

National Cultural Policy Submission

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The Centrality of the Artist

The term artist is too broad since it encompasses both creator and performer (re-creator). It is a traditional view, but I would go along with putting the creator in the centre or apex of a triangle. The other two corners of the triangle are the performer (in the case of visual arts the exhibitor) and the audience (spectators).

Strong Institutions

Strong presumably means well-funded and without bias or indeed any hint of corruption. We have a poorly funded Australia Council where time-consuming applications have very little chance of success.

Reaching the Audience

Obviously this takes a lot of time and effort, so creators and performers should not be shouldered with this extra burden. For instance, in other countries, music composers are represented by publishers and agents who both push to have their clients' work performed by soloists, ensembles, orchestras and opera companies.

Within our established ensembles and orchestras etc. there are full-time employees who act as agents, organizing concerts years in advance. However, emerging smaller ensembles, choirs or soloists cannot afford to employ an agent to do this sort of work, so maybe the Australia Council could consider funding a group of agents who could be engaged pro bono by performers.

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

The policy should not be separate from education. For instance, the Minister for Education could institute a policy of making sure that there is a qualified music teacher in every school in the country.