



BAYSIDE CITY COUNCIL  
LIBRARY, ARTS  
AND CULTURE  
STRATEGY  
2012-2017

*“Bayside Council should support arts and culture by funding and aiding the set up of local ‘grass roots’ community art and music groups and events”*

*“Investment in Libraries, Arts & Culture is one of the best things Council can do to develop the health of the community for now and for the future”*



*“There is a lot of potential to foster local initiatives as well as involve all groups in the community. It's a great endeavour”*

*“Libraries could become a learning environment and meeting place for community to get together to enjoy talks, discussion groups and classes on arts & culture”*

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# INTRODUCTION

*Bayside, like other Australian communities, is changing. Twenty years ago few people had computers at home, mobile phones or other digital devices. No-one had heard of social media. Today, technology is the daily norm in most lives. There are other changes too. Throughout the western world, major demographic change is taking place as baby boomers age, life expectancy increases and fertility rates remain low. Cities are growing in size and people are congregating in different places than they did in times past.*

These changes create challenges for governments which need to ensure the current aspirations of citizens are understood and plans are developed to adapt and modify services accordingly. Cities that prepare for these changes are likely to reap the benefits and sustain cohesive communities in which citizens of all ages and all life stages feel connected and able to contribute.

Library, arts and cultural programs are particularly challenged by technological progress, demographic shifts and other societal changes. Hence, Bayside City Council is developing a Library, Arts and Culture Strategy to provide a solid

foundation for the provision of these important services in future. The Strategy (which is still in draft form) is designed to guide Council's planning and investment in library, arts and culture within the municipality over the coming five years.

The (draft) Strategy was developed over five months in a process that included demographic analysis, research on national and international trends and consultation with residents and community organisations. These stages, which included a Research Paper and a Discussion Paper, have formed the building blocks for the draft Strategy with many ideas and concepts from the earlier documents carried forward.



## KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This approach has enabled identification of the key challenges facing Bayside and the identification of major opportunities available. Strategic responses to these challenges and opportunities have been developed to ensure Council's library, arts and cultural programs contribute to a positive future for the Bayside community.

Community comment on the proposed directions for Bayside's library, arts and cultural programs over the next five years is now invited. All input will be considered as

part of the finalisation of the Strategy in July this year. Once complete, an Action Plan will be developed to complement the Strategy. The Action Plan will translate the strategies into concrete actions and identify responsibility for ensuring the actions are implemented.

Details of how to comment on this draft Strategy are set out at the end of this document. We look forward to hearing your views.

# WHY A LIBRARY, ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGY?

*Libraries date from 2,600 BC and possibly earlier. The 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries are considered the golden age when great libraries – the Bodleian at Oxford and the British Museum Library in London – were established. During the French Revolution, the collections of churches and aristocrats were confiscated and became the property of the people in the Bibliothèque Nationale – the first free public library service available to the general public, regardless of wealth or education. Art has played a major role in human history, supporting man's higher aspirations, celebrating what it is to be human and shaping civilisation.*

## BAYSIDE LIBRARIES

The origins of Brighton library date from 1859 when the Black St Congregational Church formed a small working men's club for "recreation, reading and improvement". It was the beginning of the Brighton Mechanics Institute which was to include a library. Books were donated, funds were raised and a building was erected at a cost of £503. John Pascoe Fawkner officially opened the Institute in 1861. In 1910, the library passed into the control of the council and thereafter borrowing was free.

City of Sandringham's Free Library was officially opened in 1958. The local paper reported the library was going so well that there were very few books left on the shelf.

Hampton Library was opened in 1960 and Beaumaris in 1970. All libraries came together to form the Bayside service in the amalgamation of councils in 1994.

Libraries as repositories of knowledge and ideas have been major contributors to the Enlightenment and continue to play a very significant role in civilised communities.

Contemporary public libraries:

- Support life-long learning and literacy
- Provide communal resources for pleasure and relaxation
- Facilitate social connectedness
- Enable e-accessibility
- Contribute to the preservation of local history



## ARTS AND CULTURE IN BAYSIDE

Since the earliest times, all communities have expressed the essential elements of their culture through art – be it visual art, music, dance or story-telling.

Most people acknowledge the intrinsic value of arts and culture and see artistic expression as a worthy pursuit in its own right. But there are more than individual benefits that flow from arts and culture. Society benefits too.

The arts:

- Tell our stories and help build Australian identity
- Strengthen social cohesion through expression of shared interests
- Drive creativity and innovation in products and services
- Provide entertainment for people of all ages and all interests
- Contribute to employment and the economy generally



## COMMITMENT TO ARTS AND CULTURE

Over the last ten years, Council has increased its commitment to arts and cultural programs. The Gallery @ Bayside Arts and Cultural Centre opened in 2011 and has staged a variety of exhibitions attracting over 5,000 people in its first 9 months.

Council also offers artists the opportunity to display their work in the foyer at Council's Sandringham offices (the space is known as ARTrium) and there is an artists-in-residence program at Billilla historic mansion.

There is an art collection acquired over the years through donation and purchase. The collection includes paintings, prints, photographs, sculpture, monuments, memorabilia, and historical household and personal effects. The items are valued at more than \$3 million.

There are arts and cultural events including:

- Artist seminars
- Resonance music series
- Film Festival
- Literary Festival

## INDIGENOUS HERITAGE

Bayside City Council is committed to its indigenous heritage. There is a Coastal Indigenous Trail marked by signs and sculptures that provide insight into the works and the social customs of Indigenous people from the area. Each of the trail signs and sculptures is based on stories authored by Boon Wurrung Elder, Carolyn Briggs. There are four etchings in the collection by

Indigenous artist Vicki Couzens, produced in response to Carolyn Briggs' stories of the Boon Wurrung people.

The Indigenous Resource Garden in Bluff Rd displays some of the plant life used by indigenous people of the Ngaruk Willum clan. The Garden is also home to the Guy Boyd sculpture, 'The Swimmer'.

## CULTURAL HERITAGE

The term 'cultural heritage' refers to the things, places and practices that define who we are as individuals, as communities, as nations or civilisations. It is that which we want to keep, share and pass on. If the cultural heritage of Bayside is to be passed

on, a plan is needed for collection and protection of what is important now and was important in times past. This is a natural role for local government through its library and cultural programs.



