



**Museums
& Galleries
of NSW**

Annual Review 2013

Michael Rolfe, CEO

'All things digital' is the most complete way to summarise M&G NSW's activity in 2013. Of course I refer specifically to the launch of our new website and associated digital strategy. Aligned with this work was the publication of our *NSW Sector Census* – an updated listing of public museums, galleries and Aboriginal keeping places and cultural centres throughout the State. It identified almost 500 places and spaces operating with regular hours and programs – 400 of which are now represented on the website. We also worked with our NETS partners on the delivery of their new website and online, national Exhibitions Register.

2013 saw the continuation of long term, popular and well-subscribed M&G NSW programs and services, many of which are delivered locally. Our Board undertook a review of its governance framework, with a view to the adoption of a new 'modern' constitution and associated 'charters', to carry the organisation forward. We also continued work to establish and support an Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Association (ACHAA) for NSW and began planning for its first meeting in the second half of 2014.

I wish to acknowledge ongoing support provided by our partners and supporters, particularly the NSW Government through Arts NSW and the Federal Government through the Australia Council for the Arts. I greatly value the effective working relationships with Regional Public Galleries NSW, Museums Australia NSW and the major cultural institutions in support of museum, gallery and Aboriginal cultural centre activity in NSW.



"Michael Rolfe and his team continue to do an excellent job with modest resources."

Oliver Frankel, Chair

Although much of the ground work for the website took place prior to 2013, I was gratified in my first year as Chair to see the launch of our new and exciting website, on time and on budget – no mean achievement for a small not-for-profit organisation.

With its new focus on the general public (in addition to the sector), the website is designed to entice the public to explore and visit the rich array of museums, galleries and Aboriginal cultural centres around the state, through the interesting stories, cultural trails and the resource of a new integrated trip planner. Website traffic has already doubled and we are optimistic about the potential of the new website.

As will be seen in other parts of this Annual Review, our wide range of programs and activities supporting the sector remains rich and vibrant. Michael Rolfe and his team continue to do an excellent job with modest resources.

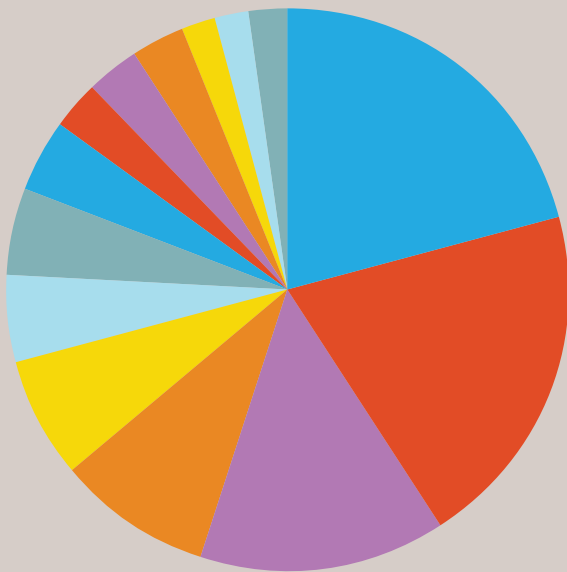
Arts NSW has recently published their initial report into funding in the arts sector. Our existing funding arrangements will be rolled forward into 2015. Our next triennial funding application will be for the three-year period from 2016.

Strong and effective governance of M&G NSW has been a personal priority since I took over the Chair in March 2013. I am pleased to say that we are well on-track to see this achieved.



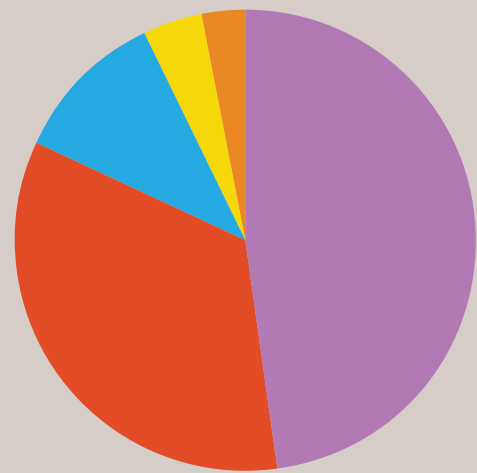
"All things digital is the most complete way to summarise M&G NSW's activity in 2013."

