Humanities and Creative Arts eResearch Consortium: A BoF for Practitioners

Participants:
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Description
This BoF session focuses on the requirements, aspirations and opportunities for collaboration between research databases containing content relating to the humanities and creative arts sector in Australia. It is designed to be a useful brain-storming event that will enable the identification and articulation of the similarities, differences, overlaps and tensions between a range of research infrastructure initiatives that serve research activities and information provision in the humanities.

The participants invite conference delegates to have input into:

- identifying new and innovative uses to which databases that record cultural activities across Australian history should be put;
- considering, in a world where crowd-sourcing is becoming commonplace, the opportunities and problems of crowd-sourcing for scholarly resources that also meet the needs of the general user;
- the debate around how research supported by databases should be recognised as scholarly outcomes and rewarded as such in the university;
- building capacity among researchers for using digital methodologies in the humanities and creative arts and extending the uptake of methodological innovation;
- our aspiration for a federated approach to Australia’s digital cultural histories across many disciplines and practices;
- finding mutually rewarding ways of collaborating with cultural sector institutions outside of universities such as galleries, museums and libraries; vital links in the research chain.

The BoF will be of interest to digital humanities practitioners, information management specialists, librarians and researchers whose work involves the creation and use of database content.

Outline
The BoF will begin with brief (3-5 minute) presentations from project representatives describing the raison d’être, history, aims and particular issues they are facing over the next five years. Each presenter will identify one burning issue or question to be addressed in the BoF. The issue or questions will be allied to a concrete example that can be discussed. The participants of this BoF all have a number of common attributes. Each represents an important national research and information asset that provides authoritative data, full text, research tools and information delivery services that, to varying degrees, map the deep history of Australia’s cultural life and the institutions and organisational structures that surround it. To varying extents each of the projects is engaged in recording and analysing the pipeline of actions that operate between the creation of cultural artefacts through their consumption and continuing existence over time.

The HCA Consortium is identifying ways of working together to create a network of...
interlinked research environments to multiply the benefits to researchers and the public of the investments made in developing these digital humanities resources. The GLAM sector is also vital to any vision of a collaborative space for sharing data, information and knowledge, but managing the different agendas of universities and collecting institutions can be difficult. Following the opening remarks, a facilitated discussion will occur to debate and extend the questions posed by the participants. By harnessing the wisdom of conference delegates and teasing out the issues surrounding the future of digitally-enabled research in the humanities and its relevance outside the university we hope to identify new ways of sharing the research space with each other and our various audiences.

We need answers to the following multi-faceted question:
What are the structural, cultural, institutional and software/hardware issues that need to be addressed in order to create the envisaged space wherein researchers, teachers and the various others actors in the field can achieve their individual and collective aims for the expansion of knowledge?

About the Speakers
For the convener(s) and for each speaker, please provide a short bio of 150-200 words.

Jonathan Bollen is a senior lecturer in Drama at Flinders University in Adelaide. He coordinates research for the AusStage database of live performance (http://www.ausstage.edu.au), focusing recently on geographic mapping, network visualisation and audience research. He is co-author of *Men at Play: Masculinities in Australian Theatre since the 1950s* (with Adrian Kiernander and Bruce Parr, Rodopi 2008). His research on gender, sexuality and performance has been published in *The Drama Review*, *Journal of Australian Studies* and *Australasian Drama Studies*.

Ross Harley is Professor and Head of the School of Media Arts at the College of Fine Arts, UNSW. He is an artist, writer, and educator in the field of new media and popular culture. His video and sound work has been presented at the Pompidou Centre in Paris, New York MoMA, Ars Electronica in Austria, and at the Sydney Opera House. He is currently Lead Chief Investigator for the ARC-funded Design and Art Australia Online (DAAO). Other current research projects include the ARC linkage projects “Video Art Online: from Ubu to Imperial Slacks” investigating the history of video art in Sydney, and “Reconsidering Australian Media Art History in an International Context”.

Kerry Kilner is the Director of AustLit Research and Publications (www.austlit.edu.au) based at the School of English, Media Studies and Art History at The University of Queensland. She has been involved in the development and digital humanities initiatives to support research in a diverse range of fields relating to Australian literary and narrative culture for the past 12 years. She was project manager and associate editor of the *Bibliography of Australian Literature* a four volume print bibliography (UQP, 2002-2008) which is likely to be the very last of its kind. Her current research, and the subject of her PhD, is in the role of Wikipedia in the university.

Richard Maltby is Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, Humanities and Law and Professor of Screen Studies at Flinders University, South Australia. He has been the lead Chief Investigator on two Australian Research Council Discovery projects examining the structure of the distribution and exhibition industry and the history of cinema audiences in Australia, which have developed the Cinema and Audiences Research Project (CAARP) database. He has also recently directed an ANDS-funded Seeding the Commons project creating a dataset from the 35,000 digital images of documents digitised from the General Correspondence files of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc. (MPPDA), Hollywood’s industry trade association, covering the period from 1922 to 1939.

Deb Verhoeven is Chair of Media and Communication at Deakin University. Deb has a longstanding interest in the digital humanities. She has developed a range of film industry related datasets including the award-winning bonza database (www.bonza.rmit.edu.au); the ANDS-funded Screen Media Research Archive and the Cinema and Audiences Research Project (CAARP) database. From 2008-2011 she was Deputy Chair of the National Film and Sound Archive. In 2011 she was elected to the foundation committee of the Australasian Association for Digital Humanities (http://aa-dh.org/).