Epilogue: Towards a Supportive Multicultural Arts Milieu

Despite over 40 years of multicultural arts policy, my research shows that the issue of participation by non–English speaking background (NESB) artists and arts practices remains fraught. The term 'non–English speaking background' or 'NESB' has been critiqued because it positions those with that label as linguistically incomplete in terms of the dominant English language. While acknowledging this issue, I use it precisely because it positions the 'non' as a distinguishing factor and as a way to 'reinscribe the negativity' (Papastergiadis, Gunew and Blonski 1994, 128). Diverse notions of leadership have been considered so as to analyse the challenges faced by artists in a multicultural Australia, and to help foster greater participation by NESB artists and multicultural arts practices. My research aims to provide artists and arts workers with a record of their multicultural historical precedents and scalable options for professional pathways. It may also provide bureaucrats and decision-makers with theoretical discourses and case studies that demonstrate innovation.

Transactional, transformational, distributed and relational modes of leadership help to navigate the perennial issues associated with cultural difference in the arts and create a move towards a supportive and supported multicultural arts milieu. The practices of 'accompaniment' and 'attunement' enhance these leadership modes because they extend the possibilities of how trust can be established between individuals, institutions and organisations. Trust is seen as the hinge that alters the artists' experiences of friction to generate traction for change in multicultural arts policy and practices. The idea of a multicultural arts

milieu helps to generate understanding of the cultural, social and political issues experienced by artists, and helps leaders to think differently about ways of increasing NESB participation in the arts.

Transactional, transformational, distributed and relational modes of leadership could be activated to realise the creative potential offered by Australia's ethnic diversity. Transactional leadership articulates expectations and ties the use of resources, including public funds, towards increasing the production and presentation of multicultural arts practices. I also suggest that funds should increasingly be directed towards NESB artists and groups rather than current practices that favour allocating 'diversity' funds to MPAs.

Transformational leadership employs charismatic personalities to effect change in groups or organisations by mobilising others' momentum towards high-profile, but often short-term, change. The charismatic personality in the multicultural arts sector is the representative who speaks up and out. Distributed leadership shares and alternates the lead role, depending on the skills needed to generate change. It can be found in multicultural arts groups or advocates whose resources are thinly spread, but who have a high degree of internal trust among group members, as was the case with kultour. Relational leadership results in longer-term change because it is based on relationship building across all levels of an organisation to identify and resource others to address specific issues. This mode of leadership is especially relevant in the institutional settings of policy development and implementation as in the Arts in a Multicultural Australia (AMA) 2000 policy process. Relational leadership can generate change in established arts organisations that are challenged to maintain attention towards cultural difference in the arts, as is the case with Contemporary Asian Australian Performance (CAAP) and Playwriting Australia's (PWA) Lotus program in relation to mainstage companies.

Each of these modes will benefit from 'accompaniment' and 'attunement'. The concept of accompaniment draws on Lynd and Lynd's (2009, 93) work; it recognises the skills and life experience that each person brings to the process of participation. In the case of a playwright and a mainstage theatre director, for example, this mutual recognition will enhance equitable knowledge sharing to benefit both artist and company. Attunement is adapted from Gibson's (2005, 272) observations concerning the complexity of understanding across multiple cultural experiences. Attunement provides a way into sensitive adjustments and amplification

of issues and practices that also benefit intercultural practices. These modes and traits are all capabilities that develop through experience and supportive networks, and are most likely to be found in people in the arts already committed to seeing change in the multicultural arts milieu. The problem, then, is how best to see these capabilities develop to a greater extent as leadership capacities for multicultural arts practices.

Three domains of arts leadership have been considered: creative, institutional and organisational. Institutional leadership appears to be waning. Therefore, change towards a productive multicultural arts milieu is most effectively achieved through exercising creative leadership in combination with organisational leadership. Creative leadership refers to the role of individual artists in making new pathways for their colleagues. Organisational leadership refers to the role that leaders in arts organisations can bring to the extension of their programs and influence towards a productive and supportive multicultural arts milieu. The most productive types of leadership that generate this influence (and within a tangible timeframe) bring the creative leadership of NESB artists into partnership with resourced arts organisations resulting in organisational leadership for the arts in a multicultural Australia. This idea moves beyond the 'placement' method (where an artist resides for a time within an organisation) to a partnership model in which the knowledge, experience and networks of each partner are shared and work in tandem to produce and present artworks that reflect and respond to a multicultural Australia.

