

## NATIONAL MUSIC POLICY

### A submission by the Music Council of Australia in response to an invitation from Peter Garrett MP, Shadow Ministers for the Arts

November 11, 2005

This submission was written by the Executive Director of the Music Council, Dr Richard Letts, in consultation with the members of the Council.

The Music Council of Australia has a membership of 50, including nominees of national music organisations and individual members elected to positions assigned to various aspects of the musical world in Australia. It thus takes in the broad spectrum of diverse musical interests and disciplines.

The Music Council provides information, conducts research, develops policy positions and advances them to decision makers, represents music on Australian and international bodies, and organises and manages projects. It is the Australian representative to the International Music Council.

Richard Letts

Executive Director

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#### SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Our policy is mainly concerned with music but, with modifications, can be extrapolated to the entire cultural sector.

The following 'general principles' are set out at the beginning of the paper because they apply broadly to the specific objectives and actions in the second section.

1) **Basic rights.** Cultural policy should recognise the basic rights of freedom of thought and expression, and the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international declarations and covenants to which Australia is a signatory. These rights have been relatively uncontroversial and unthreatened in Australia and therefore have not been a feature of recent discourse on cultural policy. In present circumstances there is an urgent need to reassert them.<sup>1</sup>

- 2) **Universal music education.** Every Australian person of school age should be provided by governments with the opportunity to receive an effective, long-term, continuing, sequential music education.
- 3) **Equity of access to musical opportunities - general.** Government should assist in the provision of opportunities for all Australians to make music to a level that gives them personal satisfaction, and to have access to the musical creations and performances of the highest standard. Special initiatives are required to ensure access for those who live in the regions or in outer metropolitan areas and for those with special needs such as the disabled, the ageing, indigenous people, refugees and immigrants.
- 4) **Career music education.** Governments should provide adequate resources for music education to an international standard for Australians who wish to make a professional career in music composition and/or performance, or other functions within the sector such as music teaching, production, delivery, technology etc. To match the instruction available to students in competing countries, it is necessary to acknowledge that music cannot be funded as a lecture hall subject, but requires provision of one-to-one instruction and other adequate

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<sup>1</sup> The right of everyone to freely participate in the cultural life of the community is recognised as a fundamental human right conforming to the principle embodied in Articles 18, 19, 22 and 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and in Article 15 of the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

resourcing of acoustically appropriate facilities, equipment and specialised library services.

- 5) **Musical diversity.** Government support to music should take advantage of and build upon the cultural and musical diversity in the community.<sup>2</sup>
- 6) **Technological innovation.** In all art forms and especially in the music sector, technological innovation has radically altered creation, production and dissemination. While most of the activity in developing and utilising these technologies probably can be left to individual and organisational enterprise, government should be alert to implement steps to remove obstacles and facilitate development.
- 7) **Whole of government.** Musical activity can be used to build personal and community identity and social capital, maintain school attendances, support health, divert and inspire at-risk youth, treat various conditions associated with ageing, and other functions; these are essentially long-term functions which through long-term impacts on trade and general economic activity support the long-term economic viability of the nation. Hence, music (and other cultural activities) merits support not only from government arts portfolios but from government generally. A vigorous culture supports long-term economic growth.
- 8) **Musical achievement.** There is no reason that Australia should not aspire to have one of the most broadly participatory, creative, diverse, excellent music cultures in the world. Such an achievement cannot be won simply by government intervention, but governments can do much to make it possible through supportive attitudes and provision of resources. Current policies do not give whole-hearted support and are unlikely to produce that result.

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<sup>2</sup> "(E)ach culture has a dignity and value which must be respected and preserved" (Article 1, UNESCO Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation (Paris, 1966))

Refer also to the Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Council of Europe, 2000; the Cotonou Declaration on cultural diversity, International Organization of the Francophonie, 2001; the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001; the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, 2005.

- 9) **Musical integrity.** Where in official policy there is conflict between supporting the maintenance of musical integrity and supporting the achievement of financial profit, musical integrity should have priority.

