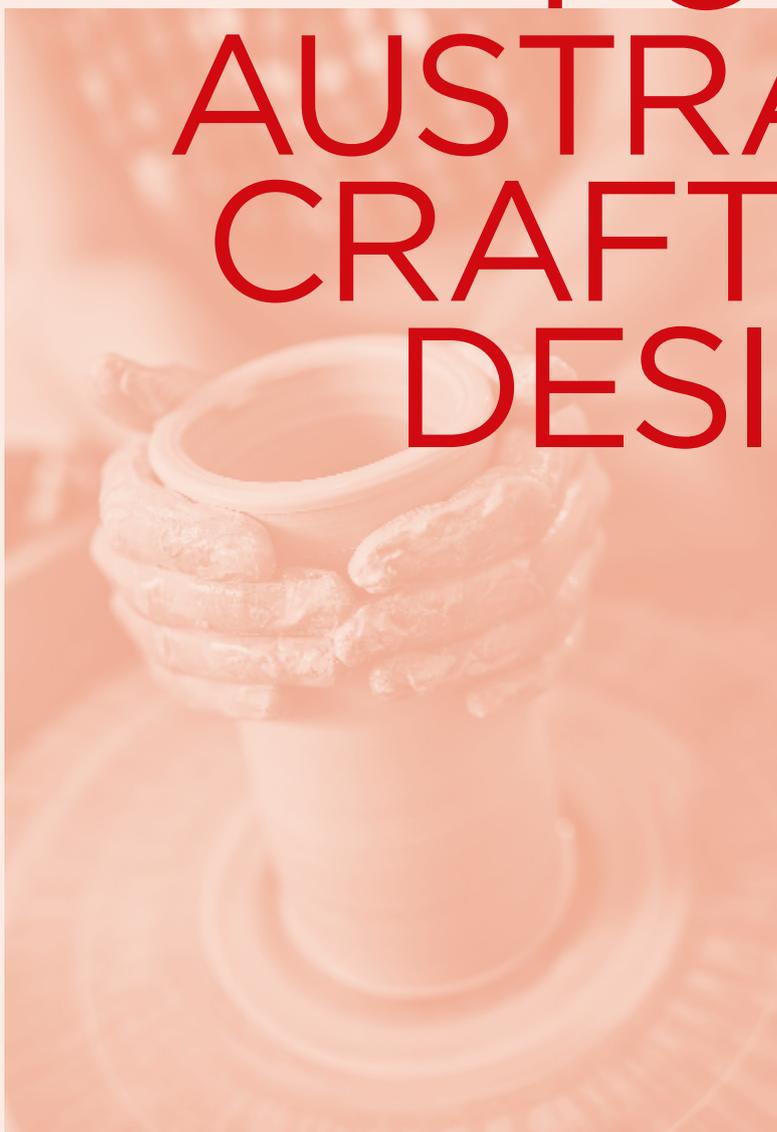




AGENDA FOR AUSTRALIAN CRAFT AND DESIGN



2016

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First published Sydney, Australia, 2016

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National Craft Initiative (NCI)
A partnership between the National
Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA)
and the Australian Craft and Design
Centres (ACDC). The National Craft
Initiative was launched in March 2013.

ISBN — 978-0-9585474-4-4

About this Document

This is an agenda for the future of Australian making, produced by the National Craft Initiative over a three-year period of engagement with the professional craft and design community. It is informed by the existing research and knowledge embedded within the key program partners: the Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC) and the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA); from direct consultations with leaders of the Australian craft and design community; and from the ideas and opportunities identified by makers themselves.

This report offers an evaluation of activities, research and insights into the current climate of the craft and design sector, identifying trends, challenges, opportunities and threats. It includes practical recommendations for strategic services for funding agencies, government and policy makers, and the sector itself to provides a vision for a strong future for the craft and design in Australia.



Australian Government



Australian Government

Visual Arts and Craft Strategy

Travel Bursaries



Government of South Australia

Arts SA



Government of Western Australia
Department of Culture and the Arts

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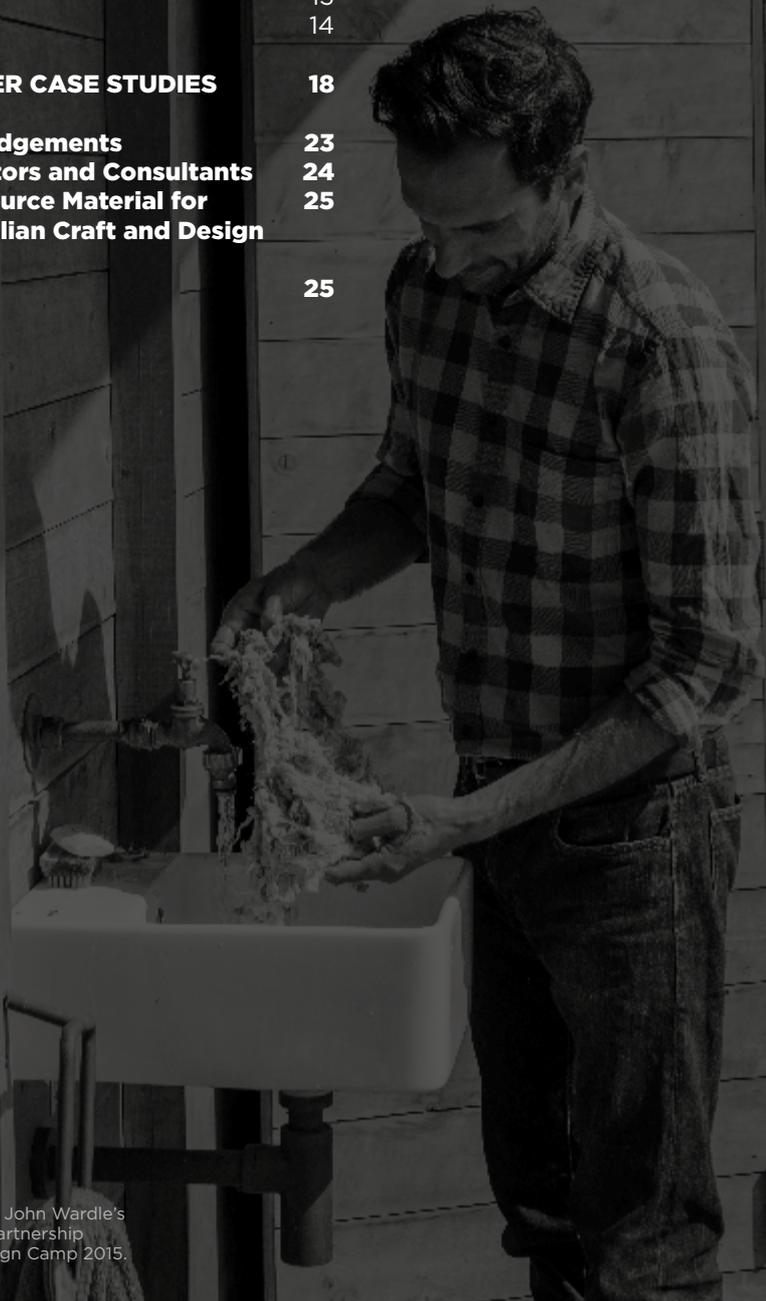


