

# Preparing future art

By LYNN COLLINS

FROM around the nation, artists, craftworkers, designers and art educators have responded to the call from the Australian Network for Art and Technology (ANAT) to spend January in Adelaide gaining specialised computer-aided design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM) skills relevant to their practice.

One successful applicant at the school is a painter interested in architectural glass, murals and mass-produced domestic neon lighting. He is at present working in Victoria with metalworkers and technicians, laser cutting his range of furniture designs. He wants to develop both milling and casting techniques for architectural detailing and to produce a computerised spray-painting process.

He is among 12 carefully chosen participants who will use equipment at the Advanced Technology Education Centre at the Regency College of TAFE. They will also be introduced to other new technologies on visits to industrial and research facilities, and discuss the new technologies.

ANAT is the new national interdisciplinary arts organisation funded by the Australian Council with the primary aim of promoting, fostering and developing interaction between the arts, sciences and technology.

Its activities include monitoring artists and organisations involved with the use of new technology both here and overseas, facilitating artists' residencies in industry, and arranging special projects such as the summer school.

The aim of the summer school is not just to create new artworks but to develop and encourage an increased awareness of new ideas.

The belief of ANAT is that artists have a critical role to play in the development of innovative commercial and exportable products. We lie behind countries such as Sweden, Italy, Denmark, Finland and Germany where artists' inventiveness has been gainfully harnessed in joint arts/industry projects of great economic potential.

"Think — or perish" has been Professor Donald Horne's cry: Australian industry must be more competitive and alert to new ideas.

Therefore, a range of arts practitioners from interior designers to jewellers will explore the state-of-the-art computer-aided design and manufacturing systems including numerical-controlled lathes and milling machines, laser cutting, flame and plasma arc equipment and modelling for plastic injection components.

"We want the artists to acquire a wider repertoire of skills for expression, the participating art educators to pass on what they have learnt and to equip some people for work in high tech firms," said Francesca da Rimini, executive officer of ANAT.

Some of the results of this exciting summer school may be discernible at an open day on January 24.

Others could come to fruition for the benefit of Australia in the future.

● For further information telephone 231 9037, or Pat Tucker on 348 4522/348 4444.