Policy, Problems and Practices

My analysis of the relationship between Australian arts and cultural policies and the fostering of creative practices among NESB artists leads me to conclude that there is no longer an explicit national policy directing attention to NESB artists. Consequently, many NESB artists have taken up the mantle for broader arts sector change through their own practices. It is worth exploring whether Australian multicultural arts policies enabled the 'mainstream' to change and/or whether artists continue to work in marginalised spaces. The AMA 2000 and 2006 policies aimed to address issues of participation of NESB artists through kultour, the Multicultural Arts Professional Development (MAPD) program and regular conferencing. These initiatives no longer exist; therefore, artists

continue to drive change. Many artists, such as Shun Wah, Koukias and Valamanesh, prefer to be considered as part of the 'mainstream' while others, such as Ramilo, prefer to stay on the margins, which they view as a much 'more interesting place to be'. The role of focused multicultural arts organisations such as kultour (now Diversity Arts Australia) and CAAP is valuable in generating a supportive networked environment that can broker wider exposure for artists.

The ways in which artists maintain their arts practices and draw on their hybrid and multiple identities will describe, influence and critique Australia's cultural landscape. These art practices highlight the types of leadership that foster the expression of the complexity of identity in contemporary Australia.

As is to be expected, NESB artists participate to a greater extent in non–linguistic based artforms (Throsby and Petetskaya 2017, 147). However, fluctuating and low levels of participation are curiously found in the community arts sector (Throsby and Zednick 2010, 24; Throsby and Petetskaya 2017, 143). Data on community arts participation are in marked contrast to historical and current arts sector perceptions that NESB artists work predominantly in ethnic communities (Gonsalves 2017). Such data would benefit from further research, as they raise questions about changing levels of NESB artists' participation and how ethnic communities' arts engagement is being creatively facilitated.

Multicultural Arts Milieu

The idea of a 'multicultural arts milieu' represents a new use of a concept that refers to the social context of organisational and informal networks that encourage or constrain a creative environment. It is the environment that helps to define, organise and maintain the relations of interaction in any given context. A supportive multicultural arts milieu would resource and engage with the creative potential afforded by a multicultural society (see Image 24).

Image 24: Bong Ramilo with Pia De Compiegne, 1991, launch of the New South Wales Multicultural Arts Association

Photographer: New South Wales Community Arts Association

The idea of a multicultural arts milieu developed as a means of analysing the lack of change for inclusion in the arts expressed by many NESB artists. A milieu moves the discussion into a different register—beyond the focus on individuals' experiences, the responsibilities of arts organisations and/or the institutional relations that are typically foregrounded in arts governance. The artists who were interviewed for this project, regardless of the stage of their careers, appeared confident in their creative and personal identities, but articulated concerns about perception and the lack of knowledge about their arts practices in their arts environment. For example, they complained about being ethnically typecast on stage or screen or through their practice, and about having to balance expectations regarding the creative use of their cultural heritage in an industry that fails to understand their practices. Many also articulated a desire for peer and family support networks.

A multicultural arts milieu can be used to gauge changes within an arts environment, such as whether the milieu can encompass the increasing numbers of artists who express multiple identities and how artists keep pace with changes in intercultural arts practices. The concept of a multicultural arts milieu contests the perception that multicultural arts are outmoded and static, and provides a way to locate the dynamic shifts of arts practice. The idea opens up possibilities across the arts spectrum for practitioners to consider how they may wish to contribute to an environment that holds all the aspects of UNESCO's 'culture cycles' in play (Mar and Ang 2015, 11). A supportive multicultural arts milieu could become an open invitation to participate—to provide spaces for collaboration, negotiation, new ideas and active profiling of multicultural arts work.

The idea was also developed in part through the Australia Council's reluctance to engage in a transparent manner with multicultural issues. A supportive multicultural arts milieu does not deny the history of embattled discourse. Instead (and even if, for some artists, their experience may remain embattled), conceptually, it offers a chance for the Australia Council to exert an influential role beyond that of the 'instrumental' (Blonski 1992, 3). The most agile approaches contributing to the milieu are those discussed in Chapter 6, whereby creative and organisational leadership combines to make a systemic difference (these are also charted in Appendices 4 and 5) in the development, production and presentation of culturally diverse arts. The impetus for this particular case study's process was stimulated by the friction caused by the marginalised position of Asian-Australian actors and performance on the mainstage.

