

Name: Danielle Z

Submission:

Dear Peter Garrett,

We have A LONG WAY TO GO. NO MORE EXCUSES. ARTS AND CULTURE IN THIS CITY OF SYDNEY AND THIS GREAT SOUTHERN LAND AS A WHOLE are demeaned, disregarded, and as a consequence we have a conservative, money and status-orientated business-focussed people. What about living and enjoying!!

All my friends live overseas, and I too, am planning the move, because it is so hard to make a living in the Arts in this country, simple.

I'm in film in particular, and the restrictions and regulations Screen Australia has brought in for emerging filmmakers makes it so difficult to get any work through. It's been jaw dropping. So what do I do, after a degree in Arts from UNSW and a Masters in Media Arts and Production from UTS, at age 30? I work at the candy bar at the Chauvel Cinema, one of the last vestiges of culture in this city. And I bought myself a HD camera (\$9000), and I'm writing a feature film from my bedroom on my days off. AND I AM NOT ALONE. My peers are doing the same, and it is not easy. I just make rent. And I have major bags under my eyes. And i feel neglected by this country and this society, BECAUSE I AM!

Let's create a cultural identity first and foremost- that's why Australian films aren't doing well at the cinemas: we don't know who we are, we're in denial of our heritage still, and of the complexity of our makeup as it stands today.

LET'S FINALLY GET THE UNION JACK OFF OUR FLAG and become the country we so desperately need to become. Let's let refugees into our land, and reinvigorate farmland and communities with plenty of room to spare. OPEN MINDS! The country will only reap the benefits.

Let's learn from NY, Berlin, London- see what they're doing right, in terms of their Arts and Culture- of course it involves promoting private investment. But deeper rooted than that, we need a complete shift AWAY from watching sport, playing pokies and television dominating our families leisure time. Sydney so often acts like a country town, when it has some of the world's great minds and hearts working so hard to keep it going from the inside.

Clover Moore and you, Peter Garrett, have been instrumental in giving my generation (I'm 30) hope for some positive and critical change. But it IS critical, and for once, can't we tackle the problem SWIFTLY?! WE ALL KNOW WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN! Take funding away from here, put it there. Make some BIG DECISIONS and you will see that you will be FULLY SUPPORTED.

Australia Day should have a new name, to include the Aborigines, and how amazing would it be to have GREAT SOUTHERN LAND as our national anthem!!

Let's reclaim our sense of humour, our UNIQUENESS- we are so far removed geographically from the USA and UK, we need to find the beating heart of the country which reflects this, and stop trying to recreate the image and identities of these other lands. It's gone on way too long. Let's not give those who can't see past this, the choice: Let's feed them CULTURE, let's cultivate a LEARNED, ACTIVE, CURIOUS, INTELLIGENT, INSPIRED, RELAXED, WORLDLY environment.

This will not be the most eloquent letter- I'm tired, and I've argued this argument way too many times lately. PLEASE!!! LET'S DO SOMETHING NOW! LET'S DO MORE THAT WHAT WE THINK WE NEED TO DO, BECAUSE WE NEED TO DO MORE THAN EVEN THAT.

I appreciate this opportunity to write.

Sincerely,

Danielle Zorbas