Image of invited English designer Simon Hasan. John Wardle's property, 'Waterview', Bruny Island Tasmania. Partnership between NGV & Design Tasmania. Parallels Design Camp 2015. Photo: Chris Crerar

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Craft Initiative (NCI), the three-year partnership between the Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC) and the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) funded by the Australia Council for the Arts has generated events, discussions, ideas and strategies to ensure a vibrant and resilient future for craft and design. It is now time to start implementing the recommendations of this report to foster a more coherent, collaborative and valued sector enhanced through the diversity of practitioners, disciplines and audiences.

Craft and design in Australia has a long history of making, engagement and innovation. Currently almost two million Australians are making craft and user-centric design has become more embedded in community and business processes. At the same time digital advances have brought more opportunities for craft and design practitioners.

However, as we have approached greater recognition of cross-disciplinary practice, the absorption of craft and design into arts funding models and changes to education and global production methods mean that craft and design have become almost invisible and voiceless. This has occurred despite the fact that the desire for the unique and hand made, particularly in this industrialised time, has grown exponentially.

Professional crafts practice requires advocacy and a platform to protect and preserve its future. We have a significant opportunity to start insisting on increased visibility for the national craft and design ecology and the unique makers who are the innovators for Australia's future. They are the story tellers of our multiple histories, the people who generate cultures of learning and exchange, the makers and investors who open up new markets and the collaborators who experiment with solutions for our communities.

Remarkable work is already being done in the sector across the country by individuals and by organisations. Now is the time to forge collaborations across Australia to multiply our actions and voice. We need to champion and elevate critical discourses, public engagement and fiscal support for the whole craft and design ecology. We need to do this while taking responsibility to ensure we are creating the climate and conditions that foster entrepreneurialism, create connections between makers, organisations, industries and government and build the capacity of the sector. It is Australia's creative future that we are fostering.

It will be through increasing visibility, investment, education and skills development that we will be able to participate and lead global dialogues. We aim to open up opportunities and critical dialogue to ensure Australian craft and design is recognised on a global stage and new markets are created.

This report provides the platform for action. Success is guaranteed by coming together. It is up to us now to choose to act.

Pippa Dickson and Jane Scott
*Co-Chairs, National Craft Initiative
Steering Committee*



PART A

NATIONAL CRAFT INITIATIVE

Geo Series in production at Canberra Glassworks.
Photo: Wendy Dawes.

INTRODUCTION

Vision

To see that excellent, innovative craft and design is valued as integral to Australian society.

The National Craft Initiative (NCI) was designed to strengthen the Australian craft and design sector through identifying strategies which would generate greater career development support and opportunities for professional craft and design practitioners, encourage innovation and excellence in their practice, build capacity, collaboration and unity of purpose for the support infrastructure bodies, increase investment in Australian craft and design and foster wide appreciation and participation by communities both nationally and internationally.

Background and Context

From the 1960s, the coming together of increasing audience interest in craft practice, the development of education and studio training facilities and the initiation of state and federal government funding all contributed to the growth of craft and design as professional and popular artforms.

However, over recent decades, the success, momentum and recognition experienced in the 1960s–1980s has been jeopardised by a number of changes to policy and funding. Recent decisions to defund the national craft peak organisation (Craft Australia, defunded 2011) and the absorption and loss of crafts' separate identity within national and state structures, has led to a dilution in craft's presence in the national conversation. These changes have resulted in a fragmentation within the craft community and a considerable reversal from the positive environment and recognition provided to craft in the 1960s–1980s.

Current low infrastructure funding does not mirror the number of Australians engaged in craft.¹ Declining government investment and very high competition for private sector funding together with subdued economic confidence and consumer spending is fuelling significant concerns for sustainability and innovation in the craft sector. The concern is that further reductions to dedicated public funding will jeopardise the significant foundation and achievements of the past fifty years since the Australian crafts movement began.

As evident in the data collected for the NCI's Mapping the Australian Craft Sector research project, despite the challenges, the craft and design ecology has demonstrated considerable agility and resilience in response to the ever-changing parameters of the working environment. By re-thinking models and practices, the sector continues to produce excellence in craft and creative processes, which are innovative, enduring and meaningful to Australian society.

¹ Almost 2 million Australian's participated in craft activities. Australia Council, *Artfacts, Creative Participation: Visual arts and craft is the one of the most popular cultural activities in Australia, but paid employment opportunities are low.* <http://artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au>, ABS 2012 'Participation in selected cultural activities, Australia, 2010-11' (CATI 4921-0)

Defining Craft Practice

The practice of hand-making today is diverse: across several generations, you could perhaps describe an arc between art, crafts and design with people located at different points. They are serious about what they do, however they see themselves or describe themselves and whatever sort of work they make.

The modes of craft practice encompass:

- those in the centre who are dedicated to contemporary expression and ideas based on traditional values, forms (often functional), materials and processes in the crafts
- those who work out of that background to make works that are conceptual in their purpose and intended to be understood as 'art', and
- those who work out of that background to make works in a 'design' context, often using new technologies and specialist industries, but with a crafts approach to materials and skills at the core.



Wheel Throwing in the Ceramics Studio, JamFactory. Photo: Tom Roschi

Some craftspeople focus on making sculptural forms, in scales ranging from table top display to wall pieces and major installations. These are general sold through commercial galleries, or commissioned for public and private buildings. Some concentrate on making one-off and limited series functional production for eg. domestic and restaurant use. Some focus on materials; some on functions; some on forms; while bringing all together in a personal interpretation of an idea. Some like an association with industry; some want an independent studio practice; others choose to employ skilled assistants; others want to work within a community. Some work with traditional tools and processes; others enthusiastically embrace current technologies as new tools.

