2

Leading for the Arts in a Multicultural Australia

Creative, institutional and organisational leaders are all part of the process to enliven opportunities for the arts in a multicultural Australia. These opportunities adapt or lead to new forms of art production for artists and can generate wider audience demographic attendance, which can also foster greater social cooperation (Van de Vyver and Abrams 2017). To realise these opportunities, policies need to be in place to address prevalent and long-term issues such as underemployment of, and low funding to, non–English speaking background (NESB) artists (see Chapter 1). To this end, institutional and organisational champions implement policies by directing funds and resources while artists in the field spearhead the change that policy is designed to generate.

Leadership can be seen as operating like a well-oiled or rusty hinge, opening up or closing down opportunities. Arts leadership in practice is frequently located within, and contextualised by, a complex set of political and administrative structures around funding and policy; the decisions made within these structures often affect artistic practice, but are usually made outside the realms of any individual artist's input. However, beyond this 'institutional' level of leadership, the arts are also characterised by a loose amalgam of artist networks through which creative aspects—ideas, techniques and influences—are disseminated, discussed, challenged and altered. Informal relations of established and emerging artists constitute forms of creative leadership that may often be in tension with administrative

hierarchies and organisational forms of leadership. Therefore, it is helpful to understand forms of leadership practices from a range of disciplines and how they appear within an artistic milieu.

NESB artists frequently call for more effective leadership from agencies and mainstream organisations to address their varying levels of support and lack of inclusion in the arts environments they wish to experience (Castagna 2017). This brings into question different kinds of leadership and how they can best manifest to generate the changes that many agree need to occur. The qualities of leaders who cultivate culturally diverse artistic content in the Australian arts sector demonstrate distributed, relational, transformative and transactional leadership styles.

The arts sector's interest in leadership is matched by organisations such as the Australia Council. The 2000 Arts in a Multicultural Australia (AMA) policy established the Multicultural Arts Professional Development program, an annual university and foundation partnership-based leadership program, that combined creative production and audience development in a very practical approach for the arts in a multicultural Australia, and that ran successfully for eight years (Kape Communications 2010). The Australia Council now funds separate courses for established and emerging leaders—usually employed in arts organisations—that include diversity, but do not appear to be tailored to the needs of NESB artists or multicultural arts practitioners (Australia Council n.d.-c). Therefore, while those who work in arts organisations have something of a pathway of courses for leadership and development, NESB artist leadership opportunities have arguably been more ad hoc. This chapter explores several modes of leadership relevant to NESB artists and the roles of friction and trust in generating the traction towards a supportive multicultural arts milieu.

Modes of Leadership

Leadership is valued as an area for research as much for its role in society as for the ongoing debates that attempt at a definition (Jackson and Parry 2011, 14). Discourse on leadership follows, and occasionally leads, changes in social organisation. As Grint (2005, 9) puts it: 'If our future world is very dynamic, competitive and unstable, then we "need" to provide flexible and decentralized leadership systems'. By connecting a dynamic environment and a decentralised mode of leadership, Grint

evokes the symbiotic relationship between the need for foresight about that environment and the best way to adapt to the opportunities it presents. Contemporary leadership theories often focus on collective approaches to achieve common goals (Sorenson, Goethals and Haber 2011; Hewison and Holden 2011; Jackson and Parry 2011) and advocate the need 'to move beyond the leader-follower-shared goal conversation, and make room for more organic, systemic, and integrative ideas and approaches' (Sorenson Goethals and Haber 2011, 36).

The concept of 'integrative ideas and approaches' aims to address systemic issues by including those people affected by any given situation into processes of generating solutions and modes of implementation. These methods are at the forefront of current leadership management discourse and are useful when considering the ways in which many artists and cultural practitioners are working to improve multicultural inclusion in the arts.

Leadership in organisational contexts is also discussed in terms of leadership and management—roles that are often unclear in the workplace. Peter Drucker (quoted in Holmes, Marra and Vine 2011, 6) argues that 'the only definition of a leader is one who has followers', and that leadership provides 'inspiration and setting new directions for an organisation, whereas management involves planning and organising to implement the objectives'. Reconsidering the traditional view of a leader at the top of a hierarchy opens up a spectrum of definitions. At one end of the spectrum, Stogdill (quoted in Holmes, Marra and Vine 2011, 12) views leadership as a process to influence the 'activities of an organised group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement'. At the other end of the spectrum, Peter and Austin provide a wider and emotive definition:

> Leadership means vision, cheerleading, enthusiasm, love, trust, verve, passion, obsession, consistency, the use of symbols, paying attention, out-and-out drama (and the management thereof), creating heroes at all levels, coaching, effectively wandering around. Leadership must be present at all levels in the organisation. It depends on a million little things done with obsession, consistency and care, but all of those million little things add up to nothing if the trust, vision and basic belief are not there. (quoted in Jackson and Parry 2011, 12–13)

The conventional image of leadership entrusted to the 'hero', 'heroine' or 'charismatic' figure embodied in one particular individual as the head is shifting to a more reflective role as the 'soul' (or 'moral' centre) of an organisation (Mendonca and Kanungo 2007, 3). Mendonca and Kanungo (2007) claim that it is the moral principles of the leader that lend credibility and legitimate the vision for the organisation. This leadership style intertwines management and leadership but, significantly, encourages the talents of those in the organisation to flourish (e.g. by mentoring and collaborating).

