

From the Director
Dr Gerard Vaughan

10 January 2007



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Dr Kathleen Dermody
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence & Trade
PO Box 6100
Parliament House,
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Dermody,

Inquiry into the nature and conduct of Australia's public diplomacy

Thank you for your letter of 21 November 2006 seeking views on how Australia informs and influences public opinion in other countries.

The NGV plays a significant cultural diplomacy role on a regular basis through our promotion of cultural assets (both physical and intellectual) and our ability to meet international standards in relation to our sector. Key NGV personnel travel throughout the year to broker international cultural product for our venues and encourage venues to consider our Collection (to date predominantly international art – see p25 in the attached NGV Annual Report 2005/06). The NGV is also a regular and significant contributor to major international cultural programs through the active lending of major art works, see pp22 and 23.

To date, securing Australian works into international environments has proved to be more of a challenge. Coordinated and funded grant programs for this purpose would be of value and could add leverage to support existing diplomatic links and priorities; this could also include financial incentives to alleviate prohibitive freight costs.

The visual arts sector can, and does, play an important role in cultural diplomacy and, with additional financial resources, could be further harnessed to support broader Commonwealth initiatives.

We welcome the opportunity to comment on this and would be pleased to discuss in more detail if required.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Ellwood".

Tony Ellwood
Acting Director