

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Individual

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Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

There needs to be a prioritisation of the local consumption of theatre, the development of a culture of theatre-going and a diversification of the theatre product. Mainstage theatre companies are buying plays from overseas instead of commissioning Australian artists. Their persistent ancient strategy is to target to rich middle-aged white people whom they supplicate repeatedly with the same bland US and UK content while dynamic local playwrights are struggling to develop and present their work. A change can be supported through the government supporting a broad appetite for theatre through financial incentives to the wider public - this will encourage people from all communities to go see theatre and will shift the demand in the kind of work presented and therefore who and what gets developed and commissioned. The government should provide each household with a budget of \$200 a year to spend on going to the theatre. Telling and sharing stories is a world changing output. Australian playwrights should not have to go overseas to get their work made. Increase funding to support full-time theatre artists and their projects. Artists are creative entrepreneurs. The production of theatre is an untapped market that could flow much more money and employment through the economy. Look to the UK and Jamaica for their model of having a broad, diverse, risk taking sector with a level of consumption and participation across socio-economic groups.