An issue for the arts regarding shifting notions of leadership is the prevalent image of the artist as working solo, or as a solo entrepreneur, striving to make their own work:

> Part of the problem in the cultural world is that the dominant tradition focuses on the individual artist and their work, failing to see that creativity in the arts depends on a network of cooperation among many people. Similarly, in the wider creative industries, much attention is given to the individual entrepreneur, whereas in fact, as in the arts, teamwork, networking, peer competition and cooperation are vital. (Hewison and Holden 2011, 32)

The issue here is that artists need highly developed communication and cooperation skills to be able to effectively compete, collaborate and network with their colleagues. Within theatre and music ensembles, for example, the tendency in the arts is to valorise the 'star' talents of individuals at the expense of acknowledging those who work as part of a group or within a 'community' of artists. Grint (2005, 33) suggests that the 'ship' (or community) has been forgotten, and organisations need to reconfigure the environment in and around the 'ship' and move away from the sole focus on the leader. This concept does not acknowledge, but is reminiscent of, Foucault's discussions of government that use the metaphor of a ship:

> What does it mean to govern a ship? It means clearly to take charge of the sailors, but also of the boat and its cargo; to take care of the ship means to reckon with winds, rocks and storms; and it consists in that activity of establishing a relation between the sailors and the ship which is to be taken care of. (Foucault 1991, 93–94)

Governing is seen as 'establishing a relationship'. It has a management role to ensure the safe delivery of sailors, ship and cargo, and evokes leadership when speaking of establishing relationships in a context-dependent environment of the unexpected.

Grint (2005, 15) equates management to 'deja vu', which relates to responding appropriately to a familiar situation, and conceptualises leadership as 'vu jade', meaning to be able to respond to novel or completely unfamiliar situations or experiences. The lack of—or, at best, intermittent—leadership within mainstream arts organisations with regard to cultural diversity generates the sense of (in this case, negative) deja vu far more frequently than that of 'vu jade' in the experience of NESB artists. This presents opportunities for managers to reinforce what has worked in the past and to combine with leaders who attempt new approaches. This interplay between the familiar and the unexpected, even risky, suggests a push–pull friction between the myriad calibrations that the NESB artist faces in the context of the wider arts environment.

Leadership Repertoire for Multicultural Arts

The types of leadership pertinent to the arts in a multicultural Australia link to the roles discussed in this book: the creative role of the artist, the multicultural arts advocates within institutions and the leaders who establish partnerships between arts organisations. Given that there are no major national multicultural arts companies in Australia, in this book I emphasise the individual artist and small multicultural arts organisations who take on leadership roles that may stretch beyond their capacity. These individuals and groups interact to varying degrees with bureaucrats at the government arts agency, the Australia Council, as well as with cultural practitioners in small to medium (S2M) and major arts organisations. The range of interactions that may lead to change in the arts environment for multicultural arts can usefully draw on the modes of distributed, relational, transformative and transactional leadership.

Distributed leadership integrates ideas and approaches by sharing lead responsibilities within a team, either as co-leaders or by switching the lead role depending on the skills required at the time (Burke, Diaz-Granados and Sales 2011, 342). This is a flexible mode that requires high-

level trust and understanding between each member so that the work keeps flowing. It also requires reflexiveness in the team members to 'authorise' each other as leaders. The relevance of this style of institutional leadership for multicultural arts policy development and implementation is that it enables multiple players to take a lead role in delivering a broad scope of structural changes. For example, the previous institutional role of the Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee (ACMAC) utilised the particular expertise or insight of its artist members in constructive debate to produce well-considered strategies and policy advice across the different artform areas of the institution and within the arts sector (Australia Council 2002, 12). Distributive leadership is found in creative and organisational leadership and can be seen in how media arts organisation CuriousWorks creates 'multi-year, national, large-scale artistic initiatives that celebrate Australia's cultural diversity' (CuriousWorks 2021a), for example. CuriousWorks engages with and educates emerging artists from diverse cultural backgrounds through its production of digital media works, the dissemination of which strongly adopts all social media forms. The company resources numbers of emerging artists, called 'Curious Creators', to co-lead projects that produce work that 'defies' mainstream stereotypical narratives (CuriousWorks 2021b). This distributed form of leadership provides opportunities for Curious Creators with different skills to step into creative and organisational lead roles in which their skill sets can come to the fore. The notion of distributed leadership in this instance provides a hands-on approach to fast-tracked professional development within a supportive environment.

Relational leadership also stresses relationships between people rather than power over them. Hosking (2011, 460–61, original emphasis) characterises the relational perspective as one based in '*ethics and local (interconnected and extended) pragmatics*' and demonstrated through open dialogue. This type of leadership requires ongoing abilities to listen attentively and non-judgementally. A sense of 'relational responsibility (rather than blaming others)' generates 'space for improvisation' (Hosking 2011, 461). Generating space for improvisation is a creative act that forms the basis of collaborative artistic work. The delicacy and temporal elements of this process cannot be underestimated, particularly when cross-cultural exchange is taken into account. Such an approach evokes the ways many NESB artists and multicultural organisations conduct their work and presents a process that builds cultural capability through cross-cultural partnerships.

Transformative leaders are perceived as charismatic and are valued for leading change in organisations because they generate trust in their vision (Hewison and Holden 2011, 31). This type of leader holds positional power and maintains it by persuasive and inspirational behaviours. Charismatic leadership was first used in a secular manner by sociologist Max Weber to describe the authority given to those who are perceived as 'extraordinary individuals [who offer] a transcendent purpose as their mission' (Conger 2011, 86). Artists who use their 'charisma' to transform how the world is perceived are often described as 'extraordinary'. The risk within institutions or organisations is that a charismatic leader's legacy for change can be short-lived. This is particularly an issue for leadership succession in multicultural arts. Alongside economic constraints, lower NESB participation rates in the arts suggest that there may be fewer opportunities to gain institutional or organisational roles as leaders.

Transactional leadership, on the other hand, is based on a transaction. To transact is to agree on an exchange. Transactional business leaders depend on their position and role within a company and tend towards a management style of leadership (Hewison and Holden 2011, 116). While transactional leadership is considered to be less nuanced because of its direct approach, undertaking effective negotiations that generate satisfactory transactions requires a certain amount of flair for influential communication. The useful side of transactional leadership, particularly given the precarity of the arts, is that the implied 'contract' requires explicit terms of agreement. Greater transactional leadership from arts funding institutions, for example, would satisfy calls for increased accountability from major arts organisations who need to demonstrate diversity as part of their funding agreement.

