

Crossroad Arts 2011

ANNUAL REPORT

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front cover
'Same but Different'
The feet of Small
Miracles Theatre
Ensemble.

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ABOUT CROSSROAD ARTS

Crossroad Arts empowers communities to create social change through the arts. The company work across the mediums of theatre, dance, film, music, writing and visual arts. We work in partnership with communities in the Mackay Region, Bowen Basin, Rockhampton, Cairns, Northern Territory and the Asia Pacific Region.

We tell stories about the people and the landscape of this country.

We create bold, dynamic and high quality new works in partnership with these communities to local, national and international forums and audiences.

The company's work is driven by a belief that participation in the arts and the process of creativity can galvanise communities by promoting a strong sense of belonging, mutual trust and identity to celebrate cultural pluralism. Culture is about how people make meaning in their lives. It's about finding something that shapes your values and going out and expressing that through art and sharing it with other people. It is what makes us human. Crossroad Arts is about creating an environment where people take charge of their environment and learn to represent themselves.

Crossroad Arts believes that these qualities and values can lead to change and a revitalization within and between individuals and communities.

“I enjoy the creativity and freedom of expression.”

“ These activities make me think outside the box – boosts my self esteem – makes me want to try more things in this area – would like to try sketching and painting -

Our aims include

Creating profound works of arts

Access to the arts for people with disabilities

Cross-cultural and inter-generational harmony

Creating a vibrant arts community

Educating young emerging artists

Suicide prevention

Youth Crime Prevention

Employment and training for young people

Crossroad Arts 2011 ANNUAL REPORT STRATEGIES

To achieve these aims Crossroad Arts employ a number of strategies:

- **Access:** creating programs that are open to people with and without experience in the arts.
- **Relationships:** establishing long term and trusting relationships with communities.
- **Ownership:** creating processes that encourage and empower genuine ownership of the projects.
- **Education:** skill based training programs that invest in the future of the company and community
- **Production Standards:** demanding high levels of commitment in the delivery of these projects.

I have learnt that there are new things I can do if I try – facilitators are very helpful, patient – they give us a lot of praise for our work.”

Participant



Since Crossroad Arts was founded in 1997 the organisation has gained a consistent high level of social, economic and culturally successful outcomes in achieving these aims:

- Has built a strong and recognized reputation nationally as a leading cultural development organisation that employs best practice methods in making a difference to people’s lives.
- Has won a series of regional and international awards for their work with the disability community.
- participation at school; increase in confidence levels and the ability to work in teams., solve problems, communicate ideas and plan.
- Has enabled participants to see futures with a greater range of options.
- Has connected participants with other services and organisations that creates a greater sense of belonging to a wider community.
- Has created significant employment opportunities for artists over 15 years.
- Has created significant strategic partnerships with peer organisations throughout Queensland and the Asia Pacific Region.
- Has delivered consistent and critically acclaimed theatre and film products to Queensland audiences.
- Has enhanced the skills of young participants resulting in improved

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COMPANY CONTEXT

History: Crossroad Arts was established in 1997 by Steve Mayer-Miller. The company very quickly established itself as a leading presenter of original theatre works that were characterised by a raw physical energy which fully utilised video, dance, puppetry and stories that sprung out of the lives of people living in Central Queensland. Their unique brand of presentation was also characterised by presenting works in non traditional urban spaces and bringing professionals and non professionals together on the stage, particularly people with disabilities.

“ This video on the outside walls of sugar mills and buildings in the region is stunning and should be seen by every film student”.

Review



This first stage of their development attracted the attention of The Queensland Theatre Company and a partnership, following their award winning 2001 stage play. In 2003 they were invited by Lyndon Terrachini to stage their own solo stage adaptation of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* to the Brisbane Powerhouse as part of the Queensland Music Festival. “ the all Mackay talent was deeply impressive. The effect is triumphant” Ben Eltham Courier Mail July 2003.

In their second stage of development, (2003) the company was successful in gaining CIP funding and the challenge of maintaining a fulltime program over 12 months. Their direction now embraced other multi art areas while still continuing to deliver community theatre works with high production values. It was in 2004 that they were invited by JUTE, Tropic Sun, Darwin Theatre Company and The Queensland Arts Council to join the Theatre to the Edge touring circuit. What followed was *Melek Mo Hani* in partnership with the Australian South Sea Islander community and their first overseas tour.” This brilliant piece of storytelling richly deserves a return season...it should not be missed on any account. A work of national significance. “Review Glyn Davis Arts Nexus.

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“This video on the outside walls of sugar mills and buildings in the region is stunning and should be seen by every film student”.

