would be supportive [sic] and rewarding, this proved to be the case across the board.” Susan Hayes

Outcomes

The Skulls in Schools AIR project provided for a holistic approach to learning which drew inspiration from the golden age of the Renaissance. During this period detailed knowledge of human anatomy was recognised as being crucial for artists, who would need to understand the structure of bones and muscles as well as human physiological capacities for movement. In keeping with the ‘layering’ technique used in facial reconstructions, they developed what could only be described as a ‘multi-layered’ approach to teaching and learning.

To help students understand how art techniques relate to facial structure they were shown and handled bones. At the same time they learnt about facial muscles and skin layers in order to understand facial expressions. From there they were instructed in drawing and 3D sculptural techniques so they could produce “a face that looks like a face, do eyeball shadowing or sculpt a nostril.”

In describing the completed Year 10 portraits, Ms Arkeveld said the works were “… amazing – accurate, stylistic and confident.”

Each PEAC student was required to write an imaginative personal ‘history’ of the individual humans whose replica skulls they had worked on, and the stories that emerged were highly inventive and often based on detailed research of historical periods or events.

In presenting a project that contained arts and science components of equal stature, teachers were shown how to use scientific information about human facial anatomy as a way of teaching art practice.
Three intensive professional learning workshops for interested arts and science teachers from across the Perth metropolitan area were presented by Susan and held at the school. One participating art teacher said of the workshop she attended that it was, “Informative – [I] plan to integrate and run extra-curricular with GATE students with [the] science/art teacher.”

“... [A] key strength [of the project] was an understanding that portraiture involves art as a technical methodology and that some areas that involve artistic practice use it in equal balance with other disciplinary understandings, such as anatomical science and archaeology...In the process of doing science...the students are producing art.” Susan Hayes

During National Science Week 2011, Susan was invited to present her work at the annual Questacon conference hosted by the National Science and Technology Centre in Canberra. As part of her presentation, Balcatta’s Year 10 GATE students delivered a 30 minute online presentation about their AIR project. This presentation was streamed live to schools around Australia.

The Skulls in Schools AIR project also included an exhibition and interactive performance by students for parents and younger peers. After the residency had finished student work was selected for exhibition in the Young Originals 2011 at the Spectrum Project Space, Edith Cowan University during October 2011.

Publicity for Balcatta’s AIR project was generated through the Western Australian education magazine School Matters and The West Australian newspaper.

“Dr Susan as Artist-in-residence has been inspirational and engaged students in aspects of forensic anthropology work. Very positive student feedback reflected the value and learning experiences of this AIR project. Teachers also reported positive outcomes and in-depth learning in their evaluation of the professional learning with Dr Susan Hayes.” Mrs Anna Kristancic, Principal

Impact

Skulls in Schools provided the school’s AIR Project Coordinator Ms Jamie Arkeveld with the stimulus to experiment with new teaching methods. Working alongside Susan also inspired her personal professional artistic practice.

Partnerships between artist and teachers, Balcatta Senior High School and PEAC students, were strengthened throughout this project. And, the excellent opportunity for skills transfer, together with the resulting teaching resource developed by Susan, will equip the school to continue to conduct facial reconstruction classes in its classrooms.

In Susan’s own words she has “slowly created, invented her own career path.” The AIR project enabled Susan to develop new ideas for expanding her professional learning program to a wider audience amongst schools and community groups. It allowed her to refine the structure and content of classes, to produce a teaching resource, and to hone her classroom skills. By the end of the residency, Susan had work booked with a number of art galleries, universities and schools both intrastate and interstate.
“This project allowed me to evaluate and refine my professional development program and [then] draft materials by having access to students and teachers with whom I could freely discuss and receive honest and considered feedback.” Susan Hayes

Both the school and artist considered the scientific study of human anatomy supported students’ understanding that art was more than just a creative process and had its basis in skill and science.

“My perception is that the students benefited by having an outside specialist at their disposal for an ongoing period of time, that they responded very well to the mentoring project and ‘played well with others’, and became more inquiring as the project progressed. I already know the students and Jamie [Arkeveld] will be continuing in the future as I have been invited to see it in action next year [2012].”
Susan Hayes

“This project will be continuing and sustained at Balcatta Senior High School and PEAC. Exploration of other cross curricular applications is expected as a follow up.”
Mrs Anna Kristancic, Principal

**Project summary**

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<th>Grant:</th>
<th>$30,000</th>
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<tr>
<td>Duration:</td>
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<td>English, Health and Physical Education, Science, The Arts</td>
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<td>Art forms addressed:</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
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Don’t let creative opportunities pass you by!

If there is the opportunity to further develop teaching skills take it! Step outside the comfort zone and explore through the creative process. Projects that can identify potential links across the curriculum or propose unique ways of learning can provide opportunities which nurture creative thinkers. Make sure that the potential partners are publicly introduced to the school community early on in order to gain the support and involvement of all teachers, students, parents and community members.
Carson Street Independent Public School

Keywords:
Embedded, Interactive, Sustainable

Priority areas
- Creative Processes
- Partnerships
- Innovation & 21st century technology
- Professional Learning
- Regional & Remote
- Indigenous
- Young people at educational risk
- Disability
- Cultural difference & diversity
The partnership

Carson Street Independent Public School is Western Australia’s only Primary Education Support School and caters for 75 students aged 4 to 12 years whose disabilities and special needs prevent their integration into the main stream school system.

The school’s curriculum is differentiated and provides Individual Education Plans (IEP) to be developed for each student. IEPs also give parents, teachers, therapists and/or the carers involved with a particular student the opportunity to collectively address their learning needs and design a program that best meets those needs. Since 2009 the school has provided sensory learning experiences (Sensory Storytelling programs) for students which has allowed them to observe, manipulate and explore objects and materials.

The school’s interest in furthering its experience of sensory theatre was sparked again in 2009 when United Kingdom artist Amber Onat Gregory visited the school to work on a smaller sensory-based production. This initial contact would be the genesis for the school’s AIR project. In 2010, with assistance from Barking Gecko Theatre Company, Amber shared her skills and knowledge with interested local artists, including three artists who joined the creative team which collaborated on the Carson Street Independent Public School AIR project. Hoping to extend these experiences Amber and Barking Gecko approached the school to apply for AIR funding to further develop sensory-based theatre in WA. A mutual desire to provide further access to and create high quality theatre for students with disabilities led to the formation of this very special AIR partnership.

The project

Carson Street School’s AIR project titled Sense of Adventure involved four specialist artists: Francis Italiano; Michelle Hovane; Rebecca Bradley; and Rachel Riggs, three of whom had completed the seed workshops hosted by Barking Gecko Theatre Company back in 2010.

“There are very few independent [arts] practitioners who are working with or for young audiences and hardly any creating work specifically for young people with disabilities and learning difficulties. The residency championed young audiences with disabilities and built a quality arts experience around their individual ways of learning and communicating.” Mrs Roslyn Hamling, Deputy Principal

During a twelve week period across Terms 2 and 3, 2011, the creative team worked closely with the Carson Street School students, teachers and carers to devise a dynamic, innovative and uniquely experimental sensory theatre production, The Jub Jub Tree; adapted from a traditional Egyptian folktale, The Well of Truth. The story tells of a donkey, a rooster and a goat who plant a garden. It incorporates lessons which address telling the truth, sharing, responsibility and fairness told through the principal art forms of dance, drama, music and puppetry.