My conclusions reflect on the role of friction and the function of trust to generate traction towards sustained change in the arts, and the modes of leadership that can cultivate that traction.

Creative Use of Friction

The metaphor of 'friction' contains the potential for productive and creative results as a source of inspiration and innovation and I have used this metaphor to explain some of the creative, social and political experiences of NESB artists working in Australia today. The practices reveal creative choices across a complex spectrum of arts and artforms. Despite this, many mainstream major performing arts companies retain a heritage arts view of multicultural arts, which perpetuates a historical association with cultural maintenance, demarcating multicultural arts from mainstream arts (Blonski 1992; Hawkins 1993; Khan et al. 2013). Some NESB artists, even international experts in specific traditional artforms, feel that the arts industry sees them as relevant primarily to ethnic community cultural maintenance (Gonsalves 2017). One response to this is that, over the decades, NESB artists have explored artistic innovation through a spectrum of creative processes. The spectrum ranges from ethno-specific to intra-cultural to bicultural to intercultural to cross-cultural and, more recently, to transcultural categories. These 'multicultural arts' or 'hybrid' practices are at the forefront of collaborative practices that engage with the complex multiplicity of Australian ethnic and cultural identities. I argue that the creative developments of artists who engage across ethnically defined cultures dynamically increases the multicultural arts repertoire. The range of that repertoire, often developed through a creativity arising from friction between cultural forms, whether innovative or traditional, positions these practices into a more 'everyday' experience of how art-based cross-cultural interactions can occur.

Far from seeing friction as inherently problematic, the nature of artistic practice and multicultural challenges to settled notions of identity show how friction can be creatively, organisationally and politically productive. The frictions around multicultural arts policy recur in cycles, and these begin when artists critique their creative environments and funding institutions, which, nationally, is primarily the Australia Council, and when they acknowledge and direct attention to their issues. This attention invariably wanes when the Australia Council shifts its focus elsewhere;

historically, this cycle repeats itself when faced with the continuing issues raised by NESB artists. Television and stage actor and presenter Lex Marinos (2015, interview) notes that calls for change by practitioners within the performing arts industry occur every four or five years. The institutional cycle appears to take around 10 years, because each decade since the 1970s has seen a renewed push for change by practitioners. This cycle began again in 2017 (DARTS 2017).

The contributions that arise from discourse and advocacy are valuable; however, I argue that the most effective results stem from the presentation of artworks that successfully engage with Australian cultural difference. In this way, the artist takes on a sociopolitical as well as creative leadership role in the multicultural arts milieu that, in part, requires them to develop trusting relationships with any number of agencies and partners.

Establishing Trust

The productive nature of friction is most evident when there are established relations of trust between the multicultural arts milieu and the wider arts scene, between artists, and between artists and key organisations within the sector. This is a role for 'cultural brokers' (Kurin 1997, 17) and involves artists and dedicated multicultural arts organisations initiating and persisting with the brokering processes that establish trust.

In the way I have used it, trust functions to tease out some of the intercultural relationships as well as gaps between the NESB artist and the mainstream arts sector. Until recently, arts policy has been used to address those gaps but, increasingly, artists must manage those gaps as well as their creative practices. My research has explored the use of trust as a way to productively engage NESB artists' experiences in changing the dynamics of the arts sectors. Trust is most succinctly defined as a 'specific solution to risk' (Luhmann 2000, 95). This definition justifies the inclusion of trust across the full spectrum of the arts sectors, including artists, funding institutions and presenting organisations. In its most basic form, 'trust is established when you do what you say you would do' in an ethical manner and with all the relevant 'processes, platforms and people' in place (Punt and Bateman 2018, 39). Taken in an even wider sense, there is the potential for significant outcomes when trust is reciprocated because 'theories of trust can serve as a tool to become aware of the human ability to cooperate' (Weltecke 2008, 391).

The issues raised by the interviewees in this study highlight the need for more and better trust in the arts. Interviewees advised how they sometimes experienced lack of understanding on the part of 'arts gatekeepers' as lack of trust in their creative endeavours. This occurred across facets such as devising content, securing funding, presenting and marketing. The potential for a broader multicultural arts milieu expands when trust is evident between artists, institutional staff and advisers, arts organisations and the public.

