

Data on Artists' Employment and Professional practice in Australia

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Research on artists' work, incomes, tax and social security

Australia Council

CONTENTS

Summary	3
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Section 1.1: Artist numbers.....</i>	<i>11</i>
Most recent estimates	11
Trends in artist numbers.....	13
<i>Section 1.2: Artists' earnings and incomes</i>	<i>15</i>
Creative earnings	15
Incomes.....	16
<i>Section 1.3: Characteristics of artists' employment.....</i>	<i>17</i>
Hours worked.....	17
Unemployment experience.....	18
Full time and part time employment	18
Employment status: employee or self-employed	19
Employee artists, 2006.....	20
<i>Section 1.4: Factors inhibiting or advancing artists' careers</i>	<i>20</i>
Part 2: Snapshot data on artists' employment in Australia 2001, 2006 and 2007.....	22
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Section 2.1: Artists 2001 (artist survey)</i>	<i>25</i>
2.1.1 Number of artists	25
2.1.2 Earnings.....	29
2.1.3 Employment status	36
2.1.4 Hours worked.....	37
2.1.5 Unemployment	38
2.1.6 Factors inhibiting career development	39
2.1.7 Factors advancing career development.....	39
<i>Section 2.2: Artists by state and territory, 2001 (artist survey)</i>	<i>41</i>
2.2.1 Number of artists	41
2.2.2 Creative income as a proportion of total income	42
2.2.3 Employment status	43
2.2.4 Allocation of work time.....	43
2.2.5 Unemployment	44
<i>Section 2.3: Artists 2006 (Census).....</i>	<i>45</i>
2.3.1 Number of employed artists	45
2.3.2 Incomes.....	46
2.3.3 Employment status	47
2.3.4 Full time/part time.....	48
<i>Section 2.4: Artists 2006 (Labour force supplementary survey)</i>	<i>48</i>
2.4.1 Superannuation.....	49
2.4.2 Multiple job holding.....	50

2.4.3 Access to leave entitlements	50
<i>Section 2.5: Work involvement 2007 (Work in culture and leisure activities)</i>	52
2.5.1 Hierarchy of creative arts activity in Australia 2007	52
2.5.2 Number working	54
2.5.3 Number paid/unpaid.....	55
2.5.4 Earnings.....	55
Part 3: Trends in artists' employment in Australia, 1987 to 2006	57
<i>Introduction</i>	57
<i>Section 3.1: Artists' employment 1987 to 2001 (artist survey)</i>	58
3.1.1 Artist population: selected indicators.....	58
3.1.2 Number of artists	59
3.1.3 Artists' earnings	62
3.1.4 Employment status	63
3.1.5 Unemployment	64
3.1.6 Factors inhibiting career development.....	64
<i>Section 3.2: Artists' employment 1996 to 2006 (Census)</i>	65
3.2.1 Number of employed artists	66
3.2.2 Median incomes.....	69
3.2.3 Income differentials between artists and other professionals	70
3.2.4 Total income all artists	72
3.2.5 Employment status	74
3.2.6 Hours worked: full time/part time	75
<i>Section 3.3: Work in arts activities 2001 to 2007</i>	75
3.3.1 Number of people involved in arts work	76
3.3.2 Number paid	77
<i>Section 3.4: Supply of new graduates to the arts labour market 1999 to 2008</i>	78
3.4.1 Course completions in the creative arts	79
3.4.2 Course completions relative to practising artists.....	80
3.4.3 Visual and performing arts graduates working or seeking work	80
3.4.4 Visual and performing arts graduates compared to all graduates	81
<i>ATTACHMENT 1: Artist definitions from main collections</i>	83
<i>ATTACHMENT 2: Income distribution</i>	84
<i>ATTACHMENT 3: Occupations used in Census and LFSS data</i>	86
<i>ATTACHMENT 4: List of activities covered by Work in selected culture leisure activities series</i>	88
<i>ATTACHMENT 5: Full list of collections utilised for analysis</i>	90

Summary

The data analysis provides an empirical picture of the working lives of Australia's artists and trends in the Australian artist labour market. The main focus is on practising professional artists, although some data are also presented on arts work more broadly defined and on graduates entering the artists' labour market.¹

The data come from four main sources:

1. The series of surveys undertaken by Professor David Throsby, referred to here as the 'artist survey' series.
2. Census of Population and Housing undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).
3. Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, a collection undertaken by the ABS as a supplement to its labour force survey.
4. Work in culture and leisure activities collection, ABS.

Data are also presented from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations on the supply of newly trained people entering the artist labour market. A number of other collections are utilised to provide contextual data and for calculating indicators.

The analysis focuses on 4 key areas:

1. Artist numbers
2. Artists' earnings and incomes
3. Other characteristics of artists' employment
4. Factors inhibiting or advancing artists' careers

The findings for each of these areas are summarised below. The data reinforce previous findings from Australia and overseas of the relatively low earnings and incomes of the majority of artists, relatively high rates of self-employment, freelancing and multiple job holding, and a relative lack of access to income support employment benefits. The analysis provides an indication of the magnitude of artists' relative position across these indicators.

Data also show that since 1987 there has been strong growth in the number of professional artists in Australia. The growth in the number of artists has been higher than the growth in Australia's adult population. Data on artists' employment has, however, only replicated this strong growth up until 2001. Since then, the number of artists employed in an arts occupation as their main job appears to have declined strongly. There is some evidence that artists have switched their main job from arts occupations to arts-related and other occupations, perhaps in response to a noticeable decline in the relative incomes of artist occupations between 2001 and 2006.

¹ Practising professional artists are defined as serious practitioners operating at a level and standard of work and with a degree of commitment appropriate to the norms of professional practice within their art form and who have demonstrable public or professional engagements.

Although data cannot identify any one factor in particular that has caused the decline in relative incomes between 2001 and 2006, one possible explanation is that there has been very strong growth in people creating arts more broadly, or 'non-professionally'. Between 2001 and 2007, the number of people undertaking paid and unpaid work in creative arts activities nearly doubled from 1.2 million to 2.4 million people per annum. This was an increase in the participation rate in creative arts from 8 percent to 15 percent of the adult population. Over the same period the number of people who received some payment for their work increased by 44 percent, or around 151,000 people. In light of the relatively small size of the professional artist sector, this is a substantial increase in arts production, and provides a likely, though largely unverifiable, explanation for much of the relative decline in artists' incomes over the period as more artists compete for paid employment and more arts products compete for audiences and consumers, both of which may cause a decline in the return on artists' labour.

1. Artist numbers

The artist survey estimates that there were 45,000 practising professional artists in Australia in 2001. Between 1987 and 2001 the number of artists grew faster than both the total labour force and the adult population (artists increased by 41 percent: the labour force by 27 percent and the adult population by 24 percent). A more recent figure will not be available until the latest in the artist survey series is completed in 2009. The analysis in this report estimates that there were 52,000 professional artists in Australia in 2007. Based on this estimate, professional artists represent around 10 percent of all people involved in creative artistic work, 0.5 percent of labour force, and 0.3 percent of the adult population (or one in every 320 people).

In the absence of more recent data from the artist survey series, establishing an estimate for the likely number of practising professional artists in Australia today involves balancing a number of indicators:

1. *Decline in 'main job' artists 2001 to 2006*

The strong growth in artist employment to 2001 appears not to have continued into the first part of this century. Between 2001 and 2006 the Census records a 15 percent drop in the number 'main job' artists. However, this does not mean that the number of professional artists has also dropped by 15 percent; it may mean that artists have switched their main job away from their creative arts activity to arts-related and other work. Some evidence for this switching is found in Census data, with strong rises in employment in arts-related occupations such as private arts teaching occurring between 2001 and 2006.

2. *Slowing of growth in general cultural employment 2001 to 2006*

Although the number of practising professional artists is not likely to have dropped as markedly as 'main job' artists, Census data do indicate that employment in the wider set of cultural occupations has grown less than total employment for the first time since at least 1996, which provides an indication for a possible underlying slowing in the growth of arts and cultural employment.

3. *Strong growth in involvement in creative arts activities 2001 to 2007*
The ABS' *Work* survey series suggests that there has been strong growth in the number of people participating in both paid and unpaid creative arts work. Between 2001 and 2007, the number of people involved in paid work in arts activities rose from 340,000 to 491,500 people, a rise of 151,300 people or 44 percent.
4. *Steady number of people completing formal arts training between 2001 and 2007*
There is a suggestion in data from DEEWR of a steady – perhaps even increasing – stream of newly trained people entering the artist labour market from tertiary training institutions. The number of people graduating from university bachelor degree courses remained at around 1,000 to 1,500 people per annum between 1999 and 2008, and the number of people completing creative arts courses rose by 50 percent between 2001 and 2007, although this includes people completing media and communications, film and design courses.

In balancing these various indicators, the 52,000 estimate of the number of practising professional artists in Australia in 2007 is more closely aligned to, although still higher than, growth in the labour force and the adult population between 2001 and 2006. The estimate relates to 2007 because this is the most recent year for which data are reliably available from which to base an estimate. It does not, therefore, account for the recent financial crisis and recession. Data from the artist survey provide an indication that the number of artists rose around the time of the recession in the early '90s. The number of professional artists may therefore rise if the same happens in the current recession.

A steady stream of newly trained artists entering the market

Over the period 1999 to 2008, creative arts graduates represented a steadily increasing flow of new artists into the labour market. Between 1,000 to 1,500 people graduated from visual and performing arts bachelor degree courses each year between 1999 and 2008. These graduates represent a steady annual influx into the artist labour market equivalent to around 3 to 4 percent of practising visual and performing artists. These graduates represent only a portion of all newly trained artists. Preliminary data presented here on a wider group of courses shows an increase in people completing creative arts courses between 2001 and 2007 (from 10,800 to 16,300 people).

The data suggest that there has been a steady influx into the pool of trained artists between 2001 and 2007. This, coupled with weakening employment prospects highlighted by the Census, might be expected to currently be putting the artists' labour market under substantial pressure. This is not, however, reflected yet in the employment outcomes for visual and performing arts bachelor degree graduates, whose full time employment prospects continued to improve between 2003 and 2008 (in 2008 more than two-thirds of arts bachelor graduates were in full time employment within four months of graduating). The supply pressure might therefore be expected to lead to a further worsening of artists' relative earnings. The completion of the latest

artist survey this year will provide substantial information on how these pressures are being manifest.

2. Artists' earnings and incomes

Different collections gather slightly different measures of earnings and incomes. The artist survey collects information on artists' earnings (ie payment for work including grants) for creative arts, arts-related and non-arts work. The Census collects information on income from all sources, which includes payments for work but also interest earnings, dividends, benefits, etc.

Earnings from creative work (artist survey)

In 2001, the artist survey indicates that artists' median earnings from creative work was \$7,300, which was equivalent to a quarter of the \$30,000 median earnings from all types of work (arts, arts-related and non-arts). Median earnings from creative work increased by 26 percent in real terms between 1987 and 2001.

Artists' full time incomes (Census)

In 2006, artists' full time median income from all sources was \$35,700. This was \$30,100 lower than the median income of other full time professionals, and nearly \$11,000 lower than the median incomes of all full time employed people.

Over the period 1996 to 2001, artists' full time median incomes rose strongly in real terms, increasing by 12 percent compared to 6 percent for other full time professionals and 8 percent for all occupations. Between 2001 and 2006, however, the median incomes of full time artists rose just 5 percent while other full time professionals' median incomes rose by 9 percent. This meant that between 2001 and 2006, the income gap between artists and other professionals widened: in 2001, the median income of full time artists was \$26,000 below that of other professionals; in 2006 it was \$30,100 below.

3. Other characteristics of artists' employment

The data analysis provides a range of indicators of artists' employment characteristics. The majority of the indicators simply reinforce aspects of the nature of artists' work found in previous research undertaken in Australia and overseas, and provide an indication of the magnitude of the differences between artists and other employed people. However, some of the indicators have not previously been published in Australia. This is particularly so for the data on artists' superannuation coverage, rates of multiple job holding, and access to paid leave entitlements, which come from a supplement to the ABS' Labour Force Survey. It should be noted, however, that this information relates only to 'employee' artists, ie. employed artists who receive salaries and wages. As the data below show, these artists represent only around half of employed artists, and a quarter of all practising professional artists.

Hours worked and working hour aspirations

In 2001, the artist survey shows that artists dedicated on average 26 hours per week to their creative work. This was 60 percent of artists' total average working week. Given the opportunity, the majority (78 percent) of artists not working full time at their arts work in 2001 would have liked to have spent more time at their creative arts work. This represents a pool of around 14,000 professional artists ready to increase the hours they work at creative arts activity, and who have relatively low barriers with which to do so (such as existing reputations, networks and occupation-specific capital). This pool is equivalent to just under a third of the total number of professional artists, and provides an indication of the ease with which the supply of artist labour could increase in the short-term.

Full time employment is less prevalent in artist occupations (Census)

The proportion of artists employed full time declined from 47 percent in 2001 to 45 percent in 2006. This is lower than the prevalence of full time employment in other professional occupations (74 percent) and all occupations (68 percent). The lower prevalence of full time employment in artists' employment is evident across all three Censuses undertaken over the ten year period 1996 to 2006.

Self-employment and freelancing are more prevalent among artists (Census)

Self-employment is more prevalent in artist occupations than in other professional occupations. Around half (49 percent) of 'main job' artists were self-employed in 2006, compared to just 6 percent of professional occupations. The self employment and freelancing rate of artist occupations is therefore more than eight times higher than in other professional occupations.

Between 1996 and 2006 the prevalence of self-employment in artist occupations increased (from 35 to 49 percent of artists) while self-employment rates in other professional occupations remained relatively stable.

Superannuation coverage is low among employee artists relative to other employees (LFSS)

In 2006, just over three-quarters (78 percent) of employee artists belonged to a superannuation or retirement benefits scheme. The coverage rate across all occupation groups was 93 percent.

Multiple job holding rates are higher among employee artists (LFSS)

In 2006, 12 percent of employee artists were multiple job holders, compared to 4 percent of all professional employees and 3 percent of all employees.

Employee artists' access to paid leave entitlements is lower than employees in other occupations (LFSS)

In 2006, less than half (45 percent) of employees in artist occupations had access to paid leave entitlements, compared to 84 percent of employee professionals and 73 percent of all employees.

Unemployment experience

Of the three artist surveys (relating to 1987, 1993 and 2001), the 1987 and 2001 artist surveys show a similar proportion of artists experiencing some unemployment (around a third). The 1993 survey stands out as different, with around a quarter (26 percent) of artists experiencing some period of unemployment in the years leading up to the survey. This drop in rate of artists' unemployment occurred at a time when unemployment in the general workforce was high due to the recession in the early '90s.

Between the 1987 and 2001 artist surveys, the proportion of artists applying for benefits dropped from 66 percent to 56 percent, while the proportion of artists who had their application for benefits refused dropped from around 10 percent to 3 percent.

Employment prospects of visual and performing arts bachelor degree graduates improved between 1999 and 2008, but were still not as good as all graduates

The proportion of visual and performing arts bachelor graduates who were in full time employment within four months after finishing their degree rose from 57 percent of graduates in 1999 to 67 percent of graduates in 2008. Data are unable to reveal the proportion of graduates who were working as artists. The proportion of creative arts graduates seeking full time employment was more than twice that of all graduates (33 percent as opposed to 15 percent). Data from the same source not analysed in detail in the analysis also suggest that over the same period, visual and performing arts courses were consistently ranked among the lowest among bachelor courses in terms of graduates' median incomes.

5. Factors inhibiting or advancing artists' careers

The artist survey indicates that in 2001, a lack of work opportunities, a lack of financial return from creative work, and a lack of time for creative work due to other pressures and responsibilities were considered by artists to be the most important factors inhibiting their careers. Talent and training were considered by artists as the most important factors for advancing their careers.

Part 1: Overview

Introduction

This report aim provides an empirical picture of the working lives of Australia's artists. The main focus is on 'practising professional artists', defined as 'serious practitioners operating at a level and standard of work and with a degree of commitment appropriate to the norms of professional practice within their artform' and who have demonstrable public or professional engagements (Throsby and Hollister, 2003; 13).

Some data are also presented on arts work more broadly defined and on graduates entering the artists' labour market.

The data used for the report come from four main sources:

1. The artist survey series undertaken by Professor David Throsby
2. *Census of Population and Housing* undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)
3. *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership*, a collection undertaken by the ABS as a supplement to its labour force survey
4. *Work in culture and leisure activities* collection, ABS

Data are also presented from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations on the supply of newly trained people entering the artist labour market between 1999 and 2008. A variety of other collections are utilised to provide contextual data and for calculating indicators. A full list of collections utilised is provided in attachment 6.

The artist survey series is the most comprehensive and accurate source of data on artists' working lives in Australia. Wherever possible, this series has been used as the primary source of information. However, the most recent survey in the series was undertaken in early 2002, so the information is now nearly eight years old. Other sources of data are used here to provide both contextual and more recent information. These are, however, less detailed sources of information and not tailored to the often unusual characteristics of artists' work, which limits the ability to draw accurate conclusions from the data provided by these collections. A full, accurate and more up to date picture of the working life of artists will not be possible until the next artist survey is completed in 2009.

The range of artists covered by the data is based on the definition from the artist survey series:

- Writers
- Visual artists
- Craft practitioners
- Actors
- Directors
- Dancers

- Choreographers
- Musicians
- Singers
- Composers
- CCD workers

Data are not able to be presented at this level of detail due to low numbers of artists in certain categories, so a number of occupations are combined in the data presented here. The other collections utilised for this report have different classifications of artist occupation or type of arts activity that differ from the artist survey. Data from these other collections are based on a selection of occupations and activities that are as close as possible to those of the artist survey. Attachment 1 sets out the occupations and activities used from each of the main collections to develop the data in this report.

Below is a summary of the data presented in parts 2 and 3 of this report divided into four key areas:

1. Artist numbers
2. Artists' earnings and incomes
3. Characteristics of artists' employment
4. Factors inhibiting or advancing artists' careers

The data reinforce previous findings from Australia and overseas of the relatively low earnings and incomes of the majority of artists, relatively high rates of self-employment, freelancing and multiple job holding, and a relative lack of access to income support employment benefits. The analysis provides an indication of the magnitude of artists' relative position across these indicators.

Data also show that there has been strong growth in the number of professional artists in Australia since 1987. The growth in the number of artists has been higher than the growth in Australia's adult population. Artists' employment has, however, only replicated this strong growth up until 2001. Since then, the number of artists employed in an arts occupation as their main job appears to have declined strongly. There is some evidence that artists have switched their main job from arts occupations to arts-related and other occupations, perhaps in response to a noticeable decline in the relative incomes of artist occupations between 2001 and 2006.

Although data cannot identify any one factor in particular that has caused the decline in relative incomes between 2001 and 2006, one possible explanation is that there has been very strong growth in people creating arts more broadly, or 'non-professionally'. Between 2001 and 2007, the number of people undertaking paid and unpaid work in creative arts activities nearly doubled from 1.2 million to 2.4 million people per annum. This was an increase in the participation rate in creative arts from 8 percent to 15 percent of the adult population. Over the same period the number of people who received some payment for their work increased by 44 percent, or around 151,000 people. In light of the relatively small size of the professional artist sector, this is a

substantial increase in arts production, and provides a likely, though largely unverifiable, explanation for a substantial part of the relative decline in artists' incomes over the period.

Section 1.1: Artist numbers

The artist survey provides the most accurate estimate of the number of practising professional artists in Australia. This is because of the way in which the sample population is derived for the survey. The researchers compile lists of artists in different art forms from source lists provided by various arts service organisations, arts companies, directories, membership lists for unions and professional associations. The researchers undertake extensive screening and testing to ensure that the survey covers the target group of practising professional artists. For this reason, the definitions and sample used in the survey has been used as the foundation for the statistical analysis in this report. Other collections are not able to identify the professional artist population to the degree of accuracy that the artist survey does. Even though the Census in theory captures information on the whole population, rather than just a sample of the population, it is associated with a number of well-documented problems in capturing data on artists (these are described in detail in the introduction to part 2 of this report).

For these reasons, the artist survey is the best source for estimating the number of professional artists in Australia. Unfortunately, the most recent artist survey provides data for 2001. A more recent estimate of artist numbers is presented in this report by applying information from other data to the 2001 artist survey estimate.

Most recent estimates

45,000 professional artists in Australia in 2001; an estimated 52,000 in 2007

The most recent artist survey estimates that there were 45,000 practising professional artists in Australia in 2001. An accurate picture of the current number of professional artists will not be possible until the next survey in the artist series is completed in 2009. An estimate developed in this report forecasts that the number of professional artists in Australia in 2007 was 52,000 people.

(Section 2.1.1)

It is estimated that 27,800 artists in 2007 had arts work as their 'main job' (equivalent to just over half of the estimated practising professional artists).

(Section 2.3.1)

These estimates relates to 2007 because this year is the latest in the work series used to derive the estimate. The estimates do not, therefore, account for the recent financial crisis and recession. Some of the data presented here provide an indication of a countercyclical element in the artist population:

- During the early '90s recession the number of professional artists appears to have been high: artist numbers grew by 25 percent between 1987 and 1993, compared to 9 percent growth in total employment and

13 percent growth in the labour force. The artist survey also suggests that professional artists worked slightly more hours on average than in 1987. As the economy recovered between 1993 and 2001, artist numbers grew by less than total employment and at around the same rate as the labour force, and the average hours worked dropped back to 1987 levels.