The key to the success of this project was the intensive ‘embedding’ process. The artists worked with teachers in the classroom to provide sensory stimulation to familiarise students with the storyline, characters and production elements of the final theatrical performance.
Outcomes

Each class used sensory activities to focus on a different aspect of the story including making miniature reproductions of the puppets that would be used in the final performance by the artists, and planting bulbs in pots to represent the germination of The Jub Jub Tree.

The teaching approach, through repetition and progression, was designed to maintain the students’ interest, to build their trust and confidence and to increase their comprehension of the storyline.

“Language skills were addressed through the storytelling, which encouraged improved vocabulary and communication skills. Teachers observed distinct improvements during the project, with children striving to communicate their impressions and feelings... The extension of language for all students was very evident.” Teacher

Each week different characters and plot elements were introduced and repeated. A variety of sensory activities targeted skills development in motor control through dance and movement. These included interpersonal and communication skills via singing and playing together, musical skills by listening to and playing instruments, tactile skills and manipulation whilst helping to make puppets, expression of emotions and moods when sharing likes and dislikes, and imagination during listening to stories and exploring roles.

“Children who normally shy away from such experiences were happy to participate once they got used to the characters and the artists. It was also good to see skills in the children I hadn’t seen before.” Teacher

The final performance was a multi-sensory interactive experience with a special purpose ‘magical forest’ set designed to enhance the sensory elements of the performance: sight; sound; touch; and taste.

“I loved when they gave us the green glitter. I loved that. I loved touching and feeling.” Student response via blog diary
Impact

The action research nature of this residency meant the artists could experiment with different ways to engage the students.

“The artists themselves were the main strength. They took the time to get to know each child and what they liked [or] disliked.” Teacher

Whilst no formal professional learning workshops were scheduled for teachers, the nature of the project through classroom observation and the collaborative process enabled the transfer of skills between artists and teachers. The observations and opinions of the teachers were also actively sought by the artists after each lesson and in regular scheduled meetings to discuss teaching strategies and lesson plans.

“This experience has helped consolidate an artistic team for future sensory theatre developments, and is a stepping stone for creating a company to specialise in this work. I have realised my heart is deeply aligned with this style of performance practice and I am greatly enthused to continue to put my energy into growing this project. We have successfully established a working model for the future.” Rebecca Bradley

Teachers reported that they had been inspired by the artists to try similar improvisational techniques with the students and to stage an ambitious Christmas concert for the first time.

Sensory Adventure and the creation of The Jub Jub Tree, proved to be an outstanding success for the Carson Street School. They have fully embraced the medium of sensory theatre and are maintaining an active arts program.

The project has also lead to more sustainable career outcomes for the artists, who have since created Sensorium Theatre, Australia’s first theatre company dedicated to sensory theatre for children with disabilities.

“We achieved and exceeded our aims. This AIR project was one of the most professionally and artistically satisfying processes I have been involved with for a long time! My experience was rewarding, challenging, inspiring and overwhelmingly affirming on many levels. As an artist I constantly encountered opportunities to extend my skills, develop new skills, and create new work of a high quality.” Francis Italiano
Support each other.

Commitment and effort involved in managing and delivering a project is challenging but is made easier by good pre-project planning. Involvement of the whole AIR project management team is crucial and support for project coordinators and artists by the whole school during the residency essential.

Remember you are part of a team of like-minded teachers and artists who share a collective passion to further develop inspirational and transformative arts in education activities in schools.

Project summary

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<th>Grant</th>
<th>$30,000</th>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>390 hours (collectively)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>34 (45% of the school population)</td>
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<td>Number of teachers involved</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Number of artists involved</td>
<td>4 (+ representatives from Barking Gecko Theatre Company)</td>
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<td>Key learning areas addressed</td>
<td>English, Health and Physical Education, The Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art forms addressed</td>
<td>Dance, Design, Media, Music, Visual Arts</td>
</tr>
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“This project had enormous value! Staff realised that there were a whole range of visual arts activities appropriate for their students beyond painting (i.e. puppet and mask making, sculpture). [The project] definitely enhanced the staff’s confidence to approach storytelling and drama activity within the classroom... [I] felt that the whole experience also lifted the spirit and strengthened the heart of staff working in this difficult area.” Mrs Roslyn Hamling, Deputy Principal
Governor Stirling Senior High School

Keywords:
Technology, Community, Creative Industries

Priority areas
- Creative Processes
- Partnerships
- Innovation & 21st century technology
- Professional Learning
- Regional & Remote
- Indigenous
- Young people at educational risk
- Disability
- Cultural difference & diversity
**The partnership**

Governor Stirling Senior High School was established on the banks of the Swan River in Woodbridge (formerly West Midland) in 1958. Maintaining a school population of approximately 850 students, including 120 Indigenous students, the school offers an academic Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program and works towards incorporating an Aboriginal perspective across all Learning Areas to create a learning environment that is culturally and appropriately inclusive for Aboriginal and ethnic students.

In 2011, the school was split into two campuses to cater for redevelopment of the original school site. Years 8 to 10 were housed at the old Midland Primary School site and Years 11 and 12 at Cyril Jackson Senior Campus.

The AIR project was viewed as an opportunity to document the school’s challenging cultural shift during the relocation of its students and the redevelopment of the site. Exploring the themes of identity, change and community, the Snapshots of Change AIR Project would provide an opportunity for the school to engage professional media artists to enhance curriculum delivery and pilot a range of teaching practices which would inform the school’s future Arts Media program.

Community partnerships were a strong feature of this project. Past students, teachers and members of the local community were invited to share their memories and perceptions of the school.

In partnership with cultural organisation FORM which manages the Midland Atelier, a creative design hub located at the old Midland Railway Workshops, the school hosted their final exhibition in one of the old railway workshops.

“The basis to my teaching practice is in fact involving artists and arts organisations or community members within my teaching practice. I think it’s fundamental to a 21st Century curriculum in the arts. It was a whole school, huge project [and] was also integrated into the community. This school has a real connection with the greater Perth community… There are so many people connected to this school.”

Ms Elizabeth ‘Lizzi’ Phillips

**The project**

Snapshots of Change was coordinated by Arts teacher Ms Lizzi Phillips and delivered with the guidance of artists-in-residence John Macliver and Steve Berrick. This multi-media project allowed for collaboration between staff, students and artists across many learning areas. Adopting multimedia technologies was particularly important as the school is committed to the future development of a specialist art program in this field.

“The project offered a rich and authentic collaboration between two creative practitioners and the local community in sharing their memories and wealth of experience to enhance and enrich the curriculum in such an exciting [and] relevant way, whilst at the same time developing a repertoire of ideas and projects for the school’s new Arts Media course.”