Financials



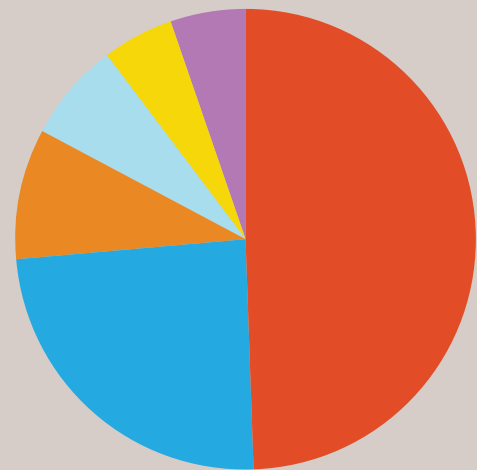
Devolved funding by regions

- Riverina 21%
- Mid-North Coast 20%
- Sydney 14%
- Central West 9%
- Blue Mountains 7%
- Hunter Region 5%
- Far South Coast 5%
- New England and North West 4%
- Southern Highlands and Tablelands 3%
- Shoalhaven 3%
- Northern Rivers 3%
- Snowy Mountains 2%
- Outback NSW 2%
- Illawarra 2%



Income

- Core funding 48%
- Devolved and project funding 34%
- Earned income 11%
- Sponsorship and foundations 4%
- Interest 3%



Expenses

- Staffing costs 49%
- Devolved grants 24%
- Project costs 9%
- Travel and accommodation 7%
- Communication 6%
- Administration 5%

“Through devolved funding M&G NSW distributed over \$395,000 to the sector.”

"12 exhibitions toured to 36 venues across 5 states and seen by 295,725 people."



Gallery Programs and Touring Exhibitions

M&G NSW continues to tour exhibitions of contemporary visual art, craft and design to communities across Australia. In 2013, 12 exhibitions toured to 36 venues across five states and were seen by 295,725 people. These showcased the works of 162 living artists and included more than 300 works of art and objects across various mediums.

These exhibitions provided valuable audience development opportunities with over 380 associated public program events held at host galleries and the distribution of educational resources produced or supported by M&G NSW to 525 schools. In 2013, M&G NSW toured:

- *The 2012 and 2013 Archibald Prize*
- *Life in Your Hands: Art from Solastalgia*
- *Survivor: Dadang Christanto*
- *How Yesterday Remembers Tomorrow*
- *Sense of Place*
- *Light Sensitive Material: Works from the Verghis Collection*
- *Studio: Australian Painters Photographed by R. Ian Lloyd*
- *There's a War On! World War II at Home (small scale)*
- *Contemporary Australian Drawing: 20 Years of the Dobell Prize for Drawing*
- *In-Habit: Project Another Country*
- *Bungaree: The First Australian*

Museum Programs and Collections

Standards Program

The *Standards Program* ran in the Murray/Western Riverina region in partnership with eight local councils, strengthening the museum practices and sustainability of 16 local museums and engaging approximately 80 volunteers.

The 2013 Program continued the partnership with Museums & Galleries Services Queensland. Eight museums and galleries in Western Queensland participated in the *Queensland Standards Program*.

Museum Advisor Program

The regional *Museum Advisor Program*, established in 2000, provides funds for a Museum Advisor to work with museums within a local government area for 20 days per year.

Supporting 76 museums in 20 local government areas, the *Museum Advisor Program* continued to support the work of over 380 volunteers through the provision of advice and specialist skills.

"Standards assisted 16 local museums and engaged over 80 volunteers."





Grants

With funding from the NSW Government through Arts NSW, M&G NSW managed various devolved grant programs.

Fellowships, Mentorships and Volunteer Placements

Over \$20,000 was devolved through the *Fellowship and Mentorship Program* to six museum and gallery professionals and \$10,000 to volunteers through the *Volunteer Placement Program*.

Museum Grants

\$85,000 was devolved through *VIM Grants* to support the work of over 2,500 museum volunteers across 36 local government areas in 15 regions in NSW. \$165,537 was devolved through the new *Small to Medium Museum Grant program* supporting 11 collection documentation projects and two regional networking projects.