Industry itself is changing, and in Australia is moving from large-scale manufacturing to small specialist industries that can be contracted for certain tasks, or with whom craftspeople can collaborate. International collaborations include those where traditional skills are drawn on (ethically), such as in India, China and elsewhere, while contributing to the economy of the community. At the same time, the value of new communication technologies is acknowledged by most people for a range of purposes. Many follow several of these directions at the same time, seeking economic viability as well as creative satisfaction.²

² Grace Cochrane, 'National Craft Initiative: Supplementary Research'



Images from Craft's Summer Catalogue, styled by Leesa O'Reilly. Photo: Hilary Walker



Weavers Pamela Joyce and Milena Paplinska working on *Catching Breath*, designed by Brook Andrew, 2015. Photo: Jeremy Weihrauch

PARTNERS AND KEY THINKERS

A Partnership between ACDC and NAVA

The previous Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts provided 3-years of project funding for the NCI to be managed through a partnership between the Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC) and the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA). ACDC and NAVA are the expert bodies representing the interests of craft and design practitioners in Australia.

The partnership drew on the experience of the extensive community of practitioners and on the industry expertise held by the two partners. ACDC and NAVA appointed a Steering Committee comprised of members of both organisations and independent experienced practitioners to contribute to the strategic direction and guide the NCI Program Manager with the implementation of this project.

About ACDC

The network of Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC) is a group of key organisations from all States and Territories in Australia that represent the professional craft and design sector. These craft and design organisations support a range of practitioners and play a critical role in celebrating the work of Australian practitioners who embrace the highest degree of craftsmanship and who explore material, process and ideas to advance contemporary craft and design practice. Activities range across high quality exhibitions, publishing, retail, advocacy, membership assistance, professional development, educational activities and market and audience development. The organisations engage with the sector at a local, national and international level and offer services and programs that support sustainable and innovative practice.

About NAVA

The National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) is the national peak body for the visual and media arts, craft and design sector. Through advocacy and service provision, NAVA works to achieve a strong Australian visual arts sector and a vibrant, distinctive and ethical cultural environment. Since its establishment in 1983, NAVA has been successful in securing policy and legislative change to encourage the growth and development of the sector. NAVA sets and monitors adherence to best practice standard and also undertakes advocacy, research, policy and project development and data collection and analysis. NAVA provides direct services to its members and the sector generally by offering expert advice, referrals, resources, professional representation and development, grant programs, education and training courses, critical events and a range of other opportunity brokerage and career development services.

Key Thinkers and Contributors

The NCI forged relationships with a national group of practitioners, industry experts, advocates and leaders from the craft and design sector to contribute to the design and implementation of the three-year program. These key thinkers contributed to NCI's research, strategic planning and industry consultation processes identifying opportunities and trends that have informed this report. The key thinkers and consultant groups include members of the ACDC network, NAVA staff, the network of specialist craft organisations and associations, the Australian Design Alliance and well known professional craft and design practitioners and educators.

RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION METHODOLOGIES

Strategic Industry Consultation Sessions

The NCI undertook direct industry research consultation sessions with industry nominated key thinkers across Australia to distil innovative ideas for growing a highly diverse, vibrant and sustainable Australian craft and design sector. Through facilitated discussions, an informed and distributed contribution was made by the national network of experts towards the NCI's methodologies, research focus areas, and specific service recommendations identified in Part B of this report.

Specialist Craft Organisations and Associations Roundtable Session

The NCI invited participation and contribution from directors of the Australian specialist craft organisations and associations. This extensive network of educators and advocates were brought together for an inaugural roundtable consultation for direct industry research purposes, and the outcomes were included in NCI's further research and reviews. These consultations delivered insights into the current climate and needs of this community and contributed to recommendations for a future-looking sector.

ACDC and NAVA Consultations

The NCI was regularly represented at ACDC sessions and events via the Program Manager and Steering Committee; directors and key staff of the national organisations participated in NCI's major research reviews; and regular community engagement and communication pathways were developed over the three-year period. The NCI Program Manager was located in the NAVA offices enabling consistent consultation with all project partners and participants. Administration services were provided by NAVA and the project drew on the organisation's advocacy and representation experience.

Australian Design Alliance Consultations

The Australian Design Alliance (ADA) is the alliance of peak professional organisations that represent designers across all aspects of Australia's design industry. Regular consultations and discussions were held with ADA regarding a range of issues including education, design policy and intellectual property protection for Australian craft and design practitioners.

Practitioners Consultations

Regular consultations and discussions with practitioners were held during the NCI period. This included the development of focused case studies and interviews as published in *Mapping the Australian Craft Sector* and for this document.

Private Investment Consultations

Discussions were generated with key sector figures to identify possible philanthropists who would be interested in investing in new opportunities for makers across Australia.

MAJOR PROJECT OUTCOMES

The Research Project

The NCI commissioned a research report, *Mapping the Australian Craft Sector*, to address the first phase of the NCI project. The overall aim was to provide the foundations for action in building a sustainable and highly valued crafts industry in Australia. The report identified the context and background alongside the current climate for the craft and design sector including participation, cultural and creative contribution, employment and income and the state of craft and design education, and these inform the final recommendations produced in this report.

The International Craft and Design Conference

The NCI sought expressions of interest from potential partners in a major international conference. The National Gallery of Victoria was selected to partner with NCI to present *Parallels – Journeys into Contemporary Making*. Looking both globally and locally, *Parallels* provided a range of informative, inspirational, and provocative talks revealing the shifting priorities and emerging opportunities for Australian and international craft and design.

The talks and conference program were developed for both a general audience and those immersed in the contemporary world of design-focused craft. Each invited speaker was, in their own way, working at the intersection of craft and design, a realm that is rapidly expanding and evolving as society reappraises the importance of the hand made in an increasingly industrial world. Speakers discussed the significance and importance of hand made objects, the relationships between commercial design and crafted objects, and the ways in which technology, sustainability, digital connectivity and globalisation are impacting traditions.

This was a rare opportunity to explore new landscapes for contemporary making, and to understand the forces reshaping the parallel (and convergent) worlds of craft and design.

