

The Hon. Tony Burke MP  
Minister for Home Affairs, Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Cyber  
Security, Minister for the Arts, and Leader of the House  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
27 November 2024

Dear Minister Burke,

We the undersigned artists from Western Australia who represent over 95% of the Western Australian artists have exhibited four times or more in *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe* are writing to ask for your help.

We wish to express our surprise and great disappointment that Creative Australia does not provide any funding or appear to have any interest in *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe* or its exhibiting artists.

In your letter to the people of Western Australia in this year's *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe* exhibition catalogue you wrote:

"For twenty years Sculpture by the Sea has been a staple for arts lovers, tourists ... Making sure that there's a place for every story and a story for every place is crucial. That's why it's a centrepiece of the Government's National Cultural Policy 'Revive'. It's also exactly what this event does."

Your words are true. *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe* enables us to present our artwork to over 220,000 visitors each year and to a world-wide digital audience of millions of people each year. In addition, some 10,000 school students visit the exhibition each year and thousands of people with disability visit or take part in the free Access & Inclusion Program. No other art exhibition in Western Australia and few in Australia provide this opportunity for artists to engage with the public in such numbers. Few, if any Australian art exhibitions have an international reputation with artists around the world on the scale of *Sculpture by the Sea's* international reputation. Yet year after year Creative Australia and the Australia Council before it continue to not only ignore the exhibition and our work but are oblivious to what the exhibition provides to the Australian public and Australia on an international stage.

With the end of the Catalyst Fund and the RISE Fund, *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe* currently receives no Federal government arts funding. How is this possible? Who is making these decisions at Creative Australia? Who is accountable for these decisions at Creative Australia? How can Creative Australia, just like the Australia Council before it, ignore our work year after year and not provide any funding whatsoever? How can they ignore the unprecedented public response to the exhibition?

That Creative Australia, just like the Australia Council before it, is allowed to ignore the extraordinary interaction between the people of Western Australia and our artwork shows a massive disconnect between what Australian artists and the Australian public want and the management of public arts funding in Australia.

That *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe* is in jeopardy due to the disinterest of Creative Australia calls into serious question the management of public arts funding in Australia.

As Creative Australia has no interest in *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe*, and even if they did no significant multi-year funding is available from Creative Australia until 2029, we respectfully ask that you provide direct multi-year funding to the not for profit organisation that stages the exhibition and for the artists in *Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe* that is commensurate with the importance of the exhibition to the people and artists of Western Australia. This will enable the exhibition to continue and for our work as artists and what we have delivered to Western Australia and Australia to be respected.

The address for correspondence to the signatories below is: Olga Cironis, 55 Glyde Street, East Fremantle WA 6158.

Please also find included with this letter several additional letters to you written by some of the artists who have signed this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Olga Cironis, East Fremantle, 6158  
Sharyn Egan, Yangebup, 6164  
Johannes Pannekoek, Gooseberry Hill, 6076  
Yuko Takahashi, Tuart Hill, 6060  
Jennifer Cochrane, Maylands, 6051  
Jon Denaro, Hamilton hill, 6163  
Britt Mikkelsen, Maylands, 6051  
Anne Neil, North Fremantle, 6159  
Sally Stoneman, Maranup, 6256  
Stephen Tepper, North Fremantle, 6159  
Dr Richard Hammer, Daglish, 6008  
Andrea Vinkovic, Lesmurdie, 6076  
Janine McAullay Bott, Wattleup, 6166  
Geoff Overheu, Gingin, 6503  
Elaine Clocherty, Cowaramup, 6284  
Norton Flavel, Winthrop, 6150  
Tony Davis, Gelorup, 6230  
Merle Topsi Davis, Gelorup, 6230  
Tim Macfarlane Reid, Hilton, 6163  
Geoffrey Drake-Brockman, Nedlands, 6009  
Ayad Alqaraghholli, Dianella, 6059  
Kathy Allam, Peppermint Grove, 6011  
Kerrie Argent, Lake Grace, 6353  
Mikaela Castledine, Kalamunda, 6076  
Ron Gomboc, Middle Swan, 6056  
Miik Green, Maylands, 6051  
Tony Jones OAM, East Fremantle, 6158  
Sang Sug Kim, Dianella, 6059  
Richie Kuhaupt, Beaconsfield, 6162  
Lou Lambert, Hamelin Bay, 6288  
Jina Lee, Darlington, 6070  
Alessandra Rossi, South Fremantle, 6162  
Shaumyika Sharma, Leeming, 6149  
Dr Jon Tarry, Belmont, 6104  
Rima Zabaneh, Ardross, 6153  
Denise Pepper, Bayswater, 6053  
April Pine, Welshpool, 6106  
Tim Burns, York, 6302  
Mark Grey-Smith, Annibrook, 6280  
Ben Juniper, Wembley, 6014  
Tom de Munk-Kerkmeer, Northam, 6401  
Kevin Draper, Torbay, 6330  
Stuart Green, Coolbinia, 6050  
Tania Spencer, Lake Grace, 6353

6<sup>th</sup> November 2024

To the Honourable Minister Burke,

We the undersigned artists from Western Australia who have exhibited four times or more in Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe are writing to ask for your support.