Methods to Generate Trust

There are several methods that the arts can employ to increase the participation of NESB artists. Some methods suggest that simulacrums of trust are more suited to institutions and can be stimulated through transactional means such as conditions on funding. Other approaches stimulate more trusting working relationships through different means of organisational interactions.

For example, the Australian screen sector has successfully used quotas to improve gender parity (Castagna 2017). An approach adopted by Arts Council England (2018) stipulates the conditions of socio-economic inclusion in the awarding of a particular arts grant. The Australia Council has not used quotas for multicultural arts practice since the late 1990s. However, implicitly acknowledging their low levels of funding, a 2016 Australia Council strategic goal aims to grant 14 per cent of funding to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) artists and organisations by 2020.

Another method of trust combines transactional and relational forms of leadership, such as the protocols for non-Indigenous people working with Indigenous artists. These protocols address issues of respect, behaviour and intellectual property (Janke 2016), and are transparent and transactional because they explicitly articulate the conditions under which this kind of cross-cultural work can occur.

Trust can also be acknowledged through a relational mode of leadership. This can be seen in a memorandum of understanding (MoU), whereby the parties enter into an agreement that they jointly develop based on agreed and perceived mutual benefits. MoUs are developed after a period of familiarisation that has led to greater understanding and agreement between the parties.

Opportunities to increase familiarity may also establish trust through increased exposure. Recent AMA initiatives such as kultour and MAPD included aims of increased exposure. Likewise, the work of CAAP provides a conduit for trust between Asian-Australian writers and mainstream creative producers.

Trust needs to be evident between the artist and the institution. This can be generated through recruiting NESB artists as assessment and advisory peers. The Australia Council Multicultural Advisory Committee (ACMAC) was effective at developing generations of artist advocates and stimulating sector-wide critical discourse. This process of equipping NESB artists as peers and advocates within an institutional setting has yet to be replaced. The establishment of a structured program would be valuable to ensure those capacities can be well developed in future generations.

In these ways, trust acts as a hinge that articulates and enables communication between a range of players across any given multicultural art project. The results of establishing trust can generate traction towards a robust, ethnically diverse arts sector.

Generating Traction

Traction suggests both grip and movement. It can be generated through the creative use of friction in conjunction with a trusting environment. The processes that generate traction will lead to longer-term change and reduce cycles of limited change. It can be generated when NESB artists and arts organisations align their goals and work together, utilising and acknowledging their different sets of expertise, resources and influence. Long-term traction will also depend on issues of equitable resourcing and the development of platforms to enable the succession of leadership roles. Both issues are yet to be resolved for NESB artists and multicultural arts organisations. The work entailed in maintaining the partnership momentum must be financially validated, otherwise the NESB artist or multicultural arts organisation will always be the unsustainable 'volunteer' in the process. The persistence of the artist and cultural practitioner leads to creative, institutional and organisational change by revealing the dynamic nature of Australian identities and continually prompting the arts sector to engage with the creative potential of multicultural Australia.

The number of successful transitions into the mainstream afforded through the Lotus program highlights how swiftly creative capacities can build when the leaders of organisations share similar values and aims. The creative and organisational leadership roles demonstrated by CAAP and PWA provide symbolic value and expand the economic value chain proposition to include an awareness of audience reception based on presentation of form and marketing context. Most significantly, this process for the production of performing arts can be adapted to other art spheres to provide an alternative to the traditional 'placement' model of one NESB artist in a large organisation.

The 'pathway' processes and range of partnerships developed by CAAP and PWA in the Lotus program reinforce a productive phase towards the next step in a professional career, recognition by industry and programming that expands audiences. The creative and organisational skills of the artists share the characteristics of persistence, steadfast adherence to vision and flexibility in its realisation, highly nuanced negotiation skills and a commitment to change beyond their immediate sphere. The artists and the multicultural arts milieu to which they contribute form what Ahmed (2012, 139) describes as the 'backbone' of diversity work. Such artists take on the responsibility for diversity in the arts as they wish to see them, rather than engaging only with the often tokenistic options offered by institutions or mainstream organisations suffering from 'equity fatigue' (Ahmed 2012, 90, 139):

> Because diversity and race equality are not already mainstream—because everything is 'not okay'—we need support, specialisms and drivers. Practitioners or experts provide a backbone. When mainstreaming is taken up as if it describes what already exists, then mainstreaming is used by the organisations to avoid appointing specialists in the area, or indeed to avoid giving diversity and equality the additional support that it needs.