Keynote Speakers

Parallels – Journeys into Contemporary Making was a rare opportunity to gather international and national expertise in the craft and design community and in addition to the conference program, the situation offered an unparalleled chance to have generative conversations on the future of making in Australia. Video recordings of the *Parallels* keynote lectures can be found via nationalcraftinitiative.com.au

Antonio Aricò
Milan, Italy

Gijs Bakker
Amsterdam,
The Netherlands

Wava Carpenter
L'ArcoBaleno / Design
Miami, Miami, USA

Andrea Trimarchi
Formafantasma
Amsterdam,
The Netherlands

Mavis Ganambarr
Elcho Island Arts,
Northern Territory

Simon Hasan
London, England

Shun Horiki
East Japan Project
Tokyo, Japan

Trevyn & Julian McGowan
Southern Guild
Cape Town, South
Africa

Veena Sahajwalla
Director, Centre for
Sustainable Materials
Research & Technology,
UNSW, Sydney

Helen Souness
Managing Director,
Australia & Asia, Etsy Inc

Sasah Titchkosky
Koskela, Sydney

John Wardle
John Wardle Architects,
Melbourne

Lou Weis
Broached Commissions,
Melbourne

Margaret Wertheim
The Institute for Figuring,
Los Angeles, USA

Cyril Zammit
Design Days Dubai
Dubai, United Arab
Emirates

Departures Session

The National Craft Initiative and the National Gallery of Victoria presented *Departures*, an industry research session bringing together the NCI partners with selected international guest speakers and the conference rapporteurs. It created a space for reflection post-*Parallels*, to collect the opinions, experiences and provocations shared from the conference stage and discussions at *Parallels* events. The purpose of this session was to generate practical strategies for the future of craft and design in Australia and to enhance a connection between Australian and international practitioners, events, thinkers and opportunities. It resulted in the development of strategies and recommendations for strengthening Australian craft and design nationally and internationally.

Craft Curators Seminar

Craft (Vic) presented a seminar in conjunction with *Parallels* for national craft and design curators that included presentations and round table discussions chaired by the NCI Program Manager. This event interrogated the key issues for curatorial practice and developed recommendations for the future of craft and design curators and makers.

The Code of Practice

NAVA's *Code of Practice for the Professional Australian Visual Arts, Craft and Design Sector* is the national best practice standard for the sector. It provides a set of practical and ethical guidelines for the conduct of business between art, craft and design practitioners and those with whom they deal professionally including galleries, agents, dealers, retailers, buyers, sponsors and partners, commissioners, employers and the managers of residencies, workshops, competitions, prizes and awards.

The Code is an essential professional tool for the negotiation of contracts, agreements and entry conditions, and for the explanation of the business protocols and procedures, and baseline fees for the visual arts, craft and design sector.

The NCI undertook a research and consultation process to update the craft and design related elements, guides and factsheets for edition five of the Code, specifically clarifying areas of intellectual property rights for craft and design practitioners, retail commissions and sales, and fees and wages for practitioners.

P A R
A L L
E L S



World view panel at *Parallels*, 2015 including Antonia Syme (Australian Tapestry Workshop, Melbourne), Melanie Katsalidis (Pieces of Eight, Melbourne), Brodie Neill (Made in Ratio, London), Wava Carpenter (l'ArcoBaleno, Miami) and Cyril Zammit (Design Days, Dubai) and host Helen O'Neil (British Council, Australia). Photo: NGV Photographic Services

A photograph of a woman in a workshop, likely a shoemaker, working on a piece of leather. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. In the foreground, there is a wooden block with a metal rod passing through it, resting on a wooden surface. The woman is in the background, focused on her work.

PART B

AGENDA FOR AUSTRALIAN CRAFT AND DESIGN

CURRENT CLIMATE

Throughout three years of research, development and consultation, NCI identified key insights and areas of risk affecting the current climate, key trends and challenges that may impact makers and the sector nationally, as well as the potential opportunities and threats to the future of craft and design in Australia.

Trends

Embedding sustainability. 'As well as providing pleasure and satisfaction to the maker and designer, a practice also has to be a sustainable, viable reality and successfully find its marketplace.'³ Building sustainable practice, both in terms of ecology and economics, continues to provide challenges for the sector, largely due to the contracting funding environment. To support the future health of the sector, new models of working need to be explored that identify and facilitate applications of craft and design to other industries, open new markets through government investment, increased commercial and private sources of support and greater collaboration within the crafts community.

Embracing digital change. Practitioners need to stay updated on the latest digital trends and platforms to be able to access new markets and audiences in a competitive marketplace locally and internationally. This includes capitalizing on the opportunities of social media, digital sales and broader audience reach through digital communication networks and publishing.

³ Grace Cochrane et al, *NeoCraft: Modernity and the Crafts* (Nova Scotia: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.) 2008

Challenges

Defining best practice. Best practice and ethical standards are required to set the benchmark for partnerships in craft and design. 'What is missing is a shared point of reference to common interests and standards. Too often, claims to the 'ethical' value of a product are unsubstantiated.'⁴ Greater dissemination of the updated Code of Practice is needed alongside common language to describe ethical standards in partnerships, production, dissemination and consumption of craft and design products.

Expanding international engagement opportunities. There are widespread opportunities for professional craft and design practitioners for international exchange, engagement and expansion of markets and audiences, but the appropriate infrastructure and support is lacking. Whilst many sectors have access to funding and business support for international market participation, craft and design relies heavily on the capacity of individuals and organisations to access international opportunities.

Shifting funding models and opportunities. 'Grants, philanthropy, sponsorship, increased earned income, and investment through different forms of debt and equity finance will all play part in the financial model for an arts organisation of the future.'⁵ There is an increase in entrepreneurialism and alternative funding and financing models are emerging. This is particularly necessary as grants-based funding is diminishing and becoming less accessible and reliable.

Definitions in flux. Due to the shifting nature of the craft and design disciplines, there are challenges in defining craft and design and evolving regional vocabularies to articulate making practice. 'The studio model of professional artists, craft and design practitioners is becoming more fluid and trans-disciplinary as they respond to market shifts, collaborations, new technologies and opportunities and bring resilience to practice.'⁶ Recognising the wider adoption of craft practice and methods in other artforms and general Australian culture has the potential to significantly impact how craft and design is valued and prioritised in Australia.

⁴ Kevin Murray, *Code of Practice for Partnerships in Craft & Design*. <http://sangamproject.net/code> (accessed 10 December, 2015).

⁵ Cathy Hunt, *Paying the Piper: There Has to be a Better Way*. <https://www.currencyhouse.org.au/node/158> (accessed 10 December, 2015).

⁶ Jon Goulder. *Adaptable Species are the Most Resilient*. Short talk, *Parallels — Journeys into Contemporary Making*, Melbourne, 17 September, 2015

Opportunities

Centring creativity. 'Beyond the development of new products and services, [...] there is an untapped role for designers to work with industry at a strategic level as either 'catalysts' or 'mentors' to embed design-led innovation practices.'⁷ Embedded design thinking and creative expertise are needed at all levels of decision making and leadership.⁸

Measuring and modelling the sector. '...The accurate and meaningful measurement and tracking of the creative industries is essential if the full potential of this sector is to be harnessed.'⁹ Comprehensive longitudinal evaluation and measurements of the impact of the sector are required from both research institutions and the sector itself to assist economic and social arguments and advocacy.