## LIBRARY, ARTS AND CULTURE – NOW AND IN FUTURE

Library, arts and cultural programs are an important component of the social fabric of the Bayside community. The world is changing rapidly and so are the things that are valued by the community. Library, arts and culture must be ready to face the

challenges and seize the opportunities that the future presents. For this reason, a strategy is being developed to set the course for these important services. While the Strategy has a five year horizon, it has been developed with the next 20 years in mind.

### WHY A LIBRARIES, ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGY?

*As Thomas Hobbes, English philosopher, said: "No arts, no letters, no society."*

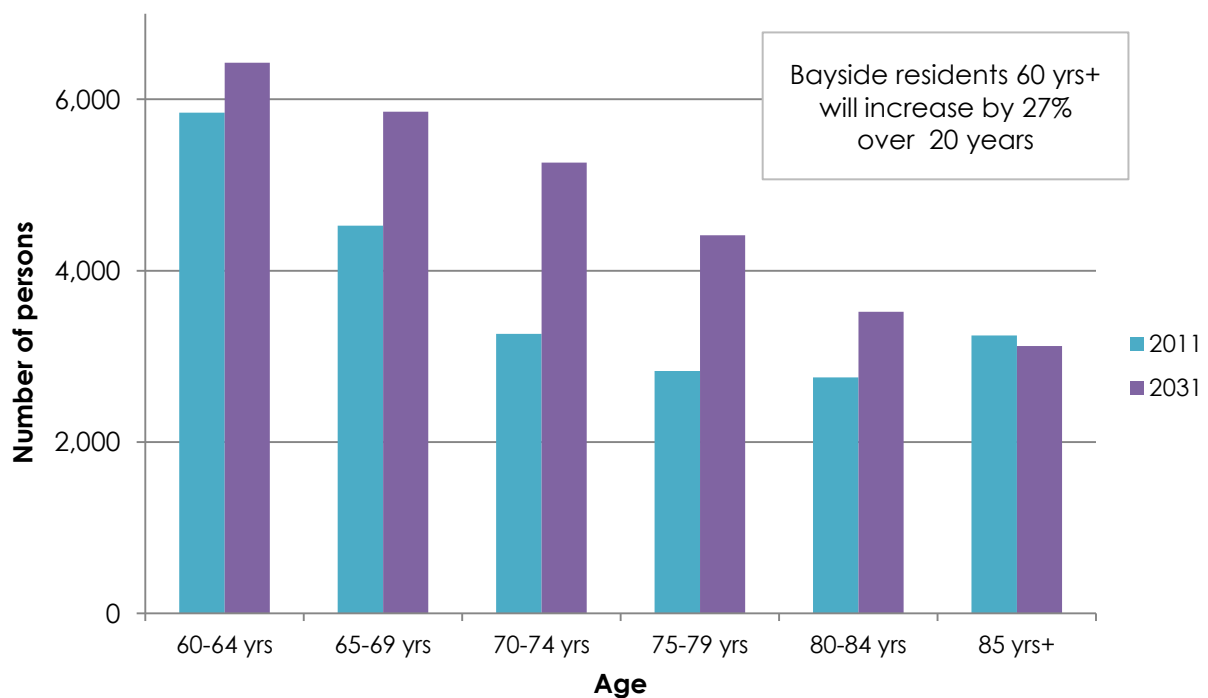
# THE BAYSIDE COMMUNITY

The municipality of Bayside, with its extensive coastal setting and easy access to the central city, offers residents a lifestyle that few other municipalities in Victoria can match. Prior to European settlement, the Boon Wurrung clan lived on the eastern shores of Port Phillip Bay and some of their descendants still live in the area. The City of Bayside as we know it today was formed through the amalgamation of Victorian councils in 1994, and is made up of the former Cities of Sandringham, Brighton, and parts of the former Cities of Mordialloc and Moorabbin.

Bayside has a population of nearly 100,000 people and is still growing, although slowly – about 0.7% annually compared to Australia's overall growth rate of 1.7%.

Like the rest of Australia, the population of Bayside is ageing. More than 22% of the

Bayside community is over 60 compared with only 16% over 60 in Melbourne as a whole. The number of older people is increasing rapidly and by 2031, the number of residents 60 years or older will increase by 27%. Bayside will 'feel' like an older community.



## BAYSIDE ECONOMY

Bayside residents are generally better educated, healthier and of higher socio-economic status than Melbourne as a whole although, like all cities, there are pockets of disadvantage. The 2006 SEIFA index (a measure of socio-economic status

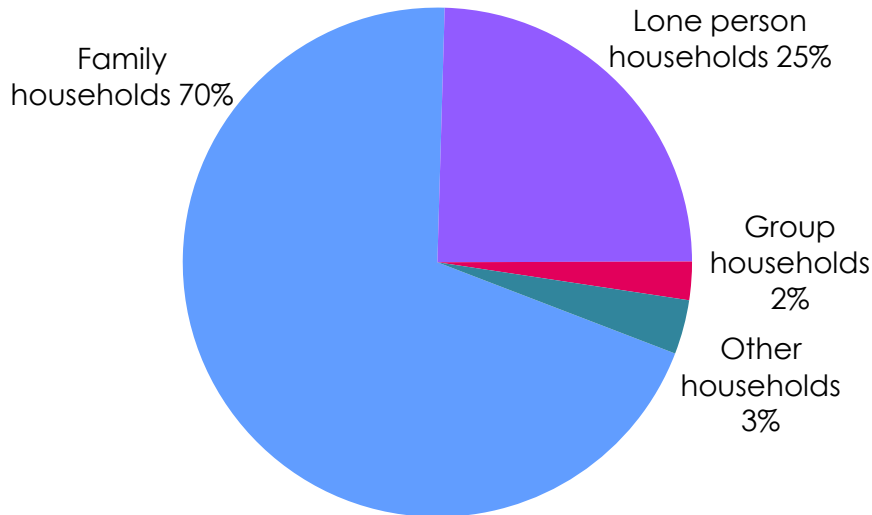
used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics) rates Bayside as third highest among the 31 municipalities in Melbourne. All Bayside suburbs except Highett and Hampton East rank in the top quartile of SEIFA scores for Melbourne.



