

National Cultural Policy Submission

Running Duck Studio

I think it may be beneficial to put some focus and resources into lifting the standing/image of the arts in the community, government and business sector. Doing this will flow through to help the arts sector improve fundamental conditions of work and practice.

Back in the time of the kings and queens, artists were put on a pedestal as masters of their craft, and revered by the royals and society

Never has it been more evident that the government holds little respect or value in the arts than in the lockdown situations of recent.... Galleries and every artform were the first to be locked down and the last to be opened back up.... Even the bottle shops and hair stylists were opened before any gallery.

Yes, there are a lot of grants on offer for the lucky few

So, what went wrong? I believe we slipped up in letting everyone jump on the "Artist ban wagon" so much so that there is no longer a real distinction between who and what an artist is anymore. For example, all dancers, actors, and musicians are now referred to as artists. Though I know it was meant in jest, a T-shirt slogan I read the other day kind of sums the situation up; it read, "I am a sandwich artist". The term artist may have lifted the creative reputation of such performance arts, but it has now been so diluted that it no longer has weight, especially for the original classic visual arts sector.

You can say, wow, that's fantastic; everyone has the freedom to be an artist and art has become arbitrary, art can be whatever you want. And performance arts are, justifiably, a significant art form. But where does that leave those who recognise as the classic artist or visual artist?

Perhaps as a part of the striving to obtain a balanced and fair workplace agreement, we need to find ways to showcase, educate, and champion the value of the arts in the evolving cultural reality.

One Idea is perhaps to award creative ambassador postings that are paid positions to represent the visual arts sector. Maybe one in each state? For example, selecting an artist that is a talented, well-spoken storyteller and demonstrator. They would be available for talks and demonstrations at major events, gatherings, schools, government activities and the like.

You say but doesn't every artist do this anyway.... artists are not all the same, a unified, strong image is needed. Most artists are brilliant creators but not so articulate. And this trend by galleries forcing all artists into presentations is not helping the professional image.

Not only would an ambassador represent the arts community, but also educate and demonstrate the value of the arts to government bodies and schools alike.

It's great to say pay us this because everyone else gets this... but wouldn't it be great if we could demonstrate why the arts sector should be respected so there is no question that it is due?

That's my stab in the dark. I apologise for the longwindedness if anyone has the time to read this. Have a fantastic day. Love your work 😊