The avoidance of mainstreaming applies to the scaling back of dedicated multicultural arts programs that began in 2008 with the end of ACMAC and the low participation rates of NESB artists. Methods that successfully intervene in the prevailing temporary 'one-off project' nature of multicultural arts practice in Australia establish more visible pathways. These pathways, which are examples of creative and organisational leadership working in concert, demonstrate a new version of the 'backbone' of Australian multicultural arts practice in which a more robust

multicultural arts milieu could emerge. The NESB artists are the ones who show leadership and 'make a new door' to gain entrance to the arts industry (Badami 2017).

The types of consultations that occur with artists as leaders and peers at the institutional site of the Australia Council cause a range of frictions. The significant redirection of federal and state funding away from multicultural arts organisations (see Table 4) is compounded by the absence of an identifiable national creative centre or hub for producing art in a multicultural Australia. Therefore, NESB artists and groups must locate receptive arts organisations that have the capacity and capability to produce work from multicultural Australia.

Recent History of the Arts in a Multicultural Australia

The gap in the published history of AMA since the late 1990s is addressed in this text through the account of the aims, results and issues arising from the AMA 2000 and AMA 2006 policies. A summary timeline of the development of the arts in a multicultural Australia is provided in Appendix B. AMA 2000 brought together tradition and innovation and profiled individual artists' practices as well as their roles in the arts and the wider community. By taking this focus, the policy attempted to alter perceptions of multicultural artists as only being relevant in cultural community settings. As such setting have a low status in the arts world, this was a purposeful shift (Rentschler, Le and Osborne 2008, iv). The various prongs of this policy addressed a spectrum of issues through the professional and creative development program of MAPD, the national multicultural arts organisation network of kultour that toured multicultural arts practices, and two international conferences with associated publications and expert roundtable discussions. AMA 2006 identified a renewed focus in the areas of leadership, participation and creative production, including between Indigenous and NESB artists. The Australia Council allocated three years of funding to three multicultural arts organisations to increase their presentation and promotion skills and hosted symposium events. Making Creative Cities: The Value of Cultural Diversity in the Arts, held in conjunction with the British Council in 2008, was the last formal AMA international event. The forum pointed out the value of different

leadership modes for cultural difference in the arts that I have extended to encompass relevant modes of leadership across creative, institutional and organisational domains.

Creative Leadership

Artists demonstrate creative leadership in their capacity for social, creative and political agency within the Australian arts sector. Alongside their hybrid identities, NESB artists also develop capacities to navigate differences arising from intercultural (in terms of artistic practice as well as ethnicity), intergenerational and linguistic spheres. Their navigation of the arts industry is often from a marginal position that, in the past, has prompted an almost inevitably political response towards change in the arts. These political responses include pushing the boundaries of traditional/conventional perceptions of the canon and creative adaptations of cultural heritage. These elements are aspects that define a multicultural arts milieu. Creative leaders take on the additional mantle to shift that milieu to one that provides greater support and understanding of their arts practices.

The theme of creativity from friction identifies creative leadership as a key driver contributing to a multicultural arts sector. Artists who lead 'just by making art' are creative leaders, as visual artist Valamanesh observed. However, creative leadership is more evident in those who also create spaces or pathways for other artists, whether as mentors, through peer networks or by establishing arts organisations to increase creative opportunities for NESB artists. Individual artists are often seen as torchbearers of cultural translation, a perception that both reifies and implicitly limits how many artists of NESB backgrounds can carry such a torch. Papastergiadis (2000, 134) observes that arguments for expanding the 'cultural boundaries of art [are accompanied by a] fetishization of the alterity' of the marginalised artist who acts as translator between the periphery and the centre. He also observes that recognition of the influence of those individual artists has not been met with similar arts educational and industry frameworks to understand the significance of cultural differences (Papastergiadis 2000, 134).

Creative leadership is demonstrated when the artist recognises the need to forge some of those frameworks and, in doing so, goes beyond their own practice. In this way, the charismatic and transformational form

of leadership mostly associated with individual practitioners is altered through a closer attentiveness to the needs of other artists. This suggests that the iterative communication process of 'attunement' (Gibson 2005, 271)—a process relevant across all domains of leadership—is particularly appropriate in the complex environments that stimulate the practices of NESB artists.

