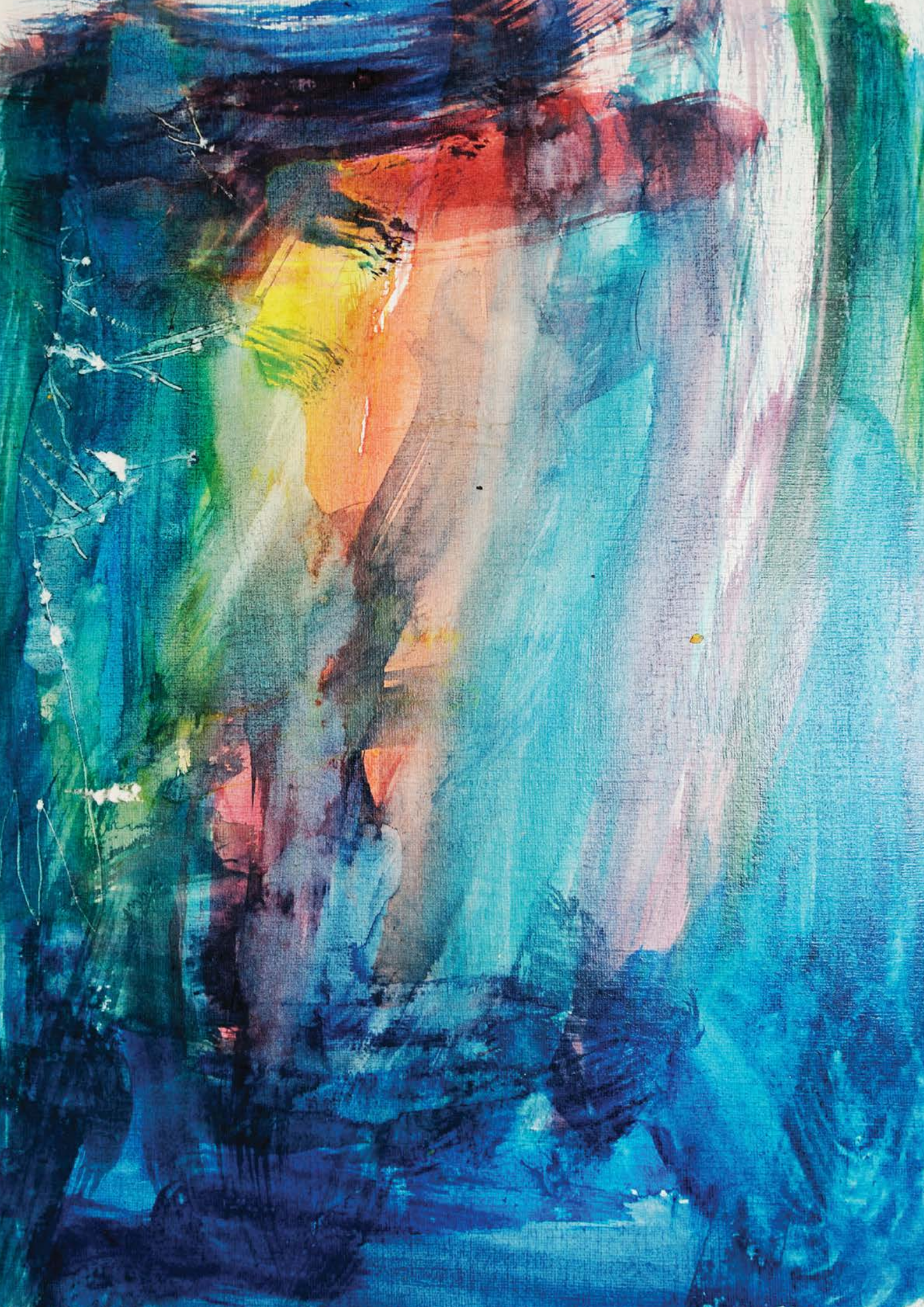




**ARTS ACCESS VICTORIA**

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Annual Report  
**2014/15**



# Contents

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4	<b>A message from the Executive Director</b>
5	<b>A message from the Chair</b>
6	<b>2014 at a glance</b>
8	<b>Who we are</b>
9	<b>Strategic focus #1: Leadership</b>
10	Leadership highlights
14	Case study: Dance Haptics
16	<b>Strategic focus #2: Creativity</b>
17	Creativity highlights
22	Case study: <i>Dopa-kinesia</i> by Pezaloom
24	<b>Strategic focus #3: Engagement</b>
25	Engagement highlights
28	Case study: Beyond Access
30	<b>Our partners</b>

**Cover:**

John Puli, an artist with the ArtWORK program.  
Photo by Paul Dunn

**Inside cover:**

*Untitled*, Dragan Mickov, 2014

**Back cover:**

*Totem head*, Chris O'Keefe, 2014

# A message from the Executive Director

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▶ As we closed the book on our 40th anniversary, Arts Access Victoria has taken the opportunity to reflect on an amazing four decades of dedicated efforts towards increased cultural participation by people with a disability. Although the organisation looks dramatically different today from its humble beginnings, its commitment to social and artistic transformation remains as strong as ever.

Increasingly, however, we see the work of the organisation as future-proofing many of the social reforms that are occurring around us. Where else can you imagine a different future and begin to give it form if not through storytelling, film, visual arts, theatre and dance? As you will read in the pages of this report, this year has been about putting people with disability at the heart of everything we do, at the centre of their communities, through a range of artistic endeavours.

We have worked on a number of levels to achieve change in the way that people with disability access and participate in the arts including:

- engaging people with disability as leaders in community arts and cultural development;
- engaging mainstream community organisations and building their capacity to support people with a disability;
- engaging with key government policy and strategies to ensure the voices of people with disability are heard;
- linking individualised planning strategies with community planning and capacity building;
- developing partnerships between local government, local mainstream arts and cultural development organisations and local disability mental health services; and
- developing a coordinated approach to information sharing and promotion of accessible and inclusive programs and opportunities in local communities.

