

2nd December 2011

Letter to the Editor, The Age



Dear Editor

Re: ABC killing our future / ABC TV arts unit closed

Last night I met with the Melbourne ABC staff who produced *Art Nation*, the ABC's recently axed arts program that enticed us into theatres and galleries, and delighted television audiences whether or not we could attend.

They came together to say goodbye. The ABC's television arts unit has been shutdown.

The loss of the arts unit won't be obvious at first: Faced with strong criticism, ABC management is ensuring there at least looks to be no further decline in arts programming. The unit's talented staff will move to the private production sector from which the ABC is increasingly purchasing its programs, just as happened when the ABC's acclaimed Natural History Unit was closed.

But as people chatted, I realised how much is being lost. I became aware of their journeys at the ABC and how the often considerable talent of some of those present had been discovered or resulted from the support and opportunities given to them by other ABC colleagues.

In closing yet another specialist program unit, the ABC is losing passionate, creative program makers. It is shutting down the ABC's role as a chronicler of Australian cultural and artistic achievements. Perhaps even more worrying, the ABC's present management is killing the ABC as an incubator which will spawn and nurture future talent.

Yours sincerely

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GS: media folder