Activating Networks

These modes of leadership share a common factor. The quality of an influential leader is increasingly based on the ability to activate networks (Grint 2005). Each of the leadership styles above have in common the potential to develop and activate networks. One of the key qualities of leadership is the ability to broker relationships that form networks. Castells (2010, xxxvi), in his observation of the 'network society', finds that, despite the ubiquity and rapid proliferation of technological mediated communication systems, 'the intangible factor is still access to the micro-networks located in certain selective places, in what I named "milieus"'.

The value of the 'micro-network' is applicable to the NESB artist and the small multicultural arts organisation not only because of their size and the potential for extended international relationships, but also for the role they play in a multicultural arts milieu. In this respect, networks can be open or closed, and are closed when they are perceived as a clique with a tightly held membership (Carmichael 2011, 43). This can apply to both multicultural 'micro-networks', especially those that are ethno-specific, and the perception that some mainstream arts organisations are a 'closed circuit'.

A network is made up of people who support and influence each other through 'brokers as key actors [who] enable different patterns of social capital to develop' (Burt quoted in Carmichael 2011, 43). Social capital is widely recognised as the value attached to belonging to social groups and the ability to extend those groups. Putnam (2000, 19) defines it as the 'connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them'. He distinguishes two forms of social capital: bonding capital that functions like 'superglue' to hold groups together, and bridging capital that enables people to work together. Bourdieu includes an institutional component, articulating the functional level of positional influence to his definition:

> Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutional relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition. (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 119)

Both concepts of social capital concern the outcomes of effective leadership and participation, but with a different emphasis. Putnam focuses on the social aspect of exchange and trust, while Bourdieu emphasises the capital aspect of resources and influence. When viewed together, these offer insight into the role of the broker in network formation relevant to cross-cultural and intercultural arts practice. International case studies from arts institutions and S2M companies suggest that a new form of leadership is emerging in the UK that is inclusive and network-based, and recognises that 'the notion of "aesthetic leadership", requires new distributed leadership models' (Glow 2013, 132). Here, the link between creative practice, shared vision and responsibility, and the capacity to create, expand and maintain productive networks, articulates how the arts sector can remain relevant and reflexive in the work they produce.

Different levels of skills are needed at different times: for example, in navigating turbulence in arts funding and at the various stages of policy and artistic development cycles. This requires insight on the part of the leader to consult appropriately and foresight on the part of the manager to put programs in place that respond accordingly and to implement them effectively. Within the multicultural arts policy context, change is further complicated by shifts in political as well as demographic realities, requiring a high level of flexibility to respond to different political environments, social changes and artistic experimentation as they arise.

'Situated, strategic … transactional' (Noble 2009, 51) and cross-cultural capabilities are important attributes for navigating cultural difference. For those who champion and implement the arts in a multicultural Australia, they are essential skills. These skills would be variously nuanced based on whether the leader was in a creative, institutional or organisational position.

Creative Leadership

Creative leaders are artists recognised by their peers and the public as artists who generate new developments in creative content to explore—in this case—diversity arising from multicultural Australia. So as to be able explore that diversity, their roles as cultural brokers require cosmopolitan and cross-cultural competencies that are recognised/advocated as essential skills to creativity in a 'hyper-diverse' multicultural Australia (Mar and Ang 2015; Noble 2009). These skills are demonstrated by the artists I interviewed, yet, at times, their identities or artworks continue to meet resistance within arts systems. This resistance raises questions as to whether each aspect of the 'culture cycles' in the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (the Convention) can be found in Australia. Such 'culture cycles' represent a value chain encompassing the multiple phases in art production from education through to production and distribution (Mar and Ang 2015, 7). The low rates of employment in arts-related sectors indicates that NESB artists are absent from many of the decision-making areas within culture cycles. Yet, it is often these same artists who must generate their own opportunities as the main producers of content to explore and interpret a multicultural Australia. While these abilities reflect the entrepreneurial traits of NESB artists, we need to be cautious when sole responsibility

is placed onto underpaid multicultural artists to creatively contribute to more complex understandings of Australian society (Keating, Bertone and Leahy n.d., 13).

Nevertheless, new modes of creative leadership develop despite, or perhaps in part from, systemic constraints. The new creative modes recognise 'cultural diversity as an inescapable interactive context to which arts and cultural workers respond in their working processes' (Mar and Ang 2015, 8). The NESB artist works 'in-between' here in some ways. The context of the arts system may constrain, yet the multicultural society may inspire, and vice versa. It is through navigating and creatively activating these complex relationships that a supportive multicultural arts milieu becomes more palpable.

Intercultural Practice

One process that activates complex relationships is intercultural creative practice because it can co-produce spaces for change through such elements as traditional knowledge exchanges as well as experimentation. Intercultural practice facilitates and promotes creative results from cultural diversity, presenting challenges and opportunities. As Mar and Ang (2015, 8) observe: 'Artistic work can express this intrinsic diversity by mobilising the unpredictable interfaces of intercultural exchange, which can be found everywhere'. Risky and messy (unpredictable interfaces) and potentially hugely productive (found everywhere), creative innovation and diversity are thus linked.

Creative responses are often prompted by the tensions that exist between 'traditional' and 'contemporary' binaries in art discourse; frequently defined as 'hybrid', these form the basis of the creative trajectories of many NESB artists. This trajectory is a form of what Papastergiadis (2010, 7) terms 'translation', whereby cultural innovation becomes apparent through a 'robust process' that mutates, appropriates and reconfigures. This process involves a creative dialectical between forms and concepts that require rigorous inquiry and resolution to be 'robust'. In the context of migration and diversity, 'hybridising' is viewed as occurring 'when an entanglement and cultural mix is produced'; this facilitates 'innovating' when 'the entanglement enlightens a creative cultural innovation' (Chan Kwok-bun quoted in Morató, Zarlenga and Zamorano 2015, 4).