## BAYSIDE HOUSEHOLDS

There is a high level of home ownership in Bayside with 73% of households either owning or purchasing their home. However, nearly a quarter of residents live in one-person households, a statistic consistent with

the number of older people in the city. Of those who live alone, women significantly outnumber men. As the population ages, the number and proportion of people living alone will rise.



Bayside has a high level of internet connection. The most recent available figures (2006 census) showed that 87% of Bayside residents had internet access but that figure would be much higher now,

particularly given the rise in smart phone ownership.

Most Bayside residents work outside the municipality.



Bayside was rated eighth of 590 Australian local government areas in the BankWest Quality of Life Index 2008 which tracks where living standards are highest in Australia.

Other similar studies paint the same picture. Bayside residents live in a safe, healthy and engaged community and most residents live in households of high socio-economic status.

## PLANNING FOR THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY

There are, however, households in Bayside that are far less privileged. These include many of the people living in the public housing estates as well as those who are disadvantaged due to circumstance. These include people with a disability, those

caring for someone with a disability, some sole parents, some young people and those who are unemployed. There are also those retirees who live in valuable properties but have low incomes – the asset rich but income poor.



These statistics have implications for planning future library, arts and cultural programs. The Library, Arts and Culture Strategy will need to take account of:

- The needs of people as they grow older – issues to consider include their need to socialise, their capacity to travel independently, their desire to participate in a vast range of interests and, importantly, their wish to continue to utilise their very significant skills and make a contribution to the community
- The needs of people who live alone – for them, opportunities to socialise and participate in community groups and activities will be essential to healthy living
- The needs of people who work outside the municipality who will want access to services and programs outside business hours
- The needs of those who do not have access to technology at home
- The needs of younger people who have traditionally used municipal libraries less and may want access to quite different resources such as music and multimedia
- The needs of communities where there is financial and social disadvantage and the risk of social exclusion and exclusion from society's digital future.

# THE POLICY CONTEXT

*Commonwealth and State policies impact significantly on local government and those that are directly relevant have been taken into account in the development of this Strategy. Council's own overarching planning framework provides the platform and the parameters for this Strategy.*

## COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT POLICY

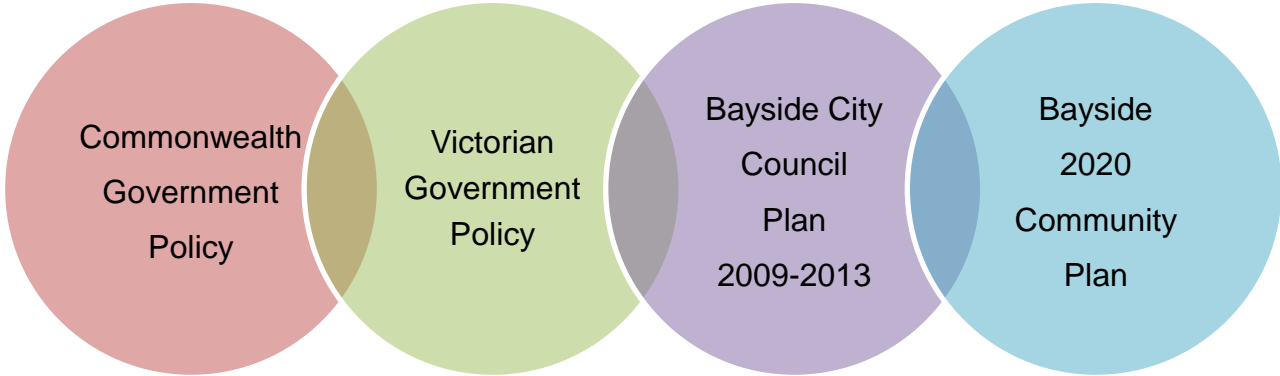
Australia does not have a national public libraries policy and the Commonwealth Government currently plays no role in the funding, development and provision of public libraries other than the national library in Canberra.

The Commonwealth Government does, however, have a goal to ensure that every community in Australia has access to affordable, high-speed broadband with 93% of premises to have access to speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second. The Commonwealth Government states that the National Broadband Network will transform service delivery in key areas such as health, education and energy and will support a new wave of digital innovation that will change and improve the way

Australians live their lives, receive services and connect with the world. Digital policy will certainly impact on libraries and also on arts and cultural programs.

The Commonwealth Government commenced the development of a National Cultural Policy in 2009 involving the arts and culture sector, creative industries, the public at large and government. An initial discussion paper was developed and there was a call for submissions in response to the discussion paper. The release of the new Policy has now been delayed and its future is unclear.

Notwithstanding the lack of cultural policy, the Commonwealth Government is a major funder of arts bodies.



## VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY

The Victorian Government has traditionally contributed to the funding of municipal public libraries but the funding formula and the amount of funds allocated is currently the subject of review.

The Ministerial Advisory Council on Public Libraries (MAC) is undertaking the review and will provide the Government with advice on a long-term strategic direction for improving library services across Victoria. The review will consider, among other matters, future services, directions and trends that will lead to changes in the provision and delivery of library services, such as emerging technologies, e-books, telephony, internet, partnership arrangements and the increasing role of libraries as community spaces.

The Victorian government does not have a specific State arts or cultural policy. The last State policy – *Creative Capacity+ Arts for all Victorians* – was a policy of the previous government. Arts Victoria, part of the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet, advises on government policy. It has developed a statement of strategic intent – *Creating the Future: Towards 2020* – to guide its operations and public investment. Arts Victoria's work is organised around four guiding themes:

- Developing cultural identity
- Creating content
- Forging connections, and
- Capturing value

Bayside City Council does not receive any funds from Arts Victoria.