This work is critical as NDIS begins to roll out nationally. We are excited about the opportunity that reform brings, and feel confident that artists will find their place within these frameworks as architects of an equal and inclusive society.

None of this work is possible without the dedicated support of funders, partners, staff and volunteers. I also want to acknowledge the 1300 artists who participated in our projects during the year. I thank each of them for their continued efforts and commitment.

**Veronica Pardo**  
Executive Director

# A message from the Chair

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▶ I am excited to present this report to our members, supporters and friends. This year, I had the opportunity to attend a consultation organised by Arts Access Victoria and our colleagues, Multicultural Arts Victoria, to gather feedback from our respective communities regarding the Victorian Government's Creative Industries Strategy. This strategy is intended to shape the way government supports the creative industries into the future.

After many decades of involvement in policy and advocacy, I reflected on the importance of having our voices at the centre of policy development – after all, we are important stakeholders; the population of Victoria is currently 5,791,000. By 2031 this is set to rise to 7,699,066. Of this total population, 18.4% has a disability. In 2015, that number is **1,065,544** Victorians – in 2031, it will be more than **1,500,000**.

Some of the messages I took away from the consultation continue to drive our work and vision. These include:

- Our key aspiration for the creative industries is to ensure that they are accessible to and inclusive of all Victorians.
- People will engage with the creative industries when they see the arts as something for them, an experience they are part of, can contribute to and feel represented by. This is at the heart of underrepresentation of people with disability in the creative industries. They do not see products or services made with them in mind, which are accessible and represent their lived experiences.
- Understand that universal access must underpin any sustainable and economically responsible strategy for the creative industries. Excluding nearly 20% of the population is unacceptable and unviable.
- Build structural frameworks that support organisations within the creative industries to fulfil their obligations as publicly-funded agencies to non-discrimination, access and inclusion. It is our strong view that all publicly-funded organisations should be accountable for their observance of federal and state discrimination and equal opportunity legislation, and their commitment to accessibility and inclusion of people with disability.

There remains much work to be done, but as an artist with disability, I see many positive opportunities ahead. I urge your support of Arts Access Victoria, and its wonderful, dedicated team of staff and volunteers. Thank you to my fellow Board members, particularly outgoing directors Gregoria Todaro and Mark Glazebrook.

**Margherita Coppolino**  
Chair

# 2014 at a glance

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Arts Access  
Victoria  
exceeded  
or met all  
**21**  
of our Key  
Performance  
Indicators

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We created **82**  
public outcomes  
and profile events

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**22**  
creative  
developments  
or new  
works were  
produced

---

**13** Arts  
Access  
Victoria  
staff  
members  
identify as  
living with  
disability

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**82,215**  
audience  
members  
experienced  
our works

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There were **69**  
profiles of Arts  
Access Victoria  
and artists or  
arts workers  
with disability  
in the media

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**24,078**  
artists with  
disability  
participated  
in Arts Access  
Victoria  
programs

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**We led  
2 major  
research  
projects**

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**4,524**  
people  
subscribed to  
our monthly  
e-newsletter

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We initiated  
**80**  
accessible  
events,  
performances  
and screenings

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We facilitated  
mentorships,  
residencies and  
internships for  
**18** artists  
with disability

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**Our  
website  
was  
visited  
16,127  
times**

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**13**

Capacity Building  
Initiatives were  
launched focusing  
on improving  
accessibility

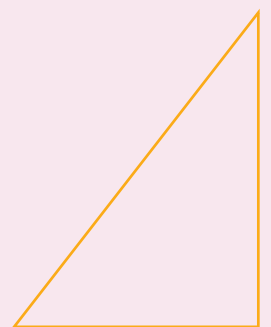
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We partnered  
with  
**57**  
organisations

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**9,868**  
people  
followed  
Arts Access  
Victoria and  
our programs  
on Facebook,  
Twitter and  
YouTube

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# Who we are

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Established in 1974, Arts Access Victoria has since become the state's leading arts and disability organisation, dedicated to an ambitious agenda of social and artistic transformation for people with a disability, the communities in which they live, and the arts sector in which they aspire to participate without barriers.

The organisation achieves this through: disability led advocacy; the delivery of outstanding community arts and cultural development programs for more than 1300 people with a disability; professional development programs for artists with a disability aimed at securing employment outcomes and best practice industry development initiatives that drive the engagement of organisations across the arts, disability and community sectors.

## Our vision

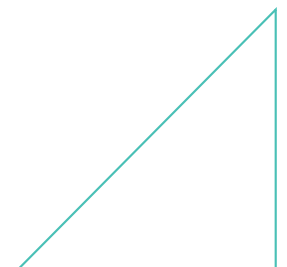
The arts sector champions people with disability as cultural innovators, valued audiences and employees.

## Our mission

To realise the cultural aspirations of people with disability, by presenting work that challenges and extends notions of who is an artist, how art is made and who it is made for.

## Our values

- ▶ **Resonance**  
Whether producing, presenting or advocating, our work reflects the aspirations of people with disability and responds to wider community desires to be challenged and transported through original and untold stories.
- ▶ **Courage**  
We are fearless in exploring new terrain, emboldened by criticism and committed to high quality inclusive processes and outcomes.
- ▶ **Justice**  
We are champions of the disability rights movement, and actively commit to people with disability leading and shaping our practice.
- ▶ **Connectivity**  
We value and nurture our relationships and harness the creativity of all partners to achieve our goals.





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# Leadership

- ▶ **Place people with disability at the heart of our practice, as industry leaders and cultural innovators.**
- ▶ **Instigate social change by driving policy development and engaging with decision makers.**
- ▶ **Ensure our capacity to grow to meet the changing needs and aspirations of our stakeholders.**

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## Leadership highlights

### ARTfinder project kicks off in 2015

In November, Arts Access Victoria secured a Social Impact Grant of \$114,047 from the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, to fund the ARTfinder project. ARTfinder is a community capacity building project that aims to improve the planning, sourcing and delivery of inclusive arts programs across Victoria by providing a comprehensive and functional online directory. Arts Access Victoria will research and develop the ARTfinder platform in 2015/16.