Ms Lizzi Phillips
During the 10 week intensive AIR program, students investigated how professional artist approached a brief to produce multimedia artworks based on the redevelopment sites of Governor Stirling Senior High School and the Midland Railway Workshops.

The artists worked alongside students and teachers to develop their ideas by showing them new and exciting ICT applications. The artists also collected data and evidence and illustrated how these can be used to create a series of works that interpreted their expression of the changing community and identity. The works produced included a series of projected multimedia installations, an architectural projection time-lapse of the demolition of the old school, and a contemporary dance piece that was interpreted from a musical soundscape. Photo montages of railcars, sound and multi-dimensional stencil mural with audio overlay of dialogue from interviews with past students, a science documentary of the flora and fauna of the Swan River, and a range of large scale documentary style digital prints, topographical maps, poetry and creation story wallpaper were also produced.

“One of my Year 12 students... took it through the entire year and she created a sculpture with the rubble and then she created a ceramic form that represented the school body... after the project [she made a] video work that she created into a musical piece (she’s also a classical guitarist). She performed the piece and videotaped her movement piece and then projected the film onto it. It was all about the transition; from the demolition... moving to this really interesting exploration of ‘wow, what’s happening?’ then to rebirth and... elation about the future of the school.” Ms Lizzi Phillips
“The project was a significant force of positive energy galvanising student attention in the gifted and talented classes where we focused on interview techniques, film-making and editing skills. John as a valued resident expert and the former Govo [sic] students who visited our current temporary site were able to share stories of old-Govo with a rapt audience. Overall, a terrific opportunity to explore the nature of change.” Teacher, Year 8 and 9 GATE English

The project culminated in a one-night exhibition held in the Power House and Copper Shop at the Midland Atelier and supported by community partners FORM and the Midland Redevelopment Authority. The exhibition not only showcased the artwork created during the project but was catered by the Year 11 and 12 Hospitality students.

“Being part of the AIR project was a fantastic opportunity for both the students and me as their teacher... The students worked for ten hours straight on the launch day of the event and were absolutely buzzing with positivity and enthusiasm from start to finish. Feedback from Governor Stirling staff, fellow students, parents and invited guests from the wider community was overwhelmingly positive and allowed our students to experience success and triumph within the structure of a ‘real’ work task. It was extremely rewarding to see the students rise to the occasion.” Teacher, Year 11 and 12 Food Science and Technology

**Outcomes**

Snapshots of Change enabled the school to test the potential for both incorporating special projects and new arts based software into the new Arts Media program. The project also allowed students to witness professional artists at work, and to experience first-hand the pressures and triumphs of preparing for a major exhibition.

“The project was a rich collaborative cross-curricula undertaking with the involvement of the school community, which enriched the school curriculum and provided students with experiences well beyond the normal curriculum in a relevant and exciting way. It also provided ideas and projects for the new Artmedia (sic) course currently under development.” Dr Pasco Putrino, Principal

Ms Phillips observed an improvement in the standard of student work, particularly in photography. She credits this to enhanced student confidence as well as improved skill level, positive outcomes from the project. John and Steve also agreed that the experience had been a positive one for participants and were surprised with the high standard of work produced.

“The quality of works on display were (sic) far beyond the years and skill levels that we originally expected from the students.” John Macliver
Ms Phillips and the artists curated the exhibition, with assistance from the Year 11 and 12 Art and Photography students. Filming on the night was edited into a six-minute video that was later uploaded to the project blog.

“The students and mentors involved in Governor Stirling’s Snapshots of Change program and exhibition have a great deal to be proud of. Not only was the exhibition an obvious success – as demonstrated by the large and enthusiastic crowd on opening night – it was thoughtfully and beautifully executed. The artworks were site-specific and engaging, encouraging the viewer to consider and then re-consider the space and environment in which they found themselves. It is also worth noting the professionalism of the students involved; from the artists through to the catering team. Both the event and the calibre of the artworks well exceeded any of my expectations.” Mollie Hewitt, Exhibition and Curatorial Coordinator, FORM

Impact

There were a number of challenges, particularly in the area of ICT encountered during the delivery of this project. Although the school had previously purchased Adobe Creative Suite Master Series software with the full suite of multimedia functionality i.e. web design and graphics, audio production and video editing, the school’s aging networking capability and PC hardware were unable to handle the large file sizes needed to complete some tasks. However, the artists regularly brought in their own equipment ensuring students remained engaged.

The high quality of the work produced became evident when artworks by 20 Year 8 students were selected for the Young Originals 2011 exhibition and other works were short-listed for the annual Year 12 Perspectives exhibition hosted by the Art Gallery of Western Australia.

As a direct result of her achievements in the AiR project, Ms Lizzi Phillips was successfully nominated for a Sangora Education Foundation travel scholarship which enabled her to undertake a study tour during the 2011/2012 summer break. Ms Phillips was also nominated and short-listed for a 2011 Premier’s Secondary Teacher of the Year, WA Education Award.

For the artists, the AiR project resulted in a much stronger understanding of secondary school students and the school system.

“I have realised how much I enjoy working with young people and the unbounded creativity they bring to the classroom. I am looking to try and continue working where possible in high school and TAFE institutions, especially in areas I believe benefit most from current industry professionals in class.” Steve Berrick

Since the completion of the project Steve has been approached by Murdoch University with an opportunity to establish multimedia streams in local high schools. This will provide secondary school students with pathways into tertiary study.
Ensure that the necessary working technology is available.

The AIR Grants Program funds cannot be used to purchase capital equipment. It is important that schools and artists ensure the technical requirements of the project are available. This entails a detailed discussion about all technical dimensions of the project prior to submitting the AIR Grants Program application.

“Technologies are lacking in some of the schools and the biggest downfall… is that it just doesn’t allow the kids to work on what they should be working on… [in the case of this AIR project] I facilitated a large amount of edits for the exhibition – working with the kids. I gave them all little mini edit projects that they could actually do in class, just because I think it’s important for them to get a feel and not just be told [what to do].” John Macliver

| Project summary |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Grant:          | $29,920         |
| Duration:       | 180 hours (collectively) |
| Number of students involved: | 200 (Approximately 24% of the school population) |
| Number of teachers involved: | 16 + 1 pre-service teacher |
| Number of artists involved: | 2 |
| Key learning areas addressed: | English, Science, Society and Environment, Technology and Enterprise, The Arts |
| Art forms addressed: | Dance, Design, Drama, Media, Music, Visual Arts |
Melville Primary School

Keywords:
Culture, History, Pedagogy
The partnership

Catering for more than 600 students, Melville Primary School moved to its current site in 2005 and features a modern centralised resource centre with dedicated science and art rooms and a specialist music room. In 2006, the 3.8 hectares that comprised the previous school site were bought by the City of Melville and transformed over 18 months to form Kadidjiny Park. Kadidjiny is a Noongar word meaning ‘learning, thinking, listening’. The park and its link to the school became the inspiration for Melville Primary School’s AIR project.

Melville Primary School wanted to extend its arts program by providing specialised instruction in the school. Implementing an AIR project was to be the first in a series of projects that would be developed in partnership with students, the community, pre-service teachers and artists.