In the third stage of development Crossroad Arts moved into a new permanent home in the centre of Mackay, and began consolidating their programs and fine tuning their work processes. There was a greater focus on developing long term partnerships with community groups, businesses, government organisations and setting up mentorship structures for young people.. The new home strengthened the company’s profile in the community and with well resourced video production equipment and space, the task of sustaining a fulltime arts program became productive and delivered. Their board of directors went from 4 to 10 members and included leading business operators . The delivery of art product maintained its high standard and continued to surprise the public with a mixture of new mediums, experimentation and boldness.
Synchronicity



“These activities make me think outside the box – boosts my self esteem – makes me want to try more things in this area – would like to try sketching and painting”

Participant

Partnerships Process Productivity

3 key factors have characterised Crossroad Arts steady rise to success over the past 15 years.

Partnerships: For over 15 years Crossroad Arts have demonstrated a proven ability to broker successful partnerships with a broad range of artistic and non artistic partners and to sustain these partnerships over a long period:

Cultural: Aust South Sea and Indigenous Communities

Artistic: Theatre to the Edge ; JUTE , Tropic Sun, Darwin Theatre Company and Queensland Arts Council. Youth Arts Queensland

Government: Dept of Education 3 year partnership

Non Government: Oz Care; Autism Support Group; Deaf Club

Process: Mentoring Scheme Eg; Strut your Stuff and Starburst- Duty of Care which also links directly into the reason our partners have stayed with us. It’s why education and ozcare and autism have partnered with us. 2010 Award in recognition of best practices from Mackay Autism Support Group.; 2010 Showcase Award for Excellence in Inclusive Education. Dept of Education and Training

Productivity: 30 new works; 106,000 audience /participants; Employment of 112 artists .

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INTERNAL SITUATION:

Crossroad Arts has emerged as a highly reputable and dynamic community arts organisation. The company is experiencing significant growth in its client and partnership base. Business, groups, Educational Institutions and Non Art based community organisations are leading the demand to work with the company.

Our diverse multi art programs are targeted to a wide demographic and include people with disabilities, newly arrived migrants, young people wanting a career in the arts, young and older people at risk and the Indigenous and Australian South Sea Islander Communities. What has set this company apart is its strong reputation of successfully being able to work with these specific cultural groups on projects and then find ways to create partnerships across the groups. With a fine balance between process, duty of care, trust, belonging and high production values the company achieve a high turnover of quality art product, strong loyalty among its many participants and transformations in the lives of those participants. When this is delivered in the form of a film, theatre piece or dance work, the effect is powerful and life affirming.

“For us it is a process that empowers people into discovering the wonders of imagination and creativity in making art and the complexities and the richness of a democratic process through creating art.....

It’s so that they can speak up and represent themselves and take an active part in the cultural, economic, social and political life of their community.”

Artist Statement



Shireen Hussain and Simmi Das from Crossroad Arts meet with co-ordinators from Ozcare Rehabilitation unit to plan the 2011 community arts program.

The recent 3 year partnership with Education Queensland in working together with Crossroad Arts is making a real and positive difference to the lives of students through the arts, and subsequently a new educational model of partnering external partners through the arts has been set up in Central Queensland.

The company’s artistic strength is supported by an administrative and financial team who provide solid management muscle to the creative core of the company. This is reflected in consistent financial growth and investment over the past 8 years since first receiving core funding from Arts Queensland in 2003. This is spearheaded by a well resourced multi media unit including professional broadcasting sound and video hardware facilities and a broadcasting camera. The dividends have been considerable.

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The company is now in a position to create a commercial arm to its operation in film and theatre that links directly to the participants sourced from its participating communities

These investments have already paid their way. With no current liabilities, a well-resourced studio space and security of tenure over the next 3 years, Crossroad Arts presents a solid case for further investment.



The Navigation program at Crossroad Arts aimed at developing business skills, governance and career opportunities for young emerging artists. Facilitated by Youth Arts Qld.

Melek Mo Hani

“ This brilliant piece of storytelling richly deserves a return season...it should not be missed on any account. A work of national significance.”
Review Glyn Davis
Arts Nexus.

EXTERNAL SITUATION

7 key areas of growth and opportunity have been identified and successfully realised.

EDUCATION: A 3-year partnership with Education Queensland working with young people in school transition and youths at risk. It includes the secondment of a part-time teacher to work with the organisation. This direction has been informed by research into a number of models in the UK particularly a nationally-funded program working in 36 of the most disadvantaged areas of England. Established in 2002, Creative Partnerships (CP) is designed to develop ‘creative learning’ in schools via long term partnerships between school and creative practitioners, both individuals and companies. It has now worked with over 4,000 schools on over 4,500 projects involving almost half a million young people. CP has been extensively evaluated (Sefton Green, 2005), with over 90 research and evaluation studies currently listed on its website.

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HEALTH: 3-year partnership with OzCare working with adults at risk who experience substance abuse. This partnership represents a significant long term opportunity for Crossroad Arts and the first time a health organisation has sourced their own funding for a CA project beyond arts funding bodies. Currently Crossroad Arts are in negotiation with Medicare Local, the Federal Health Program aimed at improving medical service delivery in Australia.