Institutional Leadership

The conceptual understanding of institutional leadership refers to modes needed for both management and advocates. Transactional leadership clarifies responsibilities and relational leadership is likely to generate a culture that will see those responsibilities embedded in the most effective ways. Both of these modes apply to the internal management responses of the Australia Council and how NESB artists' interactions led to policy responses for the arts in a multicultural Australia. Three traits can be discerned from the 1970s to the 2010s. First, multicultural issues are discarded in times of financial constraint and internal instability, which suggests that the arts in a multicultural Australia is not a core area of concern. When the will is present to address uneven responses to the creative potential of multicultural Australia, it is linked to a second trait of sustained support for, and use of, multicultural advisory committees (Blonski 1992, 1–5). A third trait demonstrates sustained engagement by the Australia Council in multicultural arts; this occurred when ACMAC and NESB artists were central to the institution's overall strategic direction, as was the case with AMA 2000.

During the implementation stage of AMA 2006, the Australia Council concluded its historical relationship of sustained engagement with NESB artists as artform board appointments and expert policy advisers. Regardless of how fraught or fruitful that engagement had been, ACMAC was a mainstay of the Australia Council's work and made a space for complex and creative policy discourse. ACMAC served as a conduit between the arts sector and the Australia Council, contributed significantly to the discourse of multicultural arts and was central to the direction taken by the institution. It appears that the council's decision to end ACMAC in 2008 and its subsequent decline as a leader in multicultural arts are linked. A policy response from the Australia Council regarding the arts in a multicultural Australia has yet to be fully articulated.

When a history is neither documented nor critically reflected upon, the risk of unproductive circular debates and repetitive institutional responses increases. When I began this research in 2014, AMA 2006 was the Australia Council's extant statement on its approach to the arts in a multicultural Australia. By the end of the study in mid-2018, all references to multicultural arts policy had disappeared from the Australia Council's website, reinforcing their institutional retreat from this area. The goal to increase grants to CALD artists was not accompanied by a published 'cultural diversity' plan. Unless and until a change of leadership prompts a different institutional approach, it seems that AMA 2006 was the Australia Council's final policy on the arts in a multicultural Australia.

Organisational Leadership

Cross-cultural competencies have been shown as essential skills for navigating a 'hyper-diverse' multicultural Australia, and cultural aspects, such as the arts and media, demonstrate the most resistance to long-term inclusion. It is the artists from diverse ethnic backgrounds who continue to take responsibility for increasing the level of culturally diverse creative production. This is most effectively achieved when leaders of arts organisations form partnerships to equitably share knowledge and resources to develop and present new multicultural arts content.

Traction can be generated in several ways, as shown in the leadership modes evident throughout the case studies explored in this book. For example, the writer and director Shakthidharan drew on the infrastructure of a major arts presenter, Carriageworks, and, subsequently, Belvoir Street Theatre. The development phase of his play, *Counting and Cracking*, took more than a decade; it was finally presented at the Sydney Festival in 2019. This points to Shakthidharan's persistence in negotiations with mainstage companies to co-direct his play. Coupled with his charismatic personality, it demonstrates transformational leadership. This case exemplifies the erosion of resistance and development of equitable trust through persistent friction. The caveat is that the trust will not be equitable until the issue of remuneration is addressed for NESB artists.

Kultour, a successful example of distributed leadership that activated networks, foundered in the face of funders' expectations around 'mainstreaming'. By contrast, the small performing arts company CAAP, led by actor and director Shun Wah in collaboration with arts industry

organisation PWA, led by arts manager Roseman, explored how to fast-track the work of Asian-Australian writers into the performing arts mainstage arena. Shun Wah demonstrates creative leadership in the form of accompaniment through creative enabling processes. Both Shun Wah and Roseman display organisational and transformational leadership through the partnerships developed on behalf of aspiring artists.