## BAYSIDE CITY COUNCIL POLICY AND STRATEGY

All local governments in Victoria are required under the Local Government Act to develop a Council Plan. Bayside City Council's *Council Plan 2009-2013* takes precedence over all Council strategies. The Council Plan is a high level document that sets out six commitments, two of which are directly relevant to the development of the Library, Arts and Culture Strategy:

- Lifestage wellbeing of our people
- Community engagement and having real conversations

Bayside also has a Community Plan expressing the community's vision for Bayside for the next 10 years. Based on an extensive and ongoing community engagement process, it sits at the heart of Bayside's planning framework, providing an essential reference for all of Council's plans, policies and strategies. Six priority areas were identified in the Community Plan, three of which are directly relevant to the

development of the Library, Arts and Culture Strategy:

- Community connection – Bayside's community wants opportunities for groups and individuals with related interests and aspirations to come together and share experience, resources and wisdom
- Life stage issues – Services and facilities need to be family friendly, fit for purpose and able to provide age appropriate services including more spaces for younger people. The outdoor areas, festivals and events create opportunities for everyone to connect and stay healthy
- Recreation, leisure, arts and culture – These are a strong focus of community interest. Collaborative approaches should be fostered to ensure participation by all age and interest groups.



## ARTS AND CULTURE FORUM

Bayside City Council has now established an Arts and Culture Forum of community members to assist in the implementation of the Recreation, Leisure Arts and Culture key priority area of the Community Plan. The Forum will assist Council in:

- Processes that engage diverse interests to work together to achieve balanced outcomes for arts and culture

- The development of strategic approaches to arts and culture issues
- Annual revision of the arts and culture component of the Bayside 2020 Community Plan.

The Arts and Culture Forum is an important contributor to the development of this Strategy.

# WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAYS

*Bayside City Council sees community engagement as a key commitment and seeks to align Council directions with the aspirations of the community. A wide ranging community consultation has therefore provided major input to the development of the Library, Arts and Culture Strategy.*

## THE APPROACH

A range of complementary methods was adopted to enable a diverse range of people to contribute to the project. These included:

- A forum for members of literary organisations and businesses as well as people with a significant interest in matters literary
- A forum for members of arts organisations, artists and creative businesses
- A meeting with members of the Bayside History Network which includes two historical societies, Black Rock House and cemetery support groups
- A meeting with the Bayside Older Adults Advisory Group
- A meeting with Council's Arts and Culture Community Engagement Forum
- Meetings and interviews with Council staff from many departments
- Interviews with senior public librarians and arts administrators in other local governments
- Interviews with recognised specialists in cultural planning
- An online survey for the general public accessible through Council's website



## THE FINDINGS

The consultation identified many opportunities and issues ranging from small, localised matters through to big ideas for the future.

All input from all consultation activities has been captured and documented for on-going reference by Council and has been used in the development of this Strategy.

The feedback to date has been very positive. Key findings include:

- The libraries are highly valued for access to books and as places where the community gathers, people learn, children play and all are welcome
- The Gallery is appreciated by those who have visited – but many residents have not
- People enjoy art outdoors – the coastal trails, sculptures, murals and mosaics
- Council support for arts and culture is important as people want to participate locally

## THERE IS ALSO A STRONG APPETITE FOR MORE OPPORTUNITIES

- Young families want more story times and programs for pre-schoolers
- Holiday programs for primary school children are excellent but more are needed
- Hampton residents want their library upgraded and want longer opening hours
- Some people already have e-readers and want access to e-books
- Young people want more CDs, DVDs and more diversity in the book collection
- Artists would like opportunities to connect with other artists
- Meeting spaces for community groups are in short supply
- A small amount of support would make a large difference to arts and cultural groups
- A cafe in or near the libraries would be welcomed by many
- Arts practitioners, businesses and community arts and cultural groups all want more opportunities for collaboration

### FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY SURVEY:

*“Reading and literacy are vitally important for people, encouraging a sense of well-being, enhancing employment opportunities and academic performance.”*

*“Libraries should embrace e-books but also cater for those who love the printed page.”*

*“With an ageing population libraries and arts and culture will be even more relevant than they are now. Keep the budgets for these important community services.”*

*“It is a pleasure to attend any of our libraries. I would appreciate a cafe within the space. Books and drinks seem to go together”*

*“Arts and culture is vital in our society and often they're undervalued”*

*“Development of a cultural hub in the Beaumaris Library Precinct with better linkage between the Library and other buildings”*

# KEY THEMES

*Library, arts and culture contribute to society in many ways. In developing a new Strategy, it is important to build on existing strengths so library and cultural programs evolve in ways that ensure all members of the Bayside community have equal access to the world of information, ideas and culture.*

The Library, Arts and Culture Strategy aims to:

- Maintain the traditional role of libraries as places of learning, information and imagination
- Foster participation in artistic and cultural expression across all ages and across all community segments
- Celebrate, protect and preserve Bayside's history and cultural heritage
- Support equitable e-accessibility in the Bayside community
- Support the strengthening of community connections
- Ensure Bayside remains a cohesive and liveable city

The development of this Strategy has included significant background research and drawn on international and Australian leading edge thinking to inform the strategic responses. On the basis of this research and the consultation to date, five main themes have emerged that encapsulate the issues and opportunities facing Bayside's library and cultural programs.

## THE FIVE KEY THEMES ARE:

Technology in Future	•The challenge of staying in front
Places & Spaces	•Ensuring they are right for the community in future
Community Responsiveness	•Keeping services responsive to changing local needs
Partnerships & Collaboration	•Creating more opportunities to work together
Smarter Resource Utilisation	•Using existing resources better

The next five sections elaborate on each of these themes in turn. Issues and opportunities are explored and explained and strategic responses are presented and described. Taken together, these strategies are intended to establish a foundation that will see Bayside library, arts and culture continue to provide Bayside residents with the opportunities they seek for learning, pleasure, connection and creativity.