Increased networking and skills exchange opportunities. Further networking and skills exchange opportunities are required to connect practitioners across Australia and internationally, and build capacity for the sector through stronger communities.

7 Sam Buculo, "Mentors, catalysts and provocateurs: The changing role for designers in the shift to design integrated business," *Creative Business in Australia* (Sydney: UTS ePress, 2015)

8 See Appendix II: Key Thinkers Consultation

9 Ogilvie, Deng & Lee, "Valuing Australia's creative industries", *Creative Business in Australia* (Sydney: UTS ePress, 2015)

Threats

Defending practitioners' ideas. There are gaps between policy and practice, and a lack of protection of intellectual property for independent craft and design practitioners. There is 'a clear need for increased harmonisation with international practices and treaties as this will benefit users of the system'.¹⁰ The broader Australian design industry is suffering due to widespread copies being manufactured and lack of education of markets and audiences.¹¹

Protecting artisanal skills and knowledge. Over recent years there has been a widespread threat to atelier-based, tertiary craft courses both in university based art schools and vocational education. There is a high demand for skills based artisanal training and a need for education and training to adapt to these new approaches.¹² Support and visibility is required for peer to peer learning structures, mentorships and apprenticeships.

10 Australian Government, Advisory Council on Intellectual Property, *Review of the Designs System: Final Report*, March 2015.

11 See Appendix II: Key Thinkers Consultation

12 See Appendix II: Key Thinkers Consultation



Weavers Chris Cochius & Sue Batten working on Gordian Knot, designed by Keith Tyson, 2016. Photo: Jeremy Weihrauch

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Based on the findings of the mapping research, conference and recommendations from industry consultations, NCI has developed a 'where to from here' strategy. The following acknowledges both the specific needs of professional craft and design practice, and the essential requirement for craft and design to be a visible and valued component of the wider visual arts sector.

This strategy calls for responsibility and action from the sector itself as well as those who fund, educate, inform and support its activities. The ambition and scope of these recommendations will be possible when government, education organisations, ACDC, NAVA, and specialist craft organisations and associations take responsibility to make change.

Four goals have been identified to ensure the vibrant future of craft and design in Australia: 'The local and global craft and design ecology is resilient and connected'; 'Australian craft and design education pathways and knowledge is strong, visible and celebrated'; 'the sector has the strength and capacity to innovate through experimentation'; and 'everyday making is embraced as central to Australian society'. Each goal is supported by recommendations and strategies for implementation. These recommendations detail the scope of services, collaborations and communication strategies needed for the craft and design sector including advocacy, sector leadership, training, profiling and networking, advice & opportunity creation through goals.

Built into each of these areas is an acknowledgement that we need to ensure the support of practitioners from Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander communities, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and across diverse socio-economic contexts.



Electric, an exhibition about craft and technology at Craft Victoria, installation view. Photo: Anita Beaney



Oluwole Oginni's Indigo dyeing workshop, part of Guildhouses' Traditional Craft program. Photo: Grant Hancock

Goals and Strategies

Goal 1. The local and global craft and design ecology is resilient and connected.

The scale and diversity of the craft and design industry is supported, connected and nourished in local, national and international contexts recognising the contribution of local communities of independent practitioners, and peak bodies nationally.

1.1 Develop new platforms and models for national and international engagement, exchange and export.

- Establish a regular national craft and design festival and an international conference and fair that connects the sector and showcases Australian makers and craft and design organisations to a broader audience demographic.
- Establish a hybrid government and industry managed body for international engagement to support exhibitions, exchanges, event participation with multiple year engagement and to assist practitioners to build export capacity and skill.
- Financially support Australian creative facilitators (curators, administrators and producers) through tax rebates or direct funding to become international ambassadors and agents for local talent.
- Develop strong international relationships and resilient communication pathways with strategic partner organisations, collaborators and commercial entities.
- Engage and collaborate more within the Asia-Pacific region through supporting traditional and innovative craft practice across diverse communities through reciprocal residencies, skills and exhibition exchanges and touring projects.

- Connect with international and partner country commercial ventures to create a wider reaching network of markets and audiences.
- Communicate Australian making, ensuring the centrality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) practices to an internationally distributed story of Australia's unique and diverse craft and design culture.¹³

1.2 Ensure a continued proliferation of local creative spaces for production, experimentation and presentation.

- Ensure the long-term financial affordability of appropriate studio spaces for practitioners, particularly in metropolitan areas.
- Develop channels for the use of non-conventional spaces for the production and presentation of craft and design work.
- Support the continuation of maker spaces and multidisciplinary creative hubs and precincts through subsidised rent programs, and embedded project spaces in larger institutions, organisations and businesses.¹⁴
- Promote the positioning of craft and making in everyday spaces in wider society through satellite programming, media narrative and education.¹⁵

1.3 Nourish the national ecology of organisations and practitioners.

- Create new opportunities for face-to-face networking for national and regional organisations and their members and the community of practitioners through national coordination and collaboration.
- Connect ACDC organisations through a unified digital strategy including online representation and communication pathways.

¹³ See Appendix II: Departures Session

¹⁴ For example the recently announced ACMI X co-working space for the creative industries. David Tiley, 'ACMI X makes a place for living creators', *Arts Hub*. Wednesday 3 February, 2016. <http://screen.artshub.com.au/news-article/features/digital/david-tiley/acmi-x-makes-a-place-for-living-creators-250415> (accessed 3 February, 2016)

¹⁵ See Appendix II: Key Thinkers Consultation

- Develop linkages with the regional crafts sector, which offers diversity, skill and a sense of place.

1.4 Lead international dialogue through remarkable digital skills and infrastructure.

- Enhance the digital capabilities of practitioners and the sector to best represent work online that engages audiences, peers and facilitators locally and internationally.

1.5 Support creative facilitators to champion the sector.

- Support further referral routes amongst creative facilitators and talent spotters to champion individual makers locally, nationally and internationally.¹⁶
- Strengthen communication pathways and professional development opportunities to build the professional capacity of curators, producers and administrators.
- Invest in the long-term critical and creative development of mid-career creative facilitators through fellowships and bursaries.
- Support curating with opportunities for ambitious exhibitions that present a strong and innovative picture of craft.

