

# Case study

## The Fashion Archives

### Details

**What:**

The Fashion Archives tells stories, showcases collections, highlights significant contributions and initiates new research and conversations about design in Queensland. The Fashion Archives is the collaborative project of curators and researchers, Nadia Buick and Madeleine King, which brings together Queensland experts (emerging and established designers, artists, academics, historians, curators and writers) and communities around the subject of fashion and dress.

The Fashion Archives received Arts Queensland funding to develop and implement its 2014 program, including an online publication, the *Remember and Revive* exhibition at artisan Gallery and public and educational events.

**When:**

2014

**Where:**

Brisbane



Remember or Revive: Maison Briz Vegas & The Fashion Archives exhibition, 2014, artisan Gallery. Credit: Tara Croser.

**Key stats:**

- 40 activities
- 4 new issues of online publication
- 19,579 unique users of website

**Arts Queensland contribution:**

\$60,000 – Projects and Programs Fund

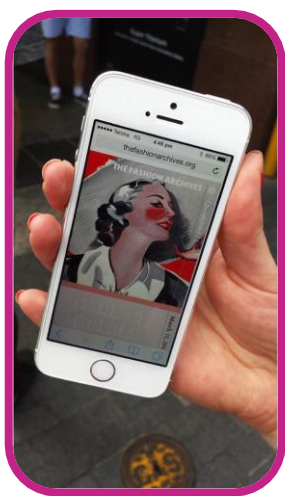
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## Outcomes

- The Fashion Archives significantly expanded documentation of Queensland fashion and dress history through 120 features, interviews and profiles across four issues of its online publication and the commissioning of eight new works by emerging and established creative practitioners.
- For more than 50 per cent of the 28 Queensland designers, artists and writers featured in the online publication, this was the first time they had been recognised as cultural leaders outside a commercial context.
- Public feedback on The Fashion Archives has been overwhelmingly positive. Comments in an online survey included: “TFA has shown that Queensland does have a rich, interesting and unique fashion history...” and “If it wasn’t for a website such as this, I wonder how much information, images and insights we might lose.”
- The *Remember and Revive* exhibition at artisan Gallery created opportunities for two emerging designers to exhibit their work for the first time. This resulted in interest from curators of a major regional gallery to show the designers’ work in the future.
- Also as a result of the exhibition, The Fashion Archives has been approached by a number of arts organisations to be involved in future exhibitions or public programs.



The Fashion Archives mobile website, 2014. Credit: The Fashion Archives.

## Learnings and reflections

Madeleine King and Nadia Buick from The Fashion Archives reflect on the course the project has taken to date and future plans:

*“The Fashion Archives has in a short time become identified as the leading Queensland organisation for fashion history, and contemporary Queensland fashion design. We’re thrilled with this response, but at the same time, we are aware of becoming limited by the disciplinary constraints of fashion, and the Queensland context. We want to build on the success of TFA, and further develop the loyal audience we’ve attracted, to create a much larger project that looks beyond fashion. As part of The Fashion Archives project, we have collaborated with practitioners from a variety of creative disciplines, and have interdisciplinary backgrounds ourselves. While there is growing recognition of the interdisciplinary nature of creative thinking, the majority of institutions and programs follow traditional disciplinary boundaries. We feel there is a gap for an ongoing program of engaging talks, exhibitions, publications, and workshops that bring together a range of disciplinary approaches, skills, and knowledge. Throughout the course of 2014, we’ve realised the elements that make our project successful aren’t confined to fashion: a unique brand, a strong visual identity, a distinctive way of looking at things, a bringing together of perspectives from the past and present, curating the best talent, distilling complex ideas into engaging content, and a different voice that people want to hear from. We’re harnessing these assets to create a new creative enterprise in 2015.*

*By April 2014 we had completed 12 issues of our fortnightly online publication within an eight month period. We felt a fortnightly release would build momentum and sustain audience interest. However, we learnt from our audience that they would have been satisfied with a monthly release, spread out over the full year. Despite this, the breadth and volume of content produced has directly led to opportunities such as The Queensland Business Leaders Hall of Fame QBLHOF Fellowship, and enhanced our credibility as an organisation that can produce exceptional content within a short timeframe with limited resources and personnel.”*