

The background is a solid light pink color. It is decorated with various abstract shapes in dark blue and white. These shapes include solid colors, stippled patterns, and line patterns. A prominent feature is a large, stylized white eye-like shape with a dark blue center and a white outline, located near the top center. Other shapes include irregular blobs, circles, and elongated forms scattered across the page.

HEAPS DECENT

ANNUAL REPORT

2016-2017

The background is a vibrant green field filled with various abstract shapes and patterns. There are numerous orange and white elements, including circles, arcs, and irregular shapes. Some shapes have internal patterns like dots or lines. The overall aesthetic is modern and artistic.

MISSION

Heaps Decent is a dynamic arts organisation working with young people and emerging artists from diverse communities - providing them with positive role models and a means by which they can tell their story in their own way. Heaps Decent supports change, positive futures and the development of high quality music with a unique identity.

ABOUT US – a passionate beginning

In early 2007 young Sydney DJ's Nina Agzarian and Andrew Levins were volunteering for independent radio station FBI. Teaming up with visiting American DJ Diplo (Wesley Pentz) they ran workshops in the Riverina Juvenile Justice centre in Wagga Wagga. A few months later they ran workshops at Juniperina all-girls Juvenile Justice centre with British Indie Popstress M.I.A.

In these workshops they glimpsed how stories and music change lives – and it started by changing Levins and Nina. Determined to sustain the work they rented space in Alexandria and used equipment donated by Diplo to work weekly with girls released from the centre. From there they were introduced to Youth Off the Street's Key College and the project snowballed.

By 2008, Fuzzy, organisers of Australia's premiere music events, took notice and offered kick-start funding and assistance as a key partner / benefactor through donations and administrative support. Heaps Decent grew exponentially.

From the start Heaps Decent successfully enlisted the support of professional guest tutors from a wide variety of musical genres – starting with Diplo there have been numerous performers, DJ's and singers who've donated time and energy, including Aloe Blacc, Lykke Li, M.I.A, Sinden, A-Trak, videoartist Ghostdad, DJ Mehdi, Spank Rock, Devlin, Lady Sovereign, Brodinski, The Cool Kids, Busy P, AC Slater, 12th Planet, Jesse Rose and many more.

A passionate beginning, and 10 years on Heaps Decent has created over 1000 songs with young people from radically diverse climes. Young people have learned to tell their stories in music through workshops, performances and mentoring schemes. Some have performed in front of thousands on the stage at Parklife Sydney, while others have performed at The Sydney Opera House in an amazing multi media event or been the first to rap in Parliament House.

Heaps Decent has become a powerful force for change.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairperson	Janine Agzarian
Treasurer	Oliver Ryan
Directors	Nina Agzarian
	Nerida Woods
	Andrew Levins
	Leanne Townsend
	Jonathan Friedrich
	Erin Morrissey (Appointed 7/2/17)

STAFF

Creative Advisors	Nina Agzarian
	Andrew Levins
General Manager / CEO	Nerida Woods
Projects Manager	Charlie O'Brien
Tutors	Charlie O'Brien
	Adam Bozzetto
	Nina Agzarian
	Caleb Crinis
	Sarah Emery
	Michael Moebus
	Howard Matthews
	Mark Egan
	Hugh O'Brien
	Chris Arnett
	Rick Bull
	Nate Mendelsohn
	Simon Jones
	Shantan Parameswaran

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

It's a pleasure to introduce the 2016/2017 Annual Report.

At Heaps Decent we imagine a future where all young Australians have equal access to arts and music making, and are able to express themselves creatively, reflecting on their own lives in their own unique environments and sharing their stories with broad audiences - be they living in an urban environment, a regional town, or a remote desert area.

During 2016/2017 we have been really proud of the organisation's achievements, and the courage of all program participants who have generated so much great work in music production and visual content. There is rich diversity in this material, and what a pleasure it was to support the creative output of young people in communities from Sydney, Wagga Wagga, Maitland, to the Northern Territory, and Wilcannia. We covered thousands of kms across NSW and beyond, and as you can see in the following pages there were many fantastic outcomes across the state as participants built their skills and showcased them through music

Janine Agzarian
Chairperson

recordings, performances and video clips.