1.6 Position Australia as a key hub in the Asia-Pacific context.

- Support financially and in-kind, Australian practitioners' participation in international events, exhibitions and programs.
- Create partnerships between education and cultural institutions and organisations for exchange and dialogue across the Asia-Pacific region.
- Increase engagement with the World Crafts Council as an established network for craft in the Asia Pacific region.

¹⁶ Ibid

Goal 2. Australian craft and design knowledge is strong, visible and celebrated.

Due to dramatic changes to traditional tertiary and vocational education provision, pathways to professional practice require greater visibility and re-thinking of traditional processes. Education programs are embracing cross disciplinary collaborations and emerging processes and trends, but need to ensure they are working cohesively with industry and practice to value Australian skills and knowledge that support future makers. The ultimate goal is for Australian craft and design education to be strong, accessible, diverse, influential and world class.

2.1 Ensure artisanal material skills and knowledge are protected and developed.

- Incentivise postgraduate research to develop strong knowledge and visibility of Australian craft provenance, which is valued as part of our cultural wealth and social history.¹⁷
- Highlight the skills of ATSI and regional practitioners and material processes through formal research, industry and mainstream media narrative, tourism and greater inclusion in curated programming.
- Research, review and campaign for the visibility and development of pathways between secondary, tertiary and in-practice studio based education and training.¹⁸

- Develop interstate and international opportunities for trainees and interns to ensure hands on training and to deepen industry connections and networks.¹⁹
- Deepen relationships between the education sector and industry at all levels to inform training and curriculum development ensuring connected, knowledgeable and skilled graduates. Employ craft and design professionals in education institutions to provide realistic and practical advice.
- Advocate for affordable and accessible vocational and tertiary training programs for artisanal craft processes to ensure a diversity of practitioners from different cultural, social and economic backgrounds are able to pursue a career in craft and design.
- Develop culturally embedded programs for craft and design practitioners that focus on local cultures, skills and materials. This should incorporate curated Indigenous and regional studio practices in sites of natural, social and historical significance.
- Further develop and promote Indigenous practice, knowledge and skills within craft and design sectors.

2.2 Champion and elevate critical discourse and communication.

- Financially support existing and new writing, publishing and distribution of Australian craft and design critical discourse.²⁰
- Support industry communication regarding programming, touring, and critical development opportunities.

2.3 Plan for career longevity for craft and design practitioners.

- Establish mechanisms to support the development and longevity of practice for mid and late-career practitioners, such as fellowships and educational opportunities, retrospective exhibitions and exchanges.

- Develop intergenerational learning through the establishment of programs and collaboration opportunities for exchange between established and early-career practitioners within specialist craft organisations and associations and cultural learning programs.

2.4 Strengthen and highlight cultures of learning from community to institution.

- Build capacity for community based practice learning through the development of infrastructure platforms for peer-to-peer learning such as internships, mentorships, skills exchanges, forums and workshops.
- Support and fund alternative learning models for practical experience or learning, for example independent studio residencies, informal mentorships or community based skills exchanges or workshops.

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

¹⁷ See Appendix II: Departures Session

¹⁸ Ibid

Goal 3. The sector has the strength and capacity to innovate through experimentation.

The craft and design sector requires a resilient framework to nourish the everyday needs of craft and design practice while building capacity to afford sector-led experimentation and innovation. New diversification, hybridisations and operational models are emerging in individual practices, micro-businesses, organisations and the greater sector ecology requiring increased resilience and capacity.

3.1 Ensure diversity in organisational and project funding and financing.

- Develop channels for impact investment, including expansion of the remit of existing organisations such as Creative Partnerships Australia and Philanthropy Australia to service the craft and design sector.²¹
- Apply innovative funding models and equity financing opportunities for micro-business, such as crowd-investment pitching forums and models that exist for tech startups or social enterprises such as Angel Investing.
- Educate micro-businesses in the sector to seek private funding through professional and business development programs.

²¹ Cathy Hunt, *Paying the Piper: There Has to be a Better Way*. <https://www.currencyhouse.org.au/node/158> (accessed 10 December, 2015).

- Educate practitioners about funding and financing pathways and opportunities through provision of dedicated online professional development resources.

3.2 Measure and publish sector data to inform advocacy and development.

- Develop a publicly available framework and implement a methodology to support the ongoing collection, measurement and evaluation of data regarding activities from both state and federal government and key organisations.
- Implement economic modelling of the impact of the craft and design sector on other industries, communities and government agencies by both research institutes and sector organisations that demonstrates the social, cultural and economic value of experimental and innovative craft and design practice to Australia.

3.3 Embrace interdisciplinary practice.

- Develop opportunities for collaboration between craft and materials science in universities through initiatives such as the establishment of relationships through networking events, postgraduate collaborative research opportunities and research residency programs.
- Support the diversification of individual and micro-studio practice models across multiple creative activities, disciplines and income streams through developing in-studio professional development programs and mentorships and highlighting the realities of contemporary practice in media.²²
- Promote opportunities for practitioners to undertake interdisciplinary and cross sector collaborations through network development, funding for cross-disciplinary projects and support from creative facilitators and specialist agencies.

²² Jon Goulder. *Adaptable Species are the Most Resilient*. Short talk, Parallels – Journeys into Contemporary Making, Melbourne, 17 September, 2015.

3.4 Support entrepreneurialism in craft and design practice.

- Invest in entrepreneurial skills through the implementation of pilot programs designed to facilitate business mentoring and investment in small business start-ups.
- Integrate further entrepreneurial focus and connection to industry in tertiary education including professional development subjects and study areas.
- Embed specialist creative industry resources into national New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) program delivery to assist low-income creative practitioners to develop sustainable and informed small businesses.

3.5 Champion international best practice standards.

- Regularly update codes of practice to industry best practice standards, supported by regular research and consultation.
- Roll out education programs for all three tiers of government communicating industry best practice standards and providing guides for working with craft and design practitioners.
- Include codes of practice as core curriculum in vocational and tertiary education programs.

3.6 Increase the market for collecting craft.

- Encourage the development of craft and design within the broader visual arts collector market locally, nationally, internationally through initiatives with organisations such as Artbank.
- Establish more specialist art purchasing through low or interest free loans to support craft and design commissions by Australian makers.²³
- Pair craft and design specific events with contemporary art events including major national and international art fairs.
- Support the development of hybrid online platforms to connect makers to markets.

²³ e.g Arts Tasmania Collect Art Purchase Scheme Arts Tasmania, *Collect Art Purchase Scheme*, <https://collect-art.com.au/> (accessed January 17, 2016).