Conclusion

The concept of a more productive multicultural arts milieu forms from the space that is opened up through multicultural arts practices and discourse. It is also partly formed by having to address the inadequacies within this space, whether in the area of policy, discourse or practice. The milieu holds a number of tensions in play: institutional and mainstream diversity 'fatigue', which leads to occasional token responses rather than systemic change; low financial and creative participation rates of NESB artists; continued advocacy by NESB artists; and the formation of delicate partnerships between organisations dedicated to improving conditions for NESB artists. A productive shift can be discerned in theatre through the increased numbers of scripts from NESB writers that are presented on stage. This shift, which is partly documented in this book, has been led by a handful of determined NESB artists over the past several years to address their ongoing marginalised position in the arts.

The creative responses of artists include their interactions through governance in the federal arts institution and organisational partnerships that foster opportunities for swift change in the profile of creative content. The projects I have presented here are not large in scale but they are influential in the scope of their potential. Their ability to scale up is dependent on understandings of the finesse of their niche approaches. Taken one by one, each project can be seen as small wins; in combination they show the resilient capacity of artists to continue the 'fight' and, in confluence with mainstream organisations, energise a productive multicultural arts milieu.

Hitherto conventional methods of placing NESB artists into mainstream arts organisations or the national funding agency as part-time 'champions' have achieved limited success. The significance of the partnership between CAAP and PWA is that both companies maintain their specific creative and organisational identities and capabilities to achieve mutual aims.

Multicultural Arts Victoria (MAV) is the most successful multicultural arts organisation in Australia, both in terms of its longevity and its ability to secure recurrent funding that provides appropriate remuneration for staff and artists (MAV 2018). A national equivalent for multicultural arts practices could expand the MAV remit and partnership approach into a national focus. A national equivalent could take the form of an artform 'flagship' company, as envisioned by Paul (2018) in her ambitions for her *Theatre of Rhythm and Dance* project, or take up the blueprint of the far broader Art + Cultural Difference + Global Collaboration workshop (outlined in Appendix D), which proposed that academics, bureaucrats, artists and organisations partner in dialogue and action to see a more supportive multicultural arts milieu.

General leadership courses are proliferating in the arts in Australia; these would benefit from a critical assessment of the extent to which they address the arts in a multicultural Australia or merely replicate the standard management practices of the arts industry. The UK's Clore Foundation arts leadership program has diversity as its central aim (Clore Leadership Foundation n.d.). Among the range of leadership issues to be addressed in Australia are the capabilities required as an NESB peer assessor and multicultural arts adviser. The opportunity to gain such experience has diminished significantly with the disbanding of ACMAC and the introduction of short-term peer assessors, resulting in a diminution of long-term, arts sector–based knowledge.

Capacity building within an arts institutional setting is accompanied by a palpable need for NESB artist networks. Access to supportive peers continues to be raised specifically by NESB artists (Stevenson et al. 2017, 54). The reinvigoration of national opportunities to develop current critical discourse could go part way towards addressing this issue. The conferences and publications supported by ACMAC in the early 2000s remain a key legacy, but these have not been revisited on a similar international scale since 2004. The artistic opportunities afforded through the friction of an increasingly diverse society remain at the cutting edge of cultural production that would benefit from more well-curated conferencing and publications.

Despite the proactive and creative energies of artists, the findings of this research indicate that the issues for the arts in a multicultural Australia have not diminished. The NESB artists in this research lead the arts sector across creative, institutional and organisational activities in several ways.

They do the 'work' that symbolises the complexity of cultural identities. They also do the 'work' to negotiate with mainstage and gallery directors and to engage diverse audiences. They are entrepreneurial. They have to be, as there is limited government support for their work. They carry the burden and take the risk of untangling the representation of complex Australian lives.

Meta-themes of leadership across three domains of the arts frame the relationship between practice, policy and the environment that surrounds the artist. The experiences and creative endeavours of artists and how their artworks articulate complex understandings show how they creatively lead as artists, citizens, activists, 'ethnics' and Australians. Organisational leadership is found in situations in which artists and arts organisations work towards a supportive multicultural arts milieu that expands the aesthetic canon of the arts to include their practices and also a different Australia, which is both more inclusive of difference and more open to engagement with creative work. Institutional leadership for AMA policies articulates a quest for change, but the processes need to be carefully tailored, well supported and continual. By paying 'detailed attention to the very *process* of creating a sense of "we" in the face of our heterogeneity' (Ang 2003a, 33, original emphasis), I argue that it is artists who make creative meaning from the 'friction' caused by the contestations and negotiations of multicultural Australia. It is artists who gain the trust to generate traction for structural change.