

# National Cultural Policy Submission

**Gwen Knox**

Submitted: as an artist

**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**

Pillar 1 I agree with this

Pillar 2. Government support needs to reflect the extra costs to delivering an arts program to remote areas. The cost of travel, accommodation is much higher, the cost of cancellation due to sorry business or community business that takes precedence over the arts project or when the arts project clashes with a football game.

Pillar 3 the concept of Excellence is subjective. An arts outcome that may be considered to be substandard by some may be celebrated widely within the community who developed it and have huge spinoffs because of it.

Pillar 4 For some communities the arts is the only cash providing industry available outside of the usual government pension etc payments

Pillar 5 Digital enabled remote indigenous communities will rely on reliable internet which can be rare especially when a visual artist need to post high resolution photos of work.

The process may also require a high literacy in English which can be an issue when English may be the fifth language that an individual has learned.

## **A Place for Every Story**

Pillar 2 We have seen great improvement here but we still need to have the freedom to develop more.

Pillar 3 the concept of Excellence is subjective. An arts outcome that may be considered to be substandard by some may be celebrated widely within the community who developed it and have huge spinoffs because of it. In training, wellbeing and pride.

Pillar 4. Strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector to contribute to national life, community wellbeing and the economy. This is huge. Well being is hard to justify to number crunchers and even harder to measure. The arts contributes to so many economies eg fashion, theatres, education, galleries, design, architecture etc but how can the importance of the arts be measured so that it can be reported in a way that it will bring more respect for the sector?

Pillar 5 will not happen without reliable internet.

## **Reaching the Audience**

All pillars

I live in Broome. We are forced to create site specific and site responsive theatre works if we want our work to be seen by our local audiences. Some of these works have been spectacularly awe-inspiring, Visiting performances are staged in a town hall that is poorly equipped to receive any work that

travels with a large crew or props and scenery. Audience that go beyond 5<sup>th</sup> row of seating will have sightline issues.

Touring companies stop at the Pilbara as there are no environment-controlled theatres above Port Hedland.

Despite the issues with very poor infrastructure, we continue to bat above our weight in output in theatre works. Sadly, so little of it is seen in our own town. Eg We should travel to Sydney if we want to see a full length production of a Broome work. We have a significant arts collection that is stored in storeroom that is not temperature controlled which leads to significant damage to artworks though mould, insect infestation, and dust.

**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**

I am a first nations person, a descendant of the stolen generation. I have grown up away from the country off my family. There are so many stories to be told. Traditional public creation stories and cautionary stories. It is also important to preserve the sacred stories in an appropriate way. So much knowledge is being lost as our old people die without passing on those stories. This will lead to a dilution of culture as stories become more modern and influenced by European language media and Arts and cultural traditions.

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

Story telling is the very core of who we are. It is so important that our stories are told both locally and beyond. They help shape us and help us come to an understanding of who we are. They help build tolerance and general understanding.

### **Reaching the Audience**

This is so difficult to do with no infrastructural support in the form of venues and workplaces, and the increased cost of working in the remote areas.

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

Promotion of respect for artists and the arts as a viable and important industry. It is a valuable contributor to the national income.