We ended the year in a stable financial position, with tremendous thanks to our project supporters who made activities possible through grants and donation. It has been tremendous to gain the support of the Australian Government Department of Communications and the Arts through their Catalyst - Australian Arts and Culture Fund - an acknowledgement of the strength of the program and the importance of making creative learning and engagement accessible for all young people, despite the challenges and obstacles many face. It was also fantastic to see our partnership with Fuzzy continue, and the positive impact this has had on communities in NSW. We are also indebted to our many other supporters.

Finally we thank the staff, volunteers, and fantastic artists who have worked with such passion and enthusiasm throughout the year, sharing their skills and making every young person feel capable of great things. We look forward to building on this years outcomes as we move on.



*Music Recording & Production Workshop,
Bourke*

MAJOR PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

What We Do

Heaps Decent tutors start with the ideas that are immediately around young people – their stories, their neighbourhoods, challenges and aspirations. As workshops unfold, young people are up skilled in music software along with more advanced ideas of how to create a song, source their own sounds, write lyrics, shoot video, operate equipment and get on stage even when scared or lacking confidence. Coupled with multimedia art, video production and other visual skills it facilitates a ‘tactics of learning’ – a pathway young people follow because they want to see the outcome and are ultimately inspired by their own works.

Heaps Decent is focused on sustaining positive changes for young people, and project work over the year has resulted in some powerful outcomes for participants. For those at risk of disengaging with education this has included school attendance increasing, coupled with amazing creative outcomes and performance. Elsewhere, following workshops in Juvenile Justice Centres, young people have sought out Heaps Decent and attended weekly drop-in on release– sustaining a relationship and making new friends in a positive learning environment. Others have enrolled in TAFE, re-engaged in learning, continued their independent pursuit of music making and gone on to perform, record and connect with other musicians and peers.



Workshop, Bourke, NSW



Workshop, Ltyentye Apurte, NT

Outlined below are highlights from a year in the life of Heaps Decent. Our website has an account of projects and news updates and can be accessed at www.heapsdecent.com. We invite you to take a look around!

Key College

Since 2008 Heaps Decent has been a weekly feature at Key College in Redfern. "Key" is an accredited independent High School (operating under the auspice of Youth Off the Streets) catering to young people without stable accommodation. Students work to individual project plans over the course of the year, to achieve their music goals. These plans are supported through individual tutoring and mentoring, and group work culminating in a compilation CD of their tracks presented at their annual Presentation Day.

Today I'll climb mountain high
Set myself free through the sky
And my silence will roll on the beat
Now I'm something and finally free

(from One Day by Sata)

Juvenile Justice Program Big Up

Throughout the year we worked with Dorchester ETU at the Reiby Centre in Campbelltown, Cobham Juvenile Justice Centre at St Mary's, Riverina Juvenile Justice Centre and Bimberi Youth Justice Centre in the ACT. Tutors worked with the ideas and stories presented by young people, and themes that emerged in song writing included freedom and restriction, transformation, time and waiting, home, family and friends. Loads of very catchy and heartfelt tunes have been created by some very talented participants in this project in collaboration with some of Sydney's most exciting producers, DJs and artists. This year, workshop special guests included producer / DJ extraordinaire A-Trak at a workshop in Reiby, and DJ Craze and Four Colour Zack at Cobham.

We have had an increasing number of young people contact Heaps Decent upon release from detention, keen to follow up, stay in contact and make more music. This is just one of the excellent outcomes of the project, which sees participants improving in areas such as literacy, and expressing themselves positively and envisaging a brighter future.

Heaps Decent is committed to reducing the reoffending rate through supporting sustained programs that build young people's resilience, skills and engagement in education and community. These are key strategies identified in the 2010 review of the NSW Juvenile Justice System.

**"I feel hopeless now
Cause I'm on the inside
But I'll be out soon
To give you back that pride
Be there for you
Cause it's a hard time"**

(Workshop participant, Reiby)

"Our students are reluctant to write but with the Heaps Decent presenters' encouragement and support as well as a desire to participate, students are producing writing that otherwise would not have been attempted."