DISABILITY: A successful continuing partnership with Rio Tinto has further enabled CA to diversify their income base and expand their operations to the Sarina area working with young people experiencing Autism.

BOWEN BASIN: The 3-year partnership with BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance has opened up the opportunity of broadening our network into outlying areas in Central Queensland and the coal belt, working with youth.

"I believe it is a wonderful, complementary activity in the recovery process as most are struggling in coming to terms with their substance dependence habits and their concurrent, often fragile, broken lives and their hope in developing a new life and lifestyle and more enjoyable future"

Partner Manager



YOUTH: The opportunities that arose following the 2009 Strut Your Stuff funded mentorships in partnership with Youth Arts Queensland and the subsequent 2010 Starburst program has had a significant impact on our organisation and the direction of youth arts here in Central Queensland. The opportunity has raised our profile in the community, provided us the opportunity to inspire young people, increased their ability to seek a career in the arts and also in some cases gave them their first artistic employment with our organisation. This has now provided a strong platform to further advocate this model in the Central Qld region as part of our Education and Bowen Basin projects. This is further strengthened with professional development workshops at Crossroad Arts through Youth Arts Queensland's Navigation program

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Artistic Director/CEO Report

2011 was another exciting, ambitious and groundbreaking year for Crossroad Arts. It was highlighted by several arts programs which brought together participants from very different sectors in the community: People perceived with disabilities, others who experienced substance abuse and mental health issues and others who had disengaged from school. The unique part of this program is that these wonderful first time artists worked together on the workshop floor and theatre to create original pieces of art. It injected in all of us a sense of hope that the process of art making has that special quality of bringing out the best in people's values and creativity.

Crossroad Arts has sustained its operations for the past 15 years and consistently delivered community art projects that have been deemed by critics, peers and stakeholders as spirited original works that spoke to the communities they worked with. They often have had a profound social impact on those communities and empowered their audiences with wonder.

Our zeal to continue working this way for so long is quite complex, but perhaps goes some of the way to defining why community arts is so vital to the health of our community in here in Mackay and elsewhere.

On any one day at Crossroad Arts there can be up to 4 programs operating in our studios: From disengaged 'at risk' school students devising a "TV cooking show" to older participants from OzCare Rehab Centre learning to weave; to people with a disability at Bluecare Respite Centre learning Indian Dance; to a group of newly arrived migrants from Bangladesh and India exploring printmaking inspired by the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore. Each of the individuals in these projects brings their own unique experience and voice to these projects in ways where the outcomes can never really be predicted. It is what gives these projects their spark and vitality and also makes them so challenging to evaluate. Each group has their own unique dynamic, need and identity.

And then the vibrancy of these projects is raised even further when all the groups come together for one celebratory project. It is here that we see unlikely partnerships taking place where what appears impossible becomes possible, where people who would not normally work with each other engage in deep and meaningful ways that go to the very heart of identity, belonging and individual and collective values. Values that go to making a better community.

At first these projects can appear to be seemingly chaotic with no sense of direction. It's what happens when people are given enough space to take ownership of a project. Democracy is not simply handed out. It takes time to earn it and make it work. And in the end that process extends to those participants being able to represent themselves actively on their own behalf with the drivers and leaders of those community groups. And it continues after the project has finished, as we negotiate and renegotiate ways of

"Its about creating!
Making something that was not there yesterday"

Artist Statement

"Crossroad Arts enthusiasm for inclusiveness and their drive to create great works of art is infectious."

Peer Review

“ It gave me a safe environment to express myself with no judgement where I have come closest to becoming myself again.”

Participant

working with the various steering committees in an often unpredictable environment. The variety of tools that we use to evaluate these projects does give us some indication that a person’s confidence and sense of self worth has increased or that they have gone back to school or undertaken a TAFE Course or that they have gone from social isolation to making new friends. We are also aware that other factors in the community will influence the decisions these people make in the changes that take place in their lives. What we are sure of is that during the course of the arts projects, some of the people who participate undergo significant positive changes in their lives. We believe it can have a ripple effect and will influence other people in their lives in a positive way. How do we know that? We don’t really. It is one of the reasons why scientific evaluation tools in the arts world are not necessarily appropriate or indeed necessary. Other ways need to be found to measure the great benefit community arts has to offer society.

“It gives participants an enjoyable, different and autonomous way to express their feelings about who they are and where they might wish to go in their life.”

For us as artists, our zeal and commitment to continue working this way comes from an inbuilt social justice antennae that recognizes that the strength of a community is based on how well those citizens who are often least able to participate, engage in society in an active and vital way; It comes from a belief that the art of nurturing creativity is one of the strongest educational tools we can bring to the workshop floor. And it comes from a genuine belief that great moments of art and art making can happen when unlikely partnerships occur between a diversity of people who work on community based projects.