Read more about ARTfinder on page 15.

### Arts Access Western Edge! recognised by council

Arts Access Western Edge! (AAWE!) is a youth performance program delivered in partnership with Western Edge Youth Arts, in which young people with disability and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds come together and share their commitment and passion for artmaking and performing.

In September 2014 AAWE! was awarded an Inclusion Award by Maribyrnong City Council. This award is a credit to the way they operate and to their process as emerging young artists, but also highlights the unique and important role AAWE! plays for young people in Melbourne's west.

### Transforming the theatre experience

An exploration of new horizons in accessible programming, in partnership with Arts Centre Melbourne, led to the idea of a 'relaxed performance' specifically designed for children with disability. Staging a relaxed performance of *Hansel and Gretel* with the Victorian Opera was an industry first and a sell-out hit with the audience. A video documentation of the performance, process and impact has become a powerful advocacy tool for Arts Access Victoria and the wider arts sector.

Since this first performance, Arts Access Victoria has been involved in an accessible installation (Terrapin Puppet Theatre's *Think I Can*) and a second relaxed performance by Victorian Opera, *Alice in Operaland*.

### After Effect: evaluating our impact

It's not enough to intuitively know that the arts transform. In 2014 Arts Access Victoria undertook an evaluation project, *After Effect*, designed to present the evidence base for the effectiveness of our capacity building work with organisations.

*After Effect* unequivocally established the impact of our training and professional development and the expanding reach of our programs.

Arts Access Victoria conducted 12 training and professional development programs to 190 participants including local government, arts, sport and recreation, education and community sectors. Of those who responded:

96% found the training to be either 'very useful' or 'useful';

99% felt "a safe space was created to speak openly about disability";

97% "felt more confident to take steps to be more inclusive of people with disability after the training"; and

66% identified "ways they felt they could make a difference in their workplace".

### DAN and ATOD lead the way

The Deaf Arts Network (DAN) and Australian Theatre of the Deaf (ATOD), through their programs and projects, have demonstrated strong Deaf-driven leadership in the arts in 2014/15.

DAN delivered a number of workshops, including at the Desert Harmony Festival in Tennant Creek and at the Deaf Children Australia Crossing Border Camp. All of these workshops were devised and led by Deaf artists, who served as positive role models for the workshop participants, both Deaf and hearing.

ATOD successfully received funding from the Festivals Australia: Regional Festivals Project Fund to deliver an arts program at the Vicdeaf Gaslight Festival.

Read more about this program on page 18.

### Beyond Access: the symposium

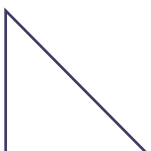


Keynote speaker Caroline Bowditch presents at the *Beyond Access* Symposium. Photo by Paul Dunn

On 12 November 2014 at the Melbourne Brain Centre, Arts Access Victoria and the Melbourne Social Equity Institute presented a one day symposium focusing on *Beyond Access: the creative case for inclusive arts practice*, a one-year research project funded by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation.

An audience of 170 people listened intently, and questioned and challenged the presenters, including keynote speaker Caroline Bowditch, other artists with disability, researchers and representatives from organisations supporting or funding artists with disability.

Read about Beyond Access on page 28.



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## Leadership highlights

### Arts Access Victoria's digital transformation

The Arts Access Victoria website remains a flagship communications asset; in 2014/15, the site received more than 41,000 page views by 16,000 visitors. Through a communications audit, we identified key areas of functional and accessibility improvement for the website, and in 2015 a website redevelopment project was launched. Through a rigorous tender process, Arts Access Victoria appointed Thick as the digital agency to lead our redevelopment with a large team of user experience, accessibility, design and technical experts.

This project aims to not only provide a more effective and accessible resource for artists and the arts and disability sectors, but also create a site that reflects our bold and ambitious organisational agenda and fortify our position as an innovator and agent of transformation in the arts and cultural sectors. The redevelopment will be completed in early 2016.

### The Other Film Festival: talking access

As part of the 2014 The Other Film Festival (TOFF), Arts Access Victoria hosted *Digital Democracy*, a forum featuring two expert panels discussing how digital platforms are being used to reach new audiences – including people with disability – and how we can ensure accessibility for all on these platforms. The panels featured

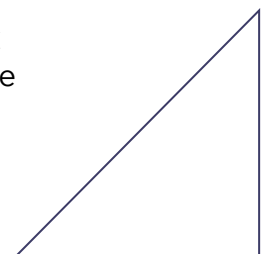


The Other Film Festival 2014.  
Photo by Jorge de Araujo

fantastic speakers, including Dr. Kim Vinc (Deakin University's Motion.Lab), Dr. Stefan Schutt (Victoria University), Jay Jay Jegathesan (University of Western Australia), Alex Varley (Media Access Australia), Suzanne Derry (Arts Law Centre of Australia), Mija Gwyn, Akash Temple and Rhian Hinkley (Arts Access Victoria), and Zoe Dawkins (Storyscape).

### VAPAC opens its eyes to access

Arts Access Victoria's work models disability inclusion in innovative ways that inspire and resonate with our peers and partners. For example, we presented two *Open Your Eyes* disability awareness training sessions for delegates attending the Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres (VAPAC) and Regional Arts Victoria (RAV) Victorian Touring Workshop, resulting in an invitation to run a workshop at the VAPAC Managers Meeting, which more than 40 members attend.



### Creative Victoria's Creative Industries Consultation

Arts Access Victoria continues to advocate strongly for strategies to increase cultural participation. We actively contribute to policy development across government in the areas of disability, culture, community and employment.

