

Sian Rinaldi

7th July 2010

Ms Mary Porter AM MLA,
Chair,
Standing Committee on Planning, Public Works,
And Territory and Municipal Services,
Civic Square,
London Circuit,
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Madam,

It has come to my attention that there has been an "Inquiry into Live Community Events" undertaken by the legislative assembly through the Standing Committee on Planning, Public Works and Territory and Municipal Services.

Firstly I would like to thank you for the opportunity to be involved in this process. I have been actively involved in the Canberra music scene since turning 18 in 2004 in many areas including working in and for live music, as an avid punter and more recently as a promoter for Soul'd On Sound. For years the Canberra music scene has seen venues come and go due to noise complaints seemingly without much choice, it is refreshing to see an open forum not only being offered but being utilised.

As many other submissions have addressed, a balance needs to be found between venue and resident. In my experience in working for venues such as the Greenroom I have seen firsthand at what lengths they will go to ensure that their establishment is not unduly interfering with the lives of local residences. Mr Marc Grainger of Transit Bar has pointed out his significant efforts to reduce the noise produced by his venue and in my opinion they have succeeded in these efforts. I am a regular patron of Transit Bar and am consistently surprised at how the noise is contained. In addition I have also stayed at the YHA above the bar and was blissfully unaware that there was a bar, let alone a music venue below. It is for these reasons I believe that this establishment has performed everything possible to ensure that their venue is not causing unreasonable effects on surrounding residences.

In many of the submissions by managers or owners of venues and also I am aware from my experience with working in live music, most of these complaints are registered by a very small fraction of the ACT. I should question then, considering the efforts of the majority of venues in Canberra to exist harmoniously in these areas, why such weight is put behind these complaints with seemingly little assistance or support given to the venues themselves. Why should venues which build and bolster up and coming musicians and give Canberra people such joy and entertainment be lost because a very small percentage of the population, and in the case of hotels, a transient percentage? Especially taking into the account the efforts put forward by the venues.

In closing I would like to draw attention to what Canberra stands to lose if more of its live music venues were to close. I remember when I was younger and would listen to my older friends talk about venues such as Gypsy Bar (which was also closed due to noise complaints) with such fond memories that I was quite jealous I missed out on these venues. Similarly, I have seen younger people look to myself and my friends as we have spoken of times at Toast with the same fond memories. As a local promoter, I have struggled to gain foothold in terms of venues as demand is so high and supply is so limited. This limits the opportunity for local musicians to play and grow with their music. Countless friends and acts have moved to places such as Melbourne and Sydney to have their music recognised and have been successful since their move.

Canberra has always prided itself on being a community that supports this community, where is our support for the music scene? Plato once said "Music is a moral law. It gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything." Where is our moral law going?

Yours Sincerely,

Sian Rinaldi

Soul'd On Sound Promotions