Holding part-time positions at both, Melville Primary School and Murdoch University, Ms Jane Nolan established herself as the key link between the primary and tertiary education partners. Ms Cheryl Guelfi was the schools AIR Project Coordinator and, together they became the driving forces behind the AIR project.

“I pitched all of my thinking that on this one occasion students are not going to benefit singularly – they will all come together and work on one project... so that art isn’t something that is graded against another person... There’s a sense of the whole group coming together in camaraderie and acting as a team.” Louise Snook

The Songlines AIR project bridged the past, present and future of the Melville Primary School. Learning activities encouraged students to track the demolition of the old school, its relocation to the new site and the transformation of the old school grounds into what became the Kadidjiny Park.

Over the course of 20 weeks, art classes were developed and delivered to increase the artistic skills of students and teachers, through engagement in visual inquiry, studio practice, exhibition and reflection. Every class at the school, all teaching staff and nine Murdoch University pre-service teachers participated in this project. Three additional artists were engaged at various times during the project; designer and textile artist Jennifer Gay; tapestry artist Antoinette Carrier; and, textile artist Trudi Pollard. These artists brought specific techniques to the project and/or provided support for lead artist Louise Snook.

The project

The school employed Louise Snook, award-winning textile and community project artist to work with them to deliver the Songlines of the Old School AIR project. Using the concept of Indigenous Songlines and focusing on the school’s history, the project used the paths across the land to shape and inspire the creation of a large quantity of textile-based art works. Ultimately these works would be accompanied by storytelling, drama, dance and song culminating in a Songlines Festival.
The project was implemented across the curriculum by allocating time periods to age based year groups:

- Years 6 and 7 – Memories of the Old School
- Years 4 and 5 – The Protection and Saving of the Site
- Years 2 and 3 – The Present Use of the Site
- Kindergarten – Year 7 all explored Indigenous Stories/Use of the Site

“For both children and teachers, it [the AIR project] not only allowed for, but actively promoted integration, breadth and balance across the curriculum. Classroom teachers had the opportunity to be actively involved in the project so that they could incorporate and integrate aspects of it into their own planning and delivery of lessons with their children, allowing the children to make deep connections with and between ideas, people and experiences.” Teacher, Years 5 and 6

**Outcomes**

Involvement in the AIR project contributed significantly to students’ learning and sense of identity. Activities “stimulated the children’s imagination and creativity… and provided access to cultural learning.” Students “developed a strong sense of their identity and strengthened their ability to become creators of culture.”

“My really surprised at how deeply the children were able to reflect so personally and meaningfully about their art. It was really so important to them.” Teacher, Years 3 and 4

An aim of the project was to use Multiple Intelligences and actively explore different modes of learning. In addition, the AIR project would lift the profile of Arts in the community and amongst pre-service teachers.
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“A lot of them [the student teachers] were talking about multiple intelligences and how they could see children who are probably more kinaesthetic learners getting a lot out of the art, compared to, say children who aren’t used to doing that sort of thing. So they were looking at those types of learners – like Visual spatial learners.”
Ms Jane Nolan

“I have been amazed at the volume of knowledge and skills I have gained as a direct result of this AIR project – and not only the amazing skills taught to me by Louise Snook but the skills and ideas taught to me by the students! Their creativity, imagination, quirkiness and overall whimsical natures really assisted with my learning and pedagogical practice.”
Pre-service teacher (Interview with Scribe Magazine Issue 2, 2012, p.2)

“I used a program on the internet because if you haven’t done it [project management] before, you don’t know! The program showed you how you could split the project up into various tasks, and then track when they should be due, when those certain projects should be finished, and also how to allocate certain people to be in charge of those aspects.”
Ms Jane Nolan

Impact

The key partnership between Melville Primary School and Murdoch University’s School of Education was an inspired combination of teaching, learning and art; in particular the university’s School of Education used the experience to reform the pre-service teacher practicum arrangements.

“This was a very ambitious and mammoth project which was expertly driven by the two [AIR] coordinators; without their dedication to fine tune the vision into ‘do-able’ parts the project would have floundered. The need to coordinate 630 [odd] students, 50 staff and numerous volunteers is testament to their planning, communication skills and standing within the community.”
Mrs Betty McNeill, Principal
Parents and teachers observed that embedding an artist in the classroom for 20 weeks had affected the students deeply and in many ways. The residency was also said to have helped develop students’ social and emotional skills. As one parent commented “…I saw children trying new things, laughing, resolving conflict… problem solving, cooperating.”

The AIR project had a profound impact on Melville Primary School. The school intends to expand its Arts program to include drama and music, and to embed arts-based learning in other parts of the curriculum. The art room will be used more for its intended purpose, and the school is open to employing artists in the classroom in future.

Consider peer mentoring.

Professional learning through an AIR project should not be undervalued. Teachers and artists have the opportunity to work side-by-side, learning new artistic techniques and pedagogy. In turn experienced teachers and artists can mentor pre-service teachers and emerging artists.

Peer mentoring, specifically in the case of artists, can inspire the creation of more ‘Teaching Artists’ in the future. For many teaching artists, developing a body of experience as artists working in schools is also part of diversifying employment opportunities and building sustainable careers.
North Fremantle Primary School

Keywords:
Environment, Socio-cultural, Collaboration
The partnership

North Fremantle Primary School is situated on the banks of the Swan River within view of the Port of Fremantle. Founded in 1886, the school moved to its current site in 1968 and celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2011. North Fremantle is a small and compact community. With just on 100 students and nine teaching staff (in 2011), the school is close knit, caring and catering for a diverse mix of cultures and socio-economic groups.

The aims of the school’s AIR project were to celebrate through art the school’s links with the ecology of the nearby Swan River and to forge stronger partnerships with the wider community. The school encouraged craftspeople, historians, photographers, graphic designers and marketing personnel to come to the school to share their skills and expertise.

“The breadth and depth of the project appealed to a wide spectrum of people from our community. The exploratory stages of the project involved snorkelling in the river and exploring the river bank. This appealed to our parents with a scientific and adventurous side. The designing and building of the large scale puppets [appealed] to our creative and structural types; and the dancing, choreography, lighting and music to those with theatrical flair.”

Mrs Fiona Kelly, Principal

The project

A survey conducted in 2012 by the North Fremantle Primary School Council identified the Arts as an area that parents wanted to see developed in the school.

New Principal, Mrs Fiona Kelly, encouraged art teacher Mrs Margie Campbell to apply for AIR Grants Program funding. Internationally renowned multimedia artist and local Fremantle resident, Sandy McKendrick, was invited to participate. Sandy’s strong interest in the environment provided the catalyst for Splash!, an exploration of land and sea elements in a variety of artistic forms.

The Splash! project gave students, staff and parents the opportunity to explore the diversity of the river fauna from an environmental and socio-cultural perspective. The school community, guided by Sandy, learnt how to interpret these observations artistically through puppetry, dance, drama and audio-visual techniques.

“The purpose of the Artists-in-Residence program is to use the arts as a medium for all kinds of innovative teaching right across the curriculum… For example, the children have dissected fish in science classes, written invitations to the performance in literacy, learned about local history and environmental issues, and used new technology to record sounds and images for the performance.”

