

20 September 2001

The Hon. Peter McGauran, MP
Minister for the Arts and the Centenary of Federation
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I have pleasure in presenting to you, under Section 9 of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*, the Annual Report for the Australia Council for 2000-2001.

For the year this report covers the Australia Council was chaired by Dr Margaret Seares. I would like to pay tribute to Dr Seares, whose four-year stewardship of Council concluded in June 2001. Dr Seares' stamp on the Council, its work and strategic directions, is comprehensively documented in this report and lives on in work in progress.

Whilst this record speaks for itself, I am, personally, deeply indebted to Dr Seares for her extraordinary generosity and helpfulness in inducting her successor. Nothing speaks so directly to Margaret's commitment and her passion for the arts in Australia than the fact that she continues to find new ways to contribute to the advancement of the arts within our community.

The biggest change during the past year has undoubtedly been the culmination of the work around the Major Performing Arts Inquiry, and the finalisation of new funding arrangements. This has been a major achievement, and one that benefited from the close and effective collaboration between your Government, the State governments and the Council.

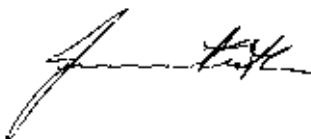
It is impossible to review the past year without reflecting on the role of Australia's creative arts and artists in the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, and in Australia's profile internationally.

The shared insights and wisdom of the arts community contributed greatly to the Planning for the Future project which has provided broadly based input to the Council's planning processes. On other fronts, in the past year Council successfully launched its revised Arts in a Multicultural Australia policy, supported the continuing work of the Youth Panel and established a Regional Panel.

I warmly acknowledge the professional assistance and ready support from your Department. I also pay tribute to the many scores of artists and people from the sector who contribute so wholeheartedly to the progress of the arts in Australia through their unstinting public service on Council, its Boards, Committees and Panels.

On behalf of the Australia Council I acknowledge and commend the Federal Government's continued support for the arts.

Yours faithfully



Dr Terry Cutler
Chairman