- 10) **Cultural subsidy and industry assistance.** Cultural subsidy is provided to highly valued cultural activity that cannot support itself totally from earned income, and is successful when it achieves cultural objectives such as the production of excellent art, regardless of profitability; continued activity probably requires continued assistance. Industry assistance is provided to lift commercial performance and is successful if the activity achieves commercial viability; continued activity should not require continued assistance. The distinction should be noted and addressed in cultural policy formulations, especially to counter unreal expectations that cultural subsidy will or should lead to financial self-sufficiency.

- 11) **Cultural sovereignty.** The Australian government should maintain full rights to support and develop Australian culture and should not allow these rights to be limited by the trade ambitions of other countries as promulgated through international trade agreements.

What follows are policy proposals addressing specific key concerns. They are set out in these categories:

#### **Music education**

#### **Community music development**

#### **Music therapy**

#### **Infrastructure**

#### **Music industry**

#### **Broadcasting and new media**

#### **Copyright**

#### **International**

#### **Arts funding**

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## MUSIC EDUCATION

### • **School music education**

*To remedy the deficiencies of school music education is of the highest priority.* MCA supports the recommendations of the National Review into School Music Education.

**ACTION** MCA asks governments at Federal and State levels to collaborate in funding the implementation of the recommendations in public schools, and in setting requirements and benchmarks for all Australian schools. The special responsibility of the Federal government for policy and funding to teacher training is noted.

### • **Tertiary music education**

The graduates of Australia's tertiary music institutions increasingly compete for work on the international market. This is so even though they may work only in Australia, because Australian audiences are offered music from all parts of the globe and their choices are not made primarily on a basis of patriotism. Orchestral musicians compete here and abroad with musicians trained elsewhere.

**ACTION** The Federal government should provide the policy and resources to support the activity of Australia's tertiary music institutions in meeting the special requirements in training musicians (including the one-to-one instruction, and provision of expertly managed specialist facilities, equipment and library resources) to an international standard.

### ***Music practice as research***

In the field of research and research funding, reflective artistic practice has not been acknowledged due to persisting science-based criteria.

**ACTION** As international recognition of these activities grow, MCA asks DEST to emphatically include artistic practice as research into the new Research Quality Framework.

## COMMUNITY MUSIC AND ARTS DEVELOPMENT

### • **Music, community, identity**

Word based arts can express and communicate issues and identity in a very explicit way. Music is perhaps less explicit but potentially deeper. Consider the

effect of the once mundane but now rare experience of singing together. At best, everyone sings the exact notes in the exact rhythm simultaneously, with the same expressive/communicative intention. There is of course skill in that, but above all there is for the moment total community. It can be a miraculous, elating experience.

Since most of us are now passive consumers of music, it takes special initiative to induce people to *make* music. Ideally, as with other cultures including even some Western cultures, music making is simply a normal part of life. We need to work on it if that is to be taken for granted in Australia.

There are many musics and some have a natural home in some communities and not others. Many ethnic musics have their base in migrant communities. If you want to learn Greek music you don't go to the conservatorium; you could find where it is taught in a Greek community. A cappella groups, garage bands are private or community initiatives. But they can be encouraged by a bit of top-down interest or funding. Garage bands need garages, and they are not necessarily easy to find.

**ACTION** Governments at all three levels should give financial and other forms of support (e.g. physical facilities, equipment, libraries of sound recordings, scores etc) to increase the opportunities for music making in communities. The emphasis should be on music generated in the community, rather than accommodating touring performances, although there is a place for the latter also.

### • **Community music education**

In almost every European country, music education is provided not only through the public school system but also through the municipal music schools. Sweden attributes the export success of its music (seven times better per capita than Australia's) to its municipal music schools. Usually these are user-pays schools but they are subsidised so that on average the students pay only 25% of the costs. And some receive instruction free of charge.

In Australia, these schools exist in any systematic way only in regional centres in NSW. There are fifteen of them. Proportionally to population, Australia would have 600 schools if it were served as well on average as European countries. These have great benefits in bringing professional skills to areas outside the artist-rich central cities and assuring

continuity of offerings in communities that have depended mainly upon often short-lived private initiatives.

At the 2004 election, Labor proposed a scheme for the establishment of community music schools. This was to have been funded by the government and managed by the Music Council. Naturally, we are in favour of such a policy.

There are other modes of provision of music education via communities. Ad hoc projects can bring musicians or composers to supervise music creation and learning. Special projects can address the needs of at risk youth, school truancy, music making by the disabled or senior citizens. Local council-based programs can be flexible to suit local needs, utilise council facilities and achieve some stability and development. Often a small amount of money goes a long way.

To some extent, there is a wall between the formal education sector and community music activity. The public would benefit from a weakening of these territorial divisions. Government could encourage more collaboration.

**ACTION** Governments at all levels should support music education provided in various modalities at the community level.

## MUSIC THERAPY

- **Professional status of music therapy**

Music Therapy is an established world wide allied health profession. Its standards of practice are regulated in Australia by the Australian Music Therapy Association. As a research based, tertiary level discipline its field of expertise is the restorative and therapeutic potential of the human response to music. It encompasses both the art of music and applied clinical knowledge in such fields of health care as psychiatry, neurological rehabilitation, paediatric and geriatric care, palliative care, developmental disabilities and special education. Music Therapy however has so far been deemed ineligible for GST exemption, Medibank rebates and its practitioners from holding health insurance provider numbers.

**ACTION:** The professional expertise of Music Therapy and the qualifications of its practitioners should be accorded full recognition with only

qualified music therapists, registered with the Australian Music Therapy Association, being employed as Music Therapists. The employment of Registered Music Therapists should be considered as consistent with the culture of best practice in health and education areas where the efficacy of Music Therapy interventions is substantiated. Federal and state initiatives and reforms in health care, such as the current reforms in aged care funding, should consider the inclusion of professional music therapy as consistent with best practice in its fields of clinical practice and expertise.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

- **National music database**

Economic Strategies P/L and the Music Council of Australia, under contract to the Statistics Working Group of the Cultural Ministers' Council, have developed a statistical framework for the music sector. This is comprehensive, forward-looking, and will provide valuable information to support maintenance and development of the sector, including the music industry.

The next task is to collect the data to implement the data base. This will require some expenditure by the CMC or the ABS.

**ACTION** The government should allocate funds to support the appropriate government entity in collecting and analysing data for a new national music database.

- **Library and information services**

Adequate specialist music library and information resources are essential for preservation of heritage, whether indigenous, mainstream or immigrant, to provide the broadest possible access to musical knowledge and expertise, and to serve as a platform for innovation. These resources therefore should be available in suitable form, scale and emphases in local libraries, in educational institutions, in national and state collections, and also in specific specialist collections. They need to be expertly managed.

**ACTION:** This is an area which is almost totally dependent upon government funding. Funding is needed to maintain and develop the collections and to place them under the stewardship of dedicated expert music librarians, archivists and curators.

- **A national music council**

This argument obviously is self-interested.

The desirable role of a national music council (or council for any artform) from government's viewpoint is that it can bring to bear an array of expert knowledge in undertaking research into the music sector, building communications within the sector that lead to greater effectiveness and efficiencies, and serving as a dependable source of information.

These services come at a cost that on the evidence cannot be met from earned income. There is a case for core subsidy and for assisting in the viability of the organisation(s) by considering them for e.g. research contracts.

**ACTION:** Provide core assistance to national artform service organisations.

## MUSIC INDUSTRY

- **Industry Action Agenda**

A coalition of music industry organisations, including the Music Council, is about to seek government support for an Industry Action Agenda. This would analyse the operation of the industry and propose joint industry and government actions to improve performance. It would be a major new all-encompassing initiative with the prospect of transforming the performance of the Australian commercial industry.

**ACTION** Support the funding of an IAA for the music industry.

## BROADCASTING AND NEW MEDIA

- **Non-commercial broadcasting**

The removal of cross-media laws and the even greater consolidation of ownership of the media will mean that the role of non-commercial broadcasting in providing a diversity of views and content becomes even more crucial.

**ACTION** In general, seek to balance the narrow presentation and interests of the commercial sector through ensuring the vitality of the non-commercial sector.