As I suggest below, this 'friction' generates energy that illuminates and encourages new ways of understanding different knowledge systems that enliven the arts.

In Australia, the visual arts and music have historically provided accessible forms of 'enlightened entanglement', in part because they can transcend language (Throsby and Hollister 2003, 23). Visual arts have the highest proportion of professional NESB artists at 16 per cent, while 8 per cent of NESB artists are composers and 7 per cent are writers (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017, 143). However, the artists and cultural practitioners that make up these data reach beyond issues of linguistics to encompass a 'language of representation … [that deals with] inclusions and exclusion in the narratives of the nation' (Gunew 2004, 19).

Cultural Brokers

Not all creative practitioners are in a position to engage in national narratives. The cultural broker holds a delicately balanced role in activating those all-important networks in the arts and cultural sectors. Cultural brokers originally worked with people to conserve the artefacts and processes celebrated as 'folk life', safeguarding intangible heritage (Jacobs 2014). Richard Kurin (1997, 17) of the Smithsonian Institute views the role as an institutional intermediary within the museum context. For him, cultural brokers engage in a specialised form of audience development, bringing audiences and what he calls 'culture bearers' together to translate and negotiate new and different cultural meanings. Kapetopoulos (2009, 13) depicts this as essential: in his view, arts administrators and marketers need to become cultural brokers, or seek out cultural brokers, when trying to reach Australia's multicultural audiences. The role of the broker in the arts becomes innovative in this example of audience development. This innovation also extends back to the artists themselves who, although not always acknowledged as such, are the primary cultural brokers (Babacan 2011, 18). Brokering can be reasonably direct through artist exchanges, yet can readily expand to encompass a vastly complex network. Elaborating on the complex scope of the role within a broad multicultural arts context, Gibson (2005, 272) explains that such a person needs to be able to:

> Broker combinations of cultural, cognitive, aesthetic and political factors; mesh a profusion of genres, individuals and communities; braid different strands of government and systems of power, different valences of allowance and impediment.

This lays out the daunting scope of work and articulates beautifully the set of relationships and factors that require attention, increasing our understanding of what contributes to 'relational' and 'distributive' leadership. These are the skills of creative leaders that NESB artists accumulate as cultural brokers. They form networks and articulate the need for access to other influential networks to further their practice (Stevenson et al. 2017; Gonsalves 2017). Thus, the broker, as artist or producer, lubricates the social, cultural, economic, political and, especially, creative realms of the arts towards a multicultural arts milieu.

Creative and Cultural Autonomy

The NESB artist, in carrying out brokering roles, moves between creating and interpreting, each of which carries a form of responsibility. At some point, the artist will try to assert autonomy over their practice. Creative and cultural autonomy here refers to the level of artistic control the artist can achieve through what is mostly an intercultural creative practice. The need to establish and maintain such autonomy is a key challenge faced by NESB artists, in large part because of the stereotyping, tensions and 'dumbing' down that result from limits placed on diversity in cultural representation that 'exclude more complex dynamics' (Mar and Ang 2015, 7). One of these limits is the artist's position as a representative of an ethnic group because it denies:

> The relative aesthetic autonomy that is understood by white artists to be their right, an autonomy that takes as its core the idea of art and art's entire history, not a narrow anthropological notion of culture. (Fisher 2010, 64–65)

The discourse of creative practice typically positions NESB artists within the community arts sector (Hawkins 1993, 86–88; Blonski 1994, 199) to the extent that multicultural arts have been seen to equate to 'community arts', which sits outside the perceived canon of 'excellence' (Kalantzis and Cope 1994, 14–19). Notwithstanding the fact that only 7 per cent of NESB artists work in a professional capacity in community and cultural development, some NESB artists still find this perception attached to them (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017, 143). At the 2017 Beyond Tick Boxes symposium, NESB artists expressed the concern that:

> Their culturally specific art practices are difficult to articulate to grant assessors, art galleries and theatre producers who see their artform as part of a cultural practice, better suited to the community arts realm than the mainstream arts world. (Castagna 2017)

Clearly, some ambiguity still exists regarding what is recognised as a professional arts practice and some residual stigma is still attached to ethno-specific arts practices. Regardless of their practice, NESB artists and arts workers must be consummate networkers across creative disciplines and sector structures. To work creatively 'across cultures', therefore, requires confidence and empathy: confidence in one's creative pursuits, confidence to address the structures of the creative sector, and empathy to engage and communicate cross-culturally.

Institutional Leadership

The institutions in the creative sector (state, territory and federal government funding agencies) form a crucial part of the system of state patronage in the arts, particularly in the Australian context, which has limited philanthropic engagement in the creative sector. The Australian subsidised arts sector is closely aligned with the funding and advisory role of the institution of the Australia Council, the key federal government arts funding agency. Institutional leadership in this context refers to how staff and artist peers might lead the policy and grant decision processes of the Australia Council.

Intermediaries

The internal cultures of these arts ministries and the Australia Council form their own microcosms—internal and external networks that broker resources into the sector. They make and facilitate decisions about the allocation of resources. Within these microcosms are 'intermediaries who "connect or disconnect" people to resources from the common purse': 'people who assess works of art, who select media programs, film projects or edit news' (Totaro 1991, 4). As Totaro (1991, 4) explains, such people 'need to be able to understand a cultural milieu of increasing diversity and complexity. How do our institutions expand their corporate knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity?'

Recognition and inclusion of NESB artists as professionals needs to go hand in hand with the professionalisation of institutions. Institutions need to be diverse in their programming, governance and staff at all levels; they need staff who not only understand but also accept their roles as institutional intermediaries. Ahmed (2012) suggests that this is a form

of 'institutional will', referring to the future tense in which the institution articulates what it 'is willing to do' by allocating an additional investment. The process to reach institutional commitment can be a cause of friction but contains within it the potential to be 'transformational' (Ahmed 2012, 128).