Goal 4. Everyday making is embraced as central to Australian society.

With almost 2 million makers in Australia, the value of craft and design practice needs to be a known cultural asset in Australia, extending beyond the industry to be economically, socially and culturally valuable in contemporary society.

- Align craft and design with the artisan and regional food movement through encouraging broader media narratives, partnerships and programming. Use widely accepted narratives of localism and the crafts to promote the sector and grow markets.²⁵

4.4 Ensure craft and design narratives are widespread in mainstream media.

- Support publishing platforms to articulate provenance and history in craft and design practice.
- Seek media coverage to educate mainstream society about the qualities of professional craft and design practice.

²⁵ See Appendix II: Key Thinkers Consultation Session, Departures Session

4.1 Support valuable and widespread collaborations across disciplines and sectors.

- Organisations support the referral of craft and design practitioners to collaborate with other disciplines within the visual art, media and built environment industries.

4.2 Embed makers and creative thinkers in leadership and decision making processes.

- Embed creative practitioners and design thinking practice at every level of decision making in the sector.
- Build capacities for risk and experimentation in practice and organisations.
- Change attitudes in government to understand and support the value delivered by craft and design through offering staff training by makers and creative thinkers.²⁴

4.3 Celebrate place and regional cultures of making through tourism.

- Support collaborations and initiatives between the tourism and craft industries to expand audience, market and capacity of practice.

²⁴ See Appendix II: Departures Session

PART C

**PRACTITIONER
CASE STUDIES**

Chinaman's File Rocking Chair, 2013.
Photo: Scottie Cameron



Trent Jansen, 2015.
Photo: Lee Grant, Molonglo Group

Trent Jansen

Trent Jansen is a designer based in Thirroul, Australia. Trent holds a Bachelor of Design from the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales in Sydney, spending a portion of his degree studies in the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada.

After a period working under Marcel Wanders in Amsterdam, Trent returned to Australia to set up a design studio in Sydney, before moving his practice to Thirroul on the New South Wales South Coast.

Trent Jansen applies his method of Design Anthropology to the design of products and furniture for manufacturers including Moooi, DesignByThem and Tait Outdoor. This approach is also applied to the design of limited edition and one-off pieces for clients including the Molonglo Group and design galleries Broached Commissions and Gallery All.

Our studio's ethical model centres around two things: one would be sustainability; and, two would be the ethics of human labour. With every material and process we work with we do our absolute best to ensure it's the most sustainable option out there. In many cases, projects are guided to ensure they are. Sustainability works its way through everything, but it also affects the conceptual thrust behind the idea. The way that we work, the limited edition nature of the work we do, and the fact that each project is so heavily researched and so conceptually rich is designed to engage the user in a way that means that these things are not disposable, they are designed to be long-term objects. They're designed to be collected and kept, not cheap and used and thrown away. They are artifacts rather than disposable things. We use materials accordingly, and make small numbers of things so they will have more of a chance of becoming valuable in that way. Everything is intensely laborious so that each object is unique and special in a way that cannot be replicated by mass production.



Laura McCusker
Photo: Jonathon Wherret

Laura McCusker

Laura McCusker Furniture was established in 1996, under the flight path, in Sydney's gritty, industrial inner-west. Since relocating to Hobart in 2003, she has continued to make quality hand made, individually designed pieces tailored to her clients' specific needs. But now, she works next to a babbling brook, surrounded by heirloom fruit trees, in an old apple packing shed, for real. She has been lucky enough to work on projects with MONA, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and a bunch of other fantastic clients from Tasmania, mainland Australia and beyond.

Professional development and learning in the industry is about relationship building. It becomes more than selling something to someone. We're in negotiations at the moment with three new clients, to take them out on the boat on the lake to pick the tree that's going to be cut into the timber that will be the table top. Actually having that story as part of it, they're picking the timber that will be part of the table.

It became really obvious early on that we can't compete with big companies. We can't compete with the scale of distribution or the advertising budget of the big companies and retail showrooms. We can't have 15 tables for people to choose from that you can walk away with next week. So it's a different product that we're offering, and half the product is us. The table they're buying doesn't exist yet. It's not actually about the table it's about being part of the process of making the table. It's the word of the day at the moment — collaborative design — really, every single piece we make for someone, they really have input into the design. We look at the space, where the sun comes in, where it will sit and be used, the age of their kids, the stage they're at in their life. It's not about flicking through a catalogue, it's a different model we're working on. That's our point of difference. We can't and we don't compete with big companies.



Elliat Rich, 'What Colour is the Sky?'
Photo: Oliver Eclipse

Elliat Rich

Elliat Rich is based in Alice Springs, Central Australia. She works across a broad-spectrum of design for a diverse client base, remotely, locally and nationally. Her practice covers cross-cultural resources, exhibition design, public art and furniture, product development, one-off exhibition and limited run objects. All projects align with an ethical imperative to increase equality between people and across species.

Rich completed her Bachelor of Design at the College of Fine Arts, UNSW with first class honours in 2006. In 2014 she and her partner launched Elbowrkshp, a studio, retail space and workshop that they share with other creative professionals.

The studio is a clear extension of our combined creative practices, it physically embodies how we work. Its location within the 8 Hele Precinct — a site shared with other creatively orientated businesses — in Alice Springs is a testament to the creative capital that exists and flourishes throughout Central Australia. The ongoing existence of the studio is proof that creative professionals can exist outside of major cities and perhaps experience more freedom and diversity of briefs. Based in a remote centre with a diverse client group requires working with a unique set of constraints that require innovating within the design and production processes.