- **Public broadcasting**

It appears that both major parties are willing to allow the ABC to run down because its broadcasts can express views that are critical of their actions. Collateral damage is done to the ABC as a producer and disseminator of expressions of Australian culture – a role in which it once had enormous importance. The virtual collapse of drama production has been revealed in recent times in the press. Similar if lower profile difficulties face music production on ABC television and radio. Indeed, we know that radio often cannot afford even the broadcast fees for productions other than its own.

**ACTION** Provide substantial additional funds to ABC TV, radio and new media for cultural production. Note that music production for television may be especially expensive and target some of the provision for that purpose.

### ***SBS Radio***

SBS radio broadcasts very little Australian music. Although in principle it supports the inclusion of Australian music in its broadcasts, It has no quantitative objective for local music content. If it did so, there would be some small boost to local practitioners of multicultural and hybrid music.

**ACTION** Require that SBS Radio meets a local content quota beginning at 10% and building in 2.5% increments every year until it reaches 20%.

- **Maintenance of local content quotas**

Local content quotas for commercial and community radio are now capped by the Australia/US Free Trade Agreement. The AUSFTA sets a limit of 25% on local content quotas on commercial radio, but it does not control the sub-quotas within the 25% limit.

Commercial radio quotas for some genres are lower than 25%. They step down in 5% decrements depending upon musical genre. Evidence suggests that the reduced quota levels are not always justifiable on the basis of lack of repertoire.

Further, there are new music quotas (new = released in the previous 12 months) for the top three tiers: 25% x 25, 20% x 20%, 15% x 15%. The latter would require broadcast of one new Australian music track about every three hours. The top level requires such broadcast about once an hour. This is not a demanding regulation and on the face of it, it could be increased.

There is strong evidence that airplay affects record sales and that, in particular, the new music quota has had a very positive effect on record sales, acceptance of Australian artists by the public, and the success of Australian artists. It would not be difficult to increase these benefits by increasing the quotas.

**ACTION** Act through pressure or regulation to increase local content requirements on genres in the lower tiers, and double the new music requirements.

***Monitoring of compliance with quotas for commercial radio has been lax.***

**ACTION** Make it clear that the government expects effective monitoring and public reporting in accordance with the published regulations.

***Monitoring of compliance for community broadcasters***

There is no monitoring of compliance for community broadcasters. A Music Council study of a number of countries revealed that if there is no monitoring, there is effectively no quota. While there are those in the community sector who profess and realise a strong commitment to Australian music, there is no objective assessment of performance.

**ACTION** Require monitoring of compliance with local content quotas by the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia. Provide resources to make this possible.

- **Removal of 1% cap on radio broadcast royalties**

The royalties are paid to record companies and recording artists. The reasons for the cap are lost in time and no longer have relevance. A reasonable rate could be paid without serious impact on the reported financial outcomes for the broadcast industry. The cap is extraordinarily low and deprives the copyright owners of a reasonable reimbursement for the use of their product.

**ACTION:** The cap should be removed, allowing negotiation of an appropriate rate by the various parties.

- **Digital radio broadcasting licences**

The current review for the allocation of digital radio broadcasting licences seems to be lost in issues of technology and commerciality including profit to the government. The Music Council maintains that the primary purpose of assigning licences should be the

contribution to the vitality of culture and society, and one key to that for the broadcasting sector is a diversity of philosophy and content. Other issues, while they should be addressed, are secondary. For instance, it would be possible to provide spectrum which is only sufficient to accommodate existing licence holders, or it would be possible to make other spectrum choices that allow the entry of additional broadcasters.

If all of the digital radio spectrum is assigned to current analog broadcasters, we can expect a replication of analog programming and no increase in diversity.

**ACTION** Intervene to ensure that technical choices are made and regulations established that best serve cultural diversity. Since it will be difficult for the government to deny digital licences to existing broadcasters who have paid the government handsomely for their analog licences, a possible solution is to allocate more spectrum to digital broadcasting than is needed for the existing licencees. The additional spectrum, or even the entire spectrum, could be allocated partly on the basis of increasing the diversity of musical genres available via radio broadcast.