Our collective astonishment and great disappointed is profound in that Creative Australia does not see the significance of funding Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe, and consequently supporting us its exhibiting artists.

In your letter to the people of Western Australia in this year's Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe exhibition catalogue you wrote:

"For twenty years Sculpture by the Sea has been a staple for arts lovers, tourists ...Making sure that there's a place for every story and a story for every place is crucial. That's why it's a centrepiece of the Government's National Cultural Policy 'Revive'. It's also exactly what this event does."

Your words are true. Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe enables us to present our artwork to over 200,000 visitors each year and to a world-wide digital audience of millions of people annually. In addition, some 10,000 school students visit the exhibition, and thousands of people with a disability visit or take part in the free Access & Inclusion Program. No other art exhibition in Western Australia and few in Australia provide this opportunity for artists to engage with the public in such numbers.

The exhibition has also kick started many sculptor's careers and given support to mid-career artists along with inspiring many other outdoor sculpture exhibitions across Australia. Few, if any Australian art exhibitions have an international reputation on the scale of Sculpture by the Sea's. The collective efforts of staff, volunteers, and artists involved in the exhibition seem to be overlooked by Creative Australia and its predecessor, the Australia Council. Furthermore, you appear to be unaware of the substantial contributions the exhibition makes in enhancing the visual arts landscape in Australia and bolstering the nation's international standing in the artistic realm.

With the end of the Catalyst Fund and the RISE Fund, Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe currently receives no Federal government arts funding. How is it possible that the unprecedented public response to the exhibition is not considered? This does demonstrate that there seems to be a massive disconnect between what Australian artists and the Australian public want and the management of public arts funding in Australia.

Most artists cost contribution is up to \$10,000 of their own time and money in providing a sculpture for this free event. Could you let us know why Creative Australia does not want to support an exhibition that draws such a large crowd to view and learn about sculpture and Australian art and artists?

We respectfully request multi-year funding for the not-for-profit organisation that stages Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe which subsequently benefits the artists involved. This funding should be commensurate with the exhibition's significance to the people and artists of Western Australia. With no substantial multi-year funding available until 2029, the Cottesloe exhibition is unlikely to go ahead in 2025.

Yours sincerely,



Fiona Gavino  
Mob: 0438 476 233

November 2024

Dear Minister Burke

I have been part of the Cottesloe exhibition since its inauguration in 2005, and have exhibited 11 times there. I have also exhibited at *Sculpture by the Sea* in Bondi and Aarhus, Denmark.

In this time, I have seen the exhibition grow into a major international sculpture show, becoming one of the largest outdoor sculpture exhibitions in the world.

As a WA regional artist my involvement with *Sculpture by the Sea* assists in creating and maintaining connections with the metropolitan art community. However, I have noticed in recent years those extra six hours of travel to Perth / Cottesloe have made participation in the exhibition less viable for me without some form of financial support.

Despite this, there have been a significant number of WA regional artists involved in *Sculpture by the Sea* in both the Cottesloe and Bondi exhibitions. I sense that the conversation is changing in regard to regional artists. I believe art institutions and management structures are beginning to recognise their contribution and diversity. There is less of the "well you choose to live there" attitude that I used to often encounter at exhibitions and art forums. In fact, the first *Sculpture by the Sea* exhibition in Western Australia was in the southern regional centre of Albany in 1998 as part of the Olympic Arts Festival. This made a big impact on the region and is still a reference point for the local art community.

In Australia, the *Sculpture by the Sea* exhibition has been hugely influential. It creates a large format, but informal setting for the general public to view all kinds of sculpture. This has increased the public awareness of 3D works on all levels. By taking away the traditional gallery threshold, the exhibition creates conversations around the artworks from all kinds of differing perspectives. *Sculpture by the Sea*, Cottesloe enables us to present our artwork to over 200 thousand visitors each year as well as to a worldwide digital audience numbering millions of people each year. In addition some 10,000 school students visit the exhibition each year also thousands of people with disability visit or take part in the free access and inclusion program. No other art exhibition in Western Australia and few in Australia provide this opportunity for artists to engage with the public in such numbers.


I have benefited enormously from my involvement with *Sculpture by the Sea* and have sold works at crucial times, enabling me to continue my art practice. I have also been fortunate in that I have received numerous awards, which has given me the time and space to rethink and consider my work. The diversity of the *Sculpture by the Sea* concept creates important conversation and feedback for an artist like me, who has chosen not to be part of the commercial gallery system or the art academy. The lack of 'first crop' requirements for exhibitors or overt contracting is a refreshing change from most gallery situations.

One of the prize-winning artists at *Sculpture by the Sea Cottesloe* a few years ago described the outdoor exhibition format as the 'gallery of the future'.