However, transactional leadership is more frequently found in bureaucracies with their vertical, hierarchical structures. These types of leaders occasionally provide charismatic and even transformational leadership, but are usually associated with stability; to briefly return to Foucault's metaphor, they keep the ship on course and the shop in profit. The impetus in bureaucracies is to maintain the status quo, as Machiavelli (quoted in Nadon 2013, 4) observed:

> There is no more delicate matter to take in hand, nor more dangerous to conduct, nor more doubtful in its success, than to set up as the leader in the introduction of changes.

Transactional leaders are likely to use 'coercive' power on occasion to drive organisational change (Grint 2005, 28). A transactional business relationship relevant to multicultural arts would be one in which Australia Council funding included conditions tied explicitly to cultural diversity outcomes in staff employment and artistic content. This approach is similar to the type of contractual arrangement operating at Arts Council England. There are some precedents in the Australian arts context. Screen Australia has included specific gender and diversity considerations in their assessment criteria (Screen Australia 2017). Specific protocols for non-Indigenous artists to work with Indigenous artists have also been developed by the Australia Council (Janke 2016). Protocols via formal mechanisms such as these generate a simulacrum of trust or lead to an environment in which trust can occur, because many of the issues regarding the relationship and outcomes have been considered and clarified. In these instances, 'transparency' is a mechanism that establishes trust.

Being Diverse

Another way to gauge an institution's internal commitment to cultural diversity is through employment data published in annual reports, because staff of diverse heritages demonstrate '*being diversity*' (Ahmed 2012, 49, original emphasis). Recent data suggests a drop from 15.4 per cent in 2014–15 to 11.2 per cent in 2016–17 of Australia Council staff who

'identify as culturally and linguistically diverse' (CALD), the current term favoured by government (Australia Council 2017a, 90). The Australia Council reports that 700 peers were registered in 2016–17 to assess grant applications and, of those, 21 per cent identified as CALD. In comparison, 25 per cent were regional and remotely based (Australia Council 2017b, 50), 18 per cent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, and 6 per cent identified as living with a disability (Australia Council 2017b, 90). These staff figures indicate a decline in staff diversity while the peer figures show that efforts have been made to include culturally diverse artist peers, and suggests that the internal responsibilities to ensure peer appointments has generated traction over time to become a matter of course within the agency.

The Australia Council can consult with, and incorporate, its constituency in the process of forming policy and actions. For example, until 2008, the Australia Council sought expert advice on the arts in a multicultural Australia from ACMAC. Ahmed (2012, 31) describes two relationships between people and committees established for advocacy and change: one aims to attract and keep diversity advocates on important committees and the other seeks to have influential people on diversity committees. This duality presents a strategically durable way to influence change across an institution and is relevant to its governance.

Organisational Leadership

Within the multicultural arts focus of this book, organisational leadership refers to those in positions of influence in arts organisations funded by the Australia Council who seek to include and support NESB artists through the use of creative and financial resources. Arts organisations span the unevenly subsided arts sector. They range from S2M arts companies, including a handful of multicultural arts organisations, to major performing arts companies or major visual arts museums. Arts organisations may have a broad 'mainstream' remit or they may be dedicated to the specific promotion of NESB artists. Calls for mainstream organisations to demonstrate cultural diversity in their people and programs are also underpinned by questions of how they allocate their resources (Castagna 2017). The issue of the ability of mainstream arts to 'multiculturalise'—a useful alternative term akin to 'multiculturalization' (Noble 2011, 833)—comes to the fore in discussions of large flagship arts

organisations, and, by the same token, the issue of marginalisation comes to the fore in discussions of smaller multicultural arts organisations. Multiculturalising can be considered a cautious process that avoids creative exchanges and being 'usurped by elite culture while the peripheries remain precisely where they are' (Gertsakis 1994, 45). The danger is that of 'inscribing one knowledge at the obliterative expense of another' (Gibson 2005, 273). In describing their framework for 'utopian co-production' between academia and community, Bell and Pahl (2018, 108) are wary of practices in which 'forms of knowledge co-production are diluted or repressed'. These concerns highlight the issues around 'shared' knowledge and critique some of the results of so-called mainstreaming to increase the visibility of cultural difference in the arts. Notions of mainstreaming must be treated cautiously because organisations:

> Are not ready for it: to act as if mainstreaming is the case, because it should be the case, can be counterproductive because the conditions are not available in the present *to make it the case.* (Ahmed 2012, 138, original emphasis)

Here, the issues of timeliness, context and organisational culture are necessary precursors to an organisation's values and programs being able to accept cultural difference. However, both mainstream and multicultural organisations have different roles and must be accommodated and supported for their respective roles. The leadership skills within mainstream arts organisations bring resources to a broader presentation of the work. Multicultural arts organisations (although few in number) bring resources to develop the creative potential of artists. Both types of organisation have the potential to establish, develop and maintain partnerships that aim to alter the balance of artworks that influence and contribute to an understanding of multicultural Australia.

The relational mode offers the potential for more creative leadership when cross-cultural, intercultural and intra-cultural art is being developed, and is appropriate when new approaches to an issue involve that issue's stakeholders. This has the potential to result in longer-term social change:

> Leadership as a social process can be defined as a process of dynamic collaboration, where individuals and authorised members authorize themselves and others to interact in ways that experiment with new forms of intellectual and emotional meaning. (Gemmill and Oakley quoted in Grint 2005, 28)

This social process is most likely to be adopted by 'relational' leaders who emphasise the 'quality of the relationship between the leader and the led … seen in terms of a group of people moving forward together' (Hewison and Holden 2011, 31).