Partner Manager

In November 2011, Crossroad Arts brought all of their Mackay community groups together in an international link up with artists in Ahmedabad India to celebrate the poetic works of Rabindranath Tagore- an artist who believed that creativity and diversity were vital signs of a healthy and vibrant community. In a simulcast video link up between the two countries in front of live audiences from the two countries, a contemporary dancer in India performed a Tagore dance with live musicians while in Mackay a local Indian dancer responded and improvised to his moves using classical Indian dance.

It was a testament to a company who believe that community arts is a living breathing force for good and that anything is possible with the right values and processes in place.

I’d like to take the opportunity to thank the Board of Crossroad Arts for their continuing support. In particular John Pickup who has served our organization as president for several years and is stepping down to become a life member of the company.

Steve Mayer-Miller



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2011 Artistic Program

The 2011 Crossroad Arts program delivered 11 public project outcomes

'New Terrain': engaged with the Mackay multicultural community in mapping journeys. A series of visual art workshops, followed by a public exhibition of bamboo and paper-constructed boats in the street foyer of the Crossroad Arts (CA) studios, as part of the 2011 Mackay Festival of Arts;

“ At first I wasn't excited at all about photography, but as I took more photos and learnt more about composition, I began to really enjoy it. Now I'm thinking of doing a photography course.”



Participant

'You are Here': the development of a new stop-motion film by a group of participants with autism, screened to a public audience at CA studios;

“I enjoy learning different types of art – I get a lot of satisfaction and am surprised I am capable of doing these things.”



Participant

Cartographic Whispers 1: engaging people with disabilities from Bluecare Respite Centre in a series of workshops, which resulted in 2 public performances of new theatre works; Traci Lietzke worked with participants in the writing and performance of a new play called



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Cartographic Whispers 2: Guest Indian/Australian Director Simmi Dipanwita Das made her debut working with Bluecare participants in the writing and performance of a new play called 'The Wise King'
In memory of Rodney



"I have learnt that I have lost the creative positive side of me."

Participant

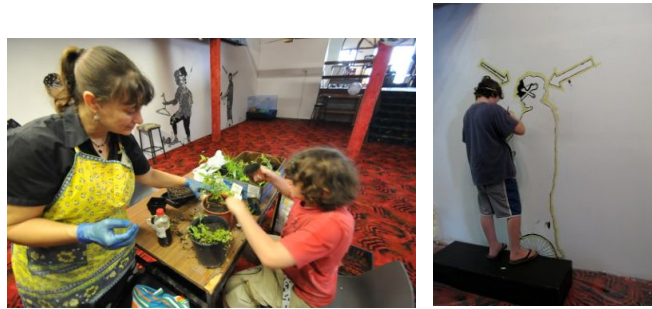
'Contraband': the mentorship of a young visual artist Nekea Blagoev, resulting in a major public art exhibition at the Ocean International Resort;

'Crossing Borders': participants from Ozcare Mackay Residential Drug and Alcohol Treatment Service completed a series of printmaking workshops, leading to a public exhibition at the Mackay Town Hall and the publication of a small catalogue of their prints;



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'Navigating Y': partnered with participants from Education Qld's Positive Learning Centre in a series of individual film, photographic and visual art workshops, leading to a series of individual public exhibitions a seminar and several screenings;
The project then extended to including young people at risk from Community Solutions.



"I have learnt patience, passion, concentration and a sense of achievement – all positive."

Participant

Latitude 22.662': a school residency at Capella State High School . Following a series of theatre workshops in 3 one-week residencies, the students performed a new theatre work (based around a town statue of the light horsemen) at their annual community school gala night;



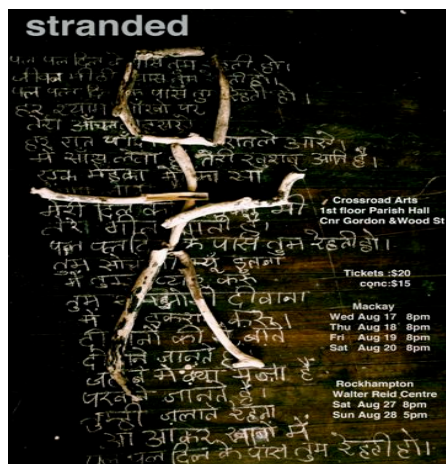
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‘Intersection’: brought all the groups together in a series of collaborations working on a new theatre piece called 'Stranded'. The production played in Mackay for a week and then toured to the Walter Reid Centre in Rockhampton for 2 public performances.



“The facilitators are awesome, caring and very approachable people who don’t judge and are always willing to help.”