This year, we worked tirelessly to make sure that the voices of people with a disability would be heard as the state government rolled out a significant consultation program to develop a Creative Industries Strategy. We supported 12 artists with disability to attend sessions advising Creative Victoria on access services to ensure that consultations were accessible and inclusive. In addition, we held our own consultation with people with disability, together with our colleagues from Multicultural Arts Victoria. The feedback from all of these processes was collated into a response, which can be found on our website – [www.artsaccess.com.au](http://www.artsaccess.com.au) – however, here are some highlights

- People will engage with the creative industries when they see the arts as something for them, an experience they are part of, can contribute to and feel represented by. This is at the heart of underrepresentation of people with a disability in the creative industries. They do not see products or services made with them in mind, which are accessible and represent their lived experiences.
- Lead by example. It's imperative that the Creative Industries Strategy has a disability action plan and is actively engaged in its execution.
- Commit to a legacy of universal access to the creative industries, so future generations can participate fully, irrespective of ability. By 2060, Melbourne's population is projected to be approximately nine to 12 million, with people aged 65 years and over comprising one quarter of the population. What in 2015 seems aspirational will in 2020 have to be 'business as usual', because it is unthinkable that a leading and aging state can continue to (by omission) plan to exclude one in four citizens because they have a disability.
- Ensure accountability for the public money divested through operational and program funding. By inference, public money should be for public good. Creative industries should require evaluation and accountability frameworks to ensure public good outcomes are emphasised (e.g., accessibility and participation)
- Investing in research that clearly identifies the benefits of creative and cultural participation across a range of indicators including health and well-being, social connectedness, and economic participation.

# Case study

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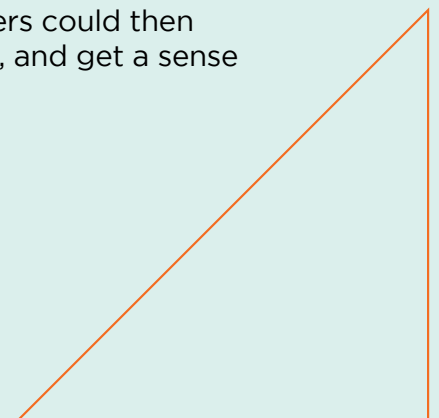
## Dance Haptics

**More than 280,000 Australians who are deafblind, blind or vision impaired are restricted from fully experiencing art because the three-dimensional nature of dance is challenging to represent non-visually.**

In response to this challenge, Arts Access Victoria partnered with Deakin Motion.Lab and the Centre for Intelligent Systems Research to develop a new research project, Dance Haptics. The Dance Haptics team researched and developed two new haptic devices – which recreate a sense of touch or movement by applying force, vibration or motion to the user – to convey the richness of dance to deafblind, blind and vision-impaired people through tactile feedback.

Through an intensive and fully-accessible workshop process with participants with a lived experience of blindness or deafblindness, dance practitioners and academics and researchers in haptic and robotic technology, the Dance Haptics team developed two prototype concepts:

- A ‘wearable vest’ device that provides touch information to the wearer’s back by means of gentle vibrations. The prototype allowed one to draw on a screen and the drawn patterns were transferred through a device to the wearer’s back. Initial workshops indicated that while the jacket could effectively provide information about the location and movement of the dancer, it was less effective in relaying information about the dancer’s body. With this realisation, the technical team began work on a motion capture-based robotic device.
- A small humanoid robot was developed to allow a sense of the posture and movement dynamic of the dancer. First, a series of dance sequences were choreographed and motion-captured to extract key movements; this information was relayed to the robot, which replicated the movements of the dancers. Users could then place their hands on the robot, particularly the arms, and get a sense of the movement and qualities of the dancer.





Dancer Stephanie Hutchison and the Dance Haptics Robot. Photo by John McCormack

Dance Haptics provides the world's first systematic investigation of haptic interaction in a real-world artistic context, and the first development of functioning devices and performance works that demonstrate the conceptual, aesthetic and functional reach of this technology. The benefits of haptic art reach across sectors, audiences and artforms: it provides a new means of accessibility for the blind and vision impaired; opens up the world of haptic art offering new aesthetic possibilities for all artists and audience, including rich sensory remote interaction; and enriches the knowledge and skill sets of artists and engineers in haptic interface development.

The next steps for Dance Haptics are to launch the outcomes at a significant cross-industry event, publish the outcomes of the project and seek funds for the continuation of the research.

# Creativity

- ▶ **Support vibrant arts and cultural activities for and by people with disability in their communities.**
- ▶ **Generate dynamic pathways that foster innovative and inclusive arts practice within the broader arts and cultural community.**
- ▶ **Produce high quality profile events and public outcomes that advance sector development.**



## Creativity highlights

### Get Out! goes off like a frog in a... cage



*Frog in a Cage*. Photo by Paul Dunn

In October 2014, Get Out! – an arts program for adults with disability based at Frankston Arts Centre – presented *Frog in a Cage*, showcasing the Get Out! ensemble and its work to a wider community audience. Sound artist Matt Davidson worked with Get Out! artists to breathe life into their words, providing a unique soundtrack, while Lea Czikowski worked with the ensemble to transform images and footage taken throughout the year into the digitally projected landscape for the show. *Frog in a Cage* also provided one participating artist the opportunity to hand-print a range of t-shirts and sell them at a merchandise stall during the show's run, fulfilling a dream of his and responding directly to his Individual Creative Plan.

The first half of 2015 has seen Get Out! take to a new style of program delivery: an artist-focused strength-based approach – as opposed to an artist-focused ensemble approach – has been adopted to meet the direct creative needs and interests of the different cohorts within the Get Out! ensemble. Pulling away from the whole ensemble to better reveal the individual artists has opened the door to more diverse outcomes for individuals and smaller Get Out! offshoot troupes.

### ArtWORK on display

In the last year 16 artists were supported through Arts Access Victoria's professional development program, ArtWORK, to apply for project and training funding to government and philanthropic funders. The percentage of success is high with artists putting forward competitive projects in artform-specific categories as well as national professional development programs.

In February 2015, Arts Access Victoria partnered with celebrated performance artist and choreographer Caroline Bowditch to present a series of workshops for artists and arts professionals. Led by Caroline, the Artist Exchange Series sessions focused on action, provoked discussion and opened a real dialogue about disability and the arts between attendees.