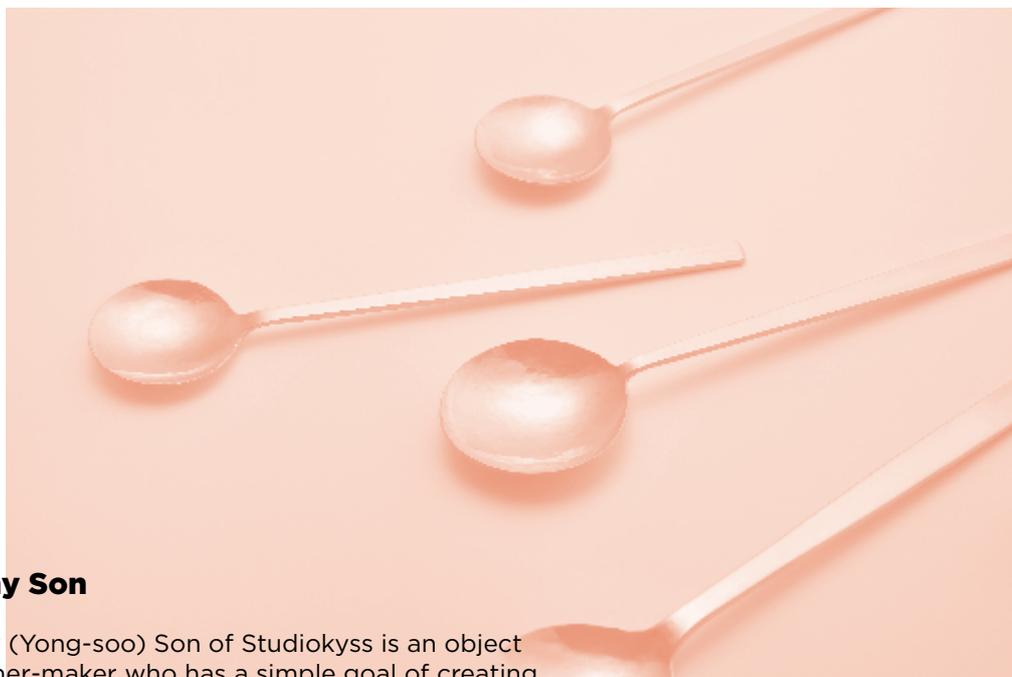
Bruce Rowe
Photo: Bobby + Tide

Bruce Rowe

Based in Melbourne, Australia, Anchor Ceramics is a design studio that operates in an applied research, prototyping and product development capacity. The studio produces handmade ceramic lighting, tile, outdoor and furniture product ranges. Founder, Bruce Rowe also maintains a practice of visual inquiry, exhibition and publication.

The capacity to experiment is embedded into Anchor's design process through two drivers; no expectations of outcome and the freedom to fail. This is supported with time, money, collaboration with both people and technology, testing, recording and reviewing; all of which are vital and often interdependent. Without a willingness to accept the condition that the endeavour may not amount to anything, the endeavour itself is meaningless and the value to our design process is limited. No amount of resource allocation can replace a willingness to accept that the experiment may falter. The other side of this coin is the possibility that the experiment will succeed and open a door that was previously closed, or, even better, lead to one that was previously unseen.

The growth of the studio over the last few years has also led to an experimentation with the business model. Once the studio grew beyond the capacity of the individual, it was necessary to look at how the business needed to be structured to support its development and growth. Some things have worked well in this regard and others haven't; but ultimately it was a willingness to embrace uncertainty that has helped the studio develop and flourish.



Kenny Son

Kenny (Yong-soo) Son of Studiokyss is an object designer-maker who has a simple goal of creating work that has 'life', objects that add significance and value to everyday environments. With the idea between decorative and functional and the ability to transcend both craft & design mediums, Kenny is interested in creating work that has the ability to interact physically and emotionally with the users, essentially giving longevity to the object.

With my own practice, I deliberately explore between two cultures, Korea and Australia. They are two places I call home. I believe the two countries both have so much to give and gain from each other, speaking in terms of arts, crafts and design.

I recently studied with a metal craft master in South Korea. The mentorship program was funded by the Australia-Korea Foundation (AKF) and it involved intensively learning and practising unique as well as traditional Korean metal craft techniques, under the guidance of Korean Designated Metal Craft Master Sung-joon Cho. Apart from my individual practice, I am always looking at opportunities to culturally explore and expand the field I belong to. I am a firm believer that good designers, artists and the makers of this generation each has an important role in educating the general public about what we do and why we do it.

I am always learning. An individual of any field should always be learning. It is the only way to look forward to the next day, and the day after that.

APPENDIX I: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NCI Steering Committee

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Program Partners

Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC)
 National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA)

Funders

The Australia Council for the Arts
 Visual Arts and Craft Strategy (VACS)

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body, and by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

ACDC Network



artisan, Qld

Road Trip exhibition, Artisan, 2013. Photo: Don Hildred



Australian Tapestry Workshop, Vic

Weavers Chris Cochius & Sue Batten working on Gordian Knot, designed by Keith Tyson, 2016. Photo: Jeremy Wehrauch



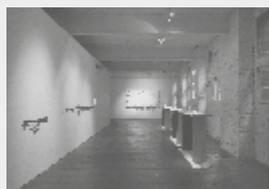
Canberra Glassworks, ACT

Geo Series in production at Canberra Glassworks. Photo: Wendy Dawes.



Central Craft, NT

Contemporary Wearables exhibition at Central Craft. Photo: Eva Straulino



Craft, Vic

Electric, an exhibition about craft and technology at Craft Victoria, installation view.



Photo: Anita Beaney
 Craft ACT, ACT

Chelsea Lemon, Triangulation Chair, 2014, American White Oak, Edible Plants. Photo: Chelsea Lemon



Design Tasmania, Tas

Image of camp workshop designs by Shun Hariki, Japan, John Wardle's property, 'Waterview', Bruny Island Tasmania. Partnership between NGV & Design Tasmania. Parallels Design Camp 2015. Photo: Chris Crerar



Form, WA

In Rainbows, Nike Savvas. 2015. Photo: Robert Frith



Guildhouse, SA

Oluwole Oginni's Indigo dyeing workshop, part of Guildhouses' Traditional Craft program. Photo: Grant Hancock



JamFactory, SA

Tobias Møhl masterclass in the JamFactory Glass Studio, February 2015. Photo: Anna Fenech Harris



Object: Australian Design Centre NSW

Installation image, Scented Intoxication by Lyn Balzer & Tony Perkins. Photo: Boaz Nothman



Sturt: Australian Contemporary Craft and Design, NSW

Chair making workshop with Evan Dunston. Photo: Indra Deigan



tactileARTS, NT

Shoemaking Workshop with Marlene Kranz. Photo: Marlene Kranz

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APPENDIX III: OTHER SOURCE MATERIAL FOR THE AGENDA FOR AUSTRALIAN CRAFT AND DESIGN

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FRONT COVER: (top) Tobias Møhl masterclass in the JamFactory Glass Studio, February 2015. Photo: Anna Fenech Harris; (bottom) Wheel Throwing in the Ceramics Studio, JamFactory. Photo: Tom Roschi.

BACK COVER: (top) Sturt — Australian Contemporary Craft and Design. Photo: Indra Deigan; (bottom) Installation image, Scented Intoxication by Lyn Balzer & Tony Perkins. Photo: Boaz Nothman

