

National Cultural Policy Submission

1471993

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

I am concerned that public galleries in Australia are becoming too heavily focused on Aboriginal art, conceptual installations, and modern multimedia experiences while neglecting classical painting and traditional visual art.

Recently I visited the Art Gallery of Western Australia in Perth with my child because I wanted to encourage an interest in art, painting, and artistic technique. Instead of seeing galleries filled with paintings, portraiture, landscapes, impressionism, realism, or major historical works, we found mostly contemporary installations, digital experiences, and Aboriginal art. It did not feel like a balanced public art gallery.

I understand the importance of preserving First Nations culture and history. However, a national gallery should represent the full breadth of artistic achievement and should not overwhelmingly prioritise one category of art at the expense of others.

Many families want to experience classical and traditional art forms that teach children about colour, composition, perspective, symbolism, and artistic mastery developed over centuries. These works are increasingly difficult to find in Australian galleries despite large collections reportedly being held in archives and storage.

Public galleries are funded for all Australians, and many visitors feel alienated by exhibitions that focus too heavily on conceptual or political themes while offering very little classical visual art. Galleries should not become spaces that only reflect current curatorial trends.

The National Cultural Policy should encourage balance, diversity of artistic styles, and greater public access to traditional painting collections. Australians should be able to experience European masters, Australian landscape painting, realism, impressionism, portraiture, and modernist works alongside Indigenous and contemporary art — not instead of them.

If galleries continue to neglect traditional painting and historical collections, younger generations may grow up without exposure to some of the most important artistic traditions in human history.