(Section 3.1.2)

- Perhaps counter-intuitively, the proportion of artists reporting some period of unemployment in each of the surveys was lowest in the years leading up to 1993, covering the time when the recession was at its deepest (just one quarter of artists compared to around a third of artists in 1987 and 2001). On the other hand, there was a notable increase in the proportion of artists applying for income support benefits. (Section 3.1.5).

An explanation for these findings cannot be fully explored here, but it does appear that the current recession could lead to upward pressure on the number of professional artists if the pattern evident during the previous major recession is repeated.

Artists by occupation

The largest occupational groups are 'visual artists and craft practitioners' combined (31 percent of artists) and 'musicians' including composers (27 percent of artists). Actors, dancers and other performing artists make up just under one fifth, and authors and writers around one tenth to one sixth of artists.

(Section 2.1.1)

Professional artists represented around 10 percent of all people involved in creative artistic work in 2007

Artistic work can be viewed in a hierarchical form from highly professionalised artistic practice to less formal creation such as unpaid, voluntary work and as a hobby activity. Estimates developed in the data analysis here suggest that in 2007, around one third (31 percent) of the adult population of Australia undertook creative activities either as work or as a hobby. This is equivalent to 4.98 million people. This figure does not include people who wrote poetry or prose, so the actual figure is likely to be higher than this.

Around half of those involved in creative arts activities considered their involvement to be work, although most (79 percent) did not receive payment for that work. The number of people receiving some payment for their creative arts work is estimated at around 491,500 people, or 3 percent of the population.

This provides an indication of the context within professional practice takes place. The estimated 52,000 practising professional artists in 2007 represent

just 11 percent of people paid for creative arts activity, and just 0.32 percent of the adult population.

(Section 2.5.1)

People completing formal arts training likely to be a significant addition to the pool of artist labour

Preliminary estimates undertaken here suggest that in 2001, around 10,800 people completed creative arts courses in Australia's tertiary education institutions. This figure includes people completing a wider range of arts courses than those relating specifically to the artists group that is the subject of this report, including media and communications, design and film courses. On the other hand, it does not include some people completing tertiary courses that aspire to become artists, such as writers and contemporary musicians, as many of these people do not train in courses specifically relating to their arts work. More analysis is required to determine the accuracy of the measure, so it is presented here as a rough estimate only. Nevertheless, if the two groups are around the same size, the figure would provide a good indication of the number of trained people entering the artist labour market, and it would represent just under one quarter (24 percent) of professional artists in 2001. Based on the 2007 estimate of professional artists developed in this report, the number of people completing creative arts courses would represent around 40 percent of professional artists in 2007.

(Sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2)

Trends in artist numbers

The number of artist grew faster than the total labour force and the adult population between 1987 and 2001

The number of artists rose from 32,000 in 1987 to 45,000 in 2001, an increase of 41 percent. Over the same period the labour force grew by 27 percent and the Australian adult population by 24 percent. Growth in artist numbers was strongest between 1987 and 1993, when the number of artists grew by 25 percent over a period when the labour force grew by 13 percent and the adult population grew by 11 percent.

This high growth to 2001 is reinforced by Census data on people employed in artist occupations as their main job.

Both the artist survey and the Census indicate that the strongest growth to 2001 occurred in two artist occupations: (i) authors and writers; and (ii) actors, dancers and choreographers.

(Sections 3.1.2 and 3.2.1)

The strong relative growth in artists' employment to 2001 appears to have stalled more recently

Census data, which are available up to 2006, suggest that the high growth rate in artists' employment has more recently been checked. The Census measures a 15 percent decline in the number of 'main job' artists between 2001 and

2006. This decline may, however, be driven as much by measurement issues than by a decline in the number of professional artists (for reasons outlined in section 3.2.1). In particular, the Census shows a notable decline in artists' real incomes relative to other occupations (including arts-related professional occupations) between 2001 and 2006, which may have caused a number of artists to move out of the 'main job' measures used in the Census.

Some evidence for this can be found in data on occupations closely related to professional artist practice, many of which display strong employment growth over 2001 to 2006, particularly private arts teachers. It may be that between Censuses artists switched from their primary creative work to arts-related professions in order to sustain income levels.

The 15 percent drop in main job artists does not therefore necessarily represent a 15 percent decline in the number of professional artists: a number may simply have switched their artistic practice from a main job to a secondary job.

Nevertheless, the data do suggest that the long period of high growth in artist numbers relative to the labour force and the adult population may have come to and end between 2001 and 2006. This is supported to some degree by an easing in the employment growth across all cultural occupations between 2001 and 2006, for which growth was less than in total employment for the first time since at least 1996.

An accurate picture of the number of professional artists currently practising in Australia will not be available until the most recent collection in the artist series is completed in 2009. As outlined above, the number of professional artists in 2007 is estimated at 52,000. This would make an estimated 16 percent increase in the number of artists from 2001 to 2007 over a period in which the labour force grew by 11 percent, and the adult population by 9 percent.

(Section 3.1.2)

Steady influx of people with formal arts training entering the artist labour market between 1999 and 2008

There has been a steady stream of newly trained people entering the artist labour market from tertiary training institutions. It is difficult to estimate the number of people leaving the artist population.

Bachelor graduates represent just a fraction of people receiving formal tertiary arts training. Some preliminary data is presented here showing that the number of people completing creative arts courses rose from around 10,800 in 2001 to 16,300 in 2007. This is a 50 percent increase, and is notably higher than the increase in the total number of people completing courses across all subjects (32 percent) over the same period. For the reasons outlined earlier, this course completion data are preliminary and presented as a rough guide only, as they include a wider set of creative courses than relate to the artist group that is the subject of this report.

(Section 3.4.2)

Section 1.2: Artists' earnings and incomes

All three of the main data collections used for this report collect earnings or incomes data in some form. However, the measures used differ substantially between collections. The major differences are described in section 2.1.2 and in figure 2.1.2c. Differences in the collections mean that data on artists' creative earnings are presented here using the artist survey, but comparisons between artists' incomes and the incomes of other occupations are based on data from the Census. Note that earnings relate to payments for work undertaken (which here includes grants and royalties), while incomes relates to money received from all sources, including earnings, interest, dividends etc.

Creative earnings

Artists' average creative earnings 2001

Averages can provide a misleading indication of earnings and should be used with caution (see explanation in 2.1.2). In 2000-01, the average earnings of artists from their creative arts work was \$17,100. This was less than half (46 percent) of artists' average earnings from all sources. Actors and writers had the highest average income from arts work (\$22,500 and \$20,400 respectively). Craft practitioners and dancers were the artist occupations with on the highest proportion of average earnings coming from the creative arts work, both with just under two thirds of total annual average income coming from creative arts work.

(Section 2.1.2)

Artists' median earnings from creative work in 2001 was \$7,300

Artists' annual median earnings are notably lower than their average earnings. This is because the earnings distribution of artists is strongly 'skewed' toward lower income levels. Median earnings data provide a more accurate picture of the annual earnings of a greater proportion of artists than average earnings, as averages are more heavily influenced by skewed distributions. (see explanation in section 2.1.2)

The median annual earnings of artists in 2000-01 from creative work was \$7,300. Dancers had the highest annual median earnings from creative work (\$12,900), followed by actors and musicians (each with \$10,500).

(Section 2.1.2)

In 2000-01, artists' annual median earnings from creative work were equivalent one-quarter of median total earnings.

(Section 2.1.2)

Artists' creative earnings increased in real terms 1987 to 2001

The median earnings of artists increased in real terms (ie higher than inflation) between 1987 and 2001. Real median earnings from artists' creative work rose 26 percent across the period from \$5,800 in 1987 to \$7,300 in 2001. (Section 3.1.3)

Proportion of earnings from creative work declined 1987 to 2001

Between 1987 and 2001 the proportion of artists' total annual average earnings coming from creative arts work declined from 51 percent to 46 percent. (Section 3.1.3)

Incomes

Full time artists' median incomes from all sources in 2006 was \$35,700

The Census indicates that in 2006 the median income of people employed full time in artist occupations was around \$35,700 per annum. Authors and related professionals had the highest full time annual median income (\$44,500), while visual artists and crafts professionals had the lowest (\$28,000). (Section 2.3.2)

Full time artists' median incomes rose in real terms between 1996 and 2006

The median full time incomes of people employed in artist occupations increased by 17 percent real terms between 1996 and 2006: from \$30,500 to \$35,700 per annum. The largest rise was in visual arts and crafts occupations, which recorded a 53 percent real increase in median full time annual income over the period. (Section 3.2.2)

Artists' incomes compared to other occupations

The full time median income of artist occupations was \$30,000 lower than other professionals in 2006

The Census shows that the median annual incomes of full time artists was around \$30,000 lower than other professionals, and around \$10,900 lower than all people employed full time. (Section 2.3.2)

Median incomes of full time artists increased relative to other occupations between 1996 and 2001

Between 1996 and 2001 the full time median incomes of artists rose by 12 percent: this was twice the rate of other professional occupations and four times the rate of other social, arts and media professionals. (Section 3.2.2)

Median incomes of full time artists declined relative to other professional occupations between 2001 and 2006

Between 2001 and 2006, the full time median incomes of artist occupations increased at a lower rate than the median incomes in other professional occupations (5 percent for artists compared to 9 percent of other professionals). The real median incomes of actors, dancers and related professionals declined by 5 percent over the period. (Section 3.2.2)

Artists' income gap widened between 2001 and 2006

The gap between artists' median incomes and other professional widened in real terms from around \$26,000 in 2001 to just over \$30,000 in 2001. (Section 3.2.3)

Rise and fall of main job artists and changes in artist incomes relative to other social, media and arts professionals, 1996 to 2006

The Census measures strong growth in the number of main job artists between 1996 and 2001, and then a strong decline from 2001 to 2006. These changes are to a degree mirrored in artists' median incomes relative to other social, media and arts professionals ('media professionals' for short). In 1996, the median income of artists was \$22,200 lower than the median income of media professionals. In 2001 the gap was \$20,200, a closing of the gap of \$2,000. In 2006, however, the median income of artists was \$23,200 lower than media professionals, a widening of the gap of \$3,000. (Note that all figures here are 'real')

The rise and fall of artists' relative incomes between 1996 and 2006 may explain in part the increase and decline in main job artists over the same period, especially considering that in 2001, artists rated 'insufficient income' as the most important factor preventing them from spending more time at their creative work (Throsby and Hollister, 2003; 42). (Section 3.2.3)

Section 1.3: Characteristics of artists' employment

Hours worked

In 2001 artists dedicated on average 26 hours per week to creative work

In 2001 artists spent 26 hours per week on average at their creative work. This was 60 percent of their total average working week. Craft practitioners spent on average longer at creative work than other occupations (33 hours, or 73 percent of their working week). Dancers and musicians spent the least number of hours at creative work on average (22 hours per week). These figures include both paid and unpaid work.

(Section 2.1.4)

Potential of supply of artist labour to increased quickly in the short-term due to a pool of professional artists wanting to increase hours dedicated to creative work

Given the opportunity, the majority (78 percent) of artists not working full time at their arts work would have liked to have spent more time at creative arts work in 2001. This represents a pool of around 14,000 professional artists ready to increase their arts working hours, and who have relatively low barriers with which to do so (eg. existing reputations, networks and arts-specific capital). This provides an indication of the ease with which the supply of artist labour could increase in the short-term.

(Section 2.1.4)

Unemployment experience

Unemployment experience 1996 to 2001

The artist survey shows that around one third (34 percent) of professional artists experienced some unemployment over the period 1996 to 2001. This figure cannot be compared to the standard unemployment rates such as those published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, as it is calculated over a five year period rather than over a year.

The average length of time artists spent unemployment over the period ranged from two to five months per year.

One-third of artists reported experiencing difficulty accessing unemployment benefits due to their occupation. More than half (55 percent) of artists reported being unable to continue their arts practice as an approved activity.

The data indicate that, once unemployed, musicians appear to have on average the least disruptive unemployment experience among artists: their occupation group has the lowest proportion reporting difficulty accessing benefits and the highest proportion being able to continue their arts practice as an approved activity.

(Section 2.1.5)

The proportion of artists experiencing a period of unemployment was lowest in 1993, at a time when unemployment in the general workforce was high due to the recession in the early '90s

The 1987 and 2001 artist surveys show a similar proportion of artists experiencing some unemployment (around a third). The 1993 survey stands out as different, with around a quarter (26 percent) of artists experiencing some period of unemployment. This drop in the rate of artists' unemployment occurred at a time when unemployment in the general workforce was high due to the recession in the early '90s.

(Section 3.1.5)

Proportion of artists applying for unemployment benefits and having benefits refused declined between 1987 and 2001

Between the 1987 and 2001 artist surveys, the proportion of artists applying for benefits dropped from 66 percent to 56 percent, while the proportion of artists who had their application for benefits refused dropped from around 10 percent to 3 percent.

(Section 3.1.5)

Full time and part time employment

Part time employment more prevalent in artist occupations 1996 to 2006

In 2006, around half of people employed as main job artists were employed full time, and around half were employed part time. Musicians had the highest rate of part time employment among artist occupations, with over two thirds (68 percent) of musicians employed part time in 2006.

The proportion of artists employed part time was greater than in other occupations. Just over one quarter (27 percent) of other professionals and just under one third (32 percent) of all occupations were employed part time.

The greater prevalence of part time employment in artist occupations is evident in all three Censuses from 1996 to 2006. The difference was relatively stable at around 27 percentage points below professional occupations (eg the proportion in full time artist occupations in 2001 was 47 percent compared to 74 percent of professionals, a difference of 27 percentage points) and around 22 percentage points below total employment. (Sections 2.3.4 and 3.2.6)

Proportion of artists employed full time declined 2001 to 2006

Between 2001 and 2006 there was a decline in the proportion of full time employment from 47 percent to 45 percent of artists. This occurred across all artist occupations except musicians and related professionals, for which there was a slight increase in the proportion of full time employment of from 30 to 32 percent. Most artist occupations experienced a 3 percentage point decline in the prevalence of full time employment. This decline was not mirrored in other professional occupations and in total employment, where the prevalence of full time employment remained relatively stable.

(Section 3.2.6)

Employment status: employee or self-employed

Majority of artists self-employed, 2001

The artist survey indicates that in 2001, 73 percent of practising professional artists were self-employed or working freelance. Just over a quarter (26 percent) were 'employees'; ie. worked for salaries or wages. Dancers had highest proportion of employee artists (52 percent); Craft Practitioners the lowest (14 percent).

Data from the artist survey are not able to be compared to other occupations. Comparisons are, however, available for main job artists in the Census (see below).

(Section 2.1.3)

Self-employment more prevalent in artist occupations, 2006

In 2006, self-employment was more prevalent in artist occupations than in other occupations. Around half (49 percent) of 'main job' artists were self-employed compared to just 6 percent of professional occupations self-employed. Among artist occupations, visual arts and craft professionals had the highest rate of self-employment (58 percent).

(Section 2.3.3)

Increase in prevalence of self-employment in artist occupations between 1996 and 2006

The Census shows that the prevalence of self-employment among main job artists increased from 35 percent in 1996 to 49 percent in 2006 (conversely, the proportion of employee artists decreased from 64 percent to 47 percent).

The increase in the prevalence of self-employment among artist occupations was not evidenced in total employment or in other professional occupations, where rates were approximately the same in 2006 as they were in 1996.

The number of artists who were employed on wages and salaries (ie as 'employees') declined from around 17,100 to 12,500 between 1996 and 2006. (Section 3.2.5)

Employee artists, 2006

Employee artists had a relatively low rate of superannuation or retirement benefits coverage, 2006

In 2006, 78 percent of employee artists belonged to a superannuation or retirement benefits scheme. This is lower than the prevalence of superannuation coverage in other occupations: 97 percent of professional employees and 93 percent of all employees belonged to a superannuation or retirement benefits scheme.

(Section 2.4.1)

Multiple job holding rates higher among employee artists, 2006

In 2006, 12 percent of employee artists were multiple job holders, compared to 4 percent of all professional employees and 3 percent of all employees.

(Section 2.4.2)

Employee artists' access to paid leave lower than employees in other occupations, 2006

In 2006, less than half (45 percent) of employees in artist occupations had access to paid leave entitlements, compared to 84 percent of employee professionals and 73 percent of all employees.

(Section 2.4.3)

The proportion of fine arts bachelor degree graduates in full time employment within four months after finishing their degree rose between 1999 and 2008

The proportion of new visual and performing fine arts bachelor degree graduates in full time employment within four months after finishing their degree rose from 57 percent in 1999 to 67 percent in 2008. This rise was higher than the rise for all graduates, although the proportion of arts graduates in full time employment remained below that of all graduates over the period. The data do not reveal the proportion of graduates who were working as artists.

(Sections 3.4.3 and 3.4.4)

Section 1.4: Factors inhibiting or advancing artists' careers

Lack of opportunity and resources are considered by artists to be the most important factors inhibiting career development throughout artists' careers, 2001

In 2001, artists indicated that three factors in particular were most important in inhibiting career development throughout their career: lack of work opportunities; lack of financial return from creative work; and lack of time for creative work due to other pressures and responsibilities. Each of these factors was selected by at least one fifth of artists

There are some notable differences between artist occupations. For the majority of performing artists, the lack of work opportunities is the most important factor inhibiting career development. For visual artists, craft practitioners, composers and writers a lack of return from the creative practice appears to be a more important inhibitor.

Data on the factors inhibiting career development are not comparable between the three artist surveys due to changes in the questions asked. Throsby and Hollister (2003) do note, however, that the results of the 2001 survey confirm earlier findings that financial problems and time constraints are the two major factors that inhibit artists' professional development. It therefore seems that these are constant factors across the period from 1987 to 2001.

(Sections 2.1.6, and 3.1.6)

Talent and training are considered by artists as the most important factors for advancing careers, 2001

Artists identified talent and art form training as the most significant factors in advancing their careers, with at least a quarter of artists identifying these as important factors. Other factors identified as important were support and encouragement from mentors, family and friends, and peer recognition, although these factors varied in importance by artist type.

(Section 2.1.7)

Part 2: Snapshot data on artists' employment in Australia 2001, 2006 and 2007

Introduction

This report provides 'snapshot' data on artists' employment from three main sources: Throsby and Hollister (2003), for data from 2001; the ABS Census for data from 2006; and the ABS Labour Force Survey supplementary employee earnings, benefits and trade union membership survey (hereafter referred to as LFSS), also for data from 2006.

These surveys gather information in different ways and have different strengths and weaknesses. Research has shown that artists' work is typified by multiple job-holding, short term, casual and contract-based employment, and levels of 'underemployment'. These characteristics make data gathering on artists' employment especially difficult.

The survey undertaken in Throsby and Hollister (2003), referred to here as 'the artist survey', is designed specifically for the needs of capturing data on artists' working lives. This survey is therefore the source of the most detailed and accurate data. However, the most recent in the survey series relates to 2001, so findings may not be representative of artists' contemporary circumstances, particularly since technological innovations may have impacted significantly on both the creative process and the dissemination of artistic products. The survey is also based on a sample of around 1,000 artists, so although large enough to generate population estimates, the sample size is limits the level of detail of analysis that can be generated from the data.

More up-to-date snapshot data are available from the ABS' Census and LFSS collections. The strength of these collections is in their sample sizes. The Census is in theory a measure of the whole population, rather than a sample of the population. The LFSS is based on a sample of around 30,000 people (or 30 times bigger than the artist survey).

However, the ABS surveys are not tailored to the complexities of artists' work patterns, and therefore do not provide as accurate a picture as Throsby and Hollister (2003). The explanatory power gained by large samples sizes can be lost through the lack of customisation for artists' often unusual working circumstances. Major limitations in the surveys are discussed in detail at the relevant places in the statistical analysis presented here.

The artist and ABS surveys have different classifications of arts work and artist occupations. The classification in the artist survey series serves as the basis for all of the data presented in this report. This defines artists as:

- Writers
- Visual artists
- Craft practitioners
- Actors
- Directors
- Dancers
- Choreographers
- Musicians
- Singers
- Composers
- CCD workers

Data are not able to be presented at this level of detail due to low numbers of artists in certain categories, so a number of occupations are combined in the data presented here. Data from the other collections used in this report are based on a selection of occupations and activities that are as close as possible to those of the artist survey. Attachment 1 sets out the occupations and activities used from each of the main collections to develop the data in this report.

The artist and ABS surveys also gather key variables in slightly different ways.

The artist survey aims to measure 'practising professional artists', defined as 'serious practitioners operating at a level and standard of work and with a degree of commitment appropriate to the norms of professional practice within their artform' and who have demonstrable public or professional engagements (Throsby and Hollister, 2003; 13). Census employment data relates to 'main job' artists, where main job is defined as the job in which the person *usually* works the most hours in the week prior to the Census. Given the contingent nature and multiple job-holding nature of artists' employment, many practising professional artists will not be represented by the data because they were temporarily not working as an artist in the week before the Census or their arts work was not the work they *usually* worked most hours in at the time. Data from the artist survey suggests that a substantial number of artists do not work most of their hours at creative arts work. In 2001 artists spent on average more than half of their working week at creative arts work (see section 2.1.4). The *median* weekly hours artists dedicated to creative work was, however, just 18 hours compared to 16 hours at all other work (unpublished data from Throsby and Hollister, 2003). These figures suggest that a number of professional practising artists are unlikely to be measured as 'main job' artists in the Census.