Participant



Cairns Deaf Community- in partnership with JUTE Theatre

In May 2011 Crossroad Arts travelled to Cairns to run a series of workshops with the Cairns Deaf Community. The workshops were aimed at building future partnerships with the community. Crossroad Arts gratefully acknowledge Suellen Maunder the artistic director of JUTE for offering the JUTE Theatre Space



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Head Above Water' is an open program for young people in crisis. Mackay Youth Mental Health referred two young people to the program, Tara Bowman and Beau Geste. Both undertook printmaking workshops with Tracey Heathwood, resulting in several new printworks



"I know now I can try new activities and not have to feel I need to be perfect, that I am accepted for myself, problems and all – Facilitators are very knowledgeable, talented, open and encouraging to us all."

TAGORE: In 2011 Crossroad Arts Artistic Director spent 4 months in India on an Asia Link Arts Residency. One outcome was that Crossroad Arts developed a partnership with Darpana Performing Arts Academy in Ahmedabad India as well as the local Indian community to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore. A series of visual art, movement and dance workshops with members of Mackay's Indian community and people with disabilities from Bluecare Respite Centre resulted in a public exhibition of artworks, dances and songs from Tagore at Artspace Mackay. The performance also included a live cross to India and a series of dances and musical pieces from artists at Darpana.

Participant



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Profile Partnerships

Education Queensland Positive Learning Centre

Now in it's 2nd year, this successful community arts project engages young people who disengage from the education system using art to build self confidence, self esteem and self respect with the participants . Teaching Indian cooking run by our administrator Shireen Hussain as a way to nourish the artist's soul became a very popular workshop



“The participants truly blossomed in their time with Street of Teapots with confidence, artistic ability and new friendships.”



Asia Link Arts Residency in India

In September 2011 Crossroad Arts Director Steve Mayer-Miller was invited to work with Indian director Mallika Sarabai in India, in the writing and directing of a new play ‘with Love’ celebrating Rabindranath Tagore’s 150th anniversary. The play toured India in January-March 2012. The opportunity provided a partnership with the Mackay Tagore project and the local Indian community.

*Partner
Manager*



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SUCSESSES AND CHALLENGES:

“the all Mackay talent was deeply impressive. The effect is triumphant” Ben Eltham Courier Mail July 2003.

The collaboration between participants from OzCare Rehab and Bluecare Respite Centre was profound. The partnership began with staff from both organisations worried that it was not a good fit in placing people who experienced substance abuse with people who had physical and learning disabilities. The comments, from Ozcare participants, say it all:

"The Bluecare activity is interesting, it makes me think about how I am feeling when associating with people with disabilities – feels like I can learn about my feelings while trying to help and entertain them – feels good to make them feel special and excited."

"Going to Bluecare is inspirational in seeing people who face disability and challenges everyday with dignity, courage and joyfulness – It helps us realise how lucky we are and to appreciate the joys of life and that there are many people with bigger challenges than us to face – so it makes us less absorbed and [helps us] connect with other people – it is a very humbling experience."

"Helping out at Bluecare and watching how they interact with us and each other is interesting and rewarding – The people from Crossroad Arts are some of the most caring, loving people I have ever met – They enjoy and care about what they do and it shows – They are also very encouraging and enthusiastic – I hope the relationship between Ozcare and Crossroad Arts continues."

“Crossroad Arts enthusiasm for inclusiveness and their drive to create great works of art is infectious.”

Peer Review

"I really enjoyed going to Bluecare – it was very humbling meeting all the people there – it was a very different experience interacting with the people we met – They were beautiful people with their happy and outgoing natures – It made you think how some of the things we worry about are trivial – I am looking forward to going again."

The other challenge was working with Tim Reid, a young man who had been part of the Juvenile Justice System. Tim worked with Crossroad Arts for over a year and, despite a number of times of opting out of the program, he eventually returned to the program and proudly presented his work to a public audience and forum in August 2011. One of the high points was Tim completing his 'cooking show' film and cooking his mother lunch, which he organised for the staff and participants at Crossroad Arts. Tim finally left home and is now living in Sarina.