The concept of 'accompaniment' is also relevant here because it builds on the relational process and adroitly avers the artificial notion of the leader and the led. The ethos of 'leadership as accompaniment' stems from the theology of liberation and Archbishop Òscar Romero's work with the campesinos of El Salvador. As Tomlinson and Lipsitz (2013, 9) explain: 'Accompaniment is a disposition, a sensibility, and a pattern of behavior. It is both a commitment and a capacity that can be cultivated'. Accompaniment is viewed as a partnership whereby professionally trained people share their skills and the people needing such skills 'offer lessons of a different kind of experience' (Lynd and Lynd 2009, 93). Accompaniment resonates with the creative pursuits of music, voice or performance of any kind. The use of accompaniment is apt to address issues of isolation, lack of access to the mainstream and increasing professional artistic practice for NESB artists because it is based in shared experience. There is also a resonance with community and cultural development practices that engage with community issues through creative exchange with a view to social and cultural change—to make the world a 'better place'. Accompaniment aims to create 'new social relationships that enacted the utopian hopes that religion and radical politics had previously only envisioned' (Tomlinson and Lipsitz 2013, 11).

Gibson's notion of 'attunement' takes us further along this concept as a way to specifically address the range of practices, protocols and 'babble of languages' that may be found in projects that are co-produced by any number of diverse artists. For Gibson (2005, 272–73), attunement is a 'patient and experimental process of listening and signalling, listening and altering … [to form] hybrid knowledge'. These two concepts (accompaniment and attunement) resonate with how those in creative and organisational roles may co-produce an expanded multicultural arts milieu.

Navigating towards a Multicultural Arts Milieu

It could, but does not yet, follow that, because we are a multicultural society, the art that is produced here reflects the complexity of our society. A multicultural arts milieu could engage with the creative potential afforded by a multicultural society. French philosophers Deleuze and

Guattari combine the three French meanings of 'milieu'—'"surroundings", "medium" [as in chemistry] and "middle"' (Massumi quoted in Deleuze and Guattari 1987, ix). One of their propositions is that 'rhythm is the milieu's answer to chaos' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 314). Their depiction of milieu suggests that it temporarily arranges a constantly dynamic world. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, 144), on the other hand, consider that a milieu is created through social relations of those in positions of power or influence to 'mirror' each back to the other: 'The relation to the social world is not the mechanical causality between 'milieu' and a consciousness, but rather a sort of ontological complicity'. Both of these depictions of milieu are appropriate for my purposes. 'Milieu' is the social context in which one finds oneself and one's peers, including systems to encourage or constrain a positive creative environment.

This ideal milieu would be aided by imaginative policy that views 'multiculturalism as an aesthetic issue' (Rizvi 2003, 135). Our dynamic and hybrid social realities mean that there is no one group of experts to hold the breadth of knowledge about multicultural arts practices across all artforms. Systems can be put in place to enable contributions to the governance of arts policy by NESB artists. As Mosquera (2003, 23) observes in the debates around cultural diversity, a 'key point is who exerts the cultural decision and on whose benefit it is taken'.

It is NESB artists' persistence that makes up an Australian multicultural arts scene; this, in turn, re-generates and creates the space and provenance to widen that milieu, enabling a set of practices to move into circulation (Ahmed 2012, 29–32). A continuous and contiguous history of production and presentation alters, permeates and shifts the boundaries of how multicultural arts 'circulate' and may generate a more supportive multicultural arts milieu.

For the individual practitioner, a cosmopolitan outlook can be viewed as a personal attribute; however, to produce a multicultural arts milieu, it is valuable to consider cosmopolitanism as a set of practices that can 'habituate open-ness to others' or, indeed, produce sites that 'foster forms of intercultural belonging' (Noble 2009, 51). Artist processes and presentations that are relevant to a multicultural Australia contribute to the production of such sites, which in turn foster the environment for multicultural arts practices. In order to foster such sites and practices, artists and multicultural arts organisations bring a cooperative approach to their cross-cultural creative work and involve their creative and ethnic networks.

It is reasonable to expect that the one (NESB artists making the work) will flow into the other (a general arts experience that describes a multicultural Australia). This is similar to the difference between intellectual and academic work as viewed by UK cultural theorist and activist, Stuart Hall (quoted in Ang 2015, 31): 'they overlap, they abut each other, they feed off one another, the one provides you with the means to do the other. But they are not the same thing'. Although describing a different set of worlds and practices, this could be seen to parallel the relationship between artist as activist and multicultural creative production as organisational change. The artist develops the organisation that provides the chance for the artist and future generations to keep on developing. Ideally, this could create a supportive milieu formed from relationships between artists, 'academies', agencies of government, arts organisations and audiences.

Constraints to the Ideal

A recurring historical narrative that hinders a flourishing multicultural arts milieu is the perception that multicultural arts comes from NESB artists working as community arts workers (Hawkins 1993; Blonski 1992, 1994; Gunew and Rizvi 1994). While recognised as the door through which the 'ethnic artist' could participate in subsidised arts, Community Arts and Cultural Development (CACD) processes are rarely valued as artistically 'excellent' because the benefits to the specific 'community' take precedence over artistic outcomes. The general public have limited access to the work, which limits wider recognition and creative traction. The perception that NESB artists are prevalent in CACD employment is challenged by data that show that only 7 per cent work in this area. Nevertheless, these associations may well be activated and reinvigorated as local governments increase support to arts and culture. *Edge of Elsewhere*, a multi-year and multi-sited international and intercultural visual arts project at Campbelltown Arts Centre in Western Sydney and 4A (now the Centre for Contemporary Asian Australia Arts) in inner Sydney, brought NESB and Indigenous artists into collaboration with community members to produce high-quality visual arts (Edge of Elsewhere n.d.). The creative outcomes of this ambitious project were made possible, in part, because of the '30 years of socially engaged arts activity in western Sydney' (Mar and Ang 2015, 55). The same is true with regard to Asian-Australian visual artists. Both point to the value of continuous organisational leadership in multicultural arts.