Financial data collected in the Census also differs from the artist survey. The Census asks respondents to estimate their usual total weekly income *from all sources*: ie. it includes not just wages and salaries, but also interest, benefits and other income. Census data therefore differs from the artist survey in both

the financial variable collected (all income rather than earnings from work) and in the reference time frame (weekly rather than annually).

As with the artist survey, the Census covers both employees and self-employed people.

The LFSS collects information on main and second jobs, but does not record the occupation of the second job. Main job is defined in the same way as in the Census. A significant limitation in the data from the LFSS is that the survey gathers information on employees only – it does not collect information on people who are self-employed (with the exception of people who draw a wage or salary from an incorporated enterprise, which data shows to be a relatively small number of people). It therefore represents a minority of artists, as the artist survey suggests that the majority of artists (73 percent) are self-employed.

Like the artist survey, the LFSS collects earnings from work rather than income from all sources. It also collects a range of employment-related information such as hours worked, superannuation, access to leave entitlements and multiple job holding.

One of the key limitations in developing a statistical picture of the nature of artists' work is, therefore, that surveys collect different information in different ways. Key differences are summarised in figure 2.0 below.

Figure 2.0: Key elements of three data collections

Collection	Sample	Employment	Status	Job types	Financial
Throsby and Hollister (2003)	Members of artists' service organisations $n \approx 1,000$	Self-defined work over a multi-year period	Employees and self-employed	3 creative, arts related, non arts	Annual earnings from work
ABS Census	N (population)	Main job in week prior to Census	Employees and self-employed	1 main job	Weekly income from all sources
ABS LFSS	Sample $n \approx 30,000$	Main and second job in week prior to survey	Employees	2 main and second jobs	Weekly earnings from work
ABS Work	Sample $n \approx 26,000$	Involvement in creative arts activities over 12 months	Not used here	Paid, unpaid and hobby activities	Annual income from activity

This part of the report presents statistics in five sections based on collection source:

1. Artist survey 2001
2. Artist survey 2001 by State and Territory
3. Census 2006
4. Labour force supplementary survey 2006
5. Work in selected culture and leisure activities 2007

Section 2.1: Artists 2001 (artist survey)

The data in this section are reproduced from the research report *Don't Give Up Your Day Job: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia* (Throsby and Hollister, 2003). The research was based on a survey of practising professional artists in Australia over the period 1996 to 2001.

The survey estimates that there were 45,000 practising professional artists in Australia in 2001, which at the time represented just under 0.5 percent of the labour force (or around 1 in every 217 people in the labour force).

This report provides an analysis of data from Throsby and Hollister (2003) on a range of employment-related indicators for professional artists, including:

- Employment status
 - i. number of self-employed professional artists
 - ii. number of employee professional artists
- Incomes
 - iii. income derived from principal artistic occupation
 - iv. income derived from other employment sources
- Hours worked
 - v. number of hours of work in principal occupation
 - vi. number of hours undertaken in other employment
- Unemployment
 - vii. period of unemployment or time with unpaid work

2.1.1 Number of artists

Figure 2.1.1a shows estimates for the number of practising professional artists in Australia in 2001. The column 'range' shows the percentage differences represented by the ranges presented in the original publication (note that these are not necessarily the same as statistical standard errors and are a rough guide only). The high percentages in the ranges for dancers, composers and community and cultural development workers (CCD workers) mean that the estimates should be interpreted with caution (the range for composers, for example, implies that the actual number of practising professional composers in 2001 is expected to have been anywhere from 1,000 to 2,000).

Figure 2.1.1a: Number of artists, 2001

	Artists	Range
	number	+/- percent
Writers	7,250	3
Visual artists	9,250	8
Craft practitioners	4,250	6
Actors	6,500	8
Dancers*	1,250	20
Musicians	12,500	4
Composers*	1,500	33
Community cultural development workers*	2,500	20
All artists	45,000	8

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003; 16) Table 1

Notes: Estimates only based on mid-point range in Table 1, Throsby (2003).

Accuracy is the percentage variation from the mid-point represented by range

* Data should be interpreted with caution due to large range

Comparing the Census and the artist survey

Figure 2.2.1b compares artist survey estimates with data from the 2001 Census. It should be noted that the Census numbers presented here differ from those published in Throsby and Hollister (2003), because the Census data here include a number of undefined occupations that were not included in the 2003 publication.

Figure 2.1.1b: Artist numbers, census and artists survey compared, 2001

ABS Census		Artists survey	
Measure: Number employed in occupation as main job		Measure: Number of practicing professional artists	
Authors and Related Professionals	3,287	Writers	7,250
Visual Arts & Crafts Professionals	9,780	Visual artists and craft practitioners	13,500
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	6,155	Actors, dancers and choreographers	7,750
Musicians and Related Professionals	8,535	Musicians and composers	14,000
-		CCD workers	2,500
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	3,992	-	
Total selected artistic occupations	31,749	All artists	45,000

Sources: ABS Census 2001 and Throsby and Hollister (2003)

The difference in the estimates can be reconciled by taking into account a number of critical differences between the surveys.

First, the definitions and occupational classifications differ significantly between the two collections. Census artist occupations are selected from the ABS's standard classification of occupations (ANZSCO). The major difference between the surveys' occupational classifications is that the ANZSCO does not have an occupational category for CCD workers. Other conceptual differences such as this will create differences in the number of artists coded to each occupation. Attachment 3 lists the artist occupations

selected from the ANZSCO in order to produce Census and LFSS data in this report. These occupations have been chosen to be as close as possible to the occupations in the artist survey. It is unavoidable, however, that the two artist groups differ due solely to differences in the classifications.

There are also significant methodological differences that cause differences in the artist groups measured by the Census and the artist survey. The Census is likely to underestimate the number of professional artists because respondents are asked to record the occupation of their 'main job' in the week leading up to the census, where main job is defined as the job in which the person usually works the most hours. There are two main characteristics of artists' work that may cause this approach to underestimate of artist numbers:

- 1) Contingent employment: a number of professional artists may not have undertaken creative arts work in the week leading up to the census; and
- 2) Multiple job-holding: creative arts work undertaken by artists may not be the occupation in which an artist usually works the most hours.

For these reasons, it might be assumed that the Census data would represent a sub-set of artist survey estimates. The data in figure 2.2.1b are consistent with this expectation, with the Census numbers lower than the artist survey in all comparable occupations.

The two estimates could be reconciled if it was known how many people measured by the Census had a non-arts main job, but whose second job was in an arts occupation, and/or who were professional artists but did not undertake arts work in the week prior to the 2001 Census. Unfortunately, these people are unidentifiable. However, the artist study estimates that 32 percent of artists held a single job in their principal artistic occupation (PAO). This would be equivalent to 14,400 artists. These people are likely to have been measured as artists in the Census, less a relatively small number who may not have worked at all in the lead-up to the Census. To make the Census number equivalent to the artist survey based on this estimate, less than half (40 percent) of artists who held more than one job would need to have recorded an arts occupation as their main job in the Census. Although not verifiable, this seems realistic. The similarity of the distributions across occupations in figure 2.1.1c appear to add weight to a strong consistency between the collections.

Throsby and Hollister (2003; 18) conclude that 'overall, the comparisons confirm that in broad terms our estimates of the artists population are consistent with census data.'

Figure 2.1.1c: Types of artists, census and artists survey compared, 2001

ABS Census		Artists survey	
	<i>Percent</i>		<i>Percent</i>
Authors and Related Professionals	10	Writers	16
Visual Arts & Crafts Professionals	31	Visual artists and craft practitioners	30
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	19	Actors, dancers and choreographers	17
Musicians and Related Professionals	27	Musicians and composers	31
-	-	CCD workers	6
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	13	-	-
Total selected artistic occupations	100	All artists	100

Sources: ABS Census 2001 and Throsby and Hollister (2003)

Estimate of the number of practising professional artists in 2007 using forecasts based on ABS collections

The artist survey provides the most accurate picture of the number of practising professional artists in Australia. The last survey was undertaken in 2001, and the results for the 2009 survey will not be available until later in 2009.

Although more up to date information is not yet available, rough forecasts of the likely population of practising professional artists in can be obtained by applying data from other collections. Figure 2.1.1d provides three forecasts for the population of practising professional artists in 2007:

- By applying the trends in Census 'main job' artists between 2001 and 2006, then inflating this estimate by the growth in total employment from 2006 to 2007.
- A mid-point forecast between forecasts a) and c).
- By calculating the ratio of practising professional artists and those undertaking some paid work in creative activities in 2001, and applying this same ratio to 2007 data from the *Work in culture/leisure* collection.

These techniques provide an estimated range of the number of practising professional artists in 2007 of between 39,000 and 65,000; or between a 13 percent decline and a 44 percent increase in artist numbers. Both forecasts seem unrealistic: the Census figure influenced by measurement issues (described in detail in section 3.2.1), and the Work figure being biased upward by a large increase in non-professional practice between 2001 and 2007 (see sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2). The mid-point of these two estimates is 52,000 (a 15 percent increase), which is the estimate chosen here and seems realistic when compared to data presented in other parts of this report (refer to the discussion in the overview in part 1).

Figure 2.1.1d: Forecasts of number of practising professional artists, 2007

	Actual	Forecasts			Difference from 2001		
		2001	2007 (a)	2007 (b)	2007(c)	Forecast (a)	Forecast (b)
	Number				Percent		
Writers	7,250	6,400	8,400	10,500			
Visual artists and craft practitioners	13,500	11,400	15,600	19,500			
Actors, dancers and choreographers	7,750	6,400	9,000	11,200			
Musicians and composers	14,000	12,600	16,200	20,200			
CCD workers	2,500	2,200	2,900	3,600			
All artists	45,000	39,000	52,000	65,000	-13	16	44

(a) Forecast based on growth in artist occupations from 2001 to 2006 Census, then growth in total employment 2006 to 2007

(b) Forecast is mid-point between forecast (a) and forecast (c)

(c) Forecast applies ratio of practising professional artists/paid involvement from 2001 to 2007 data for all artists, and assumes the same distribution of artist occupations as in the 2001 artist survey

Sources: ABS Census 2001,2006 and Throsby and Hollister (2003)

2.1.2 Earnings

Figures 2.1.2a and b provide two measures of artists' earnings: (a) average earnings; and (b) median earnings. Average earnings are obtained by dividing the total earnings of all artists by the number of artists. Median earnings are the mid-point in the artists' earnings distribution, or the level of earnings at which half of the artist group earns more, half earns less.

Median earnings tend to provide a more accurate picture of the earnings of an occupational group. Averages can be influenced by 'outliers' (small numbers of people earning unusually high or unusually low earnings) or by earnings distributions that are strongly 'skewed', or asymmetrical. Medians are more stable under these conditions.

Most earnings distributions are skewed toward lower earnings brackets, and evidence has been found that a small number of artists can earn very high earnings. As the data in attachment 2 indicates, the distribution of artists' earnings is strongly skewed toward lower incomes, especially earnings from creative work. Data from the artist survey indicate that there is a substantial difference between the two measures of earnings: in 2001, artists' annual median earnings from creative work were less than half (43 percent) their average earnings. As the earnings distributions in attachment 2 indicate, this is due to earnings distribution being skewed toward lower earnings brackets and the existence of a few artists earning relatively high incomes.

The skewed distribution makes medians a more representative measure of the earnings of the majority of artists, and a more accurate measure when comparing earnings levels between artist and other occupations.

Figures 2.1.2a and b show the artists' earnings from their principal artistic occupation ('creative' earnings) and from all work. Earnings are pre-tax and do not include sources of income not directly related to work (such as interest and dividends).

Figure 2.1.2a shows the proportion of total earnings artists receive from their principal artistic occupation. On average, artists received less than half (46

percent) of their total earnings from their creative work. Craft practitioners and dancers were the group with the highest proportion of earnings from creative work (63 and 62 percent respectively); composers and community cultural development workers the lowest (33 and 32 percent respectively).

As figure 2.1.2b indicates, the median earnings from artists' creative work in 2000-01 was equivalent to around a quarter (24 percent) of their total median earnings.

According to Australia Council (2004; 1), one third of artists in 2001 had earnings (from all sources) below the minimum wage.² Issues associated with comparing artists' earnings with earnings in other occupations are discussed in detail later in this section.

If the group of artists in the artist survey are thought of as a single 'sector', the survey's earnings data can be used to derive an estimate of the economic size of the artist sector by multiplying average earnings by the number of artists. By this method, the artists in the 2001 artist survey together earned \$769.5 million from creative work.

Figure 2.1.2a: Average earnings, 2000-01

	Principal artistic occupation (PAO)	All other sources	Total	Percent of total from PAO
	Annual earnings (\$)			Percent
Writers	20,400	25,700	46,100	44
Visual artists	12,600	16,700	29,300	43
Craft practitioners	19,100	11,200	30,300	63
Actors	22,500	19,200	41,700	54
Dancers	16,700	10,200	26,900	62
Musicians	17,700	23,400	41,100	43
Composers	12,700	25,500	38,200	33
CCD workers	8,400	17,700	26,100	32
All artists	17,100	20,100	37,200	46

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) Table 33

Notes:

Earnings do not include interest, dividends, benefits and other forms of unearned income

Earnings are gross (pre-tax)

² Australia Council, 2004, *Working paper 1: changing income and employment circumstances of individual artists*,

http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/artists/reports_and_publications/working_paper_1_changing_income_and_employment_circumstances_of_individual_artists

Figure 2.1.2b: Median earnings, 2000-01

	Principal artistic occupation (PAO)	Total	Ratio of PAO to total
	Annual earnings (\$)		Percent
Writers	4,800	35,000	14
Visual artists	3,100	22,900	14
Craft practitioners	8,200	22,600	36
Actors	10,500	32,000	33
Dancers	12,900	26,000	50
Musicians	10,500	35,800	29
Composers	4,200	31,100	14
CCD workers	3,400	22,600	15
All artists	7,300	30,000	24

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) Table 34

Notes:

Earnings do not include interest, dividends, benefits and other forms of unearned income

Earnings are gross (pre-tax)

Artists' earnings compared with other occupations

There is now an abundance of evidence suggesting that artists tend to have low earnings relative to other occupations. Often, however, the extent of the artist earnings gap is overstated through the use of inappropriate comparisons. For example, some occupational comparisons do not take account of the number of hours worked: occupation populations with higher incidence of part time workers (such as artists) will have lower average and median incomes simply due to the fewer hours worked. Not accounting for this will overstate the degree of the artists' earnings gap.

Furthermore, a wide range of factors can distort income comparisons between groups, including differences in age, education, gender balance, and hours worked. Great care should therefore be exercised when comparing artists' earnings with the earnings of other occupations.

In addition to these group differences, different surveys gather different information using different methods. It would be preferable to compare the earnings of occupational groups by using the same survey instrument. However, this is not always possible. The artist survey, for example, does not survey other occupations. To compare artists' earnings data from the survey

with other occupations, earnings data needs to be obtained from other data sources.

Throsby and Hollister (2003) use data from the LFSS to make earnings comparisons between artists and other occupations. However, the LFSS relates to employees only, whereas the artist survey relates to both employee and self-employed artists. Just over a quarter of artists in the artist survey are employees (section 2.1.3). Earnings comparisons between the LFSS and the Throsby and Hollister data are therefore not comparing two like populations and should therefore be interpreted with extreme caution. Census data indicates that employees and self-employed people tend to have different income levels. In 2001, the median full time income of self-employed artists was 62 percent that of employee artists (unpublished data provided by ABS). This 'income gap' between employees and the self-employed is evident across total employment, where the median income of full time self-employed people was 75 percent that of employees. The gap suggests that it is misleading to compare earnings of a population that consists of both employees and self employed people with earnings of population that consists of employees only, as is the case when comparing earnings between the artist survey and the LFSS. Because the LFSS is for employees only, earnings data will be biased upward and will therefore exaggerate the extent by which artists' earnings are lower than other occupations.

Census employment information covers both employees and self-employed people, but the Census measures income from all sources, which includes not just earnings from work (wages and salaries) as in the artist survey, but also non-work related income such as interest, dividends and social security benefits. It is therefore a broader earnings measure than both the artist survey and the LFSS.

Neither the Census nor the LFSS therefore provide identical information for making comparisons with earnings data from the artist survey. However, it appears that the Census is the more appropriate collection for which to compare earnings between artists and other occupations. As the data in figure 2.1.2d indicate, the median income from all sources for artist occupations measured in the 2001 Census (\$29,377) is very close to the \$30,000 rounded earnings median annual earnings figure from the artist survey.

Another crucial difference in earnings data between the artist survey and the ABS collections used here is that the ABS sources are for people whose 'main job' was an arts occupation in the week prior to the survey. Both collections are therefore likely to capture information on a more professional, talented or experienced sub-set of artist survey dataset, as these people more likely to be in continuous arts employment and therefore captured in a weekly 'snapshot'. If so, this group might be expected to have higher earnings than the average artist.

There are a number of other factors that might reduce the accuracy of comparisons between collections. Some key factors are presented in figure

2.1.2c. It can be seen from this figure that, when compared to the census and LFSS survey workers adopted for the comparisons here, the group of professional artists in the artist survey:

- a) is older on average older than the comparative groups in the Census and the LFSS, which puts an 'upward bias' on artists' comparative earnings; and
- b) has a higher proportion of women than all occupations in comparative collections, but less than professional occupations. A higher ratio of women employed places a 'downward bias' on artists' comparative earnings. The extent of the bias is revealed in the third column showing the 'gender earnings' differential from each of the surveys. The median earnings of female artists in the Throsby and Hollister (2003) survey were 67 percent of male artists. This differential is visibly greater than in census and LFSS collections, where women's full time earnings were 83 to 85 percent of men's. Note that artist survey data do not account for differences in hours worked between male and female artists.

Finally, the reference period of earnings/income information differs across the three collections. The artist survey asks artists to provide information on their earnings across the whole year. The census asks respondents to provide the *weekly* income that a person *usually* receives. The LFSS asks respondents to provide the amount of their 'last total pay' from wage and salary jobs prior to interview. There are a number of ways that these approaches might lead to slightly different measures of annual earnings and income, particularly in occupations in which earnings vary considerably from week to week and month to month, such as in the arts.

Figure 2.1.2c: Selected key workforce characteristics, 2001

Collection	Measures		Age: Percent aged 15-24	Gender: Percent female	Gender earnings differential: Female median earnings as percent of male earnings
			Percent		
Artist survey	Employees and self- employed	Professional artists	5	49	Creative work: 48 All work: 67
Census	Full time employees and self-employed	Professionals	8	53	n/a
		All occupations	17	45	83*
LFSS	Full time employees all occupations	All occupations	15	36	85

* Data for (1999-00)

Sources: Throsby and Hollister (2003) and ABS

The competing biases due to age and gender ratios may cancel each other out to a certain extent. Nevertheless, caution should be exercised when interpreting comparisons made here between earnings data from the artist

survey and the two ABS collections. The comparisons should be taken as a rough guide only.

With these caveats in mind, figure 2.1.2d shows artists' median annual earnings (from all arts and non arts work) compared with the median income from all sources for professionals and all occupations (from the Census). Census data are for both employee and self-employed full time workers.

The data suggest that artists' median earnings were around three-fifths (58 percent) the median full time income of professional occupations. The median earnings of artist were also below the median income of all full time workers, despite artists tending to have higher levels of formal training than the general workforce.³

³ In 1996, for example, 61 percent of arts professionals had formal tertiary qualifications compared to 49 percent of the total workforce (source: Guldberg, 2000, *The Arts Economy 1968-98: Three Decades of Growth*, Australia Council).

Figure 2.1.2d: Comparison of median full time earnings/income, 2000-01

	Annual median earnings	Artists' earnings as proportion of incomes of (from census):	
		Professionals	All occupations
		Percent	
	\$		
Writers	35,000	68	91
Visual artists	22,900	44	60
Craft practitioners	22,600	44	59
Actors	32,000	62	83
Dancers	26,000	50	68
Musicians	35,800	69	93
Composers	31,100	60	81
CCD workers	22,600	44	59
All artists	30,000	58	78

Comparative occupations, full time workers*

LFSS: employee earnings

Professionals	48,900
All occupations	36,600

Census: income from all sources

Artists	29,377
Professionals	51,813
All occupations	38,351

Sources: Throsby and Hollister (2003), ABS

Notes:

Earnings do not include interest, dividends, benefits and other forms of unearned income. Income includes all of these sources.

Comparison is between full-time professionals and artists who worked on average 43 hours per week for all types of work

* Caution should be exercised when making comparisons as data are from different sources.

Sources of creative earnings

Figure 2.1.2e shows the proportion of artists' creative earnings by source. A notable difference in sources is evident between artist occupations. For all occupations except visual and craft artists, salaries and wages were the greatest source of earnings. Performing artists (actors, dancers and musicians) tended to have less diversified sources of income for creative work, with more than 90 percent coming from salaries, wages or fees. Occupational groups associated with initial artistic creation (often call 'creative' or 'initial creative' artists) such as writers, visual and craft artists and composers, tended to have more diversified sources of creative earnings: with visual and craft artists receiving more than half of their creative earnings from sales of works. Grants, prizes and fellowships made of six percent of all artists' earnings.

Figure 2.1.2e: Sources of creative earnings, 2001

	Salaries, wages and fees	Sales of work and commissions	Royalties, copyright, and lending rights	Grants, prizes, fellowships	Other	Total
	Percent					
Writers	55	13	27	5	-	100
Visual artists	34	54	2	10	-	100
Craft practitioners	21	68	2	7	2	100
Actors	94	3	2	1	-	100
Dancers	90	1	2	7	-	100
Musicians	95	2	2	1	-	100
Composers	38	25	23	11	3	100
CCD workers	78	12	-	6	4	100
All artists	63	22	8	6	1	100

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) Appendix table 8.1

2.1.3 Employment status

In 2001 there were around three times as many artists working as self-employed or freelance as there were working for salaries and wages (figure 2.1.3a). The artist occupation with the highest proportion of employee artists was dancers (52 percent); Craft Practitioners had the lowest proportion (14 percent).