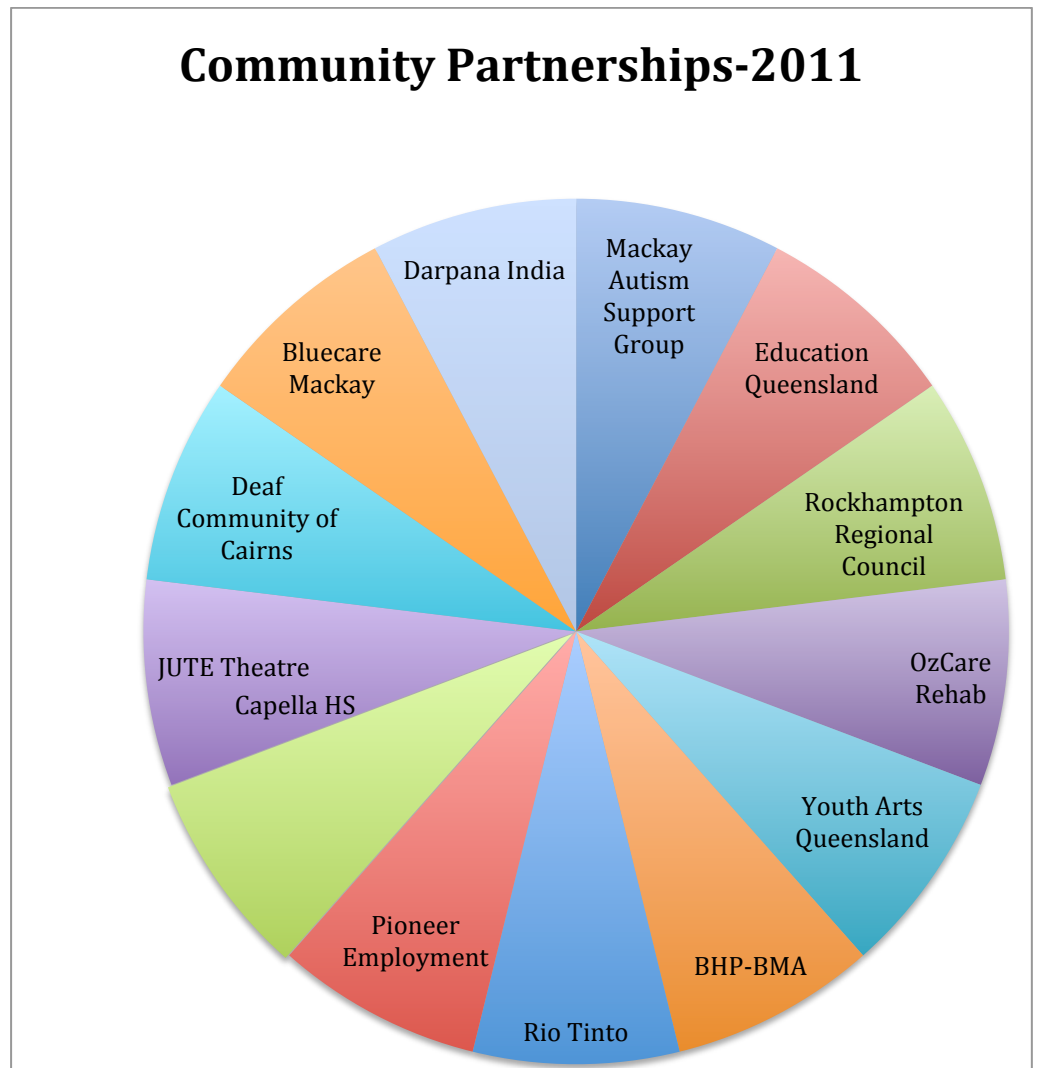
The other success of 2011 was the tour of the theatre work 'Stranded', which went to Rockhampton. It involved 8 people with disabilities living together with the production crew for 4 days at the Walter Reid Centre.

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In 2011 we employed Natasha Tomlinson a participant from Bluecare Respite Centre as an Administration Assistant. This was an important precedent in opening up further avenues to employ artists with disabilities. Natasha went on to assist in facilitating weaving workshops at Wandel Gardens in Rockhampton, a craft and respite centre for people with disabilities.”

