

Ian

From: Lyalcliff@aol.com
Sent: 27 September 2004 14:58
To: info
Subject: Cultural Commission Submission[Scanned]

Dear Mr Boyle,

Many thanks for sending the consultation phase 1 document out to me. I am pleased to respond as follows, with particular emphasis on Music:

1 on EDUCATION:

Music & the Arts should be given a higher priority, more staff, more time, and more funding in schools. It should be an objective to have 40% more children learning instruments(not all drum-kits etc!!). Many medium-sized towns on the Continent have good state-subsidised music schools.

Priority should be that young people learn about the depth & scope of music, ie music of all styles & musical heritage. Preconceptions should be effectively countered.

2 INFRASTRUCTURE:

The Higher Education Colleges (eg RSAMD) should enjoy better state funding, and be able to provide more full-time teaching posts. Towns and cities away from Central Scotland require much more of an arts presence.

3:DELIVERY of SERVICES.

I don't like this phrase in the context of the arts. Our national companies should receive a significant boost to their funding to ensure more outreach work (incl workshops), and also arrange for more young people to be bused in to performances in the main centres. Either more companies should be set up (eg in Dundee and/or Inverness) OR a vastly increased touring budget should be made available to Scottish Opera, Ballet, the RSNO, and the SCO.

4 MARKETING & PROMOTION:

More outreach work from professionals, with new funding, should be provided, with timely promotional literature/press notices & new websites for this purpose.

The slogan that the Arts are for all (and not all restrictively pigeon-holed) should be propogated. It would help if ticket prices could be slashed for high-cost performances like opera. Scottish Opera should be given a budget which would allow it to produce (say) 2 musicals and 2 operettas each year AS WELL as the rest of its repertoire.

5 CREATIVITY:

The wider the spread of artistic activity the better and music/arts/drama/ballet workshops should be encouraged. Again new funding is needed to help make this happen. There should be more competitions with genuine prizes.

On "Cultural Rights" I must say this expression seems far-fetched. What is needed is to foster genuine interest in the arts and give more towns and cities the chance to have an Arts Centre and/or Theatre with its attendant programme of events. Usually money spent of such endeavours is beneficially 'recycled' in the local community.

Some small countries in Europe can show us how it is well done - eg Norway, Finland, the Baltic States etc. It is high time that the Scottish Executive at least made sure that we can properly run and maintain just one opera company. However, another (?in Aberdeen) would be good news. If we had two companies they could share production and other costs and collaborate with outreach work.

I hope one result of your commission's work will be to ensure Scottish Opera's survival - no dark season, no homelessness, no loss of Chorus.

In Scotland attitudes need to change to realise that the arts are for all and are quite wonderful and life-enhancing. Some barriers still need to be removed, - such as class, age, cost, accessability. The key to this for the future lies in better provision and higher priority for this in schools, and higher education. Broadcasting should also play an important part, including local radio stations.

The arts can also provide a forum for social needs and international links which can be very beneficial if fostered sensibly.

I hope this submission is of assistance and would be obliged if you could keep me in touch with how the work is progressing.

I do hope your Commission's work will prove worthwhile and helpful to Scotland's artistic future. It deserves to be better; our past record is "not bad, but much scope for improvement".

Yours sincerely,
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16/03/2005

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