Figure 2.1.3a: Employment status in principal artistic occupation, 2001

	Salary or wages	Freelance or self- employed	Other	Total
	Percent			
Writers	15	83	2	100
Visual artists	18	80	2	100
Craft practitioners	14	83	3	100
Actors	39	58	3	100
Dancers	52	48		100
Musicians	32	68		100
Composers	23	77		100
Community cultural development workers	16	84		100
All artists	26	73	1	100
Comparative data for main job artists, Census*				
Artist occupations	42	57	1	100
Other Professionals	88	12	0	100
Total employment	82	17	1	100

* Caution should be exercised when making comparisons as data are from different sources. Sources: Throsby and Hollister (2003; 38) Table 24 and ABS

Figure 2.1.3b shows estimates for the number of artists by whether they were self-employed or employees. The published data from which these figures are derived (Throsby and Hollister, 2003; table 24) are presented as percentages rather than as numbers of artists. To calculate numbers, it is necessary to work back from published percentages based on the mid-point estimates of artist

numbers presented in figure 2.1.1a. The estimate ranges are reproduced in the right-hand column of figure 2.1.1a to reinforce the need for caution when interpreting the numbers for dancers, composers and CCD workers. Sub-group data (eg for dancers working freelance) is likely to be even less accurate than for occupation as a whole.

Figure 2.1.3b: Estimated number of artists by employment status, 2001

	Salary or wages	Freelance or self- employed		Total	<i>Range</i> +/- percent
		Number	Other		
Writers	1,088	6,018	145	7,250	3
Visual artists	1,665	7,400	185	9,250	8
Craft practitioners	595	3,528	128	4,250	6
Actors	2,535	3,770	195	6,500	8
Dancers*	650	600	-	1,250	20
Musicians	4,000	8,500	-	12,500	4
Composers*	345	1,155	-	1,500	33
Community cultural development workers*	400	2,100	-	2,500	20
All artists	11,278	33,070	653	45,000	8

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003; 38) Table 24

Notes: Estimates only based on mid-point range in Table 1, Throsby (2003).

Accuracy is the percentage variation from the mid-point represented by range

* Data should be interpreted with caution due to large range

2.1.4 Hours worked

Figure 2.1.4 presents data on artists' weekly working hours. In 2001-02 artists on average devoted 26 hours per week to creative work (both in their PAO and in creative arts work outside their PAO). This was 60 percent of their total average working week. Craft practitioners spent on average longer at creative work than other occupations (33 hours, or 73 percent of their working week). Dancers and musicians spent on average the least number of hours at creative work (22 hours per week). Note that these data include both paid and unpaid work. In 2001, the average hours worked per week by people employed full-time was just under 41 hours.⁴

Given the opportunity, the majority (78 percent) of artists not working full time at their arts work in 2001 would have liked to have spent more time at their creative arts work (Throsby and Hollister, 2003; Table 28). This represents a pool of around 14,000 professional artists ready to increase their arts working hours, and who have relatively low barriers with which to do so given their training and experience. This provides an indication of the ease with which the supply of artist labour could increase over the short-term.

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003, Australian Social Trends, 4102.0

Figure 2.1.4: Average hours worked per week, 2001-02

	Creative work*	All other work	Total	Proportion of time spent at creative work
	Weekly Hours			Percent
Writers	26	17	43	60
Visual artists	29	15	44	66
Craft practitioners	33	12	45	73
Actors	24	15	39	62
Dancers	22	17	39	56
Musicians	22	18	40	55
Composers	27	20	47	57
CCD workers	25	20	45	56
All artists	26	17	43	60

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) Table 27

Notes:

* Principal artistic occupation (PAO) *plus* creative work outside PAO

Both paid and unpaid work

2.1.5 Unemployment

Figure 2.1.5 presents some data on the unemployment experiences of artists over a five year period from 1996 to 2001. Around one third (34 percent) of professional artists experienced some unemployment over the period. This figure cannot be compared to the standard unemployment rates such as those published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, as it is calculated over a five year period rather than over a year. The annual average unemployment rate in the total workforce for 1996 was 8.4 percent, dropping to just under 7 percent by the end of 2001. In 2001, two thirds of unemployed people were unemployed for 8 weeks or more. (*ABS Labour Force, Australia, 6202.0, and Yearbook Australia*).

For three occupations – actors, dancers and community cultural development workers – at least half of the artists had experienced unemployment over the period. However, for actors and dancers the period of time spent unemployed appears not to have been as long as in other artist occupations. The average length of time artists spent unemployed ranged from two to five months per year.

One third of artists reported experiencing difficulty accessing unemployment benefits due to their occupation. The occupation with the highest proportion reporting difficulty was composers (60 percent); the lowest was musicians (14 percent).

Just under half (45 percent) of artists reported being able to continue their arts practice as an approved activity. These figures may be influenced by the existence of a successful arts-specific program run in Victoria under the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme that has subsequently been terminated (see literature review). Less than a third of visual artists, dancers and writers were able to continue their arts practice as an approved activity.

The data indicate that, once unemployed, musicians appear to have on average the least disruptive unemployment experience among artists: their occupation group has the lowest proportion reporting difficulty accessing benefits and the highest proportion being able to continue their arts practice as an approved activity.

Figure 2.1.5: Artists' unemployment experiences, 1996-2001

	Proportion of artists with some period of unemployment 1996-01	Average period unemployed per year	Average longest period of unemployment	If applied, experienced difficulty accessing benefits due to occupation	If received benefit, able to continue art practice as an approved activity
	Percent	Months	Months	Percent	Percent
Writers	21	3	12	19	31
Visual artists	34	5	17	33	29
Craft practitioners	25	5	17	33	47
Actors	56	3	8	53	43
Dancers	50	2	6	36	27
Musicians	27	3	7	14	71
Composers	28	3	9	60	50
CCD workers	55	5	8	28	53
All artists	34	3	11	33	45

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) Tables 31 and 32

Note: Unemployment is defined as 'being out of work and actively seeking work of any description and being able to start immediately'. (p. 128)

2.1.6 Factors inhibiting career development

Figure 2.1.6 shows the proportion of artists selecting various factors as most important for inhibiting career development throughout their career. Three factors stand out in particular, each being selected by at least a fifth of artists: lack of work opportunities; lack of financial return from creative work; and lack of time for creative work due to other pressures and responsibilities. Note that these factors may overlap to a degree.

There are, however, some notable differences between artist occupations. As Throsby and Hollister (2003; 36) note, 'it is essentially lack of work opportunities that holds back the development of performing artists, whereas a lack of return from the creative practice is more significant for visual artists, craft practitioners, composers and writers'.

2.1.7 Factors advancing career development

Artists identified talent and art form training as the most significant factors in advancing their careers (figure 2.1.7). Other factors identified as important were support and encouragement from mentors, family and friends, and peer recognition, although these factors varied in importance by artist type.

Figure 2.1.6: Most important factors inhibiting professional development of artists throughout career, 2001

	Percent of artists									
	Writers	Visual artists	Craft practitioners	Actors	Dancers	Musicians	Composers	CCD workers	All artists	
Lack of work opportunities	16	5	7	51	41	36	10	19	24	
Lack of financial return from creative work	26	34	37	10	24	23	43	35	27	
Lack of access to funding or other financial support	8	11	6	6	21	3	7	8	7	
Lack of time for creative work due to other pressures and responsibilities	29	27	21	11	3	15	27	20	20	
Difficulty in accessing training, materials, markets etc.	6	11	11	5	3	5	10	6	7	
Personal issues	6	5	4	9	3	9	-	9	6	
Discrimination	-	-	3	4	-	1	-	-	1	
Other factors	2	4	5	2	-	3	-	3	3	
No factors inhibiting professional development	2	1	2	1	-	1	-	-	1	
Don't know	4	1	3	1	3	3	3	-	3	
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) appendix table 6.7

Figure 2.1.7: Most important factors advancing professional development of artists throughout career

	Percent of artists									
	Writers	Visual artists	Craft practitioners	Actors	Dancers	Musicians	Composers	CCD workers	All artists	
Talent	34	25	22	35	17	38	47	16	31	
Training	22	22	28	22	40	24	23	29	24	
Support and encouragement from family and friends	6	8	15	8	10	6	-	16	8	
Support and encouragement from teacher/mentor/elder	6	6	6	6	13	10	-	5	7	
Recognition by peers	7	6	2	6	7	10	3	5	7	
Opportunity at a critical time	8	11	7	3	3	3	10	3	6	
All others	17	22	20	20	10	9	17	26	17	
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) appendix table 6.5

Section 2.2: Artists by state and territory, 2001 (artist survey)

Data in Throsby and Hollister (2003) are not presented separately by state or territory. This is because the survey's sample size (around 1,000 people) is generally too small to obtain accurate indicators by state or territory.

The data presented in this section have been supplied especially for the current project. There are gaps in many of the tables where the numbers in the sample are too small to make any reliable inference. Even then, the numbers that are displayed have high standard errors and should be interpreted with great caution.

We ask that the Department use this data internally only, and that neither the data nor any inferences made from it be made public.

When interpreting the data by state and territory, it should also be remembered that much of the data will be driven by artists in the major capital cities, and Melbourne and Sydney in particular. In a recent publication, Throsby (2008) analyses Census artist data by state and territory, finding that just under a quarter of artists in New South Wales and Victoria live in each State's capital city (22 and 24 percent respectively). These capital city artists therefore have a strong weighting in the data.⁵ It should also be noted that in many cases totals data for all Australia differ from those in other sections. This is due to the different way that data have been generated in order to obtain data by State and Territory.

2.2.1 Number of artists

Figure 2.2.1 shows estimates for the number of practising professional artists in Australia in 2001 by state and territory and compares the state and territory distribution of artists with the total labour force and the total population. Due to large standard errors, these distributions should be interpreted with caution. That said, the data do reflect a greater concentration of artists in New South Wales than in both the labour force and the total population.

⁵ Throsby, D., 2008, 'Creative Australia: The arts and culture in Australian work and leisure', Occasional paper 3/2008 Census series #1, The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, Canberra. www.assa.edu.au/Publications/OP/op32008.pdf.

Figure 2.2.1: Number of artists by state and territory, Australia, 2001

State/territory	All Artists		Labour force	Total population	Difference between artists and:*	
	Number	Percent			Labour force	Population
			Percent		Percentage points	
ACT	900	2	2	2	0	0
NSW	16,200	36	33	34	3	2
NT	500	1	1	1	0	0
QLD	7,800	17	19	19	-2	-1
SA	3,000	7	7	8	-1	-1
TAS	1,000	2	2	3	0	0
VIC	11,800	26	25	25	1	1
WA	3,800	8	10	10	-2	-1
Australia	45,000	100	100	100		

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) Table 2; and ABS

2.2.2 Creative income as a proportion of total income

Figure 2.2.2 shows the percent of artists' average earnings made up by earnings from creative work. New South Wales was the only state or territory in which artists earnings from creative work was more than half of their average annual total earnings. Median earnings from creative work are one fifth or less than total median earnings in every state and territory except New South Wales. The actual average and median earnings have not been reproduced here, as the data have high standard errors and are therefore not reliable enough to be presented.

Figure 2.2.2: Artists' mean and median earnings from creative work, 2000-01

State/territory	Creative compared to total earnings	
	Average Percent	Median Ratio
ACT	*	*
NSW	53	25
NT	*	*
QLD	44	17
SA	46	17
TAS	44	20
VIC	44	20
WA	38	22
Australia	46	25

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) unpublished data

* Artist numbers too small to present data

2.2.3 Employment status

Figure 2.2.3 shows the proportion of artists working as employees or freelance in 2001. Victoria's artists stand out as having a greater than average proportion of employee artists than in the rest of Australia.

Figure 2.2.3: Employment status of Australian Artists, 2001

State/territory	Work as permanent or casual employees	Are freelance or self-employed	Other	Total
	Percent			
ACT	*	*	*	*
NSW	26	73	1	100
NT	*	*	*	*
QLD	23	75	2	100
SA	19	81	0	100
TAS	*	*	*	*
VIC	33	65	2	100
WA	21	78	1	100
Australia	25	73	2	100

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) unpublished data

* Artist numbers too small to present data

2.2.4 Allocation of work time

Figure 2.2.4 shows the proportion of time per week artists spend at creative work for both mean and median hours worked. There is no State or Territory in which the median hours artists dedicate to creative work is more than half the median working week. Data on actual hours worked is not presented here due to high standard errors.

Figure 2.2.4: Time spent at creative work as percent of all working hours, 2000-01

State/territory	Creative work hours compared to total work hours	
	Mean	Median
	Percent	Ratio
ACT	*	*
NSW	55	50
NT	*	*
QLD	49	42
SA	54	50
TAS	58	50
VIC	51	49
WA	49	38
Australia	53	45

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) unpublished data

* Artist numbers too small to present data

2.2.5 Unemployment

Figure 2.2.5 shows the proportion of artists experiencing unemployment between 1997 and 2001. Tasmania had the lowest proportion of all artists experiencing unemployment across the period; Queensland the highest.

Figure 2.2.5: Artists' unemployment between 1997 and 2001

State/territory	Experienced unemployed (proportion of artists)
	Percent
ACT	*
NSW	32
NT	*
QLD	40
SA	39
TAS	23
VIC	37
WA	31
Australia	34

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) unpublished data

* Artist numbers too small to present data

Section 2.3: Artists 2006 (Census)

This section presents data from 2006 Census. As outlined earlier, the Census is unique in that it is a population collection, rather than a survey of a sample of the population. However, what the Census gains in comprehensiveness, it loses in detail. Although, as a population survey, the Census is not designed to collect detailed information about employment conditions, it does collect some information on employment and incomes. This information is presented here. As outlined in the introduction, Census employment data differs from the artist survey in three main ways:

- 1) Employment is for one job only: a person's 'main job' in the week prior to the Census, which is defined as 'the job in which the person *usually* works the most hours'. The limitations of this definition in relation to artists employment is discussed in the introduction.
- 2) The Census collects information on a person's income, rather than their earnings. This measure includes money received from non-work related activities, such as dividends, social security payments and interest earnings. The artist survey is for earnings from work-related activities only.
- 3) The Census uses ABS definitions and classifications of artist occupations, which differ from those used in the artist survey. The occupations used to generate the data here are listed in attachment 2.

2.3.1 Number of employed artists

In 2006 there were 26,974 people employed as artists in their 'main job' (figure 2.3.1). Note that 14 percent of these people were coded under the Census to 'artists and related professionals nfd'. This occupational group is for people whose main job was an artist occupation, but whose occupation was not able to be coded to one of the occupation groups used by the ABS based on the information they supplied in their response to the Census questionnaire.

An estimate of the number of main job artists in 2007 has been undertaken in section 2.5.1 in order to compare employed artists with the wider population of unpaid and hobby creative artists. The estimate of 27,800 main job artists in 2007 is obtained by simply increasing the number of main job artists by the same increase as in total employment (3 percent).

Figure 2.3.1: People employed in an artist occupation as 'main job', census 2006

Occupation	Number	Percent of total
Authors and Related Professionals	2,799	10
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	8,023	30
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	4,905	18
Musicians and Related Professionals	7,461	28
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	3,759	14
Total artist occupations	26,947	100

Main job: the job held in the week prior to the census in which the person usually works the most hours
Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing

2.3.2 Incomes

In 2006 the median incomes of full time artists was low relative to other occupations. The \$35,690 median annual incomes of full time artists was just over half (54 percent) that of other full time professionals. As figure 2.3.2a shows, artists' annual full time median incomes were around \$21,000 to \$38,000 lower than those of other full time professionals.

No artist occupation had an annual full time income above the median for all occupations, despite artists having on average higher levels of education and training.

Among artist occupations, authors and related professionals had the highest median full time income; visual arts and crafts professionals the lowest.

It should be kept in mind that this data is based on income from all sources, not just earnings from work.

Figure 2.3.2a: Median annual full time income, census 2006

	Artists	Differences		
		Other Social, Arts and Media Professionals	Other professionals	Other occupations
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Authors and Related Professionals	44,508	-14,349	-21,289	-2,035
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	28,072	-30,785	-37,725	-18,471
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	37,516	-21,341	-28,281	-9,027
Musicians and Related Professionals	38,977	-19,880	-26,820	-7,566
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	41,378	-17,480	-24,420	-5,166
Total artist occupations	35,690	-23,167	-30,107	-10,853
Other Social, Arts and Media Professionals	58,857			
Other Professionals	65,797			
All occupations	46,543			

Total income includes wages, salaries, benefits, allowances and other income
Source: ABS Census 2006

Income distribution

Figure 2.3.2b shows the distribution of full time incomes across eight income bands. It should be noted that these bands are not all the same size.

Nevertheless, the data indicate that the income distribution of full time artists tended to be more skewed toward lower incomes than other occupations. The annual income of 43 percent of full time artists was under \$31,300, compared to just 5 percent of other full time professionals and 28 percent of people employed full time in all occupations. Just 8 percent of full time artists had annual incomes of \$83,500 or more, compared to one quarter of other full time professionals.

Figure 2.3.2b: Distribution of incomes, full time workers 200

Annual income \$	Artists	Other professional s	Other occupations
		Percent	
Negative to nil income	2	0	1
< 7,800	4	0	1
< 13,000	6	0	2
< 21,000	12	1	5
< 31,300	19	4	19
< 52,200	29	24	39
< 83,500	18	46	22
83,500 or more	8	24	11
Total	100	100	100

Total income includes wages, salaries, benefits, allowances and other income

Note: The income bands are not of equal value

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing

2.3.3 Employment status

Figure 2.3.3 shows occupations by whether people were employees or self-employed. All artist occupations had a noticeably higher proportion of people working as self-employed. In all, around half (49 percent) of the artist workforce was self-employed – more than four times the rate of self-employment across all occupations. Among artist occupations, visual arts and craft professionals had the highest proportion of self-employment (58 percent), actors, dancers and related professionals the lowest (32 percent).

Figure 2.3.3: Employment status, 2006

	Employee	Self-		Total
		employed	Other	
	Percent			
Authors and Related Professionals	41	53	6	100
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	36	58	6	100
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	67	32	2	100
Musicians and Related Professionals	46	53	2	100
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	51	44	5	100
Total artist occupations	47	49	4	100
Other Professionals	93	6	0	100
All occupations	88	10	2	100

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing

2.3.4 Full time/part time

In 2006, there were more main job artists employed part time than full time. The ABS defines full time workers as those who work 35 hours or more. Part time workers are those who work less than 35 hours a week. As figure 2.3.4 indicates, the proportion of artists employed part time was greater than in other occupations. Just over one quarter (27 percent) of other professionals and just under one third (32 percent) of all occupations were employed part time.

Musicians had the highest rate of part time employment among artist occupations, with over two thirds (68 percent) of musicians employed part time.

Figure 2.3.4: Employment by full or part time, census 2006

	Full time	Part time	Total
Authors and Related Professionals	54	46	100
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	52	48	100
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	38	62	100
Musicians and Related Professionals	32	68	100
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	61	39	100
Total artist occupations	45	55	100
Other Professionals	73	27	100
Total employment	68	32	100

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Section 2.4: Artists 2006 (Labour force supplementary survey)

The data in this part come from the ABS collection *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership* (referred to here as LFSS). The collection, which is undertaken as a supplement to the ABS' Labour Force Survey, presents information on the earnings of employees, their entitlement to leave, superannuation coverage and trade union membership.

The collection relates to employees only. It therefore covers less than half the number of people employed in artist occupations. In 2006, 47 percent of 'main job' artists were employees (figure 2.3.3).

As with the Census, the LFSS data are available for the same list of occupations as in the Census, coded by the 'main job' defined in the same way as for the Census.

However, as the LFSS is a sample survey rather than a census, data cannot be generated to the same level of detail as in the Census. For example, data on the mean and median incomes of arts professionals (both separately and as a single group) are associated with high standard errors of between 25 and 50 percent and are therefore not reproduced here. The collection does, however, gather information on a range of employment characteristics, including superannuation coverage, multiple job holding and access to leave entitlements. Data on these characteristics are presented here.

2.4.1 Superannuation

Figure 2.4.1 shows the percent of employees covered by superannuation in 2006. The LFSS measures membership of a superannuation or retirement benefits scheme regardless of whether the scheme was arranged or provided by a person's current employer. Note that the second column in figure 2.4.1 includes those whose membership of a superannuation scheme was unknown.

The data suggest that as an occupational group, arts professional employees had a lower rate of superannuation scheme membership than other occupations: 78 percent of arts professionals were known to have belonged to a superannuation scheme, whereas more than 90 percent of other occupations belonged to superannuation schemes.

This rate of superannuation cover is similar to that found in the most recent artist survey, which shows that 75 percent of practising professional artists were members of superannuation schemes in 2001, with proportions ranging from around 60 percent for visual artists and craft practitioners to 87 percent of actors (Throsby and Hollister, 2003; 55). That survey also found that 60 percent of artists believed their arrangements for future financial security were not adequate to meet their future financial needs.