(Assistant Principal, The Dorchester School, Reiby)



Artwork by participant, Reiby Juvenile Justice Centre

Home Base

Home Base is open to all young people and operates weekly at Redfern Community Centre, all year round. Designed as a drop in program to enable newcomers, or young people who have accessed other Heaps Decent programs such as Key College or a Juvenile Justice workshop to continue developing creativity and skills, this project is now in it's 6th year. There are a committed group of young emerging artists from throughout Sydney attending on a weekly basis. This is an opportunity to explore new ideas with a team of producers, and develop work through to completion. They have access to studio

facilities, and are mentored in all aspects of production.

Over the course of the year special guests visited to run mentoring sessions. These visits provide great inspiration for our participants who have their sights set on a music career. Regulars at Home Base Ravin and Ata performed their material at Plan B Small Club, supporting the artist Coda Conduct at their Sydney show. Home Base artists also performed a showcase of works at World Bar - the night was a great success and loads of fun.

**"Said we gotta learn to love one another
Not divided by our race or our colour"**

(Lyrics: Kobie Dee, Home Base)



Home Base Performance, Put it on Wax Exhibition



Home Base music video set

**"I remain surviving
Never to be silenced
A young freedom rider
Trying to make a future brighter"**

(Lyrics: Karl, Home Base)

Riverina Sessions

Expanding on the network of partnerships in the region, we aimed to deliver a project focused on bringing young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds - including those who are new settlers in the area - together through music and visual arts. Heaps Decent was able to make visits to Tumut, Temora, Wagga Wagga and Griffith to run a series of workshops.

In June 2017 in Wagga Wagga, refugee and new

migrant participants commenced a project called Promised Place & Home, using the theme of mapping to share their ideas and experiences through songwriting, music production and multimedia art activities. Through the project young people from very different backgrounds will work in a number of creative processes and promote the importance of mutual understanding for others in their community.

**"The war is now
Can somebody stop it happening to me
And people around me"**

(Lyrics: Promised Place & Home)



*DJ workshop,
Wagga Wagga, NSW*



*Promised Place & Home artwork,
Wagga Wagga, NSW*

Outer West Sessions

The Outer West Sessions project was undertaken with children and young people at schools in Bourke, Walgett, Dubbo, Brewarrina and Wilcannia. We also partnered with St Therese's Community School, Wilcannia Central School and WINGS drop in centre.

Through project activities participants explored their relationship with their local culture and environment, and life in their local communities. They wrote and recorded songs and also had the opportunity to explore themes in visual mediums, working with artists to create content using varying media that was animated in stop-motion animations and other

graphics to accompany songs.

The resulting material was an incredibly eclectic mix; songs that reflect young people's unique perspectives and experiences in the outer west of NSW, and vivid images in drawing, collage and photography full of local colour.

The collection of songs developed through the year offers a wonderful perspective from children and young people on their daily lives: Their interests, social interaction and friendship; struggles; or simply celebrating good times spent in favourite activities.

"We are the next generation
Next gen here so listen up
We're growing up quick and we're really tough
We're getting together to make a song"

(Lyrics: WINGS drop in centre)



Workshop, Wilcannia NSW

Each Day Move Closer

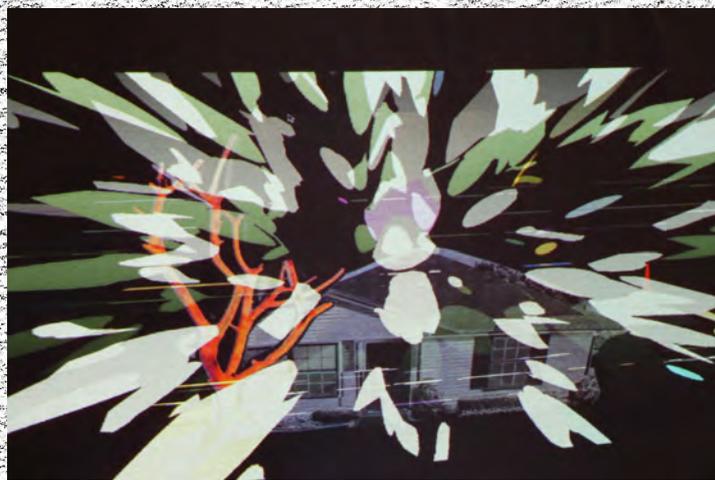
At the end of 2016 we concluded a 2 year Links to Learning project with students at Lomandra School. Participants of this project came from diverse and difficult circumstances, and had faced significant disruptions in mainstream education. The project focused on students transitioning back into mainstream schools, and improving student's engagement in learning

through music and digital art works.