Mrs Fiona Kelly (North Fremantle Primary School Community News, Summer 2011)
Throughout the project the students were able to create their own puppet that became part of the final performance – Splash! Sandy McKendrick imparted her extensive puppet making experience to AIR Project Coordinator Mrs Margie Campbell, who was then able to support students to make their puppets during art classes.

“I would often start the day with a snorkel in the river to remind me of the core of the project, [and] then relate what I had discovered since we last met. The children also began to do this... relating weekend river forays.” Sandy McKendrick

The final performance lasted for two hours and was held near the sports ground on the banks of the Swan River. An estimated 300 friends, family, guests and local community members attended. A camera operator was engaged to film the show and produce a DVD.

“Performers and their puppets paraded across Gil Fraser Reserve at sunset, led by the unmistakable beats of the Wasamba drummers to signal the start of the performance. Tales of the river were then woven together, expertly guided by artist in residence Sandy McKendrick. Dancing octopi, a seahorse and his babies, fishermen chasing a big catch, hungry hermit crabs, a lurking shark and a pelican looking for a fishy meal were stars of the show.” Extract from the North Fremantle Primary School Community News, Summer 2011

The students produced additional artworks and the P&C created merchandising to sell within the school community. The associated artwork and photographs were displayed at the Fremantle Town Hall as part of the 2011 Art Blast exhibition, held over four days during Education Week in November. This gave all visiting students and members of the public a visual display of the school’s AIR journey and Splash! gained wide public exposure when student puppeteers were invited by the Fremantle Festival to take part in the street parade in December.

Outcomes

There were very positive social and emotional outcomes gleaned from the Splash! project. Through excursions to museums, galleries and the theatre and incursions by environmental officers and scientists, students were exposed to a wide range of professional people, experiences and information. The students were encouraged to discuss, reflect upon and write about these experiences.

“My favourite part was when we went to Sandy’s work studio. Because she showed us half of the stuff she made.” Year 6 student

Teamwork was used in the development of the script and the dance sequences where younger and older students worked together to achieve an agreed goal.

Mr Simon Stewart, a talented Indigenous choreographer and dancer from Broome, assisted during the final stages of the project and provided not only another artistic perspective, but a positive male role model for students.
“The introduction of Simon Stewart to the project was an asset to our school. Not only was he a fantastic male role model for the students, but a very positive Indigenous role model. For many of the students in the Year 2/3 class dance is an area of interest, particularly Hip Hop, Breakdance type moves. Simon engaged these boys completely by doing lots of improvisation dance. This allowed the boys to experiment with their moves with the encouragement and support of Simon in a very safe and nurturing setting.”

Mrs Margie Campbell

Throughout the project students simultaneously gained knowledge and enhanced social skills, perseverance and imagination. The group performance also developed drama and dance skills and the confidence to perform in public.

“My favourite bit was when we all popped out of the seahorse’s belly. I really liked it.” Year 1 student (North Fremantle Primary School Community News, Summer 2011)

“The kids take away so much from the journey they have just completed. They have worked at the level of artist not just rote performers.” Parent

Reflecting on the strengths of the AIR project, artist Sandy McKendrick said, “[This project] arose from a need within the community, a proposal that was at the right time, right place and the right people... an underlying knowledge of the transformation that an arts-based project can have on the identity, health and well-being of the community.”

Impact

North Fremantle Primary school experienced a number of successful artistic outcomes as a result of this AIR project. The ambitious project created more than 100 individual puppets and props during classroom activities and after-hours working bees with parents and friends.

The project achieved its goal to raise the status of the Arts within the school and its community. Participants agreed that the study of the arts is an essential aspect of a well-rounded learning program.

“The reinforced belief that if all people/teachers/parents/artists can be sensitive and respectful of the visions of children and their artistic expression and its power, we have hope of a more poetic and enriched life... the arts are an absolute necessity to life and must be offered through the education curriculum.” Sandy McKendrick

AIR Project Coordinator Mrs Margie Campbell, gained immense value from her project management role, saying she gained new skills in “how to delegate, build teams and stay calm!” In particular, she learned the importance of building ownership among the team and the power of delegation to spread the workload.

For her extraordinary project management of Splash! Margie was honoured with the North Fremantle Primary School’s ‘Above and Beyond’ Award. This was presented at graduation night before the assembled school community.

“[There is an] enthusiasm to embrace the arts. Not one teacher or parent thought it was a waste of time and are already asking what’s happening next year.”

Mrs Margie Campbell
Top tip

Good planning and time management are the keys to success!

Allow time for pre-project planning, progress reporting, professional learning workshops between artist and teacher, and, reflection time once the project has finished.

Make sure the artist regularly communicates their vision for the AIR project to participating teachers so that teachers fully understand the ‘bigger picture’ and can integrate ideas into lesson plans.

Keep a journal to record the progress of your project or use information already uploaded during the project to the school’s website, project blog or newsletter. This is important when it comes time to finalise the grant acquittal report.

Don’t reinvent the wheel! Good use of these resources early on makes acquitting your grant at the conclusion of your project less time consuming.

“The time allocated by our Principal at staff meetings to discuss the progress of the project allowed us to work collaboratively to achieve our goals.” Mrs Margie Campbell

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Project summary

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South Fremantle Senior High School

Keywords:
Multiculturalism, Identity, Future Pathways
**The partnership**

**South Fremantle Senior High School** was opened in 1967 and has a student body drawn from a spread of around 40 different ethnic backgrounds. The school offers three approved specialist programs (ASP) in Baseball, Marine Studies and Music.

Since 2005 the music program has operated from the purpose-built **Calvert Music Centre**. The Centre is fully equipped with teaching and rehearsal rooms, keyboard laboratory, digital recording studio and a 150 seat auditorium.

In 2011, the school partnered with the Fremantle based organisation **KULCHA**, Western Australia’s peak body for multicultural arts. Together they developed an AIR project that would take the school’s music program in a more creative direction and would encourage students to explore the issues of identity and multiculturalism through the music genre of Hip Hop.

KULCHA aims to create ‘harmony through cultural diversity’ and has a reputation for collaborating with socially inclusive community groups and schools for multicultural dialogue and audience development. Using its extensive resource network, the organisation acted as a booking agent for the school and brought together a specialist team of artists with the required mix of music and performance skills that would best suit the needs of the school’s AIR project titled **Hip Hop Harmony**.

**The project**

In July 2008, before AIR, the parents of South Fremantle Senior High school music students organised and funded a song writing and recording workshop. The success of this workshop created an appetite for an artist-in-residence program at the school and provided the inspiration for the AIR Grants Program application in 2010. The application articulated the school’s goal to nurture students’ creativity through song writing and recording along with KULCHA’s vision to increase multicultural music experiences in the classroom.