Figure 2.4.1: Superannuation membership, employees 2006

	Belongs to a superannuation scheme	Does not belong to a superannuation scheme/unknown	Total
	<i>Percent</i>		
Arts professionals	78	22	100
All professionals	97	3	100
All occupations	93	7	100

Source: ABS Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, 6310.0

2.4.2 Multiple job holding

Under the LFSS, multiple job holders are those who were employees in their main job and who, during the reference week, worked in a second job or held a second job from which they were absent because of holidays, sickness or any other reason. Multiple jobholders exclude those who changed employer.

Figure 2.4.2 shows that artists tended to have a higher rate of multiple job holding than other professionals and all other occupations. In 2006, 12 percent of employee artist were multiple job holders, which is equivalent to around one in every eight employee artist. This is three times the rate of professional occupations and four times the rate of all occupations.

Figure 2.4.2: Multiple job-holding, employees 2006

	Multiple job-holder	Not a multiple job-holder	Total
	<i>Percent</i>		
Arts professionals	12	88	100
All professionals	4	96	100
All occupations	3	97	100

Source: ABS Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, 6310.0

2.4.3 Access to leave entitlements

The LFSS measures employees' access to leave entitlements, where leave entitlements are defined as either paid holiday leave, paid sick leave, long service leave and/or paid maternity/paternity leave in their main job.

As figure 2.4.3 indicates, around half of employee artists had access to leave entitlements in 2006. This proportion was lower than for professionals and other occupations. Note that the standard errors of these estimates are high. Nevertheless, the degree of the difference between arts professionals and all professionals is so large that, even with high data errors, it is likely that the rate of employee artists' access to leave entitlements is lower than for all professionals.

Figure 2.4.3: Paid leave entitlements, employees 2006

	With leave entitlements	Without leave entitlements	Total
	<i>Percent</i>		
Arts professionals*	45	55	100
All professionals	84	16	100
All occupations	73	27	100

* These data have a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should therefore be interpreted with caution

Source: ABS Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, 6310.0

Section 2.5: Work involvement 2007 (Work in culture and leisure activities)

The ABS collects data on people's involvement in creative arts activities through its Work in selected culture and leisure activities collection (6281.0).

The survey captures information on a broader range of creative work than in other ABS collections and the artist survey series. It is a population survey that asks people about all of their involvement in creative arts activities from involvement as a hobby to voluntary (unpaid) work, to paid work. It therefore collects data on creative arts activities that are not associated with formal paid employment, as in the Census and other ABS collections, or undertaken by practising professional artists, as in the artist survey series. The collection's broad focus is well-suited to capturing the often informal types of work that are common in the arts. The list of activities covered is reproduced in attachment 3.

The tailoring of the collection to the needs of creative arts activities is, however, both its major strength and its major weakness. The collection's uniqueness means that much of the data is not comparable with other collections, and so it is difficult to construction indicator and contextual data in order to draw inferences and make comparisons with other activities and areas (especially non-arts).

A significant problem with the data when looking at work of practising professional artists is that the collection does not provide an ability to report work undertaken only by artist writers such as novelists, poets and scriptwriters. Most of the data provided by the collection is on all writers and all forms of writing including writing for educational books, newspapers and journals. Data on writing work has therefore not been presented here, as aspects and trends in the data may not be representative of artist writers. Writing is, however, included in data on hobby involvements in the arts. A full list of all the activities covered by the collection is in attachment 5.

There are a number of other minor difficulties with presenting data from the collection for arts activities only. These are discussed at the appropriate point in the analysis below.

2.5.1 Hierarchy of creative arts activity in Australia 2007

Figure 2.5.1a shows estimates of the extent of creative arts activity in Australia in 2007 by combining data from the Work series with data from the Census and artist surveys. A number of the figures are estimates only. The derivation of each estimate is described at sections 2.1.1 and 2.2.1. The numbers in figure 2.5.1a should be taken as rough estimates only. Figure 2.5.1b presents the data in diagram form.

Figure 2.5.1a: Estimates of involvement in creative arts activities, adults, 2007

	Number of people <i>(followed by proportions within group)</i>		Percent of population
Main job artists*	27,779	53	0.17
Not main job artists	24,221	47	
Practising professional artists*	52,000	11	0.32
Others receiving payment for creative work*	439,500	89	
People receiving some payment for creative work	491,500	21	3
People unpaid for creative work	1,879,500	79	
People paid an unpaid for creative work	2,380,000	48	15
People undertaking creative activity for hobby only	2,599,100	52	
People undertaking creative activities both as work and as a hobby**	4,979,100	31	
People not involved in creative activity at all			69
Population (15+ years old)			100

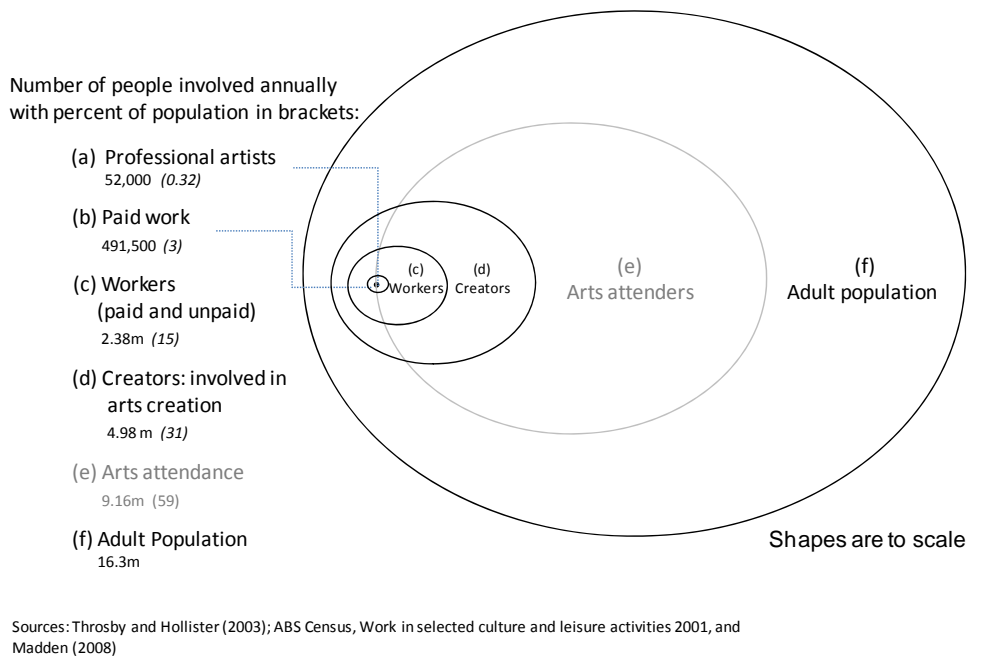
* Estimates

** An underestimate as it includes only three arts activities: visual art and craft; writing; and music

Note: Some numbers may not add due to non-responses

Sources: Throsby and Hollister (2003); ABS Census and Work in Selected Culture and Leisure Activities (6281.0)

Figure 2.5.1b: Hierarchy of involvement in arts activities, 2001



2.5.2 Number working

Figure 2.5.2 shows that 2.38 million adults (15 years and over) undertook creative arts work in the year to April 2007. This represents 15 percent of the adult population. Work is defined as both paid and unpaid work (including people who received payment 'in kind'; ie. paid in goods and/or services instead of money). The number of people working cannot be summed across the selected activities because many people would have undertaken work in more than one activity. More than 1.4 million people undertook visual arts work in 2007, or around 9 percent of the adult population.

A figure for writing is not available, as published data includes non-arts forms of writing such as writing for educational books, newspapers and journals. A rough estimate would put the writing figure at around 155,000 people in 2007.⁶

Figure 2.5.2: Work in selected arts activities, 2007

	Total	Participation
	Number	rate Percent
Visual arts activities	1,411,700	9
Craft activities	960,800	6
Writing	n/a	
Performing arts: performer	283,000	2
Performing arts: not a performer	223,300	1
Music	335,100	2
All arts*	2,380,000	15
Teaching	256,700	2
All culture and leisure activities	3,531,000	22
Total adult population	16,298,500	

* Unpublished data supplied by ABS for visual arts, craft, performing arts performer, and music activities

Involvement is for 12 months prior to April 2007, for both paid and unpaid work

Numbers do not add because some people were involved in more than one activity

Participation rate is the percent of the adult population involved in work

Source: ABS Work in selected culture and leisure activities April 2007, 6281.0

⁶ This estimate is based on involvement in writing that subtracts writing for educational books, newspapers, magazines, journals and newsletters and applying a factor for multiple participation (0.55, or roughly two types of writing participation per person).

2.5.3 Number paid/unpaid

Nearly one in five people working in arts activities in 2007 received some payment (including in kind) for their work. The proportion of people receiving payment ranged from 14 percent for craft and performing arts, to 35 percent for music and 43 percent for arts teaching (figure 2.5.3). For most arts activities, the proportion receiving payment was below the average for all culture and leisure work (30 percent).

Figure 2.5.3: Paid and unpaid work in selected arts activities, 2007

	Some paid involvement	Unpaid only	Total	Percent with some payment
	Number			Percent
Visual arts activities	281,900	1,116,600	1,411,700	20
Craft activities	139,100	813,900	960,800	14
Writing	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Performing arts: performer	38,900	238,700	283,000	14
Performing arts: not a performer	37,900	183,400	223,300	17
Music	118,800	209,900	335,100	35
All arts*	491,500	1,879,500	2,380,000	21
Teaching	111,300	142,700	256,700	43
All culture and leisure activities	1,062,100	2,428,600	3,531,000	30

* Unpublished data supplied by ABS for visual arts, craft, performing arts performer, and music activities

Involvement is for 12 months prior to April 2007

Numbers do not add because some people were involved in more than one activity

n/a = not available due to the inclusion of non-arts writing activities

Source: ABS Work in selected culture and leisure activities April 2007, 6281.0

2.5.4 Earnings

As figure 2.5.4 shows, the majority of people undertaking paid work received less than \$5,000 per annum for their arts work (this does not include people who received in kind payments). The figure for visual arts activities is an average across seven activity types, two of which had a higher than average proportion of participants earning over \$5,000: drawing (46 percent); and creating artworks with a computer (59 percent). Sculpture was the visual arts activity with the lowest proportion (9 percent) receiving more than \$5,000.

The figure for craft activities is an average across six activity types, one of which had a higher than average proportion of participants earning over \$5,000: furniture-making and wood crafts (44 percent). Glass crafts was the craft activity with the lowest proportion (7 percent) receiving more than \$5,000.

Figure 2.5.4: Work in selected arts activities by amount paid, 2007

	Paid less	Paid	Total	Proportion
	than \$5,000	\$5,000 or more		earning more than \$5,000
	Number			Percent
Visual arts activities*				45
Craft activities*				35
Writing	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Performing arts: performer	25,100	9,000	34,100	26
Performing arts: not a performer	20,200	10,100	30,300	33
Music	74,600	34,800	109,400	32
Teaching	45,500	53,400	98,900	54
All arts	n/a	n/a	n/a	
All culture and leisure activities	n/a	n/a	n/a	

* Totals not provided in original publication. Proportion is estimated as unweighted average for within category activities

Involvement is for 12 months prior to April 2007

Payment does not include payment by goods and services.

Totals differ to published data because they exclude people paid in goods and services and people who did not state the amount of payment received

Numbers do not add because some people were involved in more than one activity

n/a = not available due to the inclusion of non-arts writing activities

Source: ABS Work in selected culture and leisure activities April 2007, 6281.0

Part 3: Trends in artists' employment in Australia, 1987 to 2006

Introduction

This part of the report presents data on trends in aspects of artists working lives over time. Many of the caveats associated with trend data are the same as outlined in part 2 ('snapshot' data). These caveats will not be reproduced in detail here, but will be referred to where necessary. Two general issues to bear in mind when interpreting the trend data contained in this part of the report are outlined below. Other additional caveats are detailed where necessary alongside the data to which they relate.

The data in this part of the report compare variables from surveys at different points in time. Except for the data from the ABS' *Work in culture/leisure* series, comparisons are presented without undertaking significance testing. Caution should therefore be exercised when interpreting differences in variables between surveys - small differences may not be significant, especially for variables with low numbers of observations. For example, data presented here show that the number of craft practitioners measured in the artist survey declined by 3 percent between 1987 and 2001 (from 4,400 to 4,250). However, the upper limit of the range for the 2001 estimate of craft practitioners is 4,500. If the actual number of craft practitioners was at this upper limit of the range estimate, then the number of practitioners would have grown rather than declined. Census data are not as affected by statistical errors, as the Census is a population survey rather than a sample. As already noted, data from the *Work* series, which are presented in section 3.3, are tested for significance, so all changes shown between survey periods are significant.

It should also be noted that trend lines presented here are highly simplified in order to make them visually easy to read. Trends are shown as simple straight lines connecting points of data from survey years. In most cases the data points are a number of years apart: in the case of the Census, the survey points are four years apart; in the case of the artist survey, they are longer. Some intervals are also of different length: the interval between the 1987 and 1993 artist surveys is six years; between the 1993 and 2001 surveys it is eight years. The connecting lines between these data points are therefore extreme simplifications, and may not represent the actual underlying data between survey points. Trend lines presented in the figures here should be read with this major caveat in mind.

This part of the report presents data in three sections:

1. Artists' employment from 1987 to 2001 using the artist survey (data are for 1989, 1993 and 2001)

2. Artists' employment from 1996 to 2006 using the ABS census (data are for 1996, 2001 and 2006)
3. Supply of new graduates into the artist labour market from 1999 to 2008 (data are annual)

Section 3.1: Artists' employment 1987 to 2001 (artist survey)

The data in this section are from the series of artist surveys as published in Throsby and Mills (1989), Throsby and Thompson (1994), and Throsby and Hollister (2003). Note that in the first survey in the series, some data relate to 1986-87, while some relate to 1988. For simplicity, this report refers to all data as being for 1987.

3.1.1 Artist population: selected indicators

The basic nature of the artist population measured in the artist surveys has changed a little over time. It is important to consider these changes when interpreting trends in the employment variables analysed in this section, especially incomes. Figure 3.1.1 shows three key indicators of the nature of artist population for each of the three artist surveys, and comparative data from the total Australian labour force for context. Each of the key indicators is discussed below.

Age

The artist population has a greater proportion of older artists in 2001 than in 1987: the proportion of artists older than 44 increased from just over one third of artists in 1987 to one half of artists in 2001.

Across all three surveys, the artist population in the artist survey tended to be older than the labour force: the artist population had proportionally fewer younger people and proportionally more older people than the total labour force.

Between 1987 and 2001 the proportion of younger artists remained relatively stable while the proportion of younger people in the total labour force fell. The proportion of older artists increased faster than in the labour force as a whole.

Gender

The proportion of the artist population who were women increased from 46 percent to 49 percent from 1987 to 2001, with a peak in 1993 of 51 percent. The proportion of women in the labour force also increased over the same period (from 41 percent in 1987 to 44 percent in 2001). The artist labour force had a higher proportion of women than the total labour force across all three survey years.

Experience

The artist labour force in 2001 was more experienced than in 1987: a smaller proportion of artists were starting out or becoming established in 2001 than in 1987.

Figure 3.1.1: Selected workforce characteristics, professional artists and total labour force, 1987 to 2001

	Artists			Labour force			Points difference ^		
	1987	1993	2001	1987	1993	2001	1987	1993	2001
	Percent			Percent					
Proportion under 25 years	6	7	5	25	23	19	-19	-16	-14
Proportion over 44 years	34	39	50	25	26	33	9	13	17
Proportion who are women*	46	51	49	41	42	44	5	9	5
Proportion starting out or becoming established	38	32	35						

* Figure for 2001 is compared with labour force for 2002
 ^ Positive means artist figure is higher; negative, artist figure lower
 Source: Throsby et al (1989, 1993, 2003) and ABS

3.1.2 Number of artists

Figure 3.1.2a provides estimates from the artist survey series on the number of professional practising artists in Australia for 1987, 1993 and 2001. Note that the list of artist types has been reduced: ‘actors, dancers and choreographers’ and ‘musicians, singers and composers’ have been consolidated to ensure comparability with the 1987 survey.

The data show that there were 13,000 more practising professional artists in 2001 than in 1987 (a 41 percent increase). Most of this growth is due to growth in the number of writers, visual artists, and actors, dancers and choreographers, which together accounted for 11,450 more artists in 2001.

The data also suggest that the period 1987 to 1993 was a period of particularly strong growth, with the number of practising professional artists in the survey growing by a quarter.

Figure 3.1.2a: Estimates of number of professional artists, 1987 to 2001

	1987	1993	2001	Change	Change	Change
	Number			1987-1993	1993-2001	1987-2001
				Percent		Percent
Writers	3,200	6,000	7,250	88	21	127
Visual artists	6,200	7,500	9,250	21	23	49
Craft practitioners	4,400	5,500	4,250	25	-23	-3
Actors, dancers and choreographers	3,400	5,500	7,750	62	41	128
Musicians, singers and composers	13,700	12,500	14,000	-9	12	2
CCD workers	1,100	3,000	2,500	173	-17	127
All artists	32,000	40,000	45,000	25	13	41

Source:

Throsby and Hollister (2003; 19) Table 4

Context

Figure 3.1.2b shows the growth in artist numbers compared to growth in total employment, the labour force and the adult population. The number of artists grew across the period faster than the labour force and the adult population, due largely to the strong growth between 1987 and 1993, where the artist population grew around twice as fast as the labour force and adult population. In 1987 there was one artist to every 240 people in the labour force; by 2001 there was one artist to every 217 people.

The strong relative growth of artist numbers is shown visually in index form in figure 3.1.2c. The index for total employment shows the timing of the recession in the early '90s, with the divergence between the indexes of labour force and total employment coinciding with the higher levels of unemployment under the recession. Figure 3.1.2d shows a graph of Australia's unemployment rate, with the rise in unemployment associated with the recession visibly peaking around the middle of 1992.

Figure 3.1.2b: Number of professional artists compared, 1987 to 2001

	1987	1993	2001	Change 1987-1993	Change 1993-2001	Change 1987-2001
	Number			Percent		Percent
All artists	32,000	40,000	45,000	25	13	41
Total Employment	7,044,300	7,697,200	9,129,900	9	19	30
Labour force	7,679,500	8,646,500	9,755,400	13	13	27
Adult population	12,390,700	13,790,100	15,317,400	11	11	24

Sources: Throsby and Hollister (2003; 19); ABS

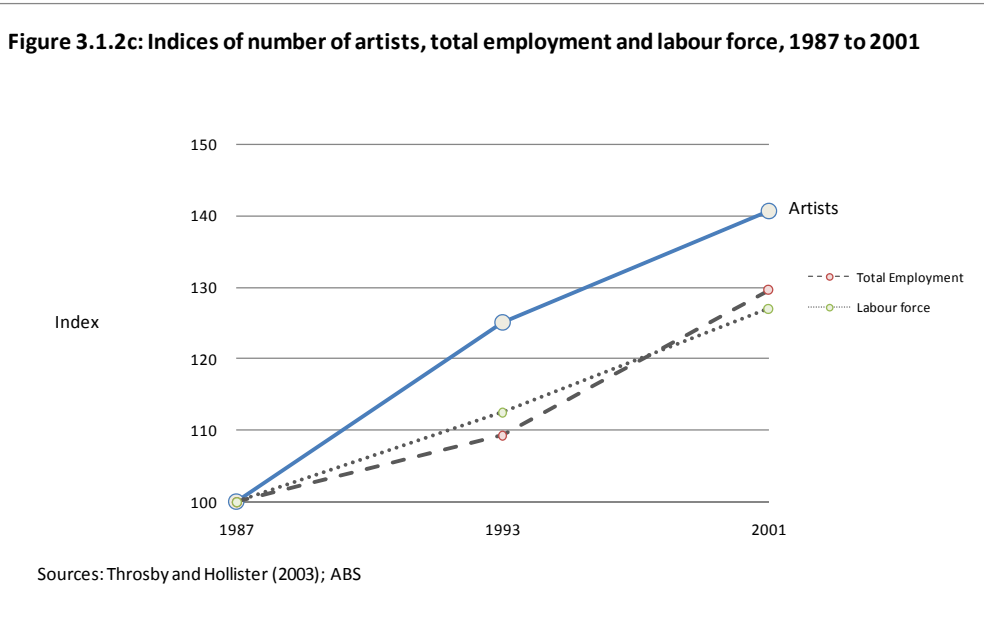
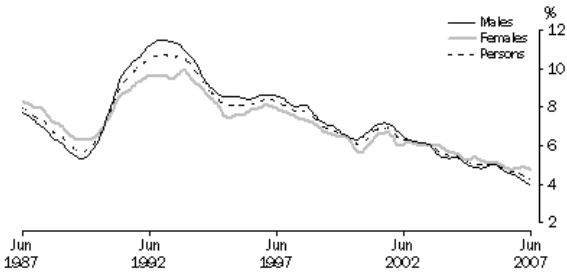


Figure 3.1.2d: Unemployment rate, Australia 1987 to 2007

Data on Artists' Employment and Professional practice in Australia



(a) Trend estimates.
Source: Labour Force, Australia, Spreadsheets (©2002.0.55.001).