- **Cable television**

Under the AUSFTA, the government may increase the requirements on cable television providers for expenditure on local production. Also, it is possible that music production can be included under arts production and requirements made for arts production.

**ACTION** The government should intervene to increase local production requirements on cable television providers to the limits allowed under AUSFTA, and ensure that music production is included under any such requirements.

- **Community radio**

Community radio is a great support to Australian musicians. Its modest government funding is an investment that produces disproportionate dividends. It merits additional, secure government support.

**ACTION** Increase support to community radio through the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia

- **Community television**

Community television has the potential to play a similar role to community radio, provided that it has the means to produce local programming.

**ACTION** Provide on an exploratory basis some government funding to community television.

- **New media regulation**

The new media reservations in Annex II of AUSFTA are extremely limiting.<sup>3</sup> Yet access by Australian artists and audiences to new media will be absolutely

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<sup>3</sup> [The Agreement reserves the right of the Australian government to implement]

*'(m)asures to ensure that, upon a finding by the Government of Australia that Australian audiovisual content or genres thereof is **not readily available** to Australian consumers, access to such programming on interactive audio and/or video services is **not unreasonably denied** to Australian consumers. Any measures addressing such a situation will be implemented through a **transparent process** permitting **participation by any affected parties**, be based on **objective criteria**, be the **minimum necessary**, be **no more trade restrictive than necessary**, not be **unreasonably burdensome** and be applied only to a service provided by a company that carries on a business in Australia in relation to the supply of the service.'* (Again, our emphases.)

The following questions arise:

The reservation applies only to **'interactive'** services. The issue here is whether between them the interactive services and the current broadcast services, which can be regulated in the present way, exhaust the universe of audiovisual services as it will develop. Will there be other important, non-interactive new media that are not covered by reservations in the Agreement? Will these fit under the classifications **'audio'** and **'video'**?

Concerning the language of the reservation, most of the terms in bold open the way for disputes over interpretation.

How do we define the phrase **not readily available**? Australian content might not be readily available because it is not produced, and the limitations on regulation may prevent important forms of regulatory support to production, such as those applying to the cable television industry. Or the content may be produced but for some reason some proportion of it is not made available by the owners of the new media, or made available only under certain restricted circumstances for reasons that are disputed. Some might say the access is being **'unreasonably denied'**; others may contest the definition of **'unreasonably'**.

The Australian government can take a position on these matters, but presumably will be held to account through its execution of the **transparent process permitting participation by any affected parties**. Prospectively this process invites opposition from audiovisual producers in the USA, severally or collectively, as well as the US government. That in itself could have a chilling effect on any impulse to action by the Australian government.

The measures proposed by the government can be argued by the **'affected parties'** on criteria that are wide open to interpretation and therefore dispute. There might be argument as to whether they are based on **objective criteria**, or by extension, whether the criteria are adequate or representative. Are they the **minimum necessary**? Minimum to achieve what purpose? Is the purpose itself permissible? Similarly with the stipulations **no more trade restrictive than necessary**, and **not be unreasonably burdensome**: define **'than necessary'**, define **'unreasonably'**, define **'burdensome'**.

crucial in future years. The government should set aside potential intimidation by the United States to ensure such access.

**ACTION** Formulate regulations for new media to ensure very adequate access by Australian artists and audiences and persist in negotiations until the regulations are accepted and are implemented.

## COPYRIGHT

- **Performers' rights**

The Performers Rights introduced in AUSFTA are cumbersome and complicated and do not provide real protection or economic rights for performers. Considerable redrafting is necessary to place all provisions in one Part of the Copyright Act 1968 rather than all over the Act. The legislation does not provide a stand alone right for performers and is riddled with flaws.

Performers rights to remuneration under statutory licenses (broadcast and public performance) should only be assignable to authorized collecting societies. They should be unwaiverable. The right to remuneration for communication to the public should only be assignable to a collecting society and unwaiverable.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> A significant section is s 113B which deals with the question of consent to the use of a sound recording of a live performance. It provides:

“A person is taken to have been granted a licence or permission (however described) by a performer to use a sound recording of a live performance if:

- (a) the performer has given his or her consent to recording the performance for a particular purpose; and
- (b) the recording is used for that purpose in accordance with the terms of the consent.”