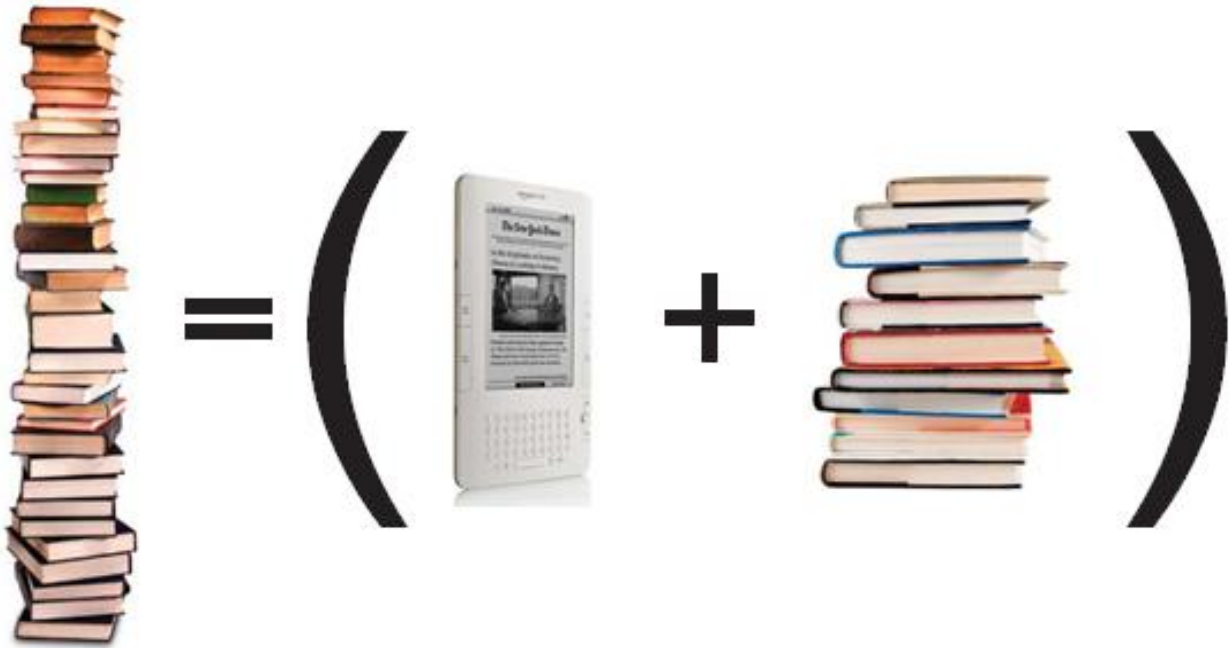


# 1 TECHNOLOGY IN FUTURE

*Australians are early adopters of new technology – home computers, the internet, and more recently social media and tablets. 10 million Australians already have a smartphone. The rise of technology has major implications for planning the future of Bayside's libraries and the future of cultural programs. Technology is changing the way people everywhere live, learn, work, connect and create. Over the past 20 years, the rate of change has been rapid and seems unlikely to slow in the foreseeable future. No-one can say exactly what will come next but, in 20 years, the world will be very different. Bayside services must plan for a digital future without dispensing with what the community values today.*

Bayside libraries have dealt well to date with the changing technology landscape. The library catalogue is available through Council's website, so users can look for titles, reserve print titles, DVDs and CDs or extend their loans. Bayside was one of the first public libraries in Victoria to introduce self checkout through Radio Frequency Identification, freeing up staff time to help patrons directly. Public access computers are available in all four libraries as is Wi-Fi for those who bring their own device. In the arts and in cultural heritage, however, there has been less progress. The Council art collection is not yet available online and there is no single electronic pathway to all cultural heritage resources.

The Bayside community is very tech savvy with higher levels of broadband connections at home than Melbourne as a whole. In 2007, 87% of Bayside households had internet access. With smart phones now ubiquitous, internet access is likely to be extremely high across the municipality. However, there are those who have missed out – some older people, some low income families and some people with disabilities.



## **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Access to digital content and devices**

The biggest technology challenge for libraries comes from the rise of e-readers such as Kindles and iPads. A study in the USA found that 1 in 5 Americans has read an e-book in the last year, four times more than 2 years earlier. Digital content is rising rapidly in Australia too with e-books now a real alternative to print material. With the convergence of internet and TV, downloads of music and film will start to replace CDs and DVDs.

Two thirds of American libraries provide e-books and so do some Australian libraries. Currently, there are market difficulties with digital rights management as authors, publishers, e-book providers and libraries struggle to provide solutions acceptable to all, but this is likely to change as demand grows. Downloading library resources from home may also be part of the future landscape. Bayside residents say they still want access to books, newspapers, DVDs and other materials, but they also want to read online, on e-readers and on tablets.

Some libraries in Australia and overseas are investing in e-reading devices pre-loaded with e-books as a means of ensuring all segments of the community have access to the latest technology. As e-reading devices come down in price, they become cost-effective as out-of-copyright titles are free to download. New titles, however, can be expensive for libraries.

Finding the right balance between e-books, downloads and traditional formats will be challenging. Bayside needs to stay in step with community preference while catering for all.

### **Ensuring digital inclusion to support lifelong learning**

Libraries have always been repositories of knowledge and provided access to information and education. Today, access to information and education increasingly requires access to technology. Libraries have an important role to play ensuring that people of all ages and all backgrounds can access information and education through use of technology. Given that much web content is now user pays, libraries also have a role in ensuring equity of access.

Some older people, low income households and those without a computer at home are all at risk of missing the digital revolution. Computer classes are offered but at a price that may act as a barrier for some. Those who are not regular library users may not know that classes are available. A more proactive, targeted approach to the digitally disadvantaged seems warranted. Ensuring digital inclusion is an important pathway to promoting lifelong learning, community skills development and sustaining social cohesion.

### **Establishing a greater online presence**

Online access has made the world seem smaller. Access to books, newspapers, and e-magazines is all very familiar but visual art is benefiting from an online presence too. Increasingly, creativity is drawing on digital resources.

Google Art Project has photographed in very high resolution the art works from major galleries around the world and they are now available on the web. Local governments can similarly showcase their collections on websites as well as showcasing works the community is

producing. Bayside has started the process of uploading its art and historical collection but there are many additional online opportunities to support community creativity.

Access to historical resources is now much easier thanks to the internet. Many Commonwealth and State records have been digitised enabling universal access. The historical societies and other community organisations hold important information about Bayside's past and access would be enhanced if their content was fully available online.

Some communities in Victoria are exploring opportunities for retention of photographic and other visual records through partnerships with local newspapers, photographers and film makers. Other opportunities include creation of historical content through social media and wikis that allow upload of photographs and stories that should not be lost. A greater focus on online content offers an important pathway to protection of local history and showcasing the artistic capabilities within the community.