Source: Year Book Australia, 2008

Estimate to 2007

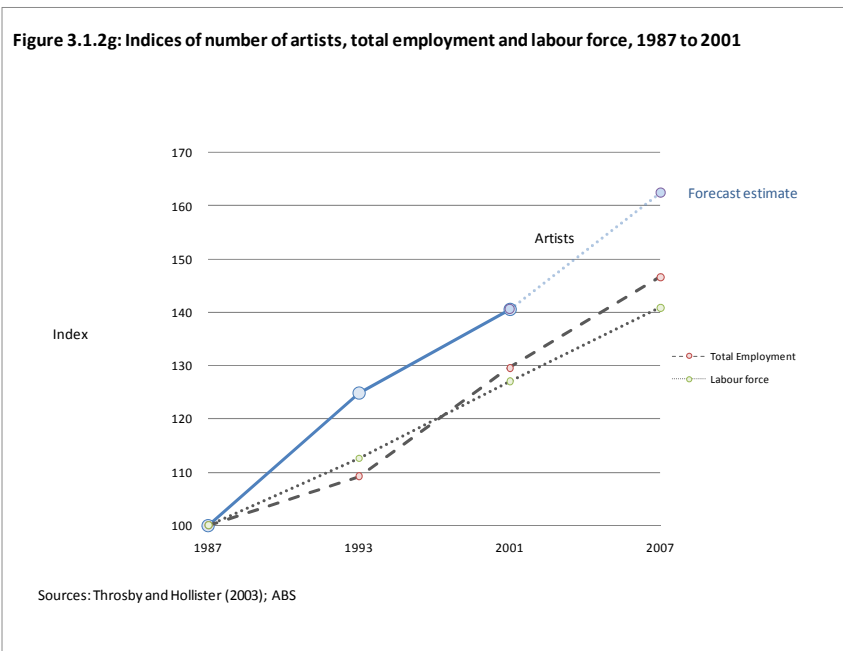
In section 2.1.1, an estimate is made that the number of practising professional artists in 2007 was 52,000. Figures 3.1.2f and g add this forecast estimate to the comparative data presented above.

Figure 3.1.2f: Number of professional artists compared, 1987 to 2007

	1987	1993	2001	2007*
	<i>Number</i>			
All artists	32,000	40,000	45,000	52,000
Total Employment	7,044,300	7,697,200	9,129,900	10,334,600
Labour force	7,679,500	8,646,500	9,755,400	10,823,500
Adult population	12,390,700	13,790,100	15,317,400	16,696,800

* Forecast estimate for artists

Sources: Throsby and Hollister (2003; 19); ABS



Sources: Throsby and Hollister (2003); ABS

3.1.3 Artists' earnings

This section provides data on trends in artists' earnings across the three artist surveys, 1987, 1993 and 2001. Two measures are presented: real average earnings; and real median earnings.

All earnings data are 'real'. That is, the effects of inflation have been taken account of, using the same deflator as that adopted for the artist survey series in Throsby and Hollister (2003).

Note that data on artists' earnings relative to other occupations is not included in this section. The reasons for this are detailed in section 2.1.2. As outlined in that section, earnings comparisons provided in the publications for the artist survey are likely to overstate the earnings gap between artists and other occupations because they compare the earnings of two different populations: one consisting of both employees and self-employed artists; the other consisting of self-employed artists only. There are significant differences in earnings between these two groups that make the comparisons inaccurate. Comparisons of earnings between artists and other occupations is provided in section 3.2.3 based on Census data.

Average and median real earnings

Real earnings take into account the effect of inflation. The data presented here are for earnings expressed in 2006 dollars.

Three underlying influences need to be kept in mind when comparing the earnings measures presented here:

- 1) The 2001 artist population has a higher proportion of older artists than in 1987. Older artists tend to have higher earnings than younger artists as they tend to be more experienced. Research has also found that older artists tend to have higher paid work in non-creative pursuits. An older population of artists would therefore be expected to have generally higher earnings levels for both creative and non-creative work.
- 2) The 2001 artist population has a higher proportion of women than in 1987. Women's earnings tend to be lower than men's. Throsby and Hollister (2003; 63) describe the earnings situation of female artists as 'bleak'. In 2001, the median creative earnings for female artists were less than half that of male artists. A higher ratio of female artists will therefore drive averages and medians lower.
- 3) There are differences in the proportion of early career artists between the three surveys: 38 percent of artists were starting out or becoming established in 1989; 32 percent in 1993; and 35 percent in 2001. These artists might be expected to have lower earnings.

Figure 3.1.3a shows artists' average real annual earnings from 1987 to 2001. The notable drop in average earnings in 1993 may be largely the result of the large increase in the number of artists in 1993, as outlined earlier. This average earnings data should therefore be interpreted with extreme caution, as the fall

in averages may be driven more by an increase in numbers than an actual fall in earnings. The median earnings data presented in figure 3.1.3b suggest that this is the case, with median real annual earnings increasing across all three surveys.

Artists' median real annual earnings from both creative and non-creative work increased from 1987 to 2001, with non-creative earnings growing faster than creative earnings. The occupations with the greatest increase in median creative earnings were dancers and musicians (data not shown).

The proportion of artists' average earnings derived from creative work declined from 51 to 46 percent between 1987 and 2001.

Figure 3.1.3a: Artists' average real earnings, 1987-2001

	1987	1993	2001	Change		1987-01
				1987-93	1993-01	
	\$			Percent		Percent
Creative work	17,900	14,400	17,100	-20	19	-4
Other work	17,000	15,800	20,100	-7	27	18
Total	34,900	30,200	37,200	-13	23	7
Proportion from creative work	51	48	46	-7	-4	-10

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) Table 41

Figure 3.1.3b: Artists' median real earnings, 1987-2001

	1987	1993	2001	Change		1987-01
				1987-93	1993-01	
	\$			Percent		Percent
Creative work	5,800	6,100	7,300	5	20	26
Total	22,000	24,500	30,000	11	22	36
Ratio creative/total	26	25	24	-6	-2	-8

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) Table 41

3.1.4 Employment status

Figure 3.1.4 shows the employment status of artists from 1987 to 2001. The surveys in 1987 and 2001 show similar ratios of salaried to self-employed artists (around three self-employed artists to every one salaried or waged artist). The 1993 survey stands out as different, with a rise in the proportion of self-employed artists to 80 percent, or 4:1. Most artist occupations follow this trend of a rise in the proportion of self-employment in 1993. The notable exception is actors. The proportion of actors employed on salaries and wages rose from 28 percent in 1987 to 39 percent in 2001. (Data not shown here)

Figure 3.1.4: Employment status, 1987 to 2001

	1987	1993	2001
	<i>Percent</i>		
Salary or wages	24	20	26
Freelance or self-employed	76	80	73
Other	-	-	1
Total	100	100	100

Source: Throsby et al (1989, 1994 and 2003)

3.1.5 Unemployment

The 1993 survey again stands out when data on unemployment experience is compared across the three artist surveys. In 1993, the proportion of artists experiencing some period of unemployment was lower than in the other two surveys: one quarter as opposed to around one-third in the other surveys. There is also a notable increase in the proportion of artists experiencing unemployment who applied for unemployment benefits in 1993. Average time spent unemployed is, however, around the same as in the 2001 survey.

The proportion of artists who had their application for benefits refused dropped in 2001 to 3 percent, down from around 10 percent in both 1987 and 1993.

Figure 3.1.5: Unemployment experience, 1987 to 2001

	1987	1993	2001
Proportion of artists with some period of unemployment (percent)	33	26	34
Average period unemployed per year (months)		3	3
Average longest period of unemployment (months)		10	11
Proportion applying for benefits (percent of unemployed artists)	66	70	56
Proportion whose application refused (percent of artists who applied)	9	10	3

Source: Throsby et al (1989, 1994 and 2003)

3.1.6 Factors inhibiting career development

Data on the factors inhibiting career development are not comparable between the three artist surveys due to changes in the survey questionnaire. Throsby and Hollister (2003) do note, however, that the results of the 2001 survey confirm earlier findings that financial problems and time constraints are the two major factors that inhibit artists' professional development. It therefore seems that these are constant factors across the period.

Section 3.2: Artists' employment 1996 to 2006 (Census)

This section presents data on artists' employment from the ABS Censuses undertaken in 1996, 2001, and 2006.

Limitations in how the Census measures artists' employment are outlined in the introduction to part 2 of this report ('snapshot' data). The Census captures those whose 'main job' is in an artist occupation at the time of the Census. The artist group measured in the Census can therefore be viewed as a subset of the population of practising professional artists as measured in the artist surveys. A reconciliation of the artist numbers from the Census and the artist survey is provided in section 2.1.1. In 2001, the Census 'main job' artists represented just under three quarters (71 percent) of the population of practising professional artists estimated in the artist survey (31,749 'main job' artists out of 45,000 practising professional artists).

As the data below indicate, the Census measures a substantial drop in the number of employed artists between 2001 and 2006. This decline should be interpreted with extreme caution: a significant part of this decline could be driven by the way the Census measures employment by occupation rather than by an actual decline in the population of Australia's practising artists. These issues are discussed in more detail in section 3.2.1 below. A full picture of the actual number of practising professional artists will not be available until the results of the latest artist survey are available (late in 2009). The 2006 Census data should be interpreted with this major caveat in mind.

The age and gender balance differs between the three employment populations compared in the data in this section. As figure 3.2.0 shows, artist occupations tend to have a greater proportion of younger people in employment than other professions, but less than all occupations. Artist occupations also tend to have a lower proportion of women than other professional occupations, but a similar proportion to all occupations.

Figure 3.2.0: Selected workforce characteristics, 1996 to 2006

	1996	2001	2006
	Percent		
Proportion under 25 years of age			
Artist occupations	14	13	11
Other Professionals	9	8	8
All occupations	18	17	17
Proportion who are women			
Artist occupations	45	45	47
Other Professionals	52	53	55
All occupations	44	45	46

Source: ABS Census

3.2.1 Number of employed artists

Figure 3.2.1a shows the number of 'main job' artists measured by the 1996, 2001 and 2006 Censuses. The data suggest that the rate of growth in artist employment was higher than total employment between 1996 and 2001, and lower than total employment between 2001 and 2006. The growth in artist occupations in the earlier period was similar to the growth in employment in professional occupations. The 15 percent decline in artist employment between 2001 and 2006 is analysed in more detail below.

Figure 3.2.1a: Number of artists, census 1996 to 2006

	1996	2001	2006	Change		
				1996-01	2001-06	1996-06
	Number of artists			Percent		Percent
Authors and Related Professionals	2,383	3,287	2,799	38	-15	17
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	9,517	9,780	8,023	3	-18	-16
Actors, Dancers and Related Professional:	4,099	6,155	4,905	50	-20	20
Musicians and Related Professionals	7,208	8,535	7,461	18	-13	4
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	3,600	3,992	3,759	11	-6	4
Total artist occupations	26,807	31,749	26,947	18	-15	1
Other Professionals	1,091,409	1,285,936	1,441,686	18	12	32
Total employment	7,636,314	8,298,606	9,104,187	9	10	19
<i>Artists as a percent of total employment</i>	<i>0.36</i>	<i>0.39</i>	<i>0.30</i>			

Source: ABS Census

Analysis of decline in artists' employment measured in 2006 Census

Part of the decline in employed artists between the 2001 and 2006 Censuses may be the result of how the Census measures employment, rather than reflecting a real decline in the number of practising professional artists in Australia. Two structural changes in particular may be influencing the Census data:

- 1) Artists may have been dedicating less time to their arts work in the 2006 Census reference period, so that their arts work could not be considered their main job. Many artists participate in multiple labour markets: in markets for their creative arts work, arts-related work and non-arts work. There are many factors that will influence how artists allocate their time across these three markets: different wage rates and demand for labour across the three markets will provide incentives and opportunities to artists. The interactions between the markets are extremely difficult to measure, and not available from Census data. The decline in 'main job' artists measured in the Census does not necessarily mean that the number of practising professional artists has also declined. It may instead be an indication of better financial opportunities in arts-related and non-arts markets (a 'pull' factor) or that earning a living from arts practice has become more difficult (a 'push' factor).
- 2) Innovations in the nature of art work, such as greater hybrid and cross art form practice and the introduction of new forms of media, may blur 'traditional' occupational boundaries contained in the occupation classifications used by the ABS. As innovations progress, artists may be coded to non-arts or arts-related occupations. Data presented below

provide some evidence of a possible structural change in artist employment toward non-traditional occupations, although again, the Census cannot provide an unambiguous answer.

Figure 3.2.1b provides some evidence that influences such these might be impacting on the Census measurement of artists' employment.

The Census measures strong growth in people employed in private arts teaching. The number of people employed as private teachers of visual arts, dance and music increased by nearly 2,000 between 2001 and 2006. Data from another ABS collection suggest that this increase may have been in response to an increase in demand for private art lessons. The ABS' *Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities* (ABS, 2006; 4901.0) shows that the number of 5 to 14 year olds involved in organised cultural activities out of school hours rose by more than 106,000 between 2000 and 2006. It may be that an increase in demand for private art lessons has caused artists in 2006 to spend more time at private teaching than in 2001.

The Census also records strong increases in employment in design occupations, especially in graphic design and designers and illustrators 'not fully defined'.⁷ Two influences may be acting here. First, strong demand from more commercial creative activities may have caused artists to supply their artistic skills to these markets more than in 2001. This scenario is possible given steady growth in the Australian economy over the period. Second, a rise in cross-art form and new media artistic practice may have caused many artists to be recorded in media or design occupations.

Underlying these possible influences is data presented later in this report showing a decline in the relative incomes of artist occupations (section 3.2.3). Real median incomes in artist occupations remained relatively stable between 2001 and 2006: for actors dancers and related professionals they declined in real terms. However, median incomes in professional occupations increased by 9 percent and for all occupations by 5 percent, which means that artists' real incomes declined over the period relative to these other occupational groups. The relative decline could explain the drop in 'main job' artists measured between 2001 and 2006 Censuses, with artists spending more time working in arts-related and non-arts labour markets to take advantage of better financial returns in those markets. These explanations are speculative only.

Even if the decline in artists' employment is not as severe as implied by Census measures, the data do at least provide an indication of a recent 'levelling off' in the growth of artists' employment following strong growth over the previous decade and beyond. This is discussed in more detail below.

⁷ The new ANZSCO occupation classification undertakes a significant expansion and reclassification of design occupations, with, for example, the introduction of separate occupations for 'multimedia designer' and 'web designer'.

Figure 3.2.1b: Artists and arts-related occupations, census 2001 to 2006

	2001	2006	Change	
			Percent	Number
Authors and Related Professionals	3,287	2,799	-15	-488
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	9,780	8,023	-18	-1,757
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	6,155	4,905	-20	-1,250
Musicians and Related Professionals	8,535	7,461	-13	-1,074
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	3,992	3,759	-6	-233
Total artist occupations	31,749	26,947	-15	-4,802
Selected arts-related occupations with increases				
Art teacher (private)	1,367	1,498	10	131
Dance teacher (private)	3,446	4,394	28	948
Music teacher (private)	8,445	9,288	10	843
Editor and book editor	4,519	5,767	28	1,248
Film, TV, radio and stage directors nec*	838	1,249	49	411
Photographer	6,845	7,696	12	851
Designers and illustrators nfd**	3,244	3,778	16	534
Fashion designer	2,575	3,446	34	871
Graphic designer	21,144	27,409	30	6,265
Interior designer	3,732	5,886	58	2,154
Media producer	6,240	8,639	38	2,399
Cultural occupations	259,909	277,458	7	
Other Professionals	1,285,936	1,441,686	12	
Total employment	8,298,606	9,104,187	10	

* nec is 'not elsewhere classified'. People employed in the occupation Director (film, TV, radio or stage) declined by 27% (or 450 people)

** nfd is 'not further defined'

Source: ABS Census

Long term trend in artists' employment: 1986 to 2006

Data obtained for the current project can be combined with earlier Census data from Guldberg (2000)⁸ to obtain a picture of long-term trends in the number of people employed in artist occupations. Guldberg uses the same occupation classification as the current project (the ASCO second edition), but adopts a slightly broader definition of artist occupations. The difference in definitions means that Guldberg's measure of employment in artist occupations is around 2,000 more people than the definition used here. Although the definitions differ, the trends measured by both definitions are likely to be broadly similar.

Figure 3.2.1c places the Census data from the current project alongside data from Guldberg to provide a picture of employment in artist occupations since 1986. The combined data suggest that the recent decline in employment in artist occupations comes at the end of a period of sustained growth between 1986 and 2001, a period over which employment in artist occupations grew faster than total employment between 1986 and 2001. This is presented graphically in the indexes in figure 3.2.1b.

It is difficult to obtain Census data before 1986 due to significant changes to ABS definitions and classifications. That said, data presented in Guldberg (2000) provides some indication that employment in arts professions grew at a higher rate than for total employment from 1971 and 1986.

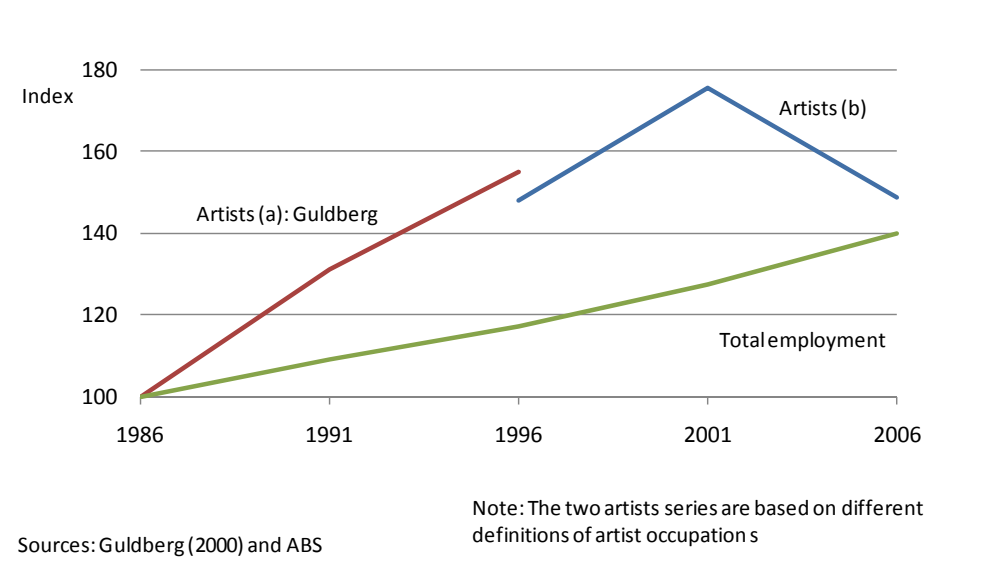
⁸ Guldberg, H, 2000, *The Arts Economy 1968-98: Three decades of Growth in Australia*, Australia Council.

The long term data suggest that the decline in artists' employment measured by Censuses between 2001 and 2006 is the first time in at least 20 years – perhaps longer – that the Census has measured a growth in artist employment below that of total employment.

Figure 3.2.1c: Number of artists, census 1986 to 2006

	1986	1991	1996	2001	2006
	Number of artists				
Total artist occupations (a)			26,807	31,749	26,947
Total artist occupations (b)	18,100	23,700	28,040		
Total employment	6,513,000	7,109,300	7,636,314	8,298,606	9,104,187
Artists (a) as percent of total employment			0.35	0.38	0.30
Artists (b) as percent of total employment	0.28	0.33	0.37		
<i>Change</i>		1986-91	1991-96	1996-01	2001-06
	Percent				
Total artist occupations (a)				18	-15
Total artist occupations (b)		31	18		
Total employment		9	7	9	10
(a) Definition used in this project					
(b) Definition used in Guldberg (2000)					
Sources: Guldberg (2000) and ABS					

Figure 3.2.1d: Indices of Census measures of artists' employment, 1986 to 2006



3.2.2 Median incomes

Census data shows that between 1996 and 2001 the median incomes of full time artists rose faster than in other occupations, driven mainly by increasing incomes among authors, visual and craft artists and musicians (figure 3.2.2a). Between 2001 and 2006, however, the full time median incomes of most artist occupations rose at a similar rate as in total employment, but almost half the rate of other professional occupations. The real median incomes of actors, dancers and related professionals declined by 5 percent at a time when incomes in the total workforce rose by 6 percent.

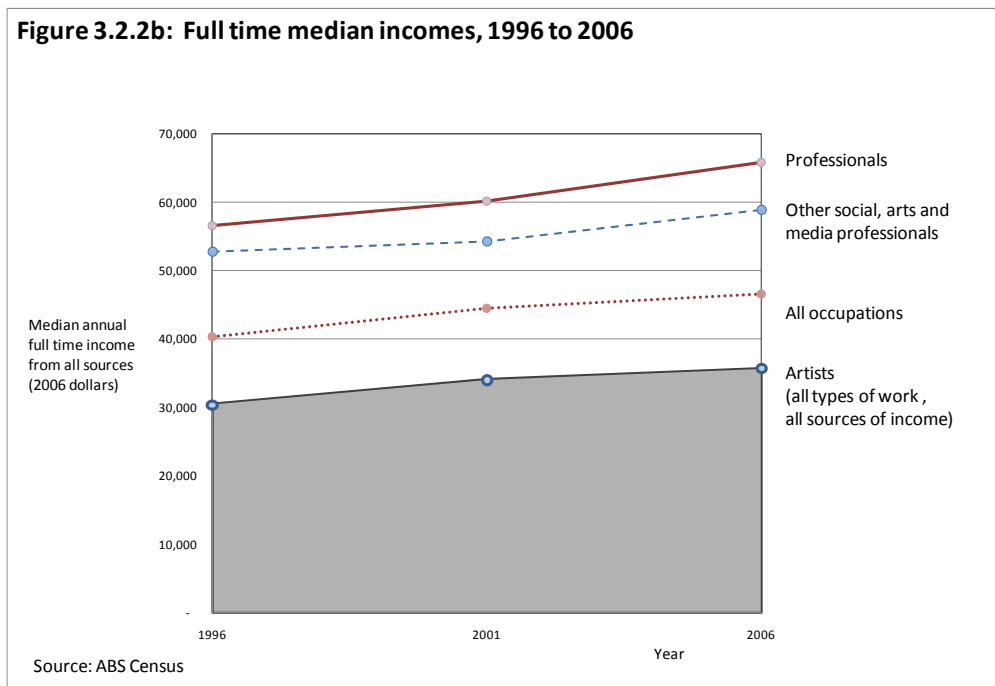
The trends in relative median full time incomes are represented graphically in figure 3.2.2b.

