



Background Information

AUSTRALIA INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL COUNCIL

an initiative of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The Australia International Cultural Council (AICC) was established by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Alexander Downer MP, in 1998. The Council is a consultative group drawing together representatives from government, the arts and cultural community and business with common interest in more effective international promotion of Australian arts and culture.

The Australia International Cultural Council's objectives are to:

- project a positive image of Australia which enhances our foreign and trade policy interests, and
- promote and enhance the export of Australian cultural products.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade provides the Secretariat for the AICC and has committed significant resources as seed funding for the Council's major activities.

The Council recognises the important role of business groups, federal government agencies, State and Territory governments and arts bodies in the international projection of Australian cultural life, particularly through international touring by individuals, groups and institutions in the visual and performing arts.

The Council seeks to project Australia as an economically successful and innovative trading nation, as well as to promote Australia's cultural diversity, the quality of our cultural output and to inform and influence international target audiences to be more understanding and appreciative of Australian society and its cultural assets.

Major activities undertaken by the Council include:

- **The Embassy Roadshow**
Series of Australian film festivals conducted by Australia's missions around the world.
- **Next Wave, Down Under**, October 2001
Australia's participation as feature country at the 2001 Brooklyn Academy of Music's annual festival
- **artsaustralia berlin02**, July - December 2002
Major season of Australian arts in Berlin
- **Celebrate Australia 2002**, Shanghai, November 2002
Australia's participation as feature country at the 4th China Shanghai International Arts Festival

Australia's involvement as the first invited guest nation at the 4th China Shanghai International Arts Festival is an opportunity to capitalise on the positive images created by the Sydney Olympics. Australia's presence at the Festival, through a multi-faceted arts program, will mark the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China.

The Festival runs from 1 November to 1 December 2002 and the major focus on Australia, ***Celebrate Australia 2002***, will run from 10-17 November. The performing arts program will be complemented by a two week season of Australian Indigenous art, and a documentary film series at the prestigious Shanghai Library from 16 November to 1 December.

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