As is evident, *Sculpture by the Sea's* benefits are manifold for both artists and for the broader community. The *Sculpture by the Sea* exhibition occupies an unusual and fundamental place in Australia's art structure and should be recognised for its importance by arts funding bodies for the role it has played and will hopefully continue to play.

Yours Sincerely

Kevin Draper  
040 772 1449



Dear Minister Burke,

I write to ask for your support. I wish to express disappointment that Creative Australia does not support the Sculpture by the Sea, Exhibition at Cottesloe nor its exhibiting artists, volunteers, interns, staff and the not-for-profit organisation, Sculpture by the Sea.

In your letter to the people of Western Australia in this year's Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe Exhibition Catalogue, your words:

*"It's important to recognise all the work that goes on behind the scenes and acknowledge the team that have produced Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe for the past two decades."*

*This is a hollow acknowledgement and at best lip service.*

*This organisation has almost single-handedly reinvigorated sculpture as an artform, not only WA but Australia wide. We now see incredible contemporary artworks around council parks, in private gardens, and in front of buildings. It has introduced contemporary sculpture to the general non elitist arts public. This is an important achievement. Significantly, Sculpture by the Sea has placed Australia on the international stage amongst the best sculpture exhibitions in the world. Few, if any Australian art exhibitions have an international reputation around the world on the scale of Sculpture by the Sea's international reputation.*

*Mr Burke, you called this exhibition, "A great arts event."  
You are right, however for it to continue, we really need your support.*

*As a regionally based artist, I find participating in Sculpture by the Sea, a very expensive exercise. Sculpture is large, it costs a great deal to produce and move it around the country, our state is very large. We do this, with no guarantee of sales. In essence, we are putting on a free show for the public, with the hope of a sale, that will go towards a wage and living costs. Some multi-year funding in these areas would greatly help for artists that don't sell and cannot cover their costs of participating in this great event.*

*In addition, you wrote:*

*"For twenty years Sculpture by the Sea has been a staple for arts lovers, tourists ... Making sure that there's a place for every story and a story for every place is crucial. That's why it's a centerpiece of the Government's National Cultural Policy 'Revive'. It's also exactly what this event does."*

*This cannot continue to happen without your support.*

*With the end of the Catalyst Fund and the RISE Fund, Sculpture by the Sea, Cottesloe currently receives no Federal government arts funding. I do not understand why there is not a multi-year rolling funding program. Currently there is no multi-year funding available to even apply for until 2029.*

*I respectfully implore you to work directly with Sculpture by the Sea to assist in this multi-year area of funding that supports the organisation to deliver this magnificent exhibition, and all the public events that go with it as a reflection of the importance of the exhibition to the people and artists of Western Australia.*

*We all agree that art in the public domain is very important for the well-being, curiosity, and cultural diversity of our wider community. Please support us.*

Regards



Tania Spencer

Artist

Lake Grace

ph 0429 041 063

[www.taniaspencer.com.au](http://www.taniaspencer.com.au)

Northam, 8-11-24

dear minister Burke,

As a Western Australian Artist I've exhibited 12 times in Sculpture by the Sea in Cottesloe.

I was born in Subiaco (1965) but raised in the Netherlands.

As a small child I made my first sculptures on the beaches of Bergen aan Zee on the North Sea coast and later in the early 90ties I created the first larger works on the beaches of the Island Terschelling during the Oeral Art festival, thousands of people celebrated all Art forms during this two week fest.

In 2000 I returned to the land of my birth, migrating from Belgium where I had been working in a foundry casting bronze monuments for the city of Antwerp.

After studying at Central TAFE and ECU, whilst exhibiting and participating in various public artworks and events, I first showed my work in Cottesloe in 2011 and won the Helen Lempriere scholarship in 2012 for my participation in the Bondi show and this galvanised my art career here in WA.

I found it to be extremely challenging to establish myself as a visual artist/sculptor after migrating to Perth, Australia and Sculpture by the Sea provided me with a platform to do so.

I'm a great fan of the idea (and action) to bring Art to the people instead of kind of hiding it away behind the thick walls and big doors of galleries. Sculpture by the Sea does this with great success...

It has been said that sculpture was hardly accepted as an art form (here in WA) before SXS.

With the help of the Helen Lempriere scholarship I was able to establish my studio and

a "Sculpture on the Verge" drive through sculpture park, here in regional W.A, in Northam'

People in this country town know me because I exhibit with Sculpture by the Sea, they accept and appreciate me and my work partly because of this.

People might not know much about Art, but they do know Sculpture by the Sea

One of my tasks as an Artist is to generate ideas and to communicate these through my creations.

Sculpture by the Sea in Cottesloe is like a huge source of inspiration, offering people, young to old, from all walks of life, to be part of it, to immerse themselves in ART, so it can ignite their own imagination, something they can take with them and apply in their own lives.

Sculpture by the Sea offers all this and more without the cost of maintaining big buildings, a large number of staff and infrastructure..... but yes funding this not for profit organisation is essential to keep it happening.

kind regards

Tom de Munk-Kerkmeer

Artist