Figure 3.2.2a: Median annual real full time income, census 1996 to 2006

	1996	2001	2006	Change		
				1996-01	2001-06	1996-06
		\$ 2006		Percent		Percent
Authors and Related Professionals	39,843	44,495	44,508	12	0	12
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	18,332	27,363	28,072	49	3	53
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	34,161	39,531	37,516	16	-5	10
Musicians and Related Professionals	37,137	38,321	38,977	3	2	5
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	37,746	38,502	41,378	2	7	10
Total artist occupations	30,508	34,083	35,690	12	5	17
Other Social, Arts and Media Professionals	52,696	54,242	58,857	3	9	12
Other Professionals	56,619	60,114	65,797	6	9	16
Total Employment	40,249	44,495	46,543	11	5	16

Total income includes wages, salaries, benefits, allowances and other income
 Deflator: CPI base 2006
 Source: ABS Census and Consumer Price Index

Figure 3.2.2b: Full time median incomes, 1996 to 2006



3.2.3 Income differentials between artists and other professionals

The income gap between artist occupations and other professionals, measured in dollar terms, widened noticeably between 2001 and 2006. In 1996 and 2001 the full time real median income of the artist occupational group was around \$26,000 lower than other professionals. By 2006, this gap had widened to \$30,107. This represents around a 16 percent widening of the income gap

between 1996 and 2006. Note that these income measures have been adjusted for the impact of inflation, so this is a 'real' increase in the income gap. The widening gap is represented graphically in figure 3.2.3b.

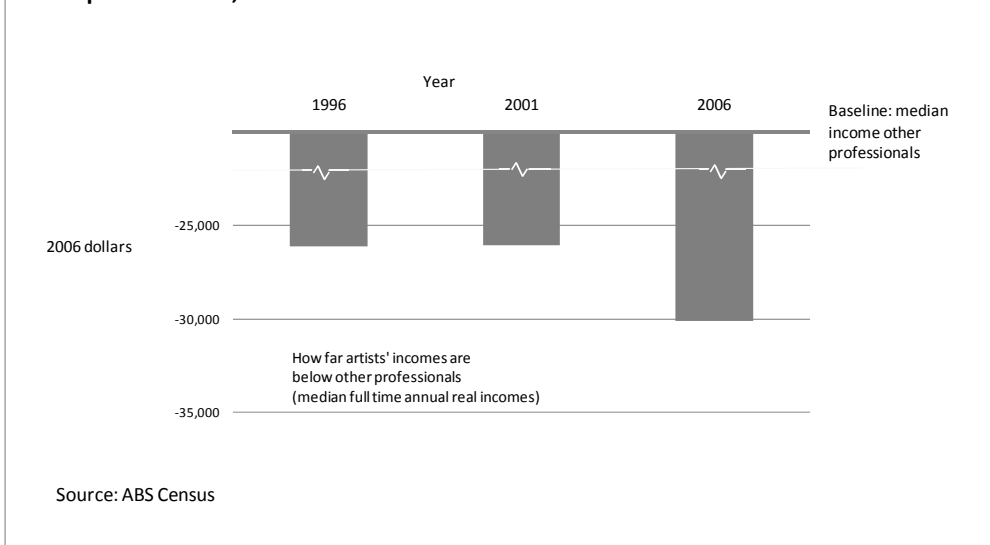
Figure 3.2.3a: Income differential, artists against other professionals, census 1996 to 2006

Gap is the difference between artists' and professionals' real median full time incomes. A negative number implies artists' incomes are lower.

				Change in gap*		
	1996	2001	2006	1996-01	2001-06	2001-06
	\$ 2006			\$ 2006	Percent	
Authors and Related Professionals	-16,776	-15,619	-21,289	1,157	-5,670	-36
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	-38,287	-32,751	-37,725	5,536	-4,974	-15
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	-22,458	-20,583	-28,281	1,875	-7,698	-37
Musicians and Related Professionals	-19,482	-21,794	-26,820	-2,312	-5,026	-23
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	-18,873	-21,612	-24,420	-2,739	-2,807	-13
Total artist occupations	-26,111	-26,031	-30,107	80	-4,076	-16
Other Professionals	-	-	-			
Total Employment	-16,370	-15,619	-19,254	751	-3,635	-23

Total full time income includes wages, salaries, benefits, allowances and other income
 * A negative figure means that the income gap between artists and professionals widened (ie artists' relative incomes worsened)
 Deflator: CPI base 2006
 Source: ABS Census and Consumer Price Index

Figure 3.2.3b: Gap between artists' median annual full time incomes and other professionals, 1996 to 2006



The widening of the gap also occurred between artist occupations with other social, arts and media professionals, many of which are occupations that share similar creative skills (directing and designing), and are therefore likely to be relatively close substitute markets for artists' labour. Figures 3.2.c and d show the income gap for artists compared with other social arts and media professionals.

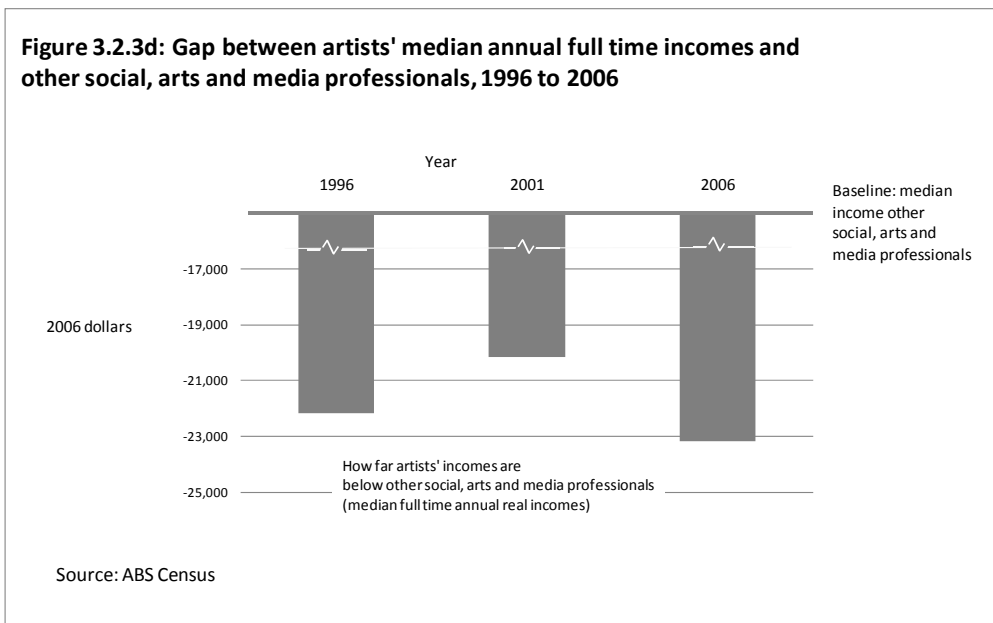
Figure 3.2.3c: Income differential, artists against other social, arts and media professionals, census 1996 to 2006

Gap is the difference between artists' and real median full time incomes in other social, arts and media professions. A negative number implies artists' incomes are lower.

				Change in gap*		
	1996	2001	2006	1996-01	2001-06	2001-06
	\$ 2006			Percent		
Authors and Related Professionals	-12,853	-9,747	-14,349	3,106	-4,602	-47
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	-34,364	-26,879	-30,785	7,485	-3,906	-15
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	-18,535	-14,711	-21,341	3,824	-6,630	-45
Musicians and Related Professionals	-15,558	-15,922	-19,880	-363	-3,959	-25
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	-14,950	-15,740	-17,480	-790	-1,740	-11
Total artist occupations	-22,188	-20,159	-23,167	2,029	-3,008	-15
Other Social, Arts and Media Professionals	-	-	-			
Other Professionals	3,923	5,872	6,940	1,949	1,068	18
Total Employment	-12,447	-9,747	-12,314	2,700	-2,568	-26

Total full time income includes wages, salaries, benefits, allowances and other income
 * A negative figure means that the income gap between artists and professionals widened (ie artists' relative incomes worsened)
 Deflator: CPI base 2006
 Source: ABS Census and Consumer Price Index

Figure 3.2.3d: Gap between artists' median annual full time incomes and other social, arts and media professionals, 1996 to 2006



3.2.4 Total income all artists

In 2006 the total annual income of all artists represented \$854.3 million (this figure is obtained by multiplying the average annual income of artist occupations, \$32,351, by the number of artists). This provides an indicator of the financial size of individual artist group, or the individual artist 'economy', bearing in mind that it is for 'main job' artists only and therefore represents an underestimate. Figure 3.2.4a shows total income for all artists back to 1986.

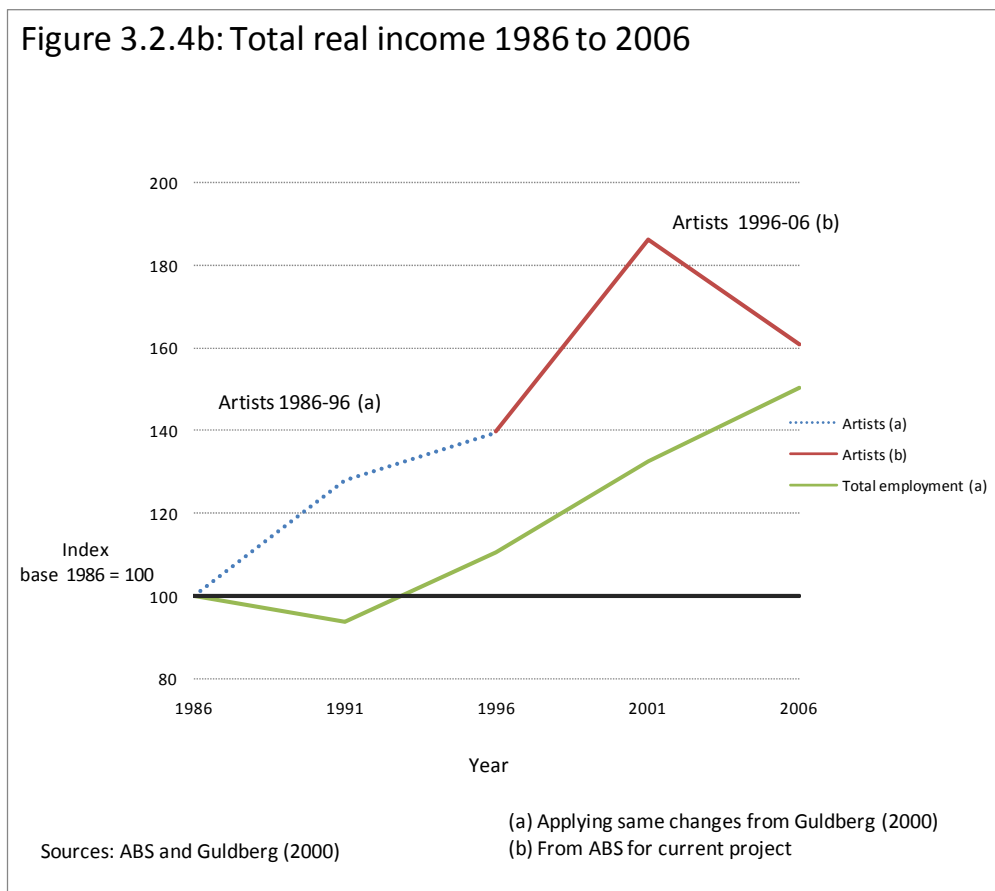
Data prior to 1996 are obtained by applying the changes published in the same measure in Guldberg (2000), although these were based on a slightly different definition of artists. The data indicate that total artists' income grew particularly strongly between 1986 and 1991 (28 percent), and between 1996 and 2001 (33 percent). The growth between 1986 and 1991 is particularly notable in light of the 6 percent decline in total employment income over the same period. The large decline in total income between 2001 and 2006 results from the strong decline in the number of main job artists.

Figure 3.2.4a: Growth in real total income, 1986 to 2006

	1986*	1991*	1996	2001	2006
Artists' total annual income (\$m 2006)	530.3	678.9	740.5	987.9	854.3
<i>Change on previous year (percent)</i>					
Artist occupations		28	9	33	-14
All occupations		-6	18	20	13

* Estimated using from Guldberg (2000) based on different list of of artist occupations
Sources: ABS census and Guldberg (2000)

Figure 3.2.4b plots the total income data in index form.



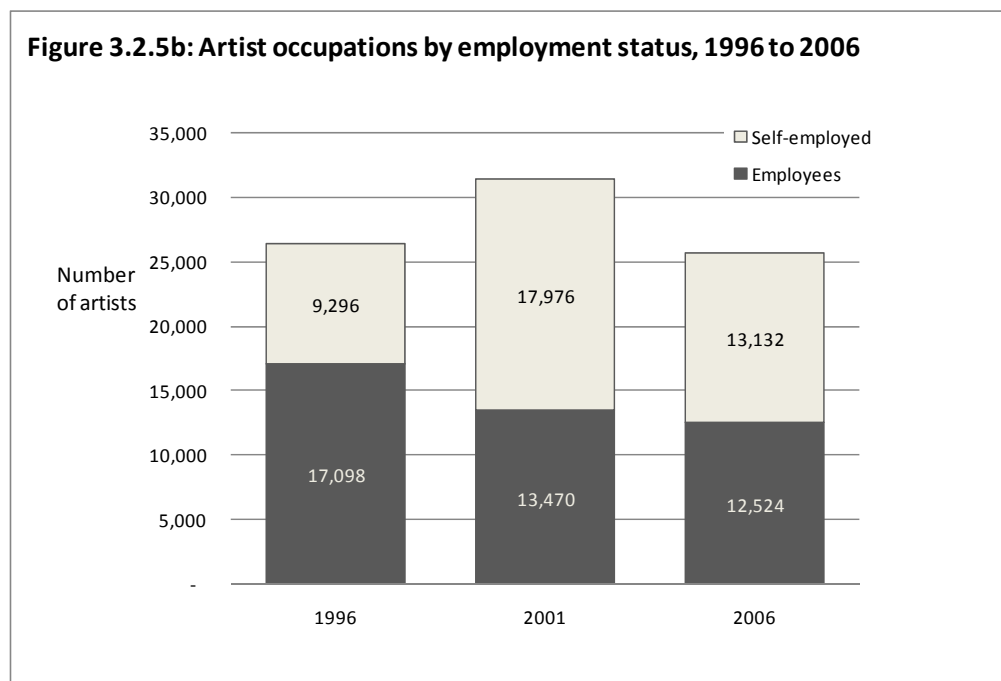
3.2.5 Employment status

Figure 3.2.5a shows the proportion of occupations employed on salaries and wages ('employees'), as opposed to self-employed. Across all three Censuses, artist occupations had lower proportions of employees than other occupations, with the difference getting larger across the period. Whereas employees represented the majority (64 percent) of artist occupations in 1996, they were a minority in 2006 (47 percent). In other professional occupations and in total employment, employees are the vast majority of people employed (around 90 percent). The Census shows that the number of artists who were employed on wages and salaries (ie as 'employees') declined from around 17,100 to 12,500 between 1996 and 2006. The actual numbers are shown in figure 3.2.5b.

Figure 3.2.5b: Proportion of occupation working as employees, 1996 to 2006

	1996	2001	2006
	Percent of occupation		
Authors and Related Professionals	53	30	41
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	52	32	36
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	84	63	67
Musicians and Related Professionals	70	42	46
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	68	47	51
Total artist occupations	64	42	47
Other Professionals	94	88	93
Total employment	91	82	88

Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing



3.2.6 Hours worked: full time/part time

Figure 3.2.6 shows the proportion of people employed full time by occupation. The ABS defines full time workers as those who work 35 hours or more. Part time workers are those who work less than 35 hours a week.

In all three Censuses, artist occupations had a lower proportion of people employed full time than other professional occupations and all occupations. Census data for 1996 differ from those found in the Labour Force Survey, so should be interpreted with care. Census data show a decline in the proportion of full time employment in most artist occupations between 2001 and 2006. The exception was an increase in the proportion of full time employment in the musicians and related professionals occupation (from 30 to 32 percent).

Figure 3.2.6: Proportion working full time, 1996 to 2006

	1996*	2001	2006
	Percent working full time		
Authors and Related Professionals	46	59	54
Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	44	55	52
Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	26	41	38
Musicians and Related Professionals	20	30	32
Artists and Related Professionals, nfd	48	62	61
Total artist occupations	35	47	45
Other Professionals	54	74	73
Total employment	50	68	68

* Interpret 1996 data with care: differs from Labour Force Survey data
Source: ABS 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Section 3.3: Work in arts activities 2001 to 2007

The ABS collects data on people's involvement in creative arts activities through its *Work in selected culture and leisure activities* collection (6281.0).

The survey captures information on a broader range of creative work than in other ABS collections and in the artist survey series. It is a population survey that asks people about all of their involvement in creative arts activities from hobby involvement to paid and unpaid work. It therefore collects data on creative arts activities that are not associated with formal paid employment, as in the Census and other ABS collections, or undertaken by practising professional artists, as in the artist survey series. Its broad focus is well-suited to capturing the informal types of work that are common in the arts. The artists measured in the Census and artist surveys can be thought of as the formal or professional subsets of the creative people measured in the *Work* series.

The tailoring of the collection to the needs of creative arts activities is, however, both its major strength and its major weakness. The collection's uniqueness means that much of the data is not comparable with other

employment-related collections, and so it is difficult to construct indicators and provide contextual data in order to draw inferences and make comparisons with non-arts areas.

Writing is excluded from the data presented here because the collection measures non-arts types of writing such as for educational books, newspapers and journals. Creative arts writing is not able to be separately identified from published sources.

3.3.1 Number of people involved in arts work

Between 2001 and 2007 the number of people involved in all forms of creative arts work nearly doubled from 1.2 million to 2.38 million people. The greatest increase was in the number of people involved in visual arts work, driven particularly by large increases in the number of people involved in drawing and photography.

Participation across arts activities grew at a higher rate than the population (which grew by 9 percent), meaning that there was an increase in the rate of people participating in creative arts work over the period from 8 percent in 2001 to 15 percent in 2007 (see figure 3.3.1a). Figure 3.3.1b shows that participation rates increased across all arts activities except performance arts.

Figure 3.3.1a: Work in selected arts activities, 2001 to 2007

	2001	2004	2007	Change 2001 to 2007
	Number			Percent
Visual arts activities	503,200	789,900	1,411,700	181
Craft activities	396,400	542,700	960,800	142
Writing	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Performing arts: performer	258,300	272,700	283,000	0 [^]
Performing arts: not a performer	106,300	151,200	223,300	110
Music	281,900	305,200	335,100	19
All arts*	1,200,000	1,596,200	2,380,000	98
Teaching	164,400	183,200	256,700	56
All culture and leisure activities	2,327,500	2,711,400	3,531,000	52
Total adult population	14,980,200	15,671,100	16,298,500	9
<i>All arts as percent of population</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>15</i>	

Notes:

Involvement is both paid and unpaid work undertaken in the 12 months prior to April 2007

Numbers do not add because some people were involved in more than one activity

n/a = not available due to the inclusion of non-arts writing activities

[^] Although the numbers differ between years, the differences are not statistically significant

* Unpublished data supplied by ABS for visual arts, craft, performing arts performer, and music activities

Source: ABS Work in selected culture and leisure activities April 2007, 6281.0

Figure 3.3.1b: Work in selected arts activities, participation rates 2001 to 2007

	2001	2004	2007	Change 2001 to 2007
	Percent of pop.			Percent points
Visual arts activities	3.4	5.0	8.7	5.3
Craft activities	2.6	3.5	5.9	3.2
Writing	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Performing arts: performer	1.7	1.7	1.7	0.0
Performing arts: not a performer	0.7	1.0	1.4	0.7
Music	1.9	1.9	2.1	0.2
All arts*	8.0	10.2	14.6	6.6
Teaching	1.1	1.2	1.6	0.5
All culture and leisure activities	15.5	17.3	21.7	6.1

Notes:

Involvement is for 12 months prior to April 2007

Involvement includes both paid and unpaid work

Participation rate is the percent of the population involved at least once

n/a = not available due to the inclusion of non-arts writing activities

* Unpublished data supplied by ABS for visual arts, craft, performing arts performer, and music activities

Source: ABS Work in selected culture and leisure activities April 2007, 6281.0

3.3.2 Number paid

Figure 3.3.2a shows that the number of people who received some form of payment for their involvement in creative arts activities grew by 44 percent between 2001 and 2007 (from just over 340,000 people to nearly 492,000 people). Growth was higher over the period than for all culture and leisure activities combined. The strongest growth occurred in visual arts activities. Data not presented here suggests that the major factors in the growth of paid visual arts involvements occurred mainly in three categories: drawing; photography; and creating (visual) artworks with a computer. The average rise in paid involvements across these three activities was 89 percent.