### **Engaging customers of the future**

As the digital age progresses, young people who stop using libraries may never return – with major implications for the long term sustainability of libraries and library funding. Better to tackle the issue now and find ways to attract young people into libraries and create long-term relationships.

Technology is potentially a great tool for engaging young people in libraries and local arts too. Young people are interested not only in what they can access online but also what they can create online. Be it film, blogs, stories, multimedia or App development, young people are pushing the boundaries of art and seeking opportunities to explore creativity online. Libraries provide the perfect venue for young people to come together to pursue these interests, develop their skills and see that the libraries are places for fun and learning.

Many libraries here and overseas are also offering gaming opportunities – both games and consoles – for use in the library or to borrow. In Scandinavia, this strategy has been extremely successful in attracting young men to libraries. This does not mean noisy, violent games but rather games that enhance cognitive development – genres that require a challenging level of reading, comprehension and calculation. Many older people now play brain training games online. Game playing crosses all demographics and age ranges.

### **Strategies**

1. Ensure that Bayside remains at the forefront of the latest advances in global technology through the provision of electronic content and digital devices. Progressively increase the proportion of the library collection budget allocated to e-resources, technology and non-print media
2. Continue to support lifelong learning by facilitating community access to affordable education in the use of digital technology
3. Investigate collaborative opportunities to provide access to, and showcase online, the artistic endeavours and the cultural heritage of Bayside
4. Capitalise on new technology to attract different community segments through provision of opportunities for recording, gaming and multimedia

## 2 PLACES & SPACES

*Libraries and galleries are places where people meet, connect, talk, learn and play. Local cultural centres can be places where people experiment, express themselves, collaborate and create. No matter how the world changes, people will still want these opportunities to come together and access shared resources. But libraries and cultural centres will need to change as the world changes. Bayside will need to plan for an older community wanting more opportunities for socialisation and self-expression in retirement and also plan for more people working from home seeking opportunities to connect with peers that they previously found in work-places.*

Bayside has four libraries, the Bayside Arts and Cultural Centre plus other community facilities managed by community groups but demand for meeting and leisure spaces is greater than facilities available.



### ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

#### Providing access for all

The libraries and cultural centre are all relatively close to the coast and residents of inner Bayside – Highett and Hampton East – do not have the same easy access to facilities. Unsurprisingly, residents in these suburbs borrow fewer books than residents in other suburbs. While another library may be needed as these suburbs grow in population, planning such a facility is premature given the largely unknown impact of technology. Seeking innovative ways to provide these communities with access to libraries and cultural programs therefore makes sense. Possibilities include outreach services and locating programs in other facilities. It may also be possible to collaborate with neighbouring municipalities in the provision of these services. Ensuring equitable access for this part of the municipality is an important goal.

#### Libraries as community focal points

Brighton, Beaumaris and Sandringham libraries are located within community precincts which offer multiple opportunities – seniors groups, arts groups, historical groups. Further developing these precincts as cultural hubs or community focal points will draw a wider range of community members and encourage higher levels of participation. Brighton library patrons might welcome a cafe, possibly in the old court house; Beaumaris might welcome a cafe too and would certainly benefit from linking the arts centre, library and senior citizens centre to create a more integrated community facility.

### **Libraries fit for purpose**

As the role of library and cultural facilities change, the interiors of the buildings may need to change too. More space is needed for activities – story time for pre-schoolers, technology classes for older people and more space for arts and cultural groups. Disability access to all areas of facilities also needs to be achieved. Libraries can also offer space for display of art and cultural works from the community and Council collection. Cafes enhance the diversity of experience and encourage visitors to stay longer. Sandringham library needs more 'people space'; Beaumaris has foyer space that is under-utilised; Hampton is small with limited space for activities. A progressive program of internal re-design as library usage changes is needed.

### **Space for artistic expression and cultural programs**

Artistic and cultural expression can grow when there are the right facilities for arts practice and arts performance. Bayside provides some community spaces for artistic endeavour but more opportunities are sought by the arts community. Premises owned by Council but under-utilised may be available. Premises owned by community organisations (e.g. churches) may also be available. Sharing of community facilities offers real potential for more people to participate in the arts.

### **Art in public places**

Public art in public places is seen by some as symbolic of a city's maturity. Bayside has some significant sculptures in open spaces but other opportunities could be identified to express a sense of Bayside's identity and values. Developers in the municipality could be encouraged to include quality public art in major developments. Council could, as a matter of policy, do the same. Some local governments allocate a percentage – usually 1% – in all capital projects for inclusion of public art in all new developments.

### **Clarifying purpose and approach to collecting and exhibiting art**

A small but important asset of Council is the art collection, acquired over many years through purchase and donations from residents but there is no formal policy about the type of art to be collected or the way art should be exhibited. Some items in the collection have little artistic or heritage value and judicious deaccessioning is needed.

The Gallery opened in 2011 with the intention of showcasing works relevant to Bayside as well as the work of practising Bayside artists and it remains important for the gallery to reflect community aspirations. External input to Gallery governance and decision-making would be beneficial. For the future it will be important to develop policies about programming, acquisition and deaccessioning as well as the role it plays in supporting other arts programs such as the arts coastal trail, ARTrium and the public art program.

Consideration also needs to be given to the long-term physical requirements of the Gallery, the future needs of other Town Hall occupants and best use of the spaces available

## Strategies

1. Investigate ways to provide better access to library resources and better access to opportunities for cultural expression in under-served areas of the City. Explore opportunities to collaborate with neighbouring municipalities in the provision of these services
2. Capitalise on opportunities in library precincts to create cultural hubs that act as drawcards and strengthen community connections
3. Increase space for people in libraries through internal redesign that takes account of the impact of technology and the changing way the community uses these facilities
4. Identify under-utilised facilities in the community suitable for arts and cultural programs and investigate ways of making them accessible to community arts groups and artists
5. Encourage the inclusion of public art in major developments and public places, making art a part of everyday in the community and include public art in all major council projects
6. Ensure the art collection and exhibition reflects the aspirations of the community by developing policies for acquisition, deaccessioning and display and investigate governance models for the Gallery
7. Review the physical requirements of all occupants in the Brighton Arts and Cultural Centre and plan for the most effective use of the space available