In music making, facilitators encouraged the stories of young people through writing lyrics, and introduced new technical skills used in electronic music production. Participants were able to further explore ideas through visual experimentation utilising a variety of digital and handmade media.



*Music workshop,
Lomandra School, NSW*



*Artwork, Each Day Move Closer,
Lomandra School, NSW*

OTHER WORKSHOPS & HAPPENINGS

Heaps Decent again joined Groovin' The Moo on their festival circuit of regional Australia, providing some workshops in collaboration with artists in the line up. These sessions were attended by talented locals keen to pick up some tips and inspiration for their own music making.

We are so excited to announce that we have recently started workshops in the Girls Refuge and the Lilian Howell Project, taking female artists to facilitate music recording and production workshops. We are lucky to have the talents of Nina Las Vegas, Elizabeth Rose and Kota Banks involved!



Groovin the Moo, Bendigo VIC



Groovin The Moo, Bunbury WA

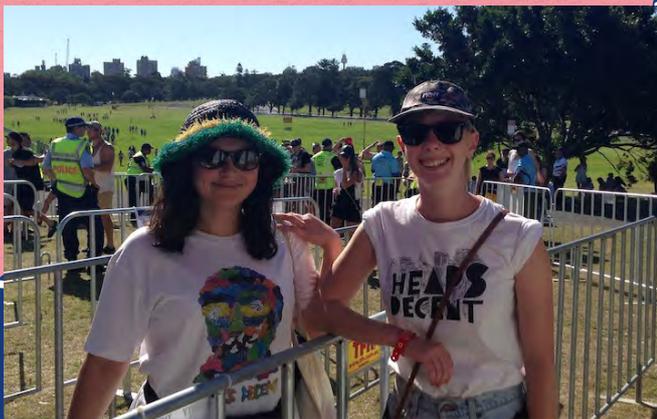
FUNDRAISING & DONATIONS

For Heaps Decent's 10 year anniversary, Nina Las Vegas hosted Diplo: Discovering, Collaboration and Creating at Giant Dwarf theatre, discussing his label Mad Decent, the beginnings of Heaps Decent, and much more. Profits from the tickets sold came back to Heaps Decent to support continued music and art workshop programs.

Through the Cash for Comp scheme with Benefactor Fuzzy we again raised donations with the event complementary ticket holders, with additional funds raised through cash donations at events. Over 50 volunteers collected donations

around the country at Listen Out events. This money goes directly to supporting the day-to-day delivery of the various projects throughout the year, and is integral to the ongoing success and development of Heaps Decent.

We have also had the continued support of the team at Ableton Live, through the very generous donation of software that's used to facilitate all Heaps Decent workshops. Native Instruments have also supported our program through the donation of music equipment.



Volunteers collect donations at Listen Out



Diplo Q&A, Giant Dwarf Theatre, Sydney NSW



Andrew Levins, Diplo & Nina Las Vegas, Giant Dwarf Theatre, Sydney, NSW

THANKS HEAPS

Projects this year have been supported by Catalyst - Australian Arts and Culture Fund, The Vincent Fairfax Foundation, Arts NSW Trade & Investment Program, Australia Council for the Arts Community Partnership Projects, Department of Human Services, Department of Education and Communities Links to Learning, Crown Resorts & Packer Family Foundation, Regional Arts NSW, Australian Communities Foundation, Westpac Foundation, APRA/AMCOS, Matana Foundation.

OUR SUPPORTERS





HEAPS DECENT

CONTACT HEAPS DECENT

www.heapsdecent.com
hey@heapsdecent.com