



IMPRESS PRINTMAKERS STUDIO AND GALLERY

ABN 73 636 897 170
www.impress.org.au

73 Warilda Street
Camp Hill
QLD 4172
Tel: 0407 730 178
email: info@impress.org.au

8 December 2011

The Secretary
Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs
ACT Legislative Assembly

Dear Secretary,

We would be grateful if the attached submission by Impress Printmakers Studio, Brisbane Inc. could be placed before the inquiry into the future use of the Fitters' Workshop in the Kingston arts precinct.

Impress is a not-for-profit, member-based, visual arts organisation providing studio facilities, educational services and exhibition opportunities for printmakers in South East Queensland.

Yours sincerely,

Jenny Sanzaro-Nishimura
President
Impress Printmakers Studio

John Doyle
Secretary
Impress Printmakers Studio



IMPRESS PRINTMAKERS STUDIO AND GALLERY

ABN 73 636 897 170
www.impress.org.au

73 Warilda Street
Camp Hill
QLD 4172
Tel: 0407 730 178
email: info@impress.org.au

Submission by Impress Printmakers Studio, Brisbane Inc. to the inquiry into the future use of the Fitters' Workshop in the Kingston arts precinct.

Contemporary printmaking

Printmaking today encompasses a variety of traditional and new media art forms with high levels of innovation responding to contemporary issues. It attracts people of all ages and from a wide range of backgrounds. Shared-access studios are essential for local printmaking communities as young and emerging printmakers find the expense of setting up their own studios prohibitive. These studios provide opportunities for members to work, learn and exhibit together and consequently develop very supportive communities especially for younger artists.

The Fitter's Workshop

The Fitter's Workshop appears to be an ideal facility for a printmaking studio with its concrete floor, open plan, single level space with ample natural light. It is also accessible to vehicles, which aids the installation of large items of printmaking equipment. The presence of large pieces of equipment such as etching, lithographic and relief presses with their wheels, gears, screw threads and levers will provide a visual reminder of the building's heritage. As a gallery is incorporated into the Megalo redevelopment, the public would be able to view this equipment in operation.

Megalo

Megalo has over 30 years of experience providing visual arts services to the ACT community and is held in high regard amongst the wider printmaking community in Australia. Clearly, it has also done the hard work required to establish itself as a strong cultural presence in the ACT community for it to be offered tenancy at the Fitter's Workshop.

The Kingston visual arts precinct

The creation of arts precincts makes a lot of sense as they foster interaction between practitioners of a variety of art forms enhancing creativity and innovation. The variety of arts forms presented stimulates participation in arts experiences by the general community. As the area surrounding the Fitter's Workshop has been designated as a visual arts precinct, a coherent strategy for developing the precinct would suggest the Workshop be allocated to a visual arts organisation. Perhaps it is time to plan for another precinct based around the various musical organisations active in the ACT community.

Funding and fairness

The scoping for the proposed tenancy by Megalo at the Fitter's workshop has no doubt consumed considerable taxpayer funds. To walk away from the agreement now would be a waste of this money.

The scoping would have involved considerable time and effort by Megalo also. To have put so much effort into securing the agreement only to have it put in doubt will be devastating for the morale of the printmaking community in the ACT. Impress members can speak from experience of having years of hard work snatched away from them, after securing a facility through the Brisbane City Council only to have the funding for the facility withdrawn as the Council required the funds to repair infrastructure destroyed in the flood disaster in January this year. While we felt gutted, we had to accept that the Council did not cause the floods and we had not been treated unfairly.

If the decision to allocate the facility to Megalo is overturned, it will place Megalo back where it was three years ago. Three years of work, down the drain. This would plainly be an unfair outcome for Megalo and is likely to cause disillusionment in Government processes, and not only in the printmaking community.

Conclusion

We are of the opinion the Fitter's Workshop is an excellent facility for a printmaking and that Megalo is a suitable tenant for the facility. While the musician's case may have merit, to overturn the decision to allocate the facility to Megalo would be an unacceptably harsh result for the printmaking community in the ACT.