## Creativity highlights

Anna Seymour, a Deaf dancer and artist with the ArtWORK program, was one of only four dancers selected from more than 100 auditionees to tour internationally with Balletlab, one of the leading contemporary dance companies in Australia, performing in their new piece, *Smudge*.



Dancer Anna Seymour.  
Photo by Pippa Dodds

### DAN and ATOD present at Gaslight



Participants of the ATOD Gaslight Festival arts program. Photo by ATOD

Throughout 2014/15, the Deaf Arts Network (DAN) and the Australian Theatre of the Deaf (ATOD) have worked towards increasing opportunities for creativity in the Deaf community, hosting a number of workshops delivered by Deaf artists, developing creative skills and providing positive role models for emerging artists.

One highlight was ATOD's delivery of a new arts program at the Vicdeaf Gaslight Festival in Wodonga in March 2015. This program, in which 40 children participated, involved the development of a new theatre piece by Deaf directors Medina Sumovic and Jessica Moody with a performance for festival guests, both deaf and hearing. The festival organisers cited the development as one of the highlights of the Festival, based on feedback they received from guests.

This project had myriad benefits. Skills development was provided for both the children who participated in the workshops and the young actors who worked with Medina Sumovic and Jessica Moody. The project also gave the Deaf audience the opportunity to see works created by other Deaf people with shared experiences.

### Feast and *for tune* in Melbourne's north-west



Way Out West performs *The Feast*.  
Photo by Paul Dunn

2014 saw Way Out West (WOW), a respite arts program for adults with disability living in Melbourne's north-west, conclude a long-term creative project. Over three years, WOW successfully developed *The Feast*, which culminated in performing three shows for the Spring Explorations season at La Mama Courthouse Theatre in November 2014. The experience gained by all group members through their participation in a theatrical production at one of Melbourne's most prestigious theatres has been invaluable, leading to increased confidence amongst group members to successfully innovate, improvise, take on new

challenges, and confidently learn new skills.

Throughout early 2015, WOW artists brainstormed options for their new project, *for tune*. To be developed over a 2-3 year period, *for tune* will showcase the individual talents of each artist in experiential exhibitions and creative workshops.

### Creating cultural leaders at Art Day South

In late 2014, Art Day South, a flagship arts program based out of the Dingley Community Centre, focused on its fourth annual involvement in the Gertrude Street Projection Festival. Art Day South's 2014 work, *In-between North and South*, was presented on a spinning transparent globe in the window of Northside Records and contained imagery of the artists in the group. The work was very well received including this tweet, "[@GSPF is thoroughly enjoyable especially liked @northsidechris hologram style crystal ball](#)" from [@ZestLearning](#).

The emphasis for the first half of 2015 has been on leadership. Art Day South has explored ways in which individuals within the group can lead in an area of their own expertise or interest. By giving participants the opportunity to lead the group through these activities we have developed some amazing performance outcomes.



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## Creativity highlights

Artists have taken ownership of their classes and developed personas, costumes and content that help to convey their individual message. This progress has been filmed, and the resulting videos will not only be a fantastic documentation of the process but also an entertaining and informative series of 'classes' that explore topics from completely new angles.



Artstop artist Stefano Conti.  
Photo by Paul Dunn

### SRS Studios program 'pops up'

SRS Studios, a program offering arts workshops to residents of 12 of Victoria's Supported Residential Service units, continued to produce exciting creative outcomes in 2014/15, including a series of 'Pop-Up' studios - art workshops held "in-house" at 10 SRSs.

The 'Pop Up' studios provided the opportunity for residents to access professional-level art practice in the convenience and comfort of their residential home, introducing residents to artmaking and building new skills, techniques and relationships with facilitating staff.

In addition to the 'Pop Up' studios, nine SRS Studio participants had work included in the Skin Gallery Summer Group Show, which was opened by the Honourable Heidi Victoria, former Victorian Minister for Arts and Culture; and in March, the SRS Studios took Nebula, Arts Access Victoria's fully accessible mobile arts space, to the 2014 Darebin True North Festival, where it was utilised as a workshop space for participants of SRS Studios to lead printmaking and My Place workshops with the public.

### Art About exhibits in Karingal



Art About artist Patrick Molinari.  
Photo by Melissa Banks.

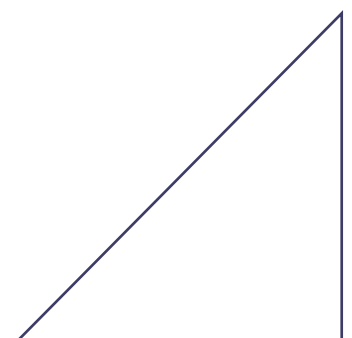
Artists from Art About, a visual arts program in the Mornington Peninsula, were invited to exhibit works in the Karingal Karnivart 2015 exhibition in Geelong in May. For many artists this was their first public exhibition experience and left a great desire to explore future exhibition opportunities. Two artists sold works in the exhibition, further fuelling the spark to offer their artwork to a wider audience.

Art About is focused on leading the arts and disability sector in the area. The program continues to champion the creation of dedicated arts spaces within accessible community and arts venues for developing and expressing a positive collective identity for people with disability through their arts practice.

### Youth workshops in City of Monash

The Satellite program is a masterclass studio for artists with disability run by Arts Access Victoria in partnership with the Monash Gallery of Art (MGA). In 2014, with the support of the MGA and local Council Metro Access, Satellite submitted an application to the Monash Community Grants Fund for a program of photography workshops aimed at young people, and we were successful in receiving a grant of \$5,000.

This was the first youth program that Arts Access Victoria has produced in the City of Monash; run in October 2014, the workshop series employed local artists and drew participants from the area's special schools, all of which were keen to see more of our programs in the area.



# Case study

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## *Dopa-kinesia* by Pezaloom

**In 2014/2015, Paul Berryman, an artist from regional Victoria who goes by the pseudonym Pezaloom, was supported through Arts Access Victoria's ArtWORK Program to undertake a complex and personal photographic creative development, *Dopa-kinesia*.**

Pezaloom lives with early-onset Parkinson's; since being diagnosed, his work in visual and sound art has been driven by a visceral reaction to his condition, challenging the many misconceptions and myths surrounding the disease – namely that it only affects the elderly, and that it is completely incapacitating. In fact, Pezaloom's experience with Parkinson's has helped him to develop an artistic language that is uniquely his own.