The support of family peers and networks are also essential to the systems that independent artists create around themselves to shore up their precarious existence and precarious art practice:

> Precarity is the condition of being vulnerable to others. Unpredictable encounters transform us; we are not in control, even of ourselves. Unable to rely on a stable structure of community, we are thrown into shifting assemblages, which remake us as well as our others. (Tsing 2015, 20)

Tsing elucidates precarity beyond unequal economic scenarios and emphasises the productive connections that can potentially occur between those very different to us. The existence of networks that build trust across those interfaces contribute to successful multicultural art projects. Permission from the family, for example, emerged as an important factor for second-generation NESB artists in their career path regardless of their ethnic background or class status; this mirrors the findings specific to Arab-Australian male artists (Idriss 2018).

The value of peer support and networks is a common issue: for example, 50 per cent of NESB respondents identified their most important need as being the opportunity to meet other artists (Stevenson et al. 2017, 54). An isolated artist cannot share their experiences and often internalises a sense of inadequacy. The response by artists to the Beyond Tick Boxes workshop organised by Diversity Arts Australia in 2017 raised this issue and attests to the need for artists to have opportunities to come together and try to make sense of their experiences. A multicultural arts milieu would see these opportunities at national, state and local levels regularly established in the arts calendar, similar to the bi-annual national regional arts conference.

A persistent issue encountered by the individual artist, and one that also plays out in public, is that of typecasting and stereotyping. Being typecast, stereotyped, cast in minority roles or not cast at all is a longstanding issue for NESB actors in theatre and on screen in Australia (Bertone, Keating and Mullaly 1998, xi). Twenty years on, a lack of opportunity remains the common experience for many NESB actors (Screen Australia 2017). Lewis (2007) sparked controversy around the lack of multicultural actors (adopting Hage's [2000] term of 'Third-World Looking People') on Australian stages and screens. This situation, if changed, would help to reframe the representation of Australia's national identity. Lewis (2007, 41) argues that the frequency with which NESB actors are cast in minority

roles is 'akin to [the] spatial marginalisation of ethnic groups in cities'. Linking these two forms of cultural and spatial ghettos crystallises the sense of invisibility experienced by many actors.

Critical Appraisal and Appreciation

All artists want exposure for their work, yet access to extended networks and avenues of support to facilitate that exposure is often absent for NESB artists. Art criticism is interpretation and evaluation of an art project made public. Critical appreciation is extremely difficult to achieve in Australia because, as arts critic and writer Alison Croggon (2016a) observes, public discourse about art prefers 'to shore up the status quo rather than to question, to expand, to educate, to inquire, to imagine better'. There may also be resistance to writing about NESB artists, and, when such writing occurs, often a snide comment undermines the multicultural aspect of the work. In a critique of a review of *Fragments*, a book of poetry by Antigone Kefala (2016) in the *Sydney Review of Books*, Sneja Gunew argues that the reviewer takes an ill-informed standpoint from which to provide an impoverished review that, without basis, dismisses Kefala's work. Gunew (2017a) sees this as an example of the 'stereotypic methods … [by which] many Australian writers of non-Anglo-Celtic background get treated by the gatekeepers of Australian literature'.

Edge of Elsewhere raised the level of critical debate through a range of media and events. The project was afforded public circulation and attention through its inclusion in three annual programs of the popular Sydney Festival of the Arts, demonstrating how the general public can be brought into dialogue with culturally diverse practices. The processes and resources dedicated to this project and the longevity of practice in the local area points to what a momentary supportive multicultural arts milieu generates, and, in parallel, exemplifies the 'whole cycle' of the UNESCO Convention (Mar and Ang 2015, 60).

The Role of Friction, Trust and Traction

The preceding discussion suggests that the metaphors of friction, trust and traction provide a way to consider how to extend a multicultural arts milieu beyond the momentary.

Encountering Friction

Friction is a force that has several dimensions. It is the 'rubbing of two bodies (physical and mechanical); the resistance a body encounters when moving over one another; clash of wills, temperaments, opinions' (*Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1982, 393). For example, sandpaper rubbing over wood results in the alteration of both materials, oil is used to reduce friction in an engine, and disagreements or conflict can cause friction between people. All energetic exchanges will produce friction generating 'heat' as a by-product. In innovation and management studies, friction is seen to aid innovation through 'abrasion', whereby people are brought onto a project because they cause 'discomfort' and can present divergent views that may lead to new solutions. Friction in organisations can also help to identify when things are being made 'too hard to do' (Sutton and Seelig 2017).

The positioning of NESB artists and multicultural arts production within the Australia Council can be characterised by the type of friction that makes things 'hard to do' (Sutton and Seelig 2017). The causes of such friction can arise from pressure from multiple sources, including federal government policies on multiculturalism; arts funding; migrant constituencies; council staff and board members; and the perceptions of, and by, NESB artists. There has, at times, been fierce, internal resistance as to the need for 'special treatment' of migrants, ethnics or NESB artists (depending on the terms of the day) that has required articulate and influential leadership on the part of those wanting to encourage arts practices that reflect Australia's multicultural reality (Blonski 1992; Hawkins 1993; Sammers 1999).

The theme of friction and its role in generating creativity emerged through my analysis of AMA policies and the refrains of my interviewees who complained about the lack of change in the arts sector and the typecasting of artists in terms of their background. The processes of intercultural practice and negotiation for creative and cultural autonomy reflect how artists respond to those constraints. Anna Tsing (2005, 4–5), writing on 'contingent encounters', argues that 'cultures are continually co-produced in the intersections I call 'friction': the awkward, unequal, unstable and creative qualities of interconnection across difference'. Navigating the 'awkward, unequal' and competing aspects of innovation and maintenance of cultural heritage encapsulates the practices of some NESB artists. Innovation is a synthesis of fresh ideas into new forms of production that resonate within contemporary society. Cultural heritage is 'collective

memory made tangible' that surfaces through forms of 'expression, maintenance, representation, recognition and renewal' (Anheier and Isar 2007, 30). These characteristics are frequently positioned as mutually exclusive binaries for multicultural arts practices, yet they present valuable opportunities through the capacity to generate creative responses.

