

# National Cultural Policy Submission

## **Australian Fairy Tale Society**

Submitted: On behalf of a not-for-profit arts organisation

**What challenges and opportunities do you see in the pillar or pillars most relevant to you? Feel free to respond to any or all pillars:**

### **First Nations**

The AFTS encourages telling and re-telling of fairy tales. Since most of our members are not First Nations peoples, we feel we cannot tell or retell First Nations stories sensitively. This leaves us with a gap in our repertoire. We would like to work alongside First Nations storytellers but we don't know of any mechanism for this.

### **A Place for Every Story**

We have studied fairy tales from around the world, including India, Japan, Russia, Romania, Denmark, Scandinavia, Spain, Italy, France, Germany, and we have upcoming fairy tales from Turkey and Chile. Our challenge is finding speakers from the original countries to deepen our understanding of each tale.

In the past we have had conferences on themes relevant to visual artists, to environmentalists, and to performers, as one way to reach out to those interest groups. In the future we will reach out to cultural groups, and to groups of people with disability, in order to hear their stories and perspectives on fairy tales.

We will extend our research into fairy tales in Australia through oral history interviews, seeking the expertise and funding that is necessary. We have begun podcasts and webseries as new ways of communicating our stories and in future we will find new platforms for story sharing.

### **The Centrality of the Artist**

We start by interpreting multiple variants of a fairy tale from our own multiple perspectives in order to stimulate the creation of multiple new works – stories are at the centre, creating more stories and other artistic works, which also stimulate more responses.

Our Society uses the original work of artist members for posters, logos, programs, and merchandise – although the merchandise needs a lot more promotion to get the sort of sales it deserves.

### **Strong Institutions**

We need to forge more connections between institutions with compatible aims in order to achieve rationalisation of resources, and the sharing of research, expertise, and promotional media; to network through conferences and professional development. This sort of networking could enable other organisations to access our creative members, enable the

AFTS to access venues for events, and other organisations to use our knowledge and expertise in the creation of their own projects.

### **Reaching the Audience**

A major issue for the AFTS is to connect with the audiences who would value our creative products, and our performance and learning events. We want to reach other artists, performers, and scholars, and the umbrella organisations that support them, as well as general fairy tale enthusiasts. We particularly want to nurture the next generation, both in university campuses, and in schools, however we really don't know how to make those contacts.

**Please tell us how each of the 5 pillars are important to you and your practice and why. Feel free to respond to any or all that are applicable to you:**

### **First Nations**

Fairy tales originated in Europe and are not an Aboriginal cultural form but we still look to Aboriginal traditional stories and history to reflect on the differences and similarities of stories from different parts of the world. We aim to investigate Aboriginal stories and culture with respect in order to deepen our understanding of cultural forms generally, and of the place of an imported form like fairy tales in a land that already had magical meanings.

### **A Place for Every Story**

This is the major objective of the AFTS: to understand fairy tales deeply enough to be able to re tell them from an Australian perspective, creating stories that use universal metaphors to tell authentic stories of our many people and places.

We strive to more deeply appreciate fairy tales from all over the world.

### **The Centrality of the Artist**

One of the objectives of the AFTS is to stimulate the creation of new art works by providing resources, and a forum for ongoing discussion. We also provide an informed community ready to appreciate these new works, and we encourage, through our conferences and in-society funding, collaborations between artists and performers of different forms.

### **Strong Institutions**

The AFTS balances the diversity of our membership (writers, artists, academics, storytellers, singers, teachers, psychologists etc) all creating connections within the Society, and the isolation from being a Society that is not exactly like any other Australian group. We rely on the initiative of our Committee to connect us with other organisations.

We sponsor an annual AFTS Award for luminaries in the field.

We hold an annual conference which is usually held live.

We have regular intellectual meetings in every state, discussing one type of fairy tale in depth each time.

We maintain a comprehensive website with rich materials for members.

We are involved in creating podcasts and working on a database to further Australian knowledge and appreciation of fairy tales.

### **Reaching the Audience**

Our objective is to communicate the works our members create because they use the language of an existing artform to reflect Australian perspectives, and the issues and values of our contemporary society. We use our personal and online resources as a platform to reach our member and non member audiences and continually struggle to extend our reach.

As well as our new AFTS podcasts we are creating a series of videos in the French salon style exploring fairy tales in depth. All these videos will be subtitled.

All images in our website have Alt-Text.

Our conferences were held over Zoom during the Covid pandemic.

We have Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Twitter channels as well as our website.

In our forthcoming (Brisbane) conference we are providing discounted places to students to reach a younger audience.

### **Are there any other things that you would like to see in a National Cultural Policy?**

Identification of where we can go when we are in need of expertise, or promotions, or advice on networking or outreach.

We would like to see Arts funding which would enable organisations like ours to pay keynote conference speakers, and website hosting and data storage fees.

We would like the government to run a database on which our organisation can be included, which is available to the general public, showing what is available to them.