

Mr Mark Taylor
General Manager, Arts & Regional
Department of Communications, Information Technology , and the Arts
Canberra.

Dear Mr Taylor

I am opposed to the introduction of resale royalties on artworks in Australia.

Having had 40 years experience in the visual arts in this country, 28 of those in my own business, I am of the opinion that the resale royalty will never or so rarely be of benefit to the creators of works of art, and that it should not be considered.

If it were introduced, probably 95% of the revenue raised would go to 5% of artists who are extremely well endowed from the sales of their art. Those artists of consequence who have never had much success financially from sales of their work will almost certainly go to their grave, with barely a pittance from the royalty. The overwhelming majority of this group would probably have had so few sales in their lifetime, that any royalty would be a pittance. Any benefit would go to their heirs. It would appear as a tax windfall.

If this royalty were ever introduced, it should be introduced as a tax and the money collected paid out to those persons in most need, and not to those few obscenely wealthy artists who are feted and fawned over by Prime Ministers and senior public servants, who are honoured with medals on Australia Day or the Queen's Birthday.

There would of course be a real problem in deciding who should receive the benefit of the royalty. The problem would not be selecting those poor and in need, but those who are genuine artists who have suffered deprivation. There are any number of bludgers in the world calling themselves artists, who are nothing but parasites living around the edges of the art world.

The introduction of resale royalties would be an extremely negative move, indeed.

Robgib