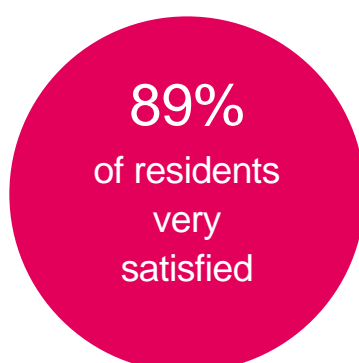
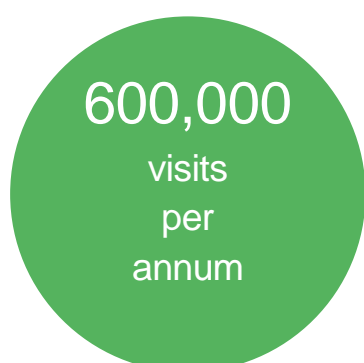
### 3 COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS

*The Bayside 2020 Community Plan expresses a vision for Bayside which came from an extensive community engagement process. The vision is that Bayside will be a truly interconnected community with support for people of all ages and in all stages of their life. Council's library and arts and cultural programs have a major role to play in achieving that vision.*

The libraries are well used with more than 600,000 visits per annum. In addition to the traditional role of lending books, DVDs, CDs and other materials, they provide many services – story time for pre-schoolers, holiday programs for primary school children, a delivery service for the housebound, public access PCs, computer courses, book clubs, author talks and more.

Measures of satisfaction with the libraries and their services are high with 89% giving Bayside libraries a score of 8, 9 or 10 on a scale of 1 to 10. However, there are segments of the community that don't use the libraries. Many young people give up library membership in secondary school and don't return as patrons until they have children of their own.

Although there are no useful statistics, anecdotal evidence suggests that participation in community initiated arts and cultural programs locally is low, while, at the same time, expressed interest in participation is high. Participation in local cultural programs has tremendous potential to strengthen community ties, reduce social isolation and enhance community well-being. As the demographic change continues and more people retire, opportunities to participate will be sought by many. There are a range of arts and cultural groups in Bayside, some of which are supported by Council but there is no systematic, strategic approach to strengthening the role these organisations can play in the community.



## ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Catering for non-traditional users

Bayside libraries have established systems to encourage community feedback but the focus of engagement is primarily with current patrons. Remaining attuned to the needs of all residents, not just those who currently use the services, will require outreach and engagement with all segments of the community. Finding ways to connect with young people will be particularly challenging. In planning and delivering arts and cultural programs, engaging with potential participants, particularly older, isolated and disadvantaged residents is challenging, but important if resources are to be directed where most needed.

### Catering for the full range of interests

The libraries have many thousands of titles and staff work hard to meet a wide range of requests. This is one of the difficult tasks in library management. Other municipalities of similar size offer more CDs and DVDs than Bayside does. E-reading will bring further challenges in determining what content to make available and, possibly which e-readers to provide. A systematic way of engaging the community in library planning, service delivery and collection/content development is needed.

### Local flexibility

All the libraries currently operate in similar ways with very similar opening hours and similar programs. But library patronage varies during the day and across the seasons with libraries sometimes crowded and, at other times, nearly empty. Some patrons, such as young people studying for exams, would stay later if opening hours were longer. With demographic change, demand may change in a variable way across the suburbs. The challenge will be to ensure that, over time, local services are modified to meet local needs.

### Programs for audiences or opportunities to participate

There are a number of cultural performance programs funded by Council – the literary festival, the film festival, a music series and artist seminars. Some programs are well attended, sometimes attendances are small. The community benefit of these programs has not been fully evaluated. Opportunities for people to attend cultural performances are important but so too are opportunities for people to participate in arts and cultural activities. Shifting the balance from staging cultural events to facilitating cultural expression through participation will contribute to a culturally richer Bayside.





## Strengthening traditional library roles

Libraries have long had roles in information provision, fostering literacy and supporting readers. Bayside libraries provide infant books for new parents, general community information and advice on reading material. These roles are more important than ever. There is now so much choice in leisure activities that readership will decline, with negative impacts on civil society.

## Staff with the right skills

With both demographic change and change in technology platforms, the community of the future may have different expectations. Increasingly, library users are requesting help with technology – utilising software, research on the internet and help with new digital devices. Many Bayside library staff trained in the pre-digital age and significant investment in their development is needed to meet community expectations. Responding to increased demand in arts and culture is also challenging – if funding shifts from staging events to supporting participation, staff will need skills in community liaison and cultural development.

## Strategies

1. Establish mechanisms to engage with all community segments to ensure that access to services is equitable and programs are tailored to specific needs and interests
2. Review library practices, programs and activities to ensure alignment with community interests
3. Enable greater flexibility at each library – in the collection, programming and opening hours to ensure each is strongly focused on local community needs
4. Review the current suite of arts and cultural programs with a view to shifting the balance from audience events to participative, community-initiated programs that deliver measurable community benefit
5. Strengthen traditional library roles in information provision and promotion of literacy engaging the community strongly in these endeavours
6. Ensure that staff recruitment and training takes account of the changing needs of library patrons. Re-orient the role of arts and culture staff to community cultural development and away from event delivery



## 4 PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

*Strong and cohesive communities are built on cooperation, contribution and shared responsibility. This is particularly so in community cultural development which thrives where governments, community organisations, creative businesses and arts practitioners work together to deliver better outcomes for all. Bayside has the opportunity to strengthen engagement with the arts and cultural community through development of a strong partnership approach.*

Bayside libraries have developed partnerships with book groups, poetry groups and other groups that meet in the libraries. Council supports some art groups and theatre groups through providing accommodation and some grants. There is direct support for artists through the artist-in-residence program and space to exhibit works.

There are two historical societies, Friends of Black Rock House and other groups who work to preserve the cultural heritage of Bayside. These groups meet with Council staff as a history network to share information and ideas. Council supports Friends of Black Rock House to open the house to the community.

But there are many other arts and cultural groups which have little or no contact with Council. Some, but not all, creative industries are linked to the Bayside Business Network. Establishment of more partnerships across literary and creative community groups and businesses offers many opportunities for collaboration, sharing resources and better outcomes for the community.

### ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

#### Creative business collaborative

Data available through Council's Economic Development Strategy suggests there are hundreds of creative businesses in Bayside – photographers, artists, writers, film makers, web designers, dress designers, illustrators, musicians, art galleries and more. The Bayside Business Network provides opportunities for all businesses to meet with peers, share ideas and collaborate for mutual benefit. Many in the creative industries are micro, home-based businesses for which such opportunities to network are particularly valuable. Council's cultural development staff could encourage stronger participation in the Bayside Business Network from creative industries, supporting both business outcomes and cultural development generally.



### Practising artist collaborative

Practising artists can be particularly isolated unless they work in shared space. Council offers some space for artists-in-residence and the opportunity for individual artists to display their work at ARTrium. The number of practising artists in Bayside is not known but is likely to be large. Establishing an 'artists' network' that meets occasionally to share ideas and, possibly, resources may lead to opportunities for showcasing the work of these artists, a higher profile for some and greater opportunities for the community to enjoy art created in Bayside.

### Partnerships for cultural and community development

There is a diverse range of arts, cultural and community groups in Bayside (e.g. art societies, poetry groups, the Toy Library) connected to Council. The community benefits when Council promotes the opportunities the groups provide for participation in cultural programmes and community activities. However, there is an opportunity to establish a much stronger community partnership framework. Strengthening the network of arts and cultural groups, providing opportunities for collaboration and providing small amounts of financial support is likely to deliver a significantly enhanced range of opportunities for community participation in the arts.

Celebration of contemporary indigenous culture, which is alive and well in Bayside, will further contribute to reconciliation.

Bayside is already a contributor of expertise to State-wide library activities. Extension of this role through developing partnerships with government, community groups, educational institutions and businesses will extend the reach and impact of the libraries in the community.

### Preservation of cultural heritage

Future generations will want to know about the history and cultural heritage of Bayside. The historical societies provide a valuable community service, on an entirely voluntary basis, collecting and preserving Bayside's history. Council provides support through accommodation but a long-term plan for resourcing and management of cultural heritage preservation is needed. Developing a long term plan, jointly with the members of the history network, for the sustainability of their work will ensure preservation of these resources for Bayside in future.

## Strategies

1. Work with Council's Economic Development Unit to grow relationships with creative businesses and promote Bayside as a hub for creativity and innovation
2. Support practising artists through provision of opportunities for networking and collaboration, display and promotion of works and linkages to creative businesses and cultural organisations
3. Establish a partnership framework for working with arts, cultural and community groups to extend their reach into the community and expand the range of library partnerships with external organisations across Victoria
4. In partnership with the history network, develop a municipal wide approach to protection of Bayside's cultural heritage and establish a plan for long-term development of resources

## 5 SMARTER RESOURCE UTILISATION

*The Bayside City Council Plan expresses a commitment to high standards of stewardship, governance and leadership. Library and cultural programs must meet these standards and utilise public resources responsibly - thereby contributing to the long-term viability of these important community programs.*

Benchmarking data collected by the Victorian Government shows that Bayside library services are efficient and the quantity and quality of services match those in other similar sized local governments.

### ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

#### Flexibility in staff roles

Current patrons have high levels of satisfaction with both library and cultural programs due, in large part, to committed, competent staff. Community needs and expectations are evolving, however, and staff roles and competencies need to change too. Staffing gaps include cultural development, management of historical resources, and technological capabilities. Some staff time has been freed through the introduction of self checkout and other efficiencies. While additional resources may be needed, it is appropriate to examine whether current resources are targeted to service priorities.

#### Flexibility in programming

The community is very positive about the programs offered: story times, holiday programs, book clubs and more, but demand for some of these programs outstrips supply. Ensuring equitable access is important, especially for Hampton East and Highett, and may mean taking some programs out to the community – libraries without borders. An older population and more retirees may increase demand for technology classes and for cultural opportunities; catering for young people will require creativity in programming. Adaptation to the future will have many challenges for management. Regular review of services and programs, based on good information about community needs and interests, enables flexibility in resource allocation so programs can change over time.



### Community philanthropy for the arts

Council has made a public, long-term commitment to art collection and display through the development of the Bayside Gallery. Building a high quality art collection for the Gallery and for display in other community facilities will be a significant, on-going commitment. This is an area where the community may be able to partner with Council to create a quality collection of art relevant to Bayside. Some municipalities have established Arts Foundations that are eligible for tax deductibility and thereby provide added incentive for people to donate funds or works of art. Calling on community generosity may enable Bayside to build a better collection in a shorter time-frame.

### A quality art collection

The art collection has grown over time largely through donation and partly through acquisition. Council resources are allocated to storage, management and care but some of the collection is of limited relevance to Bayside and/or of limited quality and could appropriately be de-accessioned. Establishing a governance model that supports excellence in the collection would ensure the community can engage with quality art that tells the story of Bayside.

### Strategies

1. Review the staffing model with a view to achieving flexibility in the allocation of resources to high priority services
2. Strengthen service planning through effective use of high quality data and strong engagement with local communities to ensure programs match local interests and demographic changes
3. Apply for Deductible Gift Recipient status for donations to the Gallery and seek advice on any other relevant taxation laws that encourage giving
4. Establish a governance model that supports the collection of high quality art relevant to Bayside and contributes to appropriate collection and management policies



# IMAGE CREDITS

**Page 6:**

*Jeffery Wilkinson, The Swimmer, c 1950s, bronze, Bayside City Council collection*

**Page 7:**

*Glenn Romanis, The Ancient Yarra River with Bunjil's Eggs, 2008, limestone basalt, Castlemaine slate and green limestone slate, Bayside City Council collection*

*Ellen José, Boon wurrung Blossom, bluestone from Lara (Victoria), crushed yellow ochre sandstone and indigenous plants, 2008, Bayside City Council collection*

**Page 12:**

*Guy Boyd, The Swimmer, bronze and granite, 1988, Bayside City Council collection. Concept developed by Guy Boyd and sculptured by his daughter Lenore Boyd*

**Page 17:**

*Image reproduced with kind permission of Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle Ltd.*

**Page 20:**

*Lenton Parr, Windhover, stainless steel and concrete, Bayside City Council collection*

**Page 22:**

*Faustus Seaudakus, Beacon, Buchan marble, 2004, Bayside City Council collection*