

National Cultural Policy Submission

Scott Redford

Submitted: As an individual

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

VISUAL ARTIST'S JOINING A LARGE UNION NOW!!

OK so we went to the Town Hall today at Lefty's in Brisbane.

We didn't stay after the speeches as the Minister would have busy with everybody.

I was struck by the Minister speaking about "safe working spaces". Obviously this pertained to the treatment of young women in the music industry; one can just imagine what happens there!

However safe working spaces would also include protecting artist's mental health when they interact with Govt agencies and institutions. My problems with the National Gallery, Canberra and Qld Art Gallery (amongst other institutions) happened a decade ago when no one ever talked about mental health. NOW it's all the go. A decade ago an individual artist just had to "wear" the situation they found themselves in as there was just nowhere to go for help.

As I say Visual Artists have NO UNION to protect them. A great deal of my problems stemmed from me being caught up in this spiral of anger and helplessness. As I said in my other submission I found it amazing that employees of Govt institutions could treat a member of the public so, esp as their wages came from the public's tax payer dollars! I bet every creative in Australia has such stories, in fact I know they do.

It would be interesting for there to be an audit as to how much legal action has been taken out by former employees of Qld Art Gallery; Qld Library and NGV, Melb...and they are just the ones I know about. Of course after the payouts people are silenced legally AND so the institutional abuse continues as Govt Art institutions are in reality totally unaccountable. So as Tony Burke is also the employment Minister I would strongly urge him to look at getting Visual Artists into one of the bigger amalgamated Unions. Decades of attempts to form an Artist's Union have failed as have efforts to get a nationally agreed scale of wages for visual artists.

I would also URGE Tony Burke to adopt National codes for Govt Institutions to deal with artists, as there seems to be NONE at the moment. This also means CONTRACTS so individuals are respected.

I urge Tony Burke to make sure that Govt Institutions nationally are not practising WAGE THEFT by not paying artists copyright fees. A practice that has gone on for decades it seems to me.

ALSO I would recommend some form of ongoing course of redress for individual artists like myself.

I suppose having a Union would help individuals SO I CAN'T STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS ENOUGH!

In fact I would very much like a written apology from the NGA, Canberra for what they did to me a decade ago. At present the NGA just ignores me.