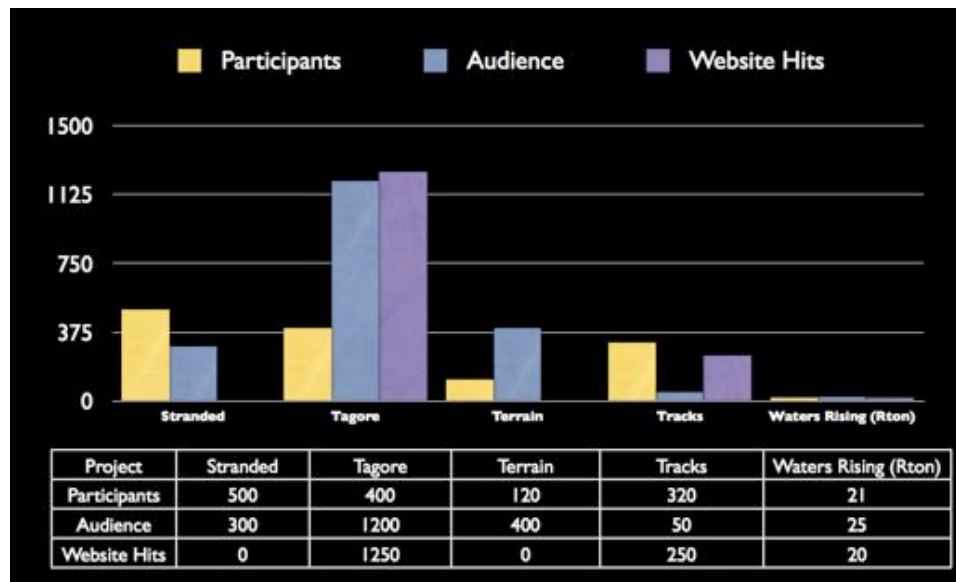
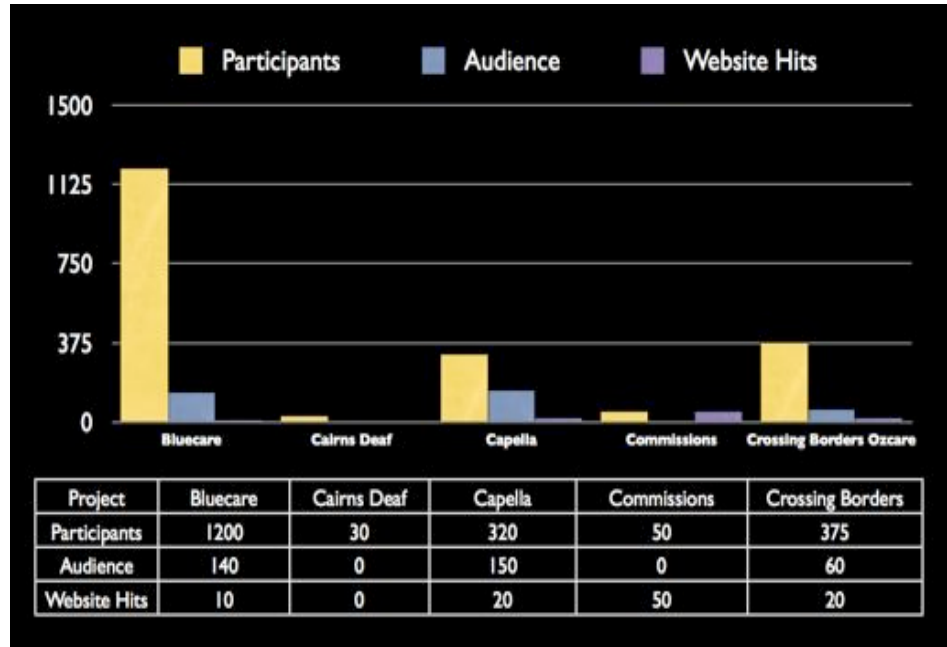
“ Last week I saw a piece of theatre that will stay with me for a long time, an expression of community enterprise and commitment...t his was community theatre at its best and a work of immense power. It was up there with the best.”

Alison Coates.
Courier Mail.

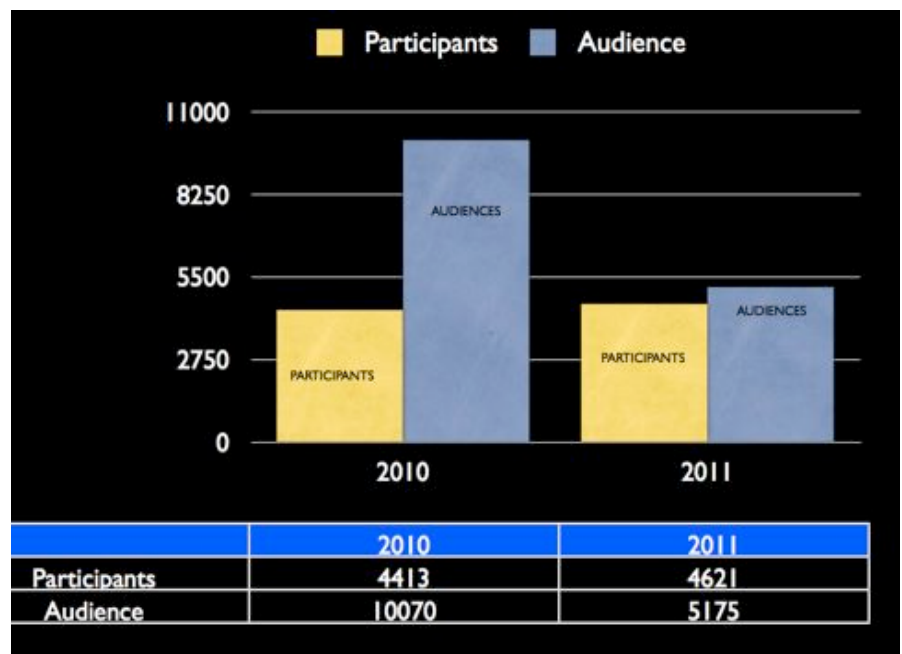
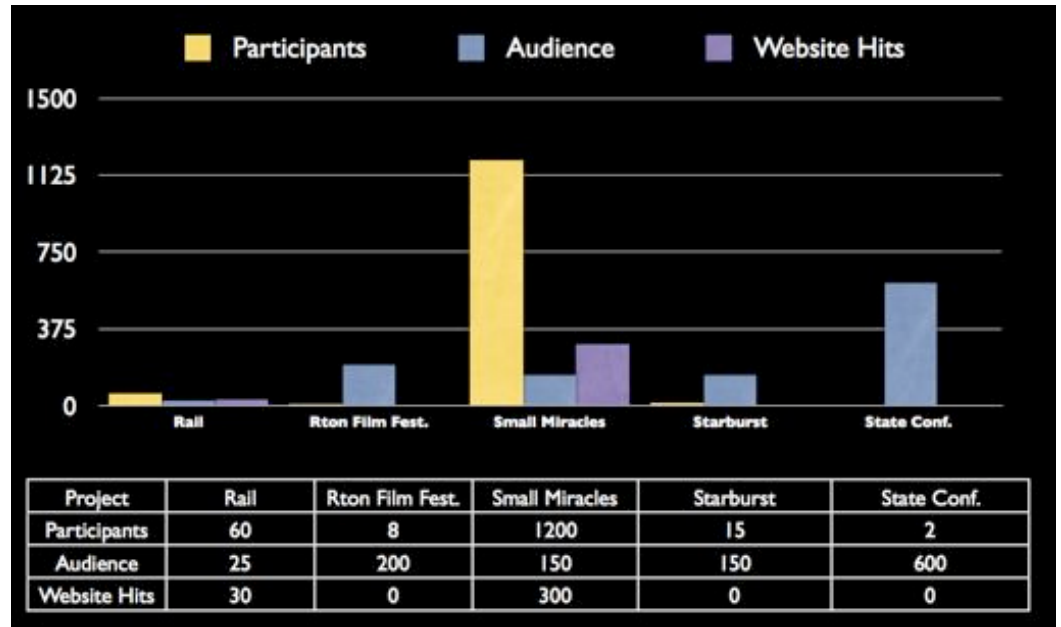