The artistic team of five was led by Hip Hop artist and producer Darren ‘Daz’ Reutens, best known for his work with local hip hop band Downsye. Rounding out the group was Senegalese drummer and storyteller Djibril Diagne, Afro-Cuban percussionist Freddy Poncin, Vietnamese Australian hip hop artist Tommy Truong (aka VietDragon), and vocalist, beat-boxer and lyricist Meng Jones. During the residency the artists worked with a total of 43 students, 34 were from South Fremantle Senior High school and nine were drawn from the Fremantle, Beaconfield, White Gum Valley, Hilton Primary Schools and Spearwood Alternative Primary School.
“The project by definition provided a safe, respectful space for students to think about ideas/matters important to themselves. It provided collaborative opportunities for students to get to know and appreciate their differences and similarities; and, it provided mentoring role modelling from a culturally and musically diverse group of artists.”
Mr Craig Wallace-Gibb, Music teacher and AIR Project Coordinator, South Fremantle Senior High School

Students were instructed in the techniques of song writing, composition and recording through a structured lesson plan devised collaboratively by the music teacher and lead artist. To replicate the ‘band’ environment, students were grouped into small teams to work on their songs. The artists in residence were timetabled as required to provide specialist guidance in their areas of expertise and Daz Reutens produced the recording sessions.

“The collaboration allowed another profound outcome to develop – and that was a significant building of ‘team’ across the entire music (student) cohort. This was evident in the level of cooperation, team work and positive relationships in student performances, the way they supported one another on stage and behind the scenes to enable performances to occur.”
Mrs Geri Hardy, Principal

During the final weeks of the project the students were booked by the primary schools to perform their original material before live audiences. A final public concert was held at KULCHA’s performance venue in Fremantle for an estimated audience of 250 family members, friends and invited guests.

“The performance at KULCHA was a significant event, putting students out of their comfort zone and in the public eye. And they stepped right up, performing with zeal, confidence and joy... The last performance at the school assembly was magical. I have never experienced a musical performance at a school where students, staff and parents felt compelled to get up and dance together – such was the uplifting nature of the performance by our students and all of the artists.”
Mrs Geri Hardy, Principal
**Outcomes**

Hip Hop Harmony served as a pilot project to support the school’s plans for a more creative direction for the music program as well as a means to give students the opportunity to experiment musically with a range of music genres whilst developing real life production skills.

“... the richness of the project, in its scope, enabled clearly differentiated curriculum that connected academic learning to inter and intra-personal learning.” Mr Craig Wallace-Gibb

The project facilitated the exploration of the cultural diversity of both the students and artists. Through song writing and composition they explored core values relating to respect of self and others’, rights and responsibilities, and by the end of the project nine original songs had been produced.

“Through working with Darren I was able to gain a deeper understanding of how to use music technology in the classroom including production techniques and the correct set up of equipment. I was also able to join in and learn drumming techniques from Djibril and Freddy alongside the students. The project provided a solid introduction to the music recording and production programs. As these are quite involved programs the more you learn, the more you find there is to learn. Having had my introduction I would like to do more PD (professional development) in these areas so that I will be better able to support my students’ learning of music technology in the future.” Mr Craig Wallace-Gibb

Principal, Mrs Geri Hardy, also observed that the “... demands on the music teacher through this [AIR project] challenged him to work with students in new ways, as new technologies and new partnerships played out in the classroom.”

For his part, lead artist Daz Reutens, with no formal teacher training, found the early weeks of the AIR project a steep learning curve. With mentoring from the music teacher, Head of the Arts Learning Area Mr David Anderson, and KULCHA’s own AIR Project Coordinator, Daz reported that he gained valuable experience across a range of areas including general teaching skills, lesson planning, project, and time management and operating within a school.

**Impact**

The process of composing, recording and producing original songs had a profound effect on the students. The success of the project is evidenced by the fact that several students have continued to write, rehearse and record their own songs.

“The fact that our children were able to work with real artists living and working in the community... meant an open creativity and expression not often possible while in the classroom environment. The AIR artists modelled and encouraged our child to have a go. The confidence and satisfaction achieved were only a spinoff from the skills of writing, production and performing learnt during the process. What a fantastic project and rare opportunity for our child.” Parent
The strong partnership forged between South Fremantle Senior High School and KULCHA during the residency provides opportunities for the school and the organisation to collaborate again. The school’s revised music program is likely to include a module on World Music that has the potential to engage musicians through KULCHA.

The Calvert Centre’s keyboard laboratory now provides the technical facilities to support music recording activities as part of the ongoing reform of the school’s music program. The school is also investigating ways to provide Vocational Education and Training (VET) pathways in music for their students.

Top tip

Consider potential creative restrictions.

During the pre-project planning phase schools and artists should discuss what is possible in a school context. Hip Hop is a provocative music style and parameters had to be established around the project for delivery in the classroom.

“...the project was opened up to embrace other styles that each group could develop collaboratively.”
Mr Craig Wallace-Gibb

**Project summary**

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STREAM 2

Southern Edge Arts
Southern Edge Arts

Keywords:
Extension and Challenge, Partnerships

Priority areas
- Creative Processes
- Partnerships
- Innovation & 21st century technology
- Professional Learning
- Regional & Remote
- Indigenous
- Young people at educational risk
- Disability
- Cultural difference & diversity
The partnership

Southern Edge Arts (SEA) is situated in Albany and is recognised as one of Western Australia’s leading regional youth performing arts organisations. With more than 25 years’ experience in successful community engagement, SEA champions creativity and quality in arts practice in young people as a means of social development. The organisation hosts regular weekly workshops in theatre, dance and circus for young people aged 5 to 25 years and has an active schools program. By connecting communities with professional arts practitioners, the organisation provides a safe environment for mentoring arts practice in a professional setting.

With extensive knowledge of the local area, previous experience working on smaller environmental art projects and inspired by a similar project, Gondwana Youth Arts Project, Nikki Green approached SEA in 2010 to discuss a potential collaboration. Together with SEA, Artistic Director Simon Clarke, Nikki developed the SEA Gondwana AIR Project application.

During 2011, SEA contracted Nikki to manage the Gondwana AIR Project. Nikki was responsible for the overall coordination across the six participating schools; liaison between SEA and its contracted specialist artists. Administration for the project was undertaken by SEA General Manager Christine Ritter and management of the artistic integrity of the project was provided by Simon Clarke.

Approximately 127 students from, Mount Barker Community College, North Albany Senior High School, Denmark High School, Denmark Primary School, Cranbrook Primary School and Mount Lockyer Primary School were selected to take part in the Gondwana AIR Project.

SEA’s four specialist artists included:

- Cecile Williams, a renowned visual artist who provided expertise in a wide variety of art forms including sculpture, installation, puppetry, theatre, costume design and environmental art;
- filmmaker, director, musician and sound engineer Peter Keelan was engaged to mentor students in the creation of music and sound installations;
- Leon Ewing a musician, actor and filmmaker mentored students in the art of short film and documentary making; and,
- award-winning choreographer and dancer Sete Tele instructed students in movement and interpretive dance.

Community partnerships proved to be a significant aspect in the success of the SEA AIR project. Local environmental experts took part as volunteer field guides and guest speakers and a number of Noongar elders shared their cultural knowledge, bush skills and history of the area.

