

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
legcon.sen@aph.gov.au

Thursday 16th of July 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Impact of the 2014 and 2015 Commonwealth Budget decisions on the Arts

I am the Artistic Director of the Training Courses at The Space Dance and Arts Centre. We offer a Certificate IV and Diploma in Dance and have been providing the industry with highly trained dancers since our inception in 2009.

We currently have just 40 students enrolled in our courses and I have grave concerns for what opportunities will be there for them once they graduate. At The Space we encourage diversity in arts practice as we believe an enriched ecology supports an industry that is full of passion and culture.

Such a small percentage of dance students make it to a major dance company and most students end up creating wonderful careers working as freelance dance artists making their own work, working with youth at risk, recently arrived immigrants or the indigenous community. Once they leave an institution like The Space they continue to build the required skills to work in these parts of the industry by working with or participating in workshops and programmes created by the small to medium companies. If these companies lose funding, they will have to reduce employment opportunities and extra programmes.

The knock on effect from this proposed reallocation will hit more than just my students and colleagues but so many communities across Australia. Over the last 10 years of teaching and making work with young people I have personally witnessed how participating in dance can build confidence, a sense of accomplishment and general motor skills for everyday activity. I learnt the skills I needed to teach these young people by working with small to mediums companies like Chunky Move and Lucy Guerin Inc. I now share the skills I learnt with the next generation of dance artists. If they can't have the same opportunities I had what happens to the cycle and our ecology?

My final comment goes to all members of parliament who have children in dance schools and consider the fact that their teachers most likely have learnt the skills to teach your children in a similar fashion to how I have. How would your children feel if they could no longer do their dance classes?

I urge the Government to review these budget decisions to protect the foundation of our cultural ecosystem and to ensure the future of the arts and dance in Australia.

I appreciate the time given to hear my thoughts

Regards

Adam Wheeler
Artistic Director

{ FULL TIME }
DANCE AT
THE SPACE

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