

To the Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs

I am writing in support of Megalo's move to the Fitters Workshop in the Kingston Arts Precinct. Megalo has provided a stimulating and supportive environment to date but I see the move to the Fitters Workshop as providing a professional well-located workshop in a hub of complementary and supportive arts organisations. Megalo would build on its already impressive community engagement and provide a platform for a much wider audience. This is a clear vision for the future, for all of the Canberra's community to feel a sense of ownership and pride in an active, well run, professional, stimulating and exciting Print Workshop.

I have had an association with Megalo for twenty-nine of its thirty-one years, since the early days at Ainslie Village. I have maintained my support for Megalo for half of my life. As an active member, I have been fortunate to use the facilities as a textile designer, screenprinter and educator. My own artistic practice developed because this facility was in my hometown and was accessible, supportive and progressive.

It was a result of a Megalo project called *Site and Soul Portfolio*, that one of my screenprints titled *Bass Gardens* is displayed on the walls of the Legislative Assembly. I chose the park opposite my family home in Griffith, ACT as my inspiration for the artwork.

I have been a lecturer in Textiles at the Australian National University from 1992 – 2011. Megalo has always been an important part of the secondary and tertiary education in the ACT, providing students and staff from various institutions with a facility that is safe, well equipped and welcoming. When I began my teaching career I taught fabric-printing classes for CIT and ANU School of Art at Megalo until these facilities were developed on campus. Megalo continues to assist emerging artists with their practice, by providing graduates access to its facilities, equipment and gallery. Graduates have also benefitted from being employed by Megalo without having to seek employment interstate.

Megalo has always provided a focal point for artists, the community, educational institutions, cultural institutions and anyone who chooses to walk in the door.

Since 1986 I have worked on a variety of Megalo's community-based projects. The particular groups supported locally include: Belconnen Community Support Scheme (unemployed people), Foundry (unemployed people), Neighbours' Narrabundah project (single parents), Watson Fashion Students, Majura Women's Group, Australia Social Welfare Union: Art in Working Life and nationally with Manupi Art Centre, NT.

The Backyard Project provided opportunities for women at home with young children to meet and participate in stimulating activities, by offering a venue, low cost childcare and a project artist for a group who often felt isolated. It was a way of giving these women a voice. I was employed as a project artist in the Backyard Project (1991). The success of this model instigated by Megalo and the Majura Women's Group in 1989 is indicated by the fact that it continues to benefit women and their families today.

I was particularly proud to exhibit my artworks on textiles and paper in Megalo's *Print Big* exhibition held in the Fitters workshop next to the Glassworks in Kingston Foreshores in 2010. Not only did Megalo contribute to the National Print Symposium, but it also celebrated 30 years in existence, a tremendous achievement.

From the early days of working in a tin shed on the side of Mount Ainslie to the rental premises in Hackett and Watson I would urge you to give Megalo its fourth and final home in the Fitters

Workshop in the Kingston Arts Precinct. The current uncertainty regarding a permanent home for Megalo has a negative impact on staff, the arts community, the many members and supporters of Megalo and the broader community.

As a long-term Canberra artist I look forward to printing for many years to come in Megalo's new location in the Fitters Workshop within the Kingston Arts Precinct.

Yours sincerely

ANNIE TREVILLIAN