J. Varghese, in *Guide to Copyright and Patent Law Changes in the US Free Trade Agreement Implementation Bill 2004* says the section is said to provide that:

“... a performer's permission to use a recording for a particular purpose is taken to be granted where the performer gave his or her consent to the recording for that purpose. For example, a recording studio may publish a recording if the performer allowed the recording to be made on the understanding that it would be published; consent is not necessary for both steps (an **'implicit license'**)”.

However, in practice the **"particular purpose"** consented to by a performer is likely to be wider than these comments would suggest.

**ACTION** Review and redraft the legislation along the line suggested above, to provide more than a symbolic right.

- **Some general issues**

Copyright was established initially in a situation where live performances of works could take place through use of a written score and at a distance from the composer. With the development of the media, the audience and income from live performance diminishes and the much greater potential audience is global and reached electronically. So the musician or composer's income increasingly depends upon somehow making a charge upon this remote audience.

Bolstered by the phenomenon of file swapping, there are those who would abandon or weaken copyright. Presumably they usually are not people who increasingly depend upon copyright income for a living. While copyright owners should have the right to give away their copyright property free of charge, and there can be advantage in a system that facilitates this, it should be their decision and not the decision of the users or third parties.

This is not intended to be an argument against appropriate fair dealing provisions.

**ACTION** Maintain a continuing review of copyright law and regulation, ensuring the rights of copyright owners to control their own works consistent with reasonable fair dealing provisions.

## INTERNATIONAL

- **Trade agreements**

The Music Council advocates the 'cultural exception', which is a policy to exclude cultural provisions from international trade agreements. We

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Nearly all recordings are made explicitly or implicitly for the purpose of broad commercial exploitation. For instance, the effect of 113 B according to the collecting society PPCA is that performers contracted to record companies will be deemed to have granted the record company a licence to use the recordings for those purposes. Accordingly, the fact that the performer may be a co-owner of copyright in the recording with the record company will be irrelevant. PPCA will simply continue to take licences from the record companies without any need to enter into arrangement with individual performers to obtain those rights.

All this is probably a moot point anyway since the performers' rights are assignable and it is unlikely that a record company entering a contract with a performer would not ask for an assignment.

believe that the government's right to support Australian culture should not be limited by the trade ambitions of other countries. This does not preclude cultural agreements with other countries, not subject to trade philosophies and imperatives.

**ACTION** Adopt the 'cultural exception' and make no offers concerning culture in any multilateral, regional or bilateral trade agreement.

- **UNESCO Convention**

The UNESCO Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions is a very important agreement that can give considerable support to the Australian government in protecting Australian culture in any future multilateral or bilateral trade negotiations. The current government's lack of support to this Convention is inexplicable in terms of Australia's direct interests and can be explained only as an inappropriate support of the position of the USA, the country from which we have the most to fear in this matter.

**ACTION** The Australian government should ratify the Convention at the earliest opportunity.

- **Assist in the international projection of Australian artists**

There are two purposes for government support to the international projection of Australian artists. One is to help in raising the flag in diplomatic and trade ventures. The other is to assist the artists in establishing international careers. It is probable that the first objective is pursued without regard to the second, but there is no reason that they should not be integrated. Further, support for the most part should go to artists who are methodically attempting over an extended term to establish themselves internationally, rather than simply to make the occasional international foray with no follow-through.

**ACTION** Develop a plan to give priority support for international touring and marketing to artists who are attempting to establish international careers, and integrate this into the touring undertaken for diplomatic or trade purposes under DFAT.

- **Bring internationally successful Australian artists and artistic productions home**

Especially in the audiovisual sector, but also in music, Australian artists are among the highest

achieving and most celebrated in the world. Most live overseas and work in overseas production.

*It is a major failure of imagination and initiative on government's part* that these artists are not engaged at least some of the time in Australian productions for home and international audiences. What a lost opportunity!

On the evidence, it is apparent that private enterprise finds it difficult to provide the capital to exploit the possibilities offered by these artists, and that the present level of support from government also is inadequate. Both tax incentives and subsidies should be considered.