Curatorial Support Initiative

The inaugural *Curatorial Support Initiative* awarded \$50,000 in devolved funding to five public galleries across NSW to engage external professional curators in the development of new exhibitions of contemporary art, craft and design. Transitioning from the previous *Incoming Touring Exhibition Grant Scheme*, the refocused program enhances curatorial support, creative programming and partnership development.

Artist or Curator Residency Program

The *Artist or Curator Residency* program of devolved funding from the Copyright Agency Limited's Cultural Fund, provided for two regional galleries to engage an artist or curator to undertake a residency activity within the gallery's community. The program aims to further encourage audience access to, and engagement with, innovative and adventurous contemporary art.

Aboriginal Sector Programs

Travelling Places

Travelling Places is an M&G NSW devised program to build virtual keeping places, embedding skills in Aboriginal communities in digital storytelling, protocols, database management, and copyright and intellectual property rights. Funded through the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, the 2013 program focused on the Wiradjuri communities of Leeton, Griffith, Cowra, Condobolin and Wagga.

The program also utilised the resources of the Australian Film, Television & Radio School's Indigenous Unit and the Arts Law Centre of Australia's Artists in the Black program. The preferred protocols database is Mukurtu, a US developed, Australian-inspired collections database. M&G NSW has held workshops on Mukurtu's ability to impose protocols and restrict access. More than 500 Indigenous communities and individuals around the world are now using Mukurtu.

Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Association

M&G NSW continued to work on the formation of the Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Association (ACHAA), a new association for Aboriginal keeping places, cultural centres, knowledge centres, language centres and artist run initiatives. It's formation was a key action for M&G NSW arising from the 2011 NSW Aboriginal summit — *Keeping Places & Beyond: Building cultural futures in NSW*. ACHAA's first meeting is earmarked for mid-2014.

"Travelling Places embeds digital storytelling skills in Aboriginal communities."



"We delivered 24 professional development events to over 600 participants."



Professional Development

In 2013, M&G NSW delivered professional development events at no or low-cost to over 616 participants in regional and metropolitan NSW.

Topic areas included: video conferencing, online engagement, use of database software, collection management, conservation, digitising collections and disaster recovery.

Professional development events included:

- *Opportunity Knocks: Mentorship and Fellowship presentations*
- *Access to Funding* (with Museum of the Riverina)
- *Video Encounters* (with Sydney Living Museums)
- *ArtChat* (with Regional & Public Galleries NSW and Freda's Bar and Canteen)
- *Online + Onsite* (with Sydney Living Museums)
- *Our Galleries, Our Spaces: Regional & Public Galleries NSW 2013 Conference* (with Regional & Public Galleries NSW, Blue Mountains Cultural Centre and Arts NSW). Deferred to February 2014 due to bush fires in the Blue Mountains.
- *The Aftermath: Disaster Recovery Stories*
- *Collection Management, Orange* (funded by a Community Heritage Grant)
- *Preventative Conservation, Orange* (funded by a Community Heritage Grant)

Research

Sector Census

M&G NSW undertook the first comprehensive census of the sector since 1999. It identified almost 500 operational museums and galleries located in NSW.

The survey of the small to medium sized organisations revealed a number of key facts about the sector including:

- The strong role of local government as a key funder and resource provider.
- Visitation of over 5 million people in the last reporting year.
- Almost 8,000 active volunteers provide a combined total of more than 17,000 hours of service per week, worth an estimated \$20 million per annum.

Guess Who's Going to the Gallery?

Continuing its research into audiences, M&G NSW launched *Guess Who's Going to the Gallery? Queensland State Report* in partnership with Museums & Gallery Services Queensland at GOMA in March 2013.

The study was undertaken with funding from the Australia Council and Arts Queensland and is a parallel study to the NSW strategic audience evaluation study which was launched in 2011.



"400 museums and galleries are on our website, connected to hundreds of events."

Two new websites

M&G NSW website: www.mgnsw.org.au

On 1 October 2013, The Hon. George Souris MP, Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing, and Minister for the Arts, launched M&G NSW's new website.

The website effectively services our audience in two ways. It provides access to professional development, events and funding information and presents an enhanced range of resources and news specifically targeted to the sector user.

