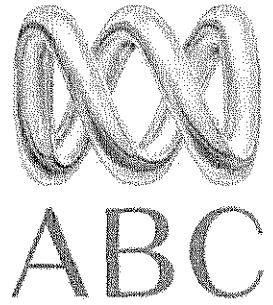


# THE ABC AND THE ARTS



Since the ABC began in the 1930s, it has been a supporter of the arts in Australia and a key source of cultural content for Australian audiences. For many in remote and regional areas, it has been the primary or only source.

The ABC Charter requires the Corporation to "encourage the performing arts in Australia" (s.6(1)(c) of the ABC Act) and to broadcast programs that "reflect the cultural diversity of the Australian community" (s.6(1)(a)(i)). The Corporation ABC has consistently interpreted these responsibilities as extending to the arts in the broadest sense and always supported the arts more generally. In recent years, it has responded to the emergence of new art forms, such as digital media and changing audience expectations.

## Arts on ABC Radio

Radio is the primary broadcast medium by which the Corporation presents and supports musical performance and composition. ABC Radio's three music-based networks – Triple J, DIG and ABC Classic FM – span classical and contemporary music. More than 40% of the music on Triple J and DIG is Australian.

In 2004, Triple J is adopting a new approach to arts programming that integrates contemporary and youth arts coverage into its daytime programming.

ABC Classic FM is also adopting a different approach to new music and will now have it mixed with the general schedule. ABC Classic FM will feature concert broadcasts – live, where possible – each weeknight at 8PM and a daily late-evening program presented by Julian Day which showcases new music – including electronic, improvised and other works – prominently featuring Australian artists. The network has also appointed a New Music Curator to liaise with the Australian composition community to find, record and schedule Australian composition and new music from within Australia and overseas.

Radio National offers a wide range of specialist arts and cultural programming, reportage and analysis. These make up

more than 30% of the network's schedule and include the general arts program Sunday Morning, specialist music programs (*The Deep End*, *The Planet*, *Music Deli*, *The Music Show*, *Singers of Renown*, *Story of Pop*, *Live on Stage*, *The Night Air*, *Sound Quality* and *Nocturne*), the radio drama program *Airplay*, literature programs (*Australia Talks Books*, *The Book Reading*, *Short Story*, *Book Talk*, *Books and Writers* and *Poetica*), the Indigenous arts and culture program *Away!*, documentaries and features (*Radio Eye* and *Sunday Night Radio National*) and profiles of artists and performers (*The Makers*).

ABC Local Radio is also committed to supporting the arts, with a particular emphasis on local arts issues, events and performers. Its coverage includes gallery exhibitions, theatre and cinema reviews, live performance by poets and musicians, and dedicated national and arts programs such as *Saturday Night Country* and *Lights, Camera, Action!* and statewide programs such as Victoria's *The Sunday Show* and the Northern Territory's *The Louvred Lounge*.

In 2001, ABC Radio used Commonwealth Government National Interest Initiative funding to establish a Regional Production Fund that commissions innovative and original radio programming produced by people living in regional Australia. The RPF has commissioned almost 150 projects, approximately 40% of which were arts-related, including works in the areas of writing, music, drama and poetry.

## Arts on ABC Television

ABC Television is Australia's leading television arts broadcaster, with programming that encompasses performance, documentary, review and analysis. ABC Television News and Current Affairs also employs a dedicated arts correspondent.

The 2004 Television schedule makes arts and cultural content accessible to both general and specialist audiences. Arts programming will be divided between evening slots and the three-hour, magazine-format omnibus *Sunday Afternoon*.

FACT SHEET

In 2004, *Sunday Afternoon* has received a three-fold increase in its resources to enable arts stories to be sourced from more locations throughout Australia and to allow greater engagement with local contemporary arts. The show features "In Conversation" segments and many more locally made stories over the course of the year. *Sunday Afternoon* will also present seasons of themed programming and will continue to feature its regular segment *Words*.

Arts talks program *Critical Mass* is broadcast each Sunday night and repeated following *Words* each Sunday afternoon. It features guests examining contemporary exhibitions, theatre, literature, dance and film.

A number of new prime time arts and cultural programs have also been scheduled for 2004-05. Australians will be invited to nominate their favourite books, in a cross media initiative that will explore, encourage and celebrate literature and reading as an activity; and a new design series, *The New Inventors* will operate in the junction where art meets science

ABC Television will also screen a number of new Australian arts documentaries from some of Australia's leading documentary makers.

#### Arts on ABC Online

Through its arts and culture gateway, *The Space*, ABC Online provides access to a wealth of online arts content, including material on film, music, books, performance, digital arts, visual arts, design, regional arts and arts content for children, as well as discussion forums and arts news. This includes original online content and cross-media content produced with Radio and TV programs.

The ABC's children's arts site *Splatt* currently contains over nine hundred pages of content and continues to grow.

ABC New Media and Digital Services is an active collaborator with the local independent production sector, through projects such as *Game On*, *Four Minute Wonders*, the AFC-ABC Broadband Production Initiative and a number of cross-media drama projects. The ABC was recently very successful at the 2004 AIMIA awards. Several arts and cultural projects were finalists or award winners; many of these were co-productions with the independent sector.

#### Arts and ABC Enterprises

The Enterprises Division actively participates in the development of Australia's cultural industries through the creation and distribution of consumer products related to the ABC's broadcasting and online output, and the performances of the State-based symphony orchestras.

#### Supporting Cultural Festivals

ABC Radio networks provide extensive coverage of major arts and cultural festivals around the country. ABC Classic FM and Radio National cover each of the major capital city arts festivals, as well as a number of smaller regional festivals.

Local Radio actively supports arts festivals and events across Australia, including the Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Perth Festivals, art exhibitions and regional festivals such as ABC Capricornia's *Arts in the Park*, the Tamworth Country Music Festivals and the Port Fairy Folk Festival. Triple J and Dig cover a wide range of music festivals targeted to their respective audiences.

The ABC Television *Sunday Afternoon* program showcased the best of the 2004 Adelaide Festival of the Arts.

#### Community Consultation

The Corporation connects with arts and cultural communities in a number of ways, including direct relationships between program-makers and arts practitioners, and through its Arts Development Advisory Group.

The Arts Development Advisory Group is made up of representatives from across the Australian arts sector and senior ABC staff involved in the development and production of arts programming. Its role is to "inform, advise and guide its arts programming and content, and provide a conduit for the views of the community."