

National Cultural Policy Submission

Anonymous

Submitted: As an artist

1. What challenges and opportunities do you see in the pillar or pillars most relevant to you?

First Nations

A big AFFIRMATIVE, see next question

A Place for Every Story

A problematic aim, see next question

The Centrality of the Artist

I write as an art educator, a visual artist with over 33 solo projects with known international museums and galleries and a 4 decades long professional involvement at prestigious art institutions. I also am a former public gallery director, freelance exhibition producer, hold an award winning PhD (Monash University) and am published writer- monographs with European publishing houses.

The artist is central and please see Q 3 for further details

Strong Institutions

Extremely important, please see next question

Reaching the Audience

<please enter your response>

2. Please tell us how each of the 5 pillars are important to you and your practice and why.

First Nations

First Nations are truly fundamental to one aspect of our sense of meaning and being, in this continent. Their presence must be honoured and respected. Their input is to be listened to, as a matter of high priority.

A Place for Every Story

The emphasis "A Place for every Story" is VERY much misguided, because it reverses the priorities:

Primary is the author (artist) and their professional standards (their craft etc) in delivering a story, alongside the various platforms which allow presentation of that story and the traditions in which these languages are given meaning.

The author/artist(s) will choose which narratives are to be expressed and hence not all stories will be told.

The Centrality of the Artist

I would like to see this emphasised in an arts policy:

An Industrial Award rate for the visual arts and crafts, possibly based on NAVA parameters (National Association for the Visual Arts)

Recognition of art as a profession by Centrelink.

Recognising that highly experienced and professional artists with exhibitions in known arts institutions overwhelmingly earn a wage at or below the poverty line, and can do so, for decades. At

the same time, the media and the general public (rightly) celebrates the value and the role of artists in Australian history and in Australian life (now).

Given the above:

See Below "Strong Institutions":

Consider establishing a fund which buys a selected number of works from artists (over a specified period) - artists with a track record and peer reviewed - for donation to major state collections. Consider this as a level of professional remuneration in the context of a average Australian wage for 3-5 years.

Recognise that artists are to be considered central, IF they have a clear professional profile, (except for the very young/emergent artists who are still to establish a track record). It is ONLY their professional profile (peer reviewed) which gives evidence of an artist's seriousness and their ongoing commitment to the highest standards within the traditions of contemporary art (the art of our time). All other aspects should be secondary.

Strong Institutions

ARTS FUNDING

Update arts funding (in line with current cost of living and inflation) after decades of degradation by various Govts.

TRIPLE the funding for The Australia Council to: A) Reverse 10 years of funding cuts and B) Update 20 years of static funding levels to current production and inflation costs.

Maintain arts funding at arms length: Continue grant assessment via arts industry peers.

Stop asking artists to find so much co-funding for a project. Fund a project to 80%, as mark of seriousness and respect.

Instigate tax free status for awarded Govt arts grants.

STRONG INSTITUTIONS / EDUCATION

Increase the status and importance of art education in our primary and secondary schools. IMMEDIATELY reverse the previous Govt's decision to increase fees for tertiary arts/humanities courses. Place a properly funded artist in residence into every school, for a year at a time

STRONG INSTITUTIONS / MUSEUMS and CONTEMPORARY ARTS INSTITUTIONS:

Increase the funding levels to these institutions for ongoing operational costs to lessen the pressures for institutions to be beholden to the corporate sector finance. Corporate support for museums, long term makes for very risk averse exhibition program. The USA is a case in point.

Reaching the Audience

Revise tax status and offsets, for collectors, willing to buy art by living artists from Australia.

Be careful in ascribing too much importance to the digital domains (in their current forms) given the invasive intrusion and cognitive limitation by the web and its various corporate interests.

See "strong Institutions" above

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

A strong emphasis on:

- 1: Highest standards for artists and a respect for professional artists and associated skilled professionals (producers, technicians curators etc).
- 2: Quality arts (and humanities) education, from primary to tertiary

3: Quality risk taking arts programming (Visual, moving image, performing, sound/music etc)

4: A commissioning body for new Australian works, which dovetails with other institutions in a simple and direct process

5: A commissioning body for new Australian works in the spirit of the US based Works Progress Administration (WPA), A, work program for the unemployed (ARTISTS and others) that was created in 1935 under U.S. Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal.