

Mr. James Boyle,  
Chair, Cultural Commission,  
Broughton High School,  
Carrington Rd.,  
Edinburgh EH4 1EG.

21 SEP 2004

(20 other) 1/3  
Laura A. Hunter BA(Hons),  
Artist / Designer,  
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15/9/04

Dear Mr. Boyle,

Having written to Mr. McAveety 21/4/04, I  
received a reply on his behalf from

Ms. Fiona MacKay 23/8/04, advising me she  
has forwarded my initial letter to you.

Ms. MacKay suggested I contact your office  
for further information on how I might  
participate in the Commission's work.

I hold an honours degree from Glasgow School of  
Art & am self-employed full-time as a working  
artist (painter) solely reliant on the commercial  
gallery system for my income.

I do not compromise my work for commercial  
purposes as I believe it produces pointless &  
soulless art, however, having been through the  
enterprise system, I try to be as 'business-like'  
as I can.

'Art as Business', in my experience is fundamentally wrong & counterproductive: it demeans an artist's vocation; it suffocates artistic spirit; it hampers true creative development.

As I am scuppered by current tax/VAT laws I was pleased you will be examining the tax position of working artists & looking to other countries' models for nurturing creative talent. (Ireland, Sweden & Canada? come to mind)

The current regime not only impedes the creation of works of merit, it also seriously restricts an artist's ability to earn & sustain a living wage (my salary is around £6,500 before tax) I would be pleased to forward more detailed information on the real issues artists face & hope I can contribute to positive change.

I am aware it is outwith Scottish ministers' power to change tax/VAT law, but I sincerely hope it is not beyond their power & will to challenge the law & current policies/regime on artists' behalf. I understand it is the Commission's remit to advise the ministers of necessary reforms.

Reform in many areas, including tax/VAT + benefit systems, would be a real breakthrough for the many Scottish artists who struggle to earn poverty pay from their practice.

It is essential that the real issues artists face are fully understood & addressed by the Commission, SAC & Mr. McAveety.

I look forward to your reply & on how I might assist in that process.

Yours sincerely,

Laura A. Hunter

(LAURA A. HUNTER)