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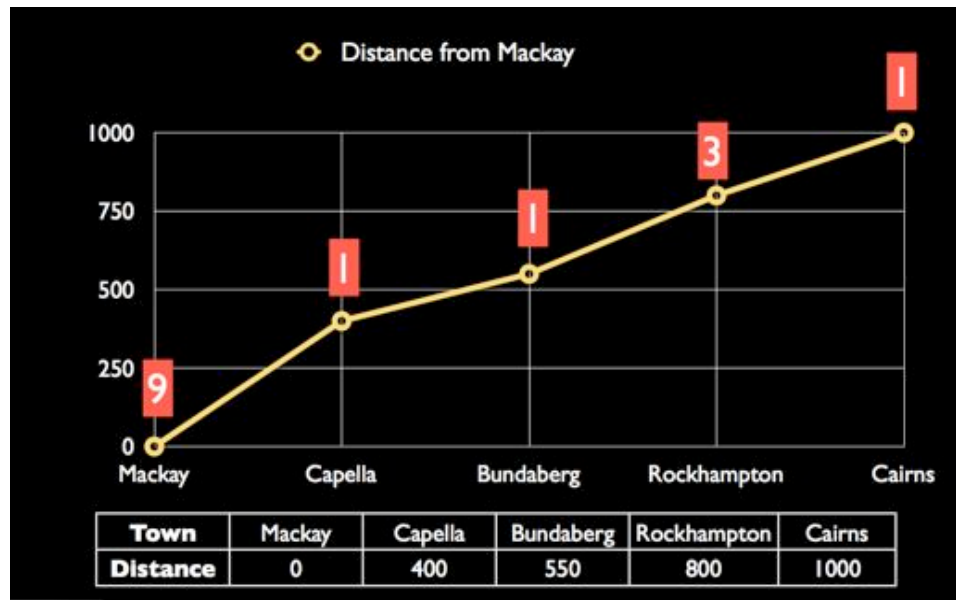
STATISTICS



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FINANCIAL

Crossroad Arts engaged Brisbane chartered accountant Brian Tucker to undertake the 2011 auditing of our financial books.

The auditor found our financial system to be in accordance with applicable accounting standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

Brian Tucker made the following observations:

“The accounts were extremely well maintained and presented, and are a credit to the committee, Steve and the staff, and your bookkeeper; well done!”

OUR PARTNERS

Thankyou to our financial and our cultural partner organisations for helping to make 2011 such a succesful year.

The Australia Council for the Arts Community Partnership Program

Arts Queensland Creative Communities

Mackay Regional Council: RADF Committee

BMA Billiton Mirsubishi Alliance

Rio Tinto Hail Creek Mine Community Fund

Whitsunday Mackay Crime Prevention Committee

Education Queensland Mackay Positive Learning Centre

Bluecare Mackay

OzCare Mackay

Sponsorship

Porters Hardware