“...with noongar elders and environmental specialists, the artists are offering a creative way of engaging with the national environment and connecting to country.” Nikki Green, (Interview – The Weekender October 2011)
The project

The thematic heart of the project was the vast tract of land known as **Gondwana Link**, stretching from the Great Western Woodlands in Esperance to the coastal Karri forests further to the west. The Gondwana Link is the focus of an environmental restoration and protection project managed by an alliance of major environmental organisations including Greening Australia, the Wilderness Society, Bush Heritage Australia and Green Skills.

Using the Gondwana Link bushland and the Gondwana Youth Arts Project as inspiration, the SEA AIR project sought to introduce students to the concept and practice of ephemeral environmental art whilst delivering a multi-arts environmental awareness experience.

Before the project began Nikki Green and SEA Artistic Director Simon Clarke visited each school to brief students and staff about the project. Following this, half-day introductory workshops were conducted to give them a practical introduction to environmental art.

Each school residency started with a field trip to local bushland. The cultural heritage and ecological biodiversity of the area was explained by local Indigenous custodians and environmentalists. Students and teachers were encouraged to broaden the ways in which they viewed the natural environment.

“[The artists] provided activities that were novel, engaging and interactive. Each was extremely personable and used a range of skills that catered for the more confident and outgoing, but encouraged and integrated less confident students into the projects. Students were guided and motivated through demonstration, discussion and references but were encouraged to explore and develop their own creative responses to the tasks.” Teacher, North Albany Senior High School

After the field trips the specialist artists conducted introductory sessions addressing their area of speciality. Cecile Williams led students on a ‘sensory path’ challenging their perceptions of the natural environment; Peter Keelan delivered a ‘Happy New Ears’ sound workshop stimulating students’ auditory perceptions; Sete Tele facilitated dance and exercise sessions; and Leon Ewing delivered music and video classes.

Following the introductory activities the artists spent one intensive week in each of the six participating schools, working with rotating groups of between 6-10 students throughout the day. The artists and students also came together at other times for a variety of collaborative activities. As the project progressed students were encouraged to select an art form and develop a piece of art which would express their understanding of the environment.

At the end of each week, the work of the groups was shown to their own school community and to other participating schools via video conferencing. As a side activity, an **Indigenous Performing Arts Camp** was held in Term 2 for 15 Aboriginal students.

“The junction between young people, arts, environment and Noongar cultural traditions is where magic happens.” Nikki Green (interview – The Weekender October 2011)
The final week of the SEA Gondwana AIR Project was held at Nowanup Bush Camp, an isolated former farm northeast of Albany. The property is owned by Greening Australia and managed by Noongar custodian Mr Eugene Eades as part of the Gondwana Link initiative. Five students from each school were selected by the artists and teachers and invited to participate in the final camp. In total 20 students between Years 6 and 10 attended the camp.

Parents, other students and guests were invited to the showcase of student work on the last day of the camp and a dance performance was presented at the annual Albany Show.

Outcomes

Originally SEA had planned to integrate the students’ environmental experiences into the classroom. Artists and teachers worked together to connect the curriculum with the field trips and mentor students in their artistic endeavours. However, this was not feasible in the intensive workshop model.

Consequently Nikki produced an education resource package containing information on the Gondwana AIR Project and ideas for activities and curriculum links beyond the residencies.

Initially the project was to take place over a more extended period in each school, but early on in the planning phase the schedule was amended to enable the artists to work as a team. This resulted in the intensive one-week residency model in each of the six schools. The change accommodated school timetables; reduced travel costs for the Perth based artists and facilitated greater creative collaboration.

During this project participating students produced 15 short films including several with original compositions and soundtracks. They also recorded and produced a music video, Gondwana Rap; gained skills in performance, filmmaking, editing, audio production, choreography and created several ephemeral visual art installations.
“It was a great opportunity for students with talent in the visual and performing arts to work with professional artists. The arts in schools is often an area where expertise of that level is not readily available. It also proves that education is not only about academic achievement but it is always about students’ social and cultural learning.” Teacher, North Albany Senior High School

The artists believe that the opportunities to collaborate and share experiences during this project facilitated a rich cultural exchange which will further develop their own arts practice. Additionally, the bush camp and weekly video conferencing has enabled the artists and SEA to develop new friendships with the schools and their communities.

“I gained a lot of ideas in seeing how the other three artists worked and in my own development as an artist I gained new ways of working with children and was enriched creatively by the many different outcomes.” Cecile Williams

“This project excelled at making kids feel comfortable, safe and eager to learn... [It] was about how kids connected, what was communicated, learned, experienced.” Nikki Green

**Impact**

In general the project had significant impact on students’ social and emotional well-being. As explained by Nikki Green, environmental art is about “pushing the boundaries” and is especially potent in an educational context that is “normally bound by structure and rules”. Artists bring a new energy that challenges the normal rhythm of school life and the project was a bold attempt to tap the free spirit of the artists in order to ‘nourish and mould the students to be ready for learning.’

Reflecting on his engagement with the students, artist Peter Keelan said “[Away from the school environment] students relate differently to tutors and tend to see the process as something different from the normal tedium of school life. It becomes special.”
The nature of the project required a flexible and supportive approach by the artists. This enabled students to gravitate towards their preferred art form and fostered a spirit of adventure and innovation allowing them to take creative risks. Art teachers from the schools developed fresh ideas, a new respect of environmental art and were reenergised as a result of the project. Both students and teachers valued the range and balance of skills the artists brought to the project.

“I really enjoyed learning new things about the arts, especially the dance and the video. It was great realising I could actually dance.” Year 9 student (Male), North Albany Senior High School

“It was an awesome experience and we all learnt a lot and are eager to do it all again next year!” Year 6 students, Mount Barker College

 “[I] gained a greater understanding of what can be done and used to motivate student learning. The artists were fantastic and gave me many ideas about how they should be incorporated into schools using similar projects.” Teacher, Denmark High School

SEA believes the AIR project has provided them with a good foundation for future school partnerships and they hope to work with the Nowanup Bush Camp’s Eugene Eades, to develop new projects for the region’s Indigenous children and young people.

Build your own AIR network.

Collaboration and communication are foundations of sustainable partnerships. Working with a cluster of schools, particularly those that are geographically aligned, will not only enrich the learning for teachers and students but enable sustainable relationships and professional learning opportunities to be established with the project artists and/or arts and cultural organisations.

Get to know AIR colleagues outside of the immediate project team. There is the potential for mentoring and networking between AIR project schools and artists before, during and after the AIR project. In bringing intercultural and multidisciplinary practitioners and enterprises together, school programs and networks extend into the wider community and social fabric.

Use documentary material developed during an AIR project as promotional material. Work samples enable both the school and the artists to showcase their programs and arts practice to the wider community.