Secondly, the website has a dynamic public interface providing a comprehensive picture of where to go and what to see in regional NSW.

There are currently 400 online museums, galleries and Aboriginal cultural centres, integrated with hundreds of exhibitions and events. Places and activities are easy to locate remotely using various mobile friendly functions.

News articles endorsing and describing the visitor experience are an important aspect of the public interface. M&G NSW's team researches and writes material for public consumption with careful attention to building positive attitudes and realistic expectations when visiting regional centres of NSW.

M&G NSW acknowledges the support of Eckersleys and NRMA, who partnered in promotion of the website.

NETS website: www.netsaustralia.org.au

The National Exhibitions Touring Support (NETS) Australia network received funding from the Australia Council to develop the National Touring Initiative (NTI); a four year collaborative program to provide cutting-edge, contemporary digital media art to regional and remote audiences across Australia. NETS Australia will also develop a series of virtual and online engagement tools, exploring new models for touring exhibitions in the digital age.

In 2013, NETS Australia launched a shared website that allows users to access touring exhibition content from a central location. With advanced features, rich media capability and a user-friendly, mobile interface, the website is the first step in delivering content and future resources developed as part of the NTI.

Over the coming years, the NTI project will explore 3D mapping, virtual curation and online distribution, culminating in a national touring exhibition of experimental digital art in 2015.

"66 great projects were nominated in the 2013 IMAGinE awards."



6th Annual IMAGinE awards

In 2013, 66 IMAGinE award nominations were received, with 13 awards presented.

The IMAGinE awards celebrate and acknowledge excellence and innovation in four categories; Collection Management, Education and Public Engagement, Education and Audience Development and Individual Achievement.

The 2013 award celebration was held at the Heroes and Legends Rugby League Museum, Moore Park.

Partners include Regional & Public Galleries NSW, Museums Australia (NSW), Rugby League Museum and Taste Canowindra.

Board members

Oliver Frankel (Chair)
Dan Brush (resigned July)
Liz Gillroy
Belinda Hanrahan
Frank Howarth (resigned March)
Larissa Lavarch
Colin Rhodes
David Sherley
Councillor Allan Smith
Kevin Sumption

Staff members

CEO
Michael Rolfe

Finance and Administration
Michael Huxley and Elizabeth Swinburn

Gallery Programs and Touring Exhibitions
Rachel Arndt, Lillian Lim and Jasmin Dessmann

Museum Programs and Collections
Tamara Lavrencic, Phoebe Arthur (until October),
Margot Stuart-Smith (from October) and Catherine
Timbrell

Professional Development
Kate Major and Emma Blong (September to
October)

Aboriginal Sector Programs
Steve Miller, Aunty Jenny Munro and Melissa
Abrahams

Information and Resources
Andrew Brettell, Katie Duncan and Carole Best

Contact us

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Acknowledgements

M&G NSW is supported by the NSW Government through Arts NSW and assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

Front cover

Image: Isabel and Alfredo Aquilizan, *In-Habit: Project Another Country*, 2012. Used transport cardboard boxes, packing tape, handcrafted cardboard houses, makeshift drums and sound, single channel video projection plus 5 LCD screen installation. Installation view, Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, Sydney. Photo: Jacob Ring. Commissioned by Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation, 2012. Image courtesy of the artists.

Inside

Image one: Michael Rolfe, CEO speaking at the launch of M&G NSW's new website.

Image two: Oliver Frankel, Chair.

Image three: Installation view of the *Archibald Prize 2012* at Newcastle Regional Art Gallery.

Image four: Introduction to Standards workshop 2013.

Image five: Bob and Des Grissell installing the new metal shelving in the textile storage area of Port Macquarie Historical Museum. Funded by a VIM Small Grant 2013.

Image six: *Travelling Places*, Griffith Leeton workshop, April 2013.

Image seven: Promotional image for M&G NSW's new website, featuring Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery.

Image eight: *The Aftermath: Disaster Recovery Stories* workshop, November 2013.

Image nine: M&G NSW staff at the 2013 IMAGinE awards.

Image ten: 2013 IMAGinE awards trophies. Photography by Mimi Kelly.

