

Film Inquiry
Submission No. 49

e) (Some thoughts on 'e') the skills required to facilitate future growth in these industries and the capacity of education and training system to meet these demands;

This criteria needs to be seen in the context of an increasingly more sophisticated student base being delivered by all sectors of education. Primary, Secondary and Tertiary (TAFE and University) sectors all provide resources and teaching programs resulting in more knowledgeable audiences, as well as lifting aspirations of those who wish to become practitioners. There is also the cost of increasing hybridization of the art forms noted by Margaret Sears as 'young artists who see themselves as 'slash artists': musician/dancer; writer/graphic artists; and so on'¹. Hybridisation moves not only the artist, but also the education institution into a new learning environment. The base disciplines that support the components cannot be ignored, but neither can the management of the resultant hybrid form; the processes require additional collaborative technologies and spaces. This development is expensive and requires commensurate additional funding if the education sector is to meet the challenge. This is an essential new requirement and there is no trade off in rationalizing other areas, the base disciplines must remain and develop if the hybrid forms are to be successfully developed and researched.

Australia has a well-established reputation for delivery of high-end animation and special effects. This is a global industry that requires high-level skills and leading edge technology. There are programs within a limited range of institutions with well-established industry partnerships and a large financial commitment providing support for this. However, at the independent end of the production spectrum the software and hardware necessary for content development is ubiquitous, and there is ongoing and growing demand for education and training to support this level of activity. This on-going demand for specialist training in content, design and delivery mechanisms, as well as critique will continue to be met by the University and TAFE sectors.

An acknowledged and important cultural & social benefit of the film industries is that they ensure that reflections of our own society are current and realistic; any future support for this sector must be robust and long term. Adequate structures are in place in three states with major industry studios meeting mainstream international demand. Small budget, independent activity must not be overlooked in the current debate, as it is here that the exploration of controversial and complex ideas is maintained without the tension of box office success. There is a need to nurture the independent film culture that develops and produces this small budget production. Training in this sector is supported in large part through film and television courses within education institutions. (*Instance, Deakin University has completed a Media & Communication creative arts complex on the Melbourne Campus?*).

There is a need for educational institutions to provide courses that reflect industry practice and as well as providing space to reflect on that practice. University Arts faculties can provide the cultural overview required for this activity to be recognized and researched. This essential cultural and social research needs to be recognized as essential in research funding models. The Cultural Industries must not be

¹ Planning for the Future Issues, Trends and Opportunities for the Arts in Australia, Australia Council, Discussion Paper February 2001

marginalised by pressure that Rupert Meyer called being 'analysed by economic value.'²

As the education sector builds links into communities, both domestic and international there is a growing requirement for Government to increase funding allocated for industry to education liaison and internship programs. There is a continued need for industry professionals to be able to move from industry to education and for academics to move into industry. In the creative arts this need is difficult to fulfill, as many of the practitioners in this area exist on very small margins and cannot support the imposition of additional staff in any sophisticated and meaningful manner.

Industry also needs to be encouraged to recognize internship programs as their own lifeblood for new practitioners. Collaboration between the education sector and the arts industries is difficult because of the differences in time requirements for production schedules and institutional timetables, and the financial constraints on many of these small independent companies. With little, or no, flexibility in many production schedules and budgets, financial support for these groups in 'funded internships programs' would greatly assist the vocational reality provided by the internship process.

² 'Contemporary Visual Arts and Craft Inquiry, Report May 2002'