However, the proportion of people who received some payment for their arts work declined over the period from 28 percent to 21 percent, which indicates that unpaid involvements grew more strongly than paid involvements (figure 3.3.2b).

Figure 3.3.2a: Paid work in selected arts activities, 2001 to 2007

	Number of those involved receiving some payment			Change 2001 to 2007	
	2001	2004	2007	Number	Percent
	Number				
Visual arts activities	175,800	183,100	281,900	106,100	60
Craft activities	94,500	117,000	139,100	44,600	47
Writing	n/a	n/a	n/a		
Performing arts: performer	29,100	40,400	38,900	9,800	34
Performing arts: not a performer	16,600	32,000	37,900	21,300	128
Music	83,500	83,800	118,800	35,300	42
All arts*	340,200	387,600	491,500	151,300	44
Teaching	76,600	81,200	111,300	34,700	45
All culture and leisure activities	900,000	957,500	1,062,100	162,100	18

* Unpublished data supplied by ABS for visual arts, craft, performing arts performer, and music activities

n/a = not available due to the inclusion of non-arts writing activities

Involvement is for 12 months prior to April 2007

Source: ABS Work in selected culture and leisure activities April 2007, 6281.0

Figure 3.3.2b: Paid and unpaid work in selected arts activities, 2001 to 2007

	Proportion of those involved receiving some payment			Change 2001 to 2007 Percent points
	2001	2004 <i>Percent</i>	2007	
Visual arts activities	35	23	20	-15
Craft activities	24	22	15	-9
Writing	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	
Performing arts: performer	11	15	14	3
Performing arts: not a performer	16	22	17	2
Music	30	28	36	7
All arts*	28	24	21	-8
Teaching	47	49	44	-3
All culture and leisure activities	36	33	30	-5

* Unpublished data supplied by ABS for visual arts, craft, performing arts performer, and music activities
n/a = not available
Involvement is for 12 months prior to April 2007
Source: ABS Work in selected culture and leisure activities April 2007, 6281.0

Section 3.4: Supply of new graduates to the arts labour market 1999 to 2008

This section presents data on bachelor degree graduates entering the work force created by Graduate Careers Australia with the ABS.

Graduate data provides an indication of the numbers of people entering into professional practice, or entering the artist labour market.

Entrants into the market include a wide range of people: people coming out of the formal education sector (schools, university, and vocational institutions) who have either graduated or undertaken arts and non-arts qualifications; people with private arts training; people without formal or informal qualifications; people coming from other occupations. People exiting the artist labour market include people leaving due to unemployment or to undertake non-artistic activities, people retiring and people dying.

Exit data are more difficult to obtain, especially for arts occupations, which have highly divergent and sometimes unpredictable retirement ages. One of the more obvious exit rates is mortality. The Australian mortality rate is currently around 6 percent of the population per annum (it was 7.6 percent in 1997, dropping to 6 percent in 2007). Artists are likely to have a higher than average mortality rate due to an association of artistic creativity with 'high risk' lifestyle factors such as higher levels of mental illness and lower incomes.⁹

⁹ Deaton, A., 2002, *Policy implications of the gradient of health and wealth*, Health Affairs, vol. 21(2); Stack, S., 2001, *Occupation and suicide*, Social Science Quarterly, vol. 82(2); 384-396; Schneider, 2002, *Les écrivains et le suicide*, Schweizer Archiv für Neurologie und

This section provides data on entrants only, and on entrants from the formal education system. The data have a number of key limitations, including:

- Some arts occupations do not have a clearly identifiable tertiary course: for example, authors and poets, contemporary musicians and craftspeople.
- Some of the data presented here include graduates from creative courses more broadly defined than the practising professional artists that form the foundation of this report. For example, data on 'creative arts' course completions include media and communications subjects. This is because the data rely on the definitions provided in published data.
- Talent may play as much of a role as formal education in determining a person's entry into professional practice. Data from the ABS' *Work in selected culture/leisure activities* series indicate that for the majority of paid arts activities in 2007, the number of people without a relevant qualification outnumbered those with a relevant qualification, sometimes by more than two to one.

3.4.1 Course completions in the creative arts

This section presents preliminary estimates on the number of people completing creative arts courses in Australia's tertiary education institutions. The figures include people completing a wider range of arts courses than those relating specifically to the artists group that is the subject of this report, including media and communications, design and film courses. On the other hand, it does not include some people completing tertiary courses that aspire to become artists, such as writers and contemporary musicians, as many of these people do not train in courses specifically relating to their arts work.

More analysis is required to determine the accuracy of the course completions data presented here, so the data should be seen as a very rough estimate only.

Figure 3.4.1 provides data on the number of people completing tertiary 'creative arts' courses (which include performing arts, visual arts and crafts, graphic and design studies, communication and media studies, and film and broadcasting courses) in major tertiary institutions (universities and institutions such as NIDA and RMIT). The data indicate that the number of people graduating from these institutions has grown steadily from around 11,000 in 2001 to 16,300 in 2007. The growth in creative arts graduates across this period was higher than average for all subjects.

Psychiatry, vol. 153 (5); 221-231.; Madden and Bloom, 2001, *Advocating Creativity*, International Journal of Cultural Policy, vol. 7(3); 409-436.

Figure 3.4.1: Award course completions, 2001 to 2007

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Change
								2001-07
	Number							Percent
Creative Arts	10,843	12,252	13,971	14,716	15,795	15,501	16,289	50
Total	187,089	200,744	215,115	225,441	232,188	239,460	247,526	32
<i>Creative as percent of total</i>	5.8	6.1	6.5	6.5	6.8	6.5	6.6	

Source: DEEWR

3.4.2 Course completions relative to practising artists

In 2001 the number of people completing creative arts courses was equivalent to just under a quarter (24 percent) of the number of practising professional artists estimated in the artist survey, and just over a third of the number of 'main job artists measured in the Census (figure 3.4.2). The two groups are not necessarily identical. For example, as noted above, creative arts courses includes media and design courses, while the professional artists in the artist survey includes writers and CCD workers who are not well represented in the data on creative arts courses. Figure 3.4.2 is presented to provide a rough indication only of the likely significance of course completions in boosting the supply of trained artists.

Figure 3.4.2: Creative arts course completions as proportion of artists, 2001 and 2006

	2001	2006	2007
Creative arts course completions (number of students)	10,843	15,501	16,289
Visual and performing artists*:			
Main job artists, Census	31,749	26,947	
Practising professional artists, artist survey**	45,000		52,000
Creative arts course completions as percent of:			
<i>Main job artists, Census</i>	34	58	
<i>Practising professional artists, artist survey</i>	24		31

* Includes visual, craft, actors, dancers, musicians and composers only

** 2007 estimated

Sources: DEEWR, Throsby and Hollister (2003) and ABS

3.4.3 Visual and performing arts university graduates working or seeking work

Figure 3.4.3 presents data on the labour market experience of graduates from university bachelor degree courses from 1999 to 2008. The survey records the labour market experience of graduates within four months of completing their degree. These graduates represent just a subset of the students in the above data (around 8.5 percent). The data show a steady influx of 1,000 to 1,500 bachelor degree graduates entering the artist labour market each year. The proportion of graduates unemployed but seeking work dropped over the period from 17 percent to 11 percent. Similarly, the proportion of graduates who were working part time or casually but seeking full time work dropped from 26

percent to 23 percent. The proportion of new visual and performing arts bachelor degree graduates in full time employment rose from 57 percent in 1999 to 67 percent in 2008. The data do not reveal the proportion of these graduates who were working as artists. However, the graduates represent a steady annual influx into the artist labour market equivalent to around 3 to 4 percent of practising visual and performing artists.

Figure 3.4.3: Visual/performing arts bachelor degree graduates, 1999 to 2008

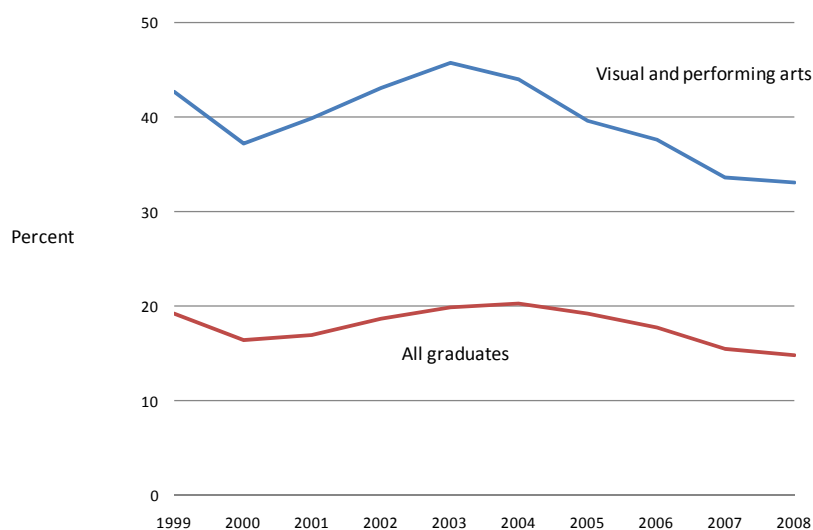
Status within four months of completing degree	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
	Number									
In full-time employment	681	788	813	597	736	802	903	950	914	886
In part-time/casual employment; seeking full-time	310	293	321	273	410	414	397	392	318	299
Not working; seeking full-time employment	197	174	219	180	212	216	198	183	146	139
Total working or seeking work	1,188	1,254	1,353	1,050	1,358	1,433	1,498	1,527	1,378	1,324
Selected indicators	Percent									
Full time as percent of total	57	63	60	57	54	56	60	62	66	67
Working but seeking full time work as percent of total	26	23	24	26	30	29	27	26	23	23
Not working but seeking work as percent of total	17	14	16	17	16	15	13	12	11	11

Sources: Graduate careers Australia, DEEWR

3.4.4 Visual and performing arts graduates compared to all graduates

Figure 3.4.4a shows that for all years from 1999 to 2008, visual and performing arts bachelor courses had a higher proportion of graduates seeking full time employment than other courses. After dropping from 1999 to 2000, the proportion of graduates seeking full time work increased steadily to 2003/2004, then declined steadily to 2008. For both groups, the proportion seeking full time employment was lower in 2008 than it was in 1999, but the overall decline was more marked for arts graduates, with the proportion dropping from 43 percent in 1999 to 33 percent in 2008. As figure 3.4.4b shows, the biggest decline was in the proportion of artists who were not working at all but seeking work, who went from 17 percent of arts graduates in 1999 to 11 percent in 2008.

Figure 3.4.4a: Proportion of bachelor degree graduates seeking full time work, 1999 to 2008



Source: Graduate careers Australia, DEEWR

Figure 3.4.4b: Proportion of graduates seeking full time work, 1999 to 2008

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Change 1999-08
	Percent of graduates										Percent points
Working but seeking full time work:											
Visual and performing arts	26	23	24	26	30	29	27	26	23	23	-4
All graduates	11	10	10	11	12	13	12	12	11	10	-2
Not working but seeking work:											
Visual and performing arts	17	14	16	17	16	15	13	12	11	11	-6
All graduates	8	7	7	8	8	7	7	6	5	5	-3
Total seeking full time work											
Visual and performing arts	43	37	40	43	46	44	40	38	34	33	-10
All graduates	19	16	17	19	20	20	19	18	16	15	-4

Percentages may not add due to rounding

Source: Graduate careers Australia

ATTACHMENT 1: Artist definitions from main collections

List of artists types, occupations and activities from the three main collections used in this report.

Artist survey data	ABS Census and LFSS	Work in culture/leisure
Writers	Authors and Related Professionals	*
Visual artists	Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals	Visual arts activities
Craft practitioners		Craft activities
Actors	Actors, Dancers and Related Professionals	Performing arts: performer
Dancers		Performing arts: not a performer
Musicians	Musicians and Related Professionals	Music
Composers		
CCD workers	-	-
-	Artists and Related Professionals, not fully defined	-
-	-	Teaching

* The Work in culture/leisure series collects information on non-artistic forms of writing such as writing for educational books, newspapers and newsletters. Although these types are creative and often cultural, they do not necessarily correspond to the practising professional artist writers artists covered in the artist survey series. Artist writers are not able to be disaggregated in the *Work* series. Data on writing work have therefore not been presented in this report, as aspects and trends in this work may not be reflective of artist writers.

ATTACHMENT 2: Income distribution

Figure A2.1 shows a comparison between median and average incomes using an indicator that measures median income as a proportion of average income. If the income distribution of an occupation was perfectly symmetrical (known as a 'normal' or bell distribution), the median and average would be the same, and the indicator in the figure A2.1 would be 100 percent. If the median is lower than the average, the indicator is less than 100, and the income distribution is 'skewed' (for example, there may be a few people with very high incomes that cause the average to be higher than for the majority of people). The smaller the median is in relation to the average, the more skewed the distribution. The data suggest that income from creative work is more variable than income from other sources and for other occupations.

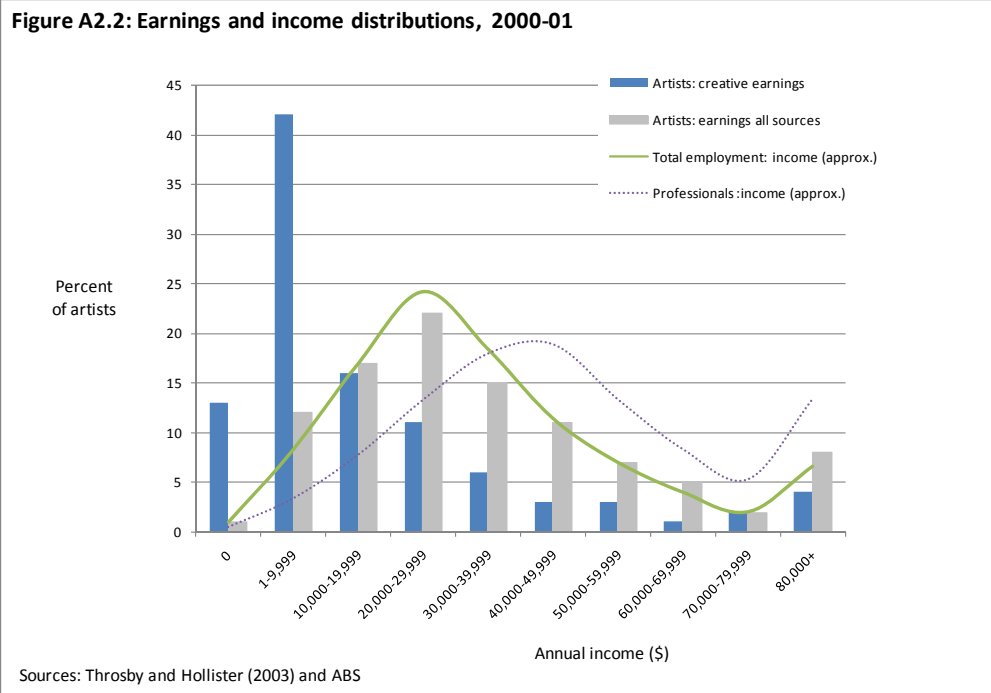
Figure A2.1: Median and average earnings compared 2001

	Median as percent of average	
	Creative work	All sources
Writers	24	76
Visual artists	25	78
Craft practitioners	43	75
Actors	47	77
Dancers	77	97
Musicians	59	87
Composers	33	81
CCD workers	40	87
All artists	43	81
ABS comparative data*		
Professionals (full time)	<i>n/a</i>	90
All occupations	<i>n/a</i>	85

Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) Tables 33, 34 and 35

Figure A2.2 provides a visual indication of the distortion from a symmetrical distribution for artists' total and creative incomes. It would be preferable to compare the artists' income distribution with the income distributions of other occupations, but this is not possible from Throsby and Hollister (2003). That said, the data in figure 6 suggest that the income distributions for other occupations is likely to be less skewed than for artists.

The income distributions in figure A2.2 provide some support for the observation in overseas data that a few 'star' artists receive relatively high incomes from their creative work, while the majority of artists earn relatively low incomes. Both distributions rise for the highest income bracket for those earning \$80,000 or more. Source: Throsby and Hollister (2003) appendix tables 8.1 and 8.4



ATTACHMENT 3: Occupations used in Census and LFSS data

Selected artist occupations from ANZSCO:

- 211111 Actor
- 211112 Dancer or Choreographer
- 211113 Entertainer or Variety Artist
- 211199 Actors, Dancers and Other Entertainers nec
- 211211 Composer
- 211213 Musician (Instrumental)
- 211214 Singer
- 211411 Painter (Visual Arts)
- 211412 Potter or Ceramic Artist
- 211413 Sculptor
- 211499 Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals nec
- 212211 Author

The full list of Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations 2006 (to the 2 digit level) is below.

1 MANAGERS

- 11 Chief Executives, General Managers and Legislators
- 12 Farmers and Farm Managers
- 13 Specialist Managers
- 14 Hospitality, Retail and Service Managers

2 PROFESSIONALS

- 21 Arts and Media Professionals
- 22 Business, Human Resource and Marketing Professionals
- 23 Design, Engineering, Science and Transport Professionals
- 24 Education Professionals
- 25 Health Professionals
- 26 ICT Professionals
- 27 Legal, Social and Welfare Professionals

3 TECHNICIANS AND TRADES WORKERS

- 31 Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians
- 32 Automotive and Engineering Trades Workers
- 33 Construction Trades Workers
- 34 Electrotechnology and Telecommunications Trades Workers
- 35 Food Trades Workers
- 36 Skilled Animal and Horticultural Workers
- 39 Other Technicians and Trades Workers

4 COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL SERVICE WORKERS

- 41 Health and Welfare Support Workers
- 42 Carers and Aides
- 43 Hospitality Workers
- 44 Protective Service Workers
- 45 Sports and Personal Service Workers

5 CLERICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE WORKERS

- 51 Office Managers and Program Administrators
- 52 Personal Assistants and Secretaries
- 53 General Clerical Workers
- 54 Inquiry Clerks and Receptionists
- 55 Numerical Clerks
- 56 Clerical and Office Support Workers
- 59 Other Clerical and Administrative Workers

6 SALES WORKERS

- 61 Sales Representatives and Agents
- 62 Sales Assistants and Salespersons
- 63 Sales Support Workers

7 MACHINERY OPERATORS AND DRIVERS

- 71 Machine and Stationary Plant Operators
- 72 Mobile Plant Operators
- 73 Road and Rail Drivers
- 74 Storepersons

8 LABOURERS

- 81 Cleaners and Laundry Workers
- 82 Construction and Mining Labourers
- 83 Factory Process Workers
- 84 Farm, Forestry and Garden Workers
- 85 Food Preparation Assistants
- 89 Other Labourers

ATTACHMENT 4: List of activities covered by Work in selected culture leisure activities series

The list of activities below is the standard high-level set of activities covered by the collection. Some of the activities are broken down into more detail, though data on these more detailed activities is not presented here. The collection also obtains data on hobby activities for 'arts and craft', 'writing' and 'music'.

Where total arts are presented in this report, the activities covered are:

- Visual art activities
- Craft activities
- Performing arts: Performer
- Music

Heritage

- Museums
- Public art galleries
- Libraries and archives
- Heritage organisations
- Botanic gardens
- National parks and reserves
- Zoos and aquaria

Arts

- Visual art activities
 - Drawing
 - Painting
 - Sculpture
 - Photography
 - Print-making
 - Creating artworks with a computer
 - Other visual art activities
- Craft activities
 - Pottery and ceramics
 - Textiles
 - Jewellery making
 - Furniture-making and wood crafts
 - Glass crafts
 - Other craft activities

Writing (includes for: Educational books; Other books; Newspapers; Magazines; Journals; Film, television or plays; Newsletters)

Publishing

Performing arts

Performer
No involvement as performer
Music
Live performer
No involvement as live performer
Radio
Television
Film production
Cinema and video distribution
Designing websites
Designing computer games and other interactive software
Design
Teaching
Festival organising
Art and craft show organising
Government arts departments and agencies

ATTACHMENT 5: Full list of collections utilised for analysis

To be completed

Artist survey

- Throsby, D., and Hollister, V., 2003, *Don't Give Up Your Day Job: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia*, Australia Council for the Arts, Sydney.
- Throsby, D., and Thompson, B., 1994, *But What Do You Do For a Living? An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia*, Australia Council for the Arts, Sydney.
- Throsby, D., and Mills, D., 1989, *When Are You Going to Get a Real Job? An Economic Study of Australian Artists*, Australia Council for the Arts, Sydney.

Australian Bureau of Statistics collections

- *Arts and culture in Australia: A statistical overview*, 2008 (second edition), Cat. No. 4172.0
- *Australian and New Zealand classification of occupations*, first edition
- *Census of population and housing*
- *Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities*, 2006, Cat. No. 4901.0
- *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership*, Cat. No. 6310.0
- *Employment in Culture, Australia*, 2006, Cat. No. 6273.0
- *Labour Force, Australia*, Cat. No. 6202.0
- *Work in selected culture and leisure activities Australia*, Cat. No. 6281.0
- *Yearbook Australia*, various years

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

- *Gradstats*, various years,
www.graduatecareers.com.au/content/view/full/24
- *Award course completions 2007: selected higher education statistics tables*,
www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/statistics/publications_higher_education_statistics_collections.htm

Other

- Australia Council, 2004, *Working paper 1: changing income and employment circumstances of individual artists*,
http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/artists/reports_and_publications/working_paper_1_changing_income_and_employment_circumstances_of_individual_artists
- Guldberg, H, 2000, *The Arts Economy 1968-98: Three decades of Growth in Australia*, Australia Council.