“This project is going to have an incredible impact on my arts practice. I will emerge with a substantial body of work that will herald my arrival as a filmmaker and video artist that works in [the] community. It has already increased my profile and reputation and is leading to further work, and I look forward to showing this work to a wider audience.” Leon Ewing
### Project summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>$99,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>1472 hours (collectively)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of students involved</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakdown per school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Albany Senior High School</td>
<td>16 (3% of the student population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Lockyer Primary School</td>
<td>19 (4% of the student population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark High School</td>
<td>16 (6% of the student population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark Primary School</td>
<td>19 (3.5% of the student population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Barker Community College</td>
<td>22 (3.2% of the student population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranbrook Primary School</td>
<td>24 (32% of the student population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers involved</td>
<td>12 teachers, four education assistants and one school chaplain (across the cohort of schools)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of artists involved</td>
<td>9 (this figure includes SEA staff and specialist artists)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas addressed</td>
<td>Health and Physical Education, Science, Society and Environment, Technology and Enterprise, The Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art forms addressed</td>
<td>Dance, Drama, Media, Music, Visual Arts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contacts

Department of Culture and the Arts
Tel: (08) 6552 7300 or Toll Free within WA 1800 199 090
www.dca.wa.gov.au

Department of Education
Tel: (08) 9264 4111
www.det.wa.edu.au

ArtsEdge
Tel: (08) 6552 7300 or Toll Free within WA 1800 199 090
www.artsedge.dca.wa.gov.au

Organisations in receipt of Department of Culture and the Arts multi-year or triennial funding:

Writing
Fremantle Press
www.fremantlepress.com.au
Magabala Books www.magabala.com
Australian Writers Guild [WA]
www.awg.com.au
The Literature Centre (formerly known as the Fremantle Children’s Literature Centre) www.thelitcentre.org.au
Stages WA www.stageswa.com
Writing WA www.writingwa.org

Dance
Ausdance [WA] www.ausdance.org.au
Buzz Dance Theatre
www.buzzdance.com.au
West Australian Ballet
www.waballet.com.au
STEPS Youth Dance Company
www.stepsyouthdance.com.au
STRUT Dance www.strutdance.org.au

Drama
Barking Gecko Theatre Company
www.barkinggecko.com.au
Black Swan State Theatre Company
www.bsstc.com.au
Deckchair Theatre
www.deckchairtheatre.com.au
Perth Theatre Company
www.perththeatre.com.au
Spare Parts Puppet Theatre
www.sppt.asn.au
Yirra Yaakin www.yirrayaakin.com.au
WA Youth Theatre Company
www.wayouththeatre.org.au
Contacts continued

**Media**
Goolarri Media Enterprises
www.goolarri.com

**Music**
WA Music Industry Association
www.wam.asn.au
West Australian Opera
www.waopera.asn.au
West Australian Symphony Orchestra
www.waso.com.au
Western Australian Youth Music Association
www.wayma.asn.au
JazzWA www.jazzwa.com
Musica Viva Australia [WA]
www.musicaviva.com.au
Perth Jazz Society
www.perthjazzsociety.com
Tura New Music www.tura.com.au
WA Youth Jazz Orchestra
www.wayjo.com

**Visual Arts**
Artsource www.artsource.net.au
Art On The Move www.aotm.com.au
FORM www.form.net.au
International Arts Space Kellerberrin (IASKA) www.iaska.com.au

**Cross-Curriculum**
Community Arts Network [WA]
www.canwa.com.au
County Arts [WA]
www.countryartswa.asn.au
Fremantle Arts Centre www.fac.org.au
Kulcha Multicultural Arts of Western Australia www.kulcha.com.au
The Blue Room Theatre
www.blueroom.org.au
Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts
www.pica.org.au
Arts Law Centre of Australia [WA]
www.artslaw.com.au
AWESOME Arts Australia
www.awesomearts.com
Disability in the Arts-Disadvantage in the Arts [WA] www.dadaawa.org.au
Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre www.kalacc.org.au
Museums Australia [WA]
www.museumswa.com.au
Propel Youth Arts WA
www.propel.org.au
Royal Western Australian Historical Society www.histwest.org.au
Southern Edge Arts
www.southernedge.org.au
Professional Teacher Associations

**Dance**
Ausdance  http://ausdance.org.au/

**Design and Technology**
Design & Technology Teachers Association (WA)
http://members.iinet.net.au/~datta/

**Drama**
Drama West  www.dramawest.com

**Media**
Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM Vic)  www.atomvic.org
*At the time of printing, the WA Chapter of ATOM did not have a dedicated website for Western Australia.

**Music**
Australian Society for Music Educators (WA)
West Australia Music Teachers Association Inc.
www.musicteacherswa.org.au/

**Visual Arts**
Art Education Association of Western Australia  http://arted.org.au

**English**
Australian Literacy Educators Association of WA
www.alea.edu.au/wa/alea-wa
English Teachers Association Western Australia (ETAWA)
www.etawa.org.au
Primary English Teachers Association
www.petaa.edu.au/

For more information about State and National arts and education contacts, professional associations and other funding programs please visit the ArtsEdge website at www.artsedge.dca.wa.gov.au
Resources

Something in the AIR, Year 1, 2009-2010
ISBN: 978-0-9803166-7-4

Creative Connections: An Arts in Education Partnership Framework 2010-2014
ISBN: 978-0-9803166-6-7

Artists in Schools – The ArtsEdge Guide for artists and teachers in Western Australia (reprinted March 2009)
ISBN: 978-7307-4305-7

Telling Tales: Western Australian Artists-in-Schools Partnerships

All publications are available for download from the Resources page of the ArtsEdge website at www.artsedge.dca.wa.gov.au
Image credits

Front cover: AIR Project photograph montage
Photographs courtesy of Governor Stirling Senior High School, Melville Primary School, South Fremantle Senior High School, Southern Edge Arts and Cecile Williams

Page 2 – Student work, Governor Stirling Senior High School. Photograph courtesy of Governor Stirling Senior High School

Page 3 – detail of student work, Southern Edge Arts, AIR Project 2011. Photograph courtesy of Southern Edge Arts and Cecile Williams

Page 11 – detail of sculpture – Melville Primary School, AIR Project 2011. Photograph courtesy of Melville Primary School and Louise Snook

Balcatta Senior High School, AIR Project 2011
Photographs courtesy of Balcatta Senior High School, pages 10, 12, 14, 50

Carson Street Independent Public School, AIR Project 2011
Photographs courtesy of Carson Street School and Sensorium Theatre, pages 15, 17, 18, 19

Governor Stirling Senior High School, AIR Project 2011
Photographs courtesy of Governor Stirling Senior High School, pages 20, 22, 25

Melville Primary School, AIR Project 2011
Photographs courtesy of Melville Primary School and Louise Snook, pages 26, 28, 30, 50

North Fremantle Primary School, AIR Project 2011
Photographs courtesy of North Fremantle Primary School, pages 31, 32, 33, 35, 50

South Fremantle Senior High School, AIR Project 2011
Photographs courtesy of South Fremantle Senior High School, pages 36, 37, 38, 40

Southern Edge Arts
Photographs courtesy of Southern Edge Arts and Cecile Williams, pages 42, 45, 46, 48

Percentage of school population figures
Percentage of total student population figures included in each project case study are based on total school population figures as listed in Semester 2, 2010 Department of Education, Schools Online profile reports.