With the support of Arts Access Victoria, in 2014 Pezaloom secured funds from Creative Victoria and City Of Melbourne to develop *Dopa-kinesia*, and assembled a small artistic team including ArtWORK artist Kim Anderson, Arts Access Victoria's Rhian Hinkley and a photography student from Deakin University.

*Dopa-kinesia* – a title that relates to the way Parkinson's prevents cells in the brain from producing dopamine, a substance that allows for smooth function of the body's movement – is the latest evolution in a series of works, beginning with a 2013 work, *Self Portrait with Spoon and Petroleum Jelly*. Pezaloom then developed a self-portrait with tubs of petroleum jelly, which went on to win the Raglan Street Gallery Art Prize and the Flanagan Emerging Artist Award at St Patrick's College in Ballarat.

The new *Dopa-kinesia* works explore Pezaloom's condition in an incredibly powerful and moving series of large-scale photographs, showing Pezaloom immersed in 160 kilograms of petroleum jelly in order to represent the heaviness, slowness and restriction of movement he experiences.





*Dopa-kinesia* #2,  
Pezaloom, 2015

18 photographs from *Dopa-kinesia* were exhibited at No Vacancy Gallery in Federation Square in June 2015. Located in one of the most dynamic arts and cultural hubs in Melbourne, the exhibition offered fantastic exposure to a wide and diverse audience, particularly with the National Gallery of Victoria and Australian Centre for the Moving Image located nearby; more than 2000 visitors experienced the *Dopa-kinesia* exhibition.

*Dopa-kinesia* is a rare project, presenting Parkinson's in such a visceral and evocative way; it is unique not only within a contemporary art context, but also within the wider discourse around living with disability.

The quality and strength of Pezaloom's work contributes greatly not only to the creative case for inclusion, but for raising the profile of artists with disability as innovators and cultural leaders.

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# Engagement

- ▶ **Collaborate and consult with individuals, industry and the community to deliver unique outcomes that strengthen the sectors we work with, generate community benefits and drive social change.**
- ▶ **Build the creative case for inclusive practice, to complement social and economic agendas for reform.**
- ▶ **Strengthen the capacity of the community, disability, and arts and cultural sectors to take on and deliver high quality, sustainable programs through collaborative approaches.**



## Engagement highlights

### *artsider* issue two launches



*artsider* cover art

The second issue of *artsider* was launched in December 2014. *artsider*, an initiative of the ArtWORK program, is a quality outsider art publication that showcases artwork by artists with disability, opening discussion and debate on art created by artists with disability and artists with mental illness. It offers an essential professional platform that creates opportunities for the artists' works to be documented and seen, and was launched at an event attended by artists, arts and community workers and our partner organisations.

### ArtWORK engages sector

The ArtWORK program has worked with more than 20 organisations including leading arts organisations, local arts council venues, regional performing arts organisations, universities, primary schools and employment agencies in 2014/15. We brokered connections and work with key personnel on a wide range of capacity building activities, including disability awareness training, information, resources and advocacy – all to meet the needs of artists whose professional development, project plan or employment outcome is being realised.

### Deaf Arts Network grows its reach

The Deaf Arts Network (DAN) has demonstrated strong engagement with the community in 2014/15. Mija Gwyn, DAN Coordinator, attended a number of forums to deliver talks about the work of DAN and Deaf artists, including a Fringe Festival forum for creative practitioners. DAN has also provided advice to a number of arts organisations about how to engage with Deaf artists and/or audiences, including Women's Circus, St Martins Youth Arts, Melbourne International Film Festival, Melbourne Writers Festival, MudFest, casting agencies and individual artists.



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## Engagement highlights

### The Other Film Festival touring program

In 2015 The Other Film Festival (TOFF) partnered with Sunbury Community Health to deliver a local film festival in Sunbury, *A Different Light*. The program consisted of eight short films from the 2014 TOFF program, and a Q&A session with a panel of actors who have lived experience of disability. This event was highly successful, with a large local audience attending the screening, broadening exposure to film culture that is about and by people with disability.

### Exploring attitudes with Open Your Eyes



Participants discuss access at the DEECD Open Your Eyes training.

In partnership with Arts Centre Melbourne, Arts Access Victoria's Industry Development team presented a hugely successful professional development program to representatives of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's (DEECD) Strategic Partnership Program (SPP) Arts Network and Health, Sport and Recreation Network.

The *Open Your Eyes* disability awareness program explored cultural attitudes about disability awareness and inclusion in the context of arts, health, sport and recreation, and education. More than 60 community organisations, industry and peak bodies that provide education programs participated in the training sessions – the highest attendance of any network event – with extremely positive feedback.

### Artlinks connects to community

In its second year, and with a renewed vision to expand arts programming and experiences for artists with disability across Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula, Artlinks partnered again with Mornington Peninsula Shire and the Frankston Arts Centre, and created new connections with The Briars and McClelland Gallery and Sculpture Park to deliver our 2015 program. Creating strong community partnerships is intrinsic to the development and sustainability of Artlinks, and these partnerships are also vital in strengthening the creative and community sectors' engagement with, and provision of programming and access for, people with disability.

### Working with Banyule to create positive change



Working with the City of Banyule to build community inclusion.

Instigating social change is a long-term proposition and our Industry Development team has positioned itself to lead this change by forging strategic and dynamic partnerships, facilitating leadership opportunities and providing practical advice. One example is our work with the City of Banyule.

As part of its innovative *WE: A Space to Explore Art, Disability and Inclusion* program, the City of Banyule engaged Arts Access Victoria to assist it to build the capacity of its community to be inclusive and provide opportunities for artists and people with and without disability to participate locally in arts and cultural life.

