

# Peter Garrett AM MP



FEDERAL MEMBER FOR KINGSFORD SMITH • SHADOW PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE ARTS

27 November 2006

Committee Secretary  
Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the  
Arts References Committee  
Department of the Senate  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Dr Holland

I welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Committee Inquiry into Australia's Indigenous visual arts and craft sector.

The government's decision to hold an inquiry is long overdue considering allegations of unscrupulous and unethical conduct within the sector have been prominent since the late 1990s.

Notwithstanding the extension of time granted by the Senate for the committee to report I am aware that a number of professionals within the industry remain concerned about the length of time allowed to fully consider the terms of reference.

This inquiry will be critical to developing policies which encourage a sustainable Indigenous visual arts and craft sector in Australia, particularly given the crucial economic, social and cultural benefits the sector contributes to Indigenous communities in urban and regional areas.

It is clear that future growth of the industry will need to be supported by strategies and mechanisms to enhance the integrity of the industry, improve current practices surrounding commissions and sale of works, ensure a rigorous intellectual property framework and build on current and future infrastructure needs.

Additionally I would encourage members of the committee to examine closely a number of relevant past reports including *The Aboriginal Arts and Craft Industry: Report of the Review Committee 1989*, Terri Janke

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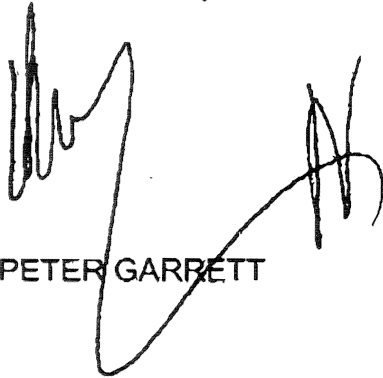
and Robynne Quiggin's *Indigenous cultural and intellectual property: the main issues for the Indigenous arts industry in 2006* and the Australian Government's *Indigenous Art Centres: Strategy and Action Plan*, amongst others.

This is a critical time for the Indigenous visual arts and craft sector as continuing overseas and local interest in the industry means the Indigenous art market is flourishing.

At the same time the need for a comprehensive policy which takes this into account is important, especially following the government's recent decision to forgo the implementation of a resale royalty scheme for visual artists, thereby denying Indigenous artists the opportunity to rightfully enjoy the fruits of their success.

I await the report of the inquiry with interest.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Peter Garrett', written over the printed name.

PETER GARRETT