

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Submitted: as an artist

The five pillars are solid and aspirational and I fully support their importance. I will speak directly from the experience of an established visual artist.

1. I would like to see greater recognition and support for acclaimed established artists who have made a lengthy contribution to the arts throughout their lifetime. Most of these artists have struggled financially and made considerable sacrifices and relied upon partners to support them in order to build their practice and tell important Australian stories. It would be beneficial to the nation, and to each artist, if once they have achieved sustained critical recognition that they are celebrated and paid a living wage to continue practicing so that they can continue to push boundaries, tell important stories honestly and not resort to commercial imperatives.
2. Funding models for individual artists are currently flawed. A particular set of skills are required in order to access arts funding and these skills are often ones that artists don't possess. The option then is to employ someone who writes the submissions which further disadvantages artists who don't have the funds for this. I would like to see provision in The National Cultural Policy for this gap to be bridged in an equitable way so that every story can be told.
3. I would like to see Australia Council representatives in every state in Australia. Currently, and previously, Federal Arts administration has been extremely Sydney centric. As a nation we are immersed in Sydney, and to a slightly lesser degree Melbourne, content and perspectives. The entire nation needs to be represented.
4. In so far as the National Cultural Policy has influence of State Galleries and Local Governments these institutions could also be incentivised to exhibit and promote local established artists far more than they do and thereby to tell local Australian stories.

5. I would love to see art become part of the everyday. It would be great if art could be more familiar, more democratised, less elite and remote which could be achieved in many ways one being by frequent exposure. I would like to see art prioritised as much as sport (not an either/or but both) by promoting established artists. Practical instances of this could be: having the public broadcaster foreground art in as many of their news broadcasts as possible eg. a work of art of an established Australian artist behind the Nightly News presenters, 7.30 Report presenter, ABC Breakfast presenters etc. This could be paid brief reference to at the start or end of the broadcast and have the name of the artist in the credits. Poems on trains and at train stations and other public places. It would be important for this art to push boundaries and go further than celebrate mediocrity and the known.

Throughout Australia I would like to see art as an integral part of holistic learning for every child and then an integral part of every adult's life via frequent exposure. Established artists have much to contribute to this.