100% of participants reported they would “recommend this training to colleagues”. Significantly, 100% were also “committed to using what they learned in [their] workplace” and 100% reported they had

“the confidence to use what they learnt in [their] workplace”. In the words of a City of Banyule Metro Access Officer, “You guys were a hit!!!”

### Leading with Melbourne Fringe Festival

As part of our ongoing relationship with the Melbourne Fringe Festival, the Industry Development team tailored a 12-month leadership program with Melbourne Fringe executive and staff to reimagine the Festival as an accessible and inclusive event, identifying opportunities for the organisation to embed access across its business and reduce barriers to participation of people with disability.

### Reaching out online

Our total follower base online has grown to 9,868 across Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. This year we have utilised social media management tools such as Buffer and Hootsuite, which has reduced our time commitment to social media but increased our capacity to engage followers.

The focus of AAV eNews has shifted from an ‘inward out’ approach to a more collaborative style; we work with contributors to generate content that supports cultural activities by and for people with disability. This approach has allowed us to foster stronger relationships with artists and arts producers, as well as create visible outcomes for funding partners.

# Case study

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## Beyond Access: the creative case for inclusive arts practice

**In 2014/15, Arts Access Victoria – in partnership with the University of Melbourne and with funding from the Lord Mayor’s Charitable Foundation – undertook a research project to investigate the creative case for inclusive arts practice as it relates to people with disability.**

Through a study of Australian and international arts companies producing work involving arts practitioners both with and without disabilities, *Beyond Access* focused on the strengths artists with disability can bring to the creative process by examining how inclusive arts practices can extend and redefine contemporary arts in exciting and innovative ways.

*Beyond Access* aimed to increase our understanding of the processes and value of inclusive arts practice as an effective means of increasing employment opportunities for arts practitioners with disability, to inform government policy to achieve greater inclusion in the arts and to promote Victoria’s burgeoning leadership in inclusive arts practice.

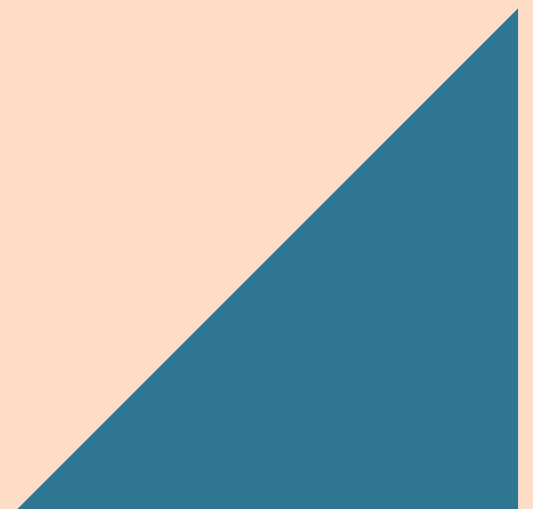
Outcomes from the project included:

- an international literature review on inclusive arts practice examining residual, central and emergent practice in inclusive arts from national and international examples;
- five video case studies on best practice in inclusive arts in Victoria, featuring Weave Movement Theatre, Rawcus Theatre Company, Jane Trengove, Australian Theatre of the Deaf and *Write-ability*;
- a *Beyond Access* symposium on Wednesday 12 November 2014 at University of Melbourne, presented in partnership with the Melbourne Social Equity Institute and attended by an audience of 180 which included educators, disability service providers, academics, students and artists with disability; and
- public presentations on the project by the research team at:
  - International Contemporary Outsider Art Conference at the University of Melbourne;
  - Victorian local government arts and cultural officers;
- and Australian Theatre Forum in Sydney.



*The GIMP Project*, Heidi Latsky Dance.  
Photo by Darial Sneed

The international literature review demonstrated clearly that while the *social benefits* of inclusive arts practice have been extensively documented, the *creative processes* and *outputs* of Australian artists with disability have been significantly under-researched. The literature review will therefore provide valuable evidence to argue for further funding to undertake a more extensive multi-year study of the aesthetic and creative strategies of disability arts practice across Australia.