The slow pace of change regarding representation is a 'glacial' friction that grinds over and eventually alters the landscape. The outer edges (or margins) at times move more quickly and generate greater friction and heat to produce some change in the landscape, while the centre (or the mainstream) moves far more slowly. The pertinent simile for NESB creative leadership in this scenario is that the margins 'melt' into a new fluid form more readily than the more static centre.

Establishing Trust

Trust is established 'when you do what you say you would do' (Punt and Bateman 2018, 39). This includes fulfilling those aims ethically and confirming whether the 'processes, platforms and people' are in place to achieve those aims (Punt and Bateman 2018, 39). It is arguable that past decades of friction, whether experienced by NESB artists, the arts sector or government (or its agencies), have produced a lack of mutual trust. Trust can be succinctly defined as a 'specific solution to risk' required when faced with an unfamiliar situation from which 'a bad outcome would make you regret your action' (Luhmann 2000, 95, 98). Arts funding institutions develop complicated procedures to assess and weed out risky clients, including those whose work is unfamiliar. If the artist is trusted (with the resources) and delivers on their grant obligations, their chances for repeat opportunities increase. This relationship between trust and risk is pertinent to the establishment of a multicultural arts milieu in several ways. The encouragement of the culturally unfamiliar would open up new creative possibilities and the allocation of (or trust with) resources would provide adequate support for the unfamiliar.

Weltecke also suggests that trust can be developed to reduce risk. While 'culturally constructed', trust may lead to an 'efficiency' of cooperation:

> 'Trust' can be seen as a specific combination of cultural practices, of emotional and rational phenomena, and of specific ideas and values connected with these practices and phenomena. Theories of trust might serve as a tool to become aware of the human ability to cooperate. (Weltecke 2008, 391)

Trust, therefore, becomes a multifaceted issue for some NESB artists that can be developed through the process of 'attunement' (Gibson 2005). Trust must be developed and present for an intergenerational, intercultural understanding that takes into account respect for knowledge holders and, as outlined above, manages that knowledge effectively to develop 'beyond' ethno-specific norms and contexts. Mutual trust for multicultural arts needs to be evident in many directions—from Australia Council staff and advisers to ethnic, migrant or NESB artists, arts organisations and vice versa, as well as the general public. If mutual trust becomes evident between these parties, the possibilities for a broader multicultural arts milieu increase.

Generating Traction

Traction describes the process whereby things can move in a desired direction by employing friction at the interface between two or more elements. Traction relies upon friction between these components or agents in a system and, if used tactically, can produce a trajectory towards a desired outcome. I use traction here to indicate movement towards a more supportive multicultural arts milieu. Traction in this sense is a result of a cultural and social understanding of the friction arising from the constraints and opportunities experienced by NESB artists and arts organisations.

The issue is how to manage exchanges that generate 'heat' towards a positive outcome while avoiding a destructive one. The process of establishing trust can determine the trajectory in a creative manner and, in time, generate traction towards something more stable and robust. The role of trust acts as a hinge that articulates and enables communication between the range of players in any given multicultural art project. There are many moments in that process where trust needs to be evident or established for an entire project to be successfully realised. Trust is publicly established when the artwork engages with, and is relevant for, diverse audiences. Contributions to those processes of developing traction include research that aims to educate artists and arts professionals alike. Such research includes *The World is Your Audience* (Migliorino 1998), *Who Goes There* (Kapetopoulos 2004), *Adjust Your View Toolkit* (Kapetopoulos 2009) and the Multicultural Arts Marketing Ambassadors program (Australia Council 2001, 21). Presenting culturally diverse content indicates

attentiveness to culturally diverse audiences, which can have the effect of increasing the trust between creative work, presenters and audiences. These relationships enliven a multicultural arts milieu.

Conclusion

Despite investment in leadership courses by agencies such as the Australia Council, members of the arts sector, including NESB artists, continue to call for 'better leadership' (Castagna 2017; Gonsalves 2017; Badami 2017). A 'traditional' view is that leaders require a vision or direction, the capacity to engender trust in that vision and the ability to influence the group (of whatever size) to achieve their goal. The calls for better arts sector leadership raise questions about the ways in which directions for the arts are determined or led, and how any policies arising from those directions are implemented or managed.

Such calls suggest leadership styles that acknowledge the crucial role of relationships and reflect and assist the interconnected nature of contemporary society. Distributed leadership, for example, identifies how different skill sets in members of a group are activated to lead depending on the circumstances (Hewison and Holden 2011, 39). Relational leadership promotes open dialogue that shares responsibility between the people involved to generate innovative ideas. This approach suits a creative practice that innovates particularly between a range of cultures because it opens dialogue and shuts down judgement (30). Transformative leaders are charismatic and able to galvanise people to trust in their vision. These types of leaders are possibly more prevalent in creative arts organisations, as the arts often attracts those who wish to, or are comfortable to, 'stand out'. When the charismatic leader leaves, however, their galvanising abilities leave with them—often before their changes have been fully implemented (29–30). Transactional leadership, on the other hand, is a useful option, as it can provide a more explicit contractual basis to tie conditions of arts funding, thereby moving beyond personal preference to public expectation (29).

NESB artists and cultural practitioners are leading the arts in a multicultural Australia, in particular those who create new meanings through their relations with cultural groups. Their need to be adaptive and develop trust so as to be able to generate collaborations responds to the constraints of persistent under-representation and lower funding

allocations (Keating, Bertone and Leahy n.d.). In this regard, each of the leadership styles discussed in this chapter are relevant at particular times in the full realisation of the UNESCO 'culture cycles' that will nurture a supportive, broader multicultural arts milieu. Crucially, it is also through the establishment of, and access to, networks for NESB artists and cultural practitioners that they will find themselves in a more generative environment. In that regard, the processes of 'accompaniment' (Lynd and Lynd 2009; Tomlinson and Lipsitz 2013) and 'attunement' (Gibson 2005) are skills worth cultivating. In all these instances, issues of 'trust' (how to *generate* it) and 'friction' (how to *exploit* it to gain traction) are central.

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