**ACTION** Government should create a situation in which it becomes more practicable for internationally celebrated Australian artists to base themselves in Australia or at least to spend significant time here regularly, and to produce or be presented in Australian productions some of which are marketed internationally.

- **Support arts development in developing countries**

Australia has an international aid program. Under the new UNESCO Convention, it is proposed that developed countries will assist developing countries in the development of their cultural sectors. The International Music Council may seek to facilitate development of music sectors through provision of expert advice and guidance. Australia might assist in this initiative subject to whatever are the usual protocols.

**ACTION** Consider Australian support to the development of music sectors in developing countries.

## ARTS FUNDING

- **Arms length funding through the Australia Council**

While the arts community may have arguments from time to time with the policies and decisions of the Australia Council (which, incidentally, deflect criticism of the government directly), at a time when civil liberties are being legally constrained by anti-terror laws, it is important that the government maintains an arm's length relationship with the Australia Council. This to some extent protects

Australian arts against censorship. No government warms to criticism of its actions, but confident and big-hearted governments know that a free flow of ideas is best for everyone.

Governments seem to want to set quite detailed policy directions for arts funding. They can instruct the Australia Council to implement a specific policy or they can implement it directly through the Minister and his department. This latter removes the arm's length funding and there are reports that the present government has used this to refuse funding to arts activity which expresses opinions opposing its policies.

This policy direction also has had the effect of diverting any new money to specific activities, leaving the core activity funded through the Australia Council artform boards with constantly decreasing funding in real terms.

**ACTION** The Federal government should recommit itself to funding the arts at arm's length through the Australia Council and should at the least make up for the loss in real terms over the past decade in core funding to core arts activity.

- **Innovation AND heritage**

In past years, there has been an emphasis on providing funding support to innovation. To some extent, innovation is inevitable now, given the changes in technology. On the other hand, there is not quite the emphasis on experimentalism since the notion of progress in the arts has taken such a beating. Perhaps inventive adaptation to change is more to the point; there is a frontier very close to us, in addition to those mistily apparent to the technological explorers.

Nevertheless, that certainly needs to be funded.

As to the musical heritage, it is important to retain that too. That is our roots, whether it's in the blues or Indian sitar music or Western orchestral and operatic music.

In the case of the latter, special consideration is needed because there is only so much that can be done to adapt these large pre-20C organisations to current economic reality. This is the great Western heritage and Australians should be able to connect with it both as practitioners and audiences. It is an area where virtuosity is merely a pre-requisite. We must train and support virtuosi.

**ACTION** Ensure that government policies support the maintenance and development of both arts innovation AND heritage. Introduce indexation that reflects the inflationary reality in the arts, especially the heritage arts – viz that because they are labour-intensive, arts inflation is higher than the CPI.

- **Small to medium**

Individual artists and small to medium arts organisations have been the losers in government support to the arts. Unlike the major organisations, they cannot effectively cry publicly for rescue when they produce a deficit. Either they cut their operations to an even lower level or they go out of existence.

But they are the cultural wellspring, the source of innovation, the training ground. Everyone involved in them is on the spot creatively. The opportunity to survive as part of an arts machine is minimal.

The report of the review of small to medium performing arts a few years ago recognised the value of this sector but was grossly inadequate in its recommendations, which seemed tailored to an instruction that there would be no additional funding. And yet funding has declined in real terms over many years. In a previous Labor election campaign, there was a promise to ‘repair the damage’ or words to that effect. We suggest that repairing the damage is welcome as a beginning but rather pathetic as an aspiration. Create a renaissance in the arts by giving some major support to the small to medium sector. That’s where the hot ideas will come from.

The increase in funding needs to be swift, otherwise there is the strong possibility, looking at history, that the first instalment appears but the ardour has died by the time subsequent instalments are due.

**ACTION** Double the funding to the small to medium sector, via the relevant Australia Council boards other than the Major Performing Arts Board, over two years. Introduce indexation that reflects the inflationary reality in the arts – viz that because the arts are labour intensive, arts inflation is higher than the CPI.