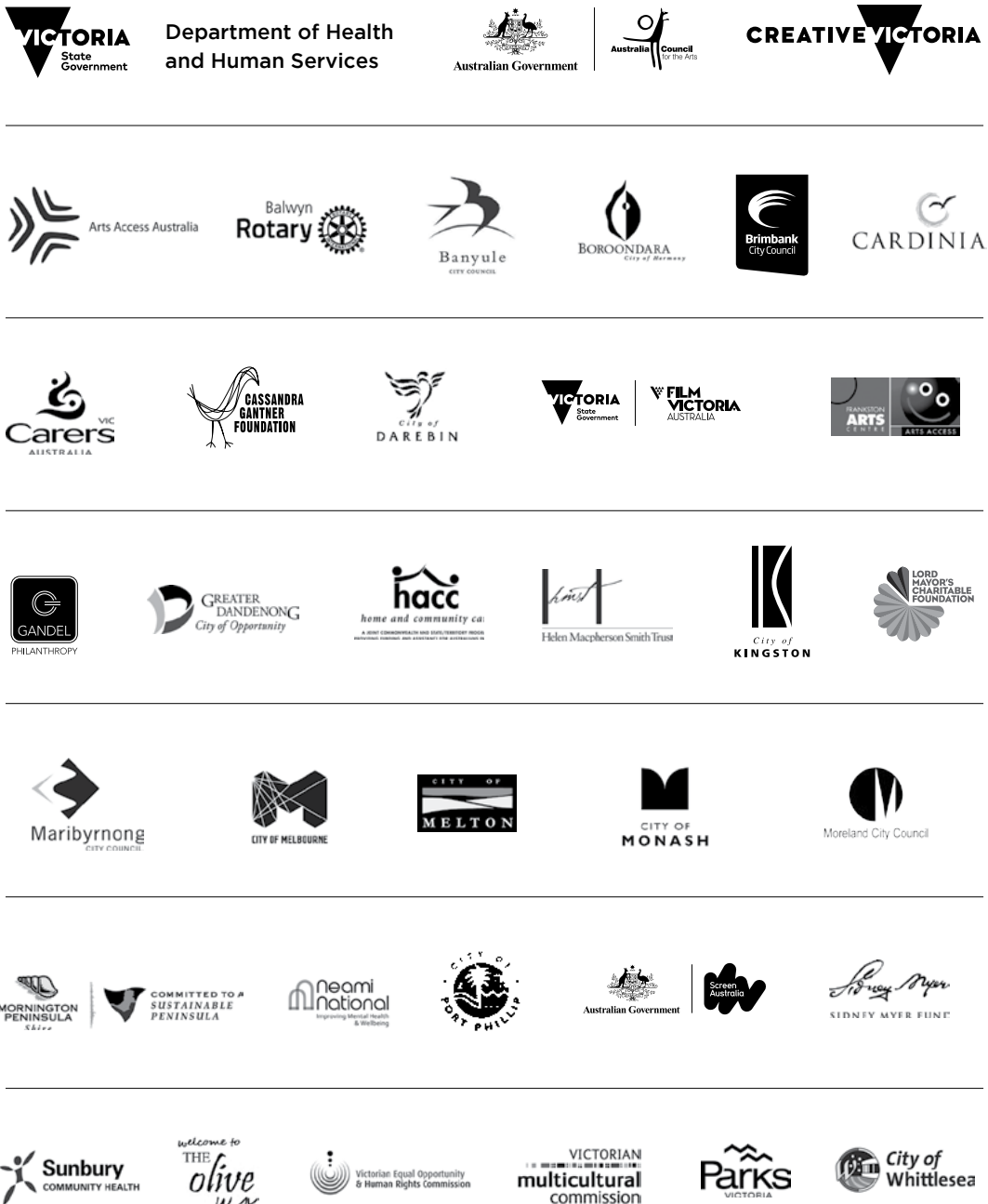


# Our partners



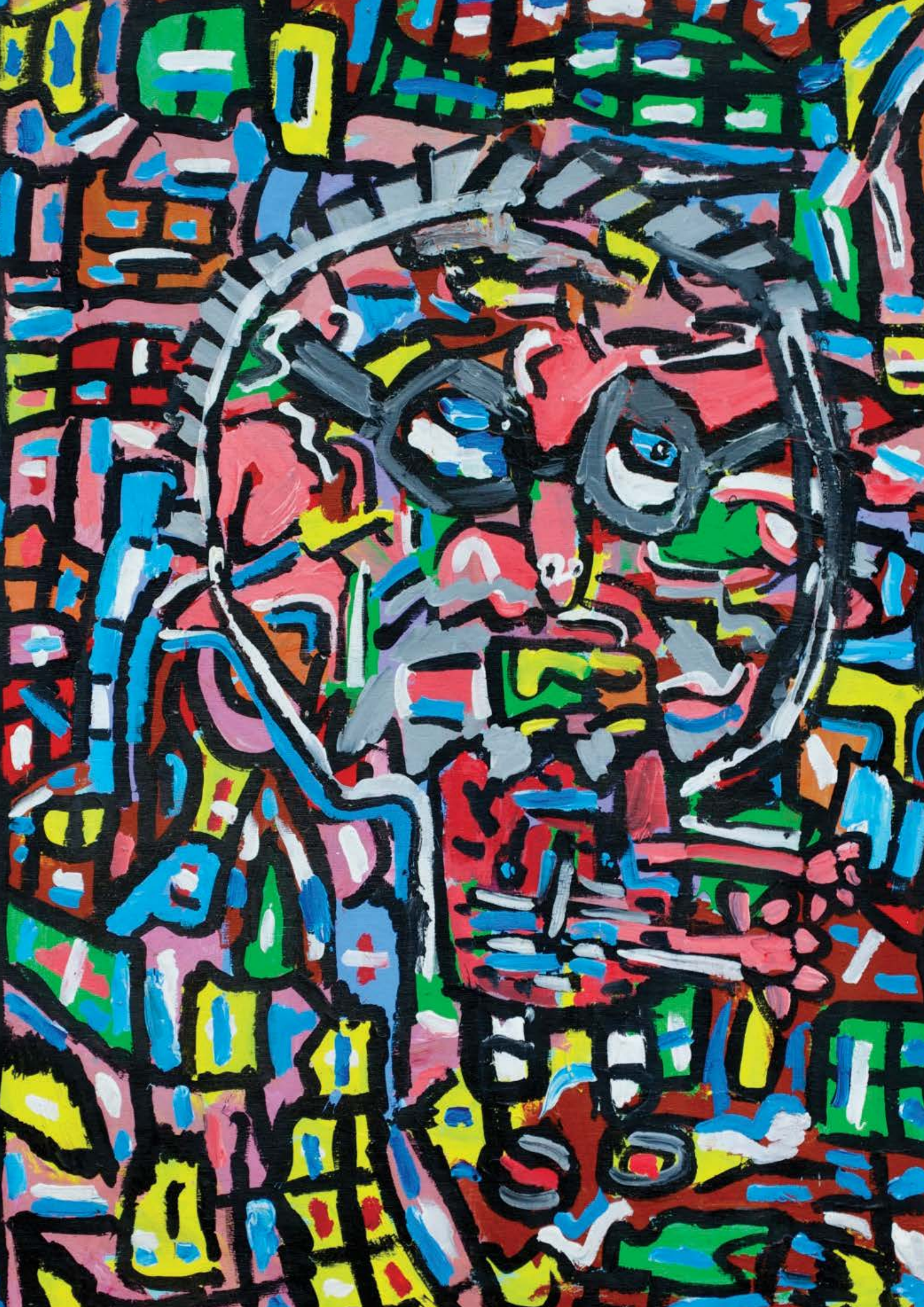
Abstract Dad, Mathew Clarke, 2014

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Arts Access Victoria







**ARTS ACCESS VICTORIA**

222 Bank Street  
South Melbourne VIC 3205  
T. (03) 9699 8299  
[www.artsaccess.com.au](http://www.artsaccess.com.au)

To read the full 2014/15  
annual report, please  
visit the Arts Access  
Victoria website.

