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NAVA gratefully acknowledges the assistance provided by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

Patrons:
Pat Corrigan AM
Professor David Throsby



Media Release: Thursday 5th August 2010

ArtsPeak Calls for Cultural Policies

At its meeting yesterday, ArtsPeak, the confederation of 25 Australian national peak arts organisations voiced its concern at the invisibility of the arts in the federal election campaign. Today ArtsPeak has released its vision for the arts and cultural commitments needed from all political parties.

ArtsPeak calls for all political parties to develop and, if elected, implement policies that will accelerate the contribution being made by Australia's cultural creators to productivity, innovation, social cohesion and the economy. ArtsPeak criticises the lack of imaginative strategies to capitalise on Australian creativity. It asks governments to implement an arts and innovation agenda that will complement key areas of public policy (eg the recent commitment to digital book publishing).

While nine out of 10 Australians participate in the arts, the federal government invests in this area less than one per cent of its expenditure overall. The arts make a major contribution to Australia's image overseas as an intellectually and culturally sophisticated nation. However, according to the just completed Throsby research report*, artists' incomes continue to fall well below average incomes, with a high percentage living below the poverty line.

"We live in a world where creativity and innovation are transforming our lives. At crucial times like elections, it becomes obvious how effectively or not Australia is positioning itself, and what should be done to improve our track record," said Tamara Winikoff, Executive Director of the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) and co-convenor of ArtsPeak. "Cultural policies must be part of this election."

Julie Dyson, National Director of Ausdance, said "For Australia to be competitive, governments need to substantially enhance the capacity of artists to contribute within a national innovation system."

ArtsPeak says that all political parties should develop coherent national cultural policies which explore and respond to issues such as:

- connecting cultural policy into all key aspects of government policy e.g health, education, the economy, social cohesion
- expanding support for the creation and presentation of new Australian work, artistic risk-taking and international sales, touring and exchange
- giving effect to International Conventions on the rights for all people to receive an adequate education in the arts and culture and to have opportunities to make a creative contribution to and/or participate in the cultural activities of their choice
- recognising and expanding the key contribution made by Australia's creative industries to the national economy by establishing a support framework for arts micro businesses and SMEs, and adopting a national design strategy
- ensuring the protection of artistic creators' rights within a human rights framework, including freedom of expression, fair industry practices, copyright and moral rights and protecting Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights
- introducing policy to facilitate artistic enterprise including providing tax incentives and tax relief for artists and organisations, and reform of social security arrangements to genuinely assist artists to build their careers
- forging a national research agenda for arts and culture based on collecting and analysing adequate statistical and qualitative data that identifies both economic and social return on investment to support wise policy development and private investment
- applying the principles of the UNESCO Convention for Cultural Diversity both within Australia and by protecting Australian culture in the context of international trade agreements

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ArtsPeak Members

- Arnhem and Northern Kimberly Aboriginal Artists Association (ANKAAA)
- Arts Access Australia (AAA)
- Arts Industry Council (Vic)
- Arts Industry Council (SA)
- Arts Law Centre of Australia
- Ausdance - Australian Dance Council
- Australian Copyright Council (ACC)
- Australian Craft and Design Centres (ACDC)
- Australian Major Performing Arts Group (AMPAG)
- Australian Music Centre (AMC)
- Australian Network for Art and Technology (ANAT)
- Australian Performing Arts Centres' Association (APACA)
- Australian Society of Authors (ASA)
- Craft Australia
- Kultour
- Live Performance Australia
- Media Entertainment Arts Alliance (MEAA)
- Music Council of Australia (MCA)
- Museums Australia
- National Arts and Culture Alliance (NACA)
- National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA)
- Performing Arts Touring Alliance
- Regional Arts Australia (RAA)
- Theatre Network Victoria
- Youth Performing Arts Australia (YPAA)

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