

TERROIR

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Australia Council for the Arts
372 Elizabeth Street (cnr Cooper Street)
Surry Hills NSW 2010

July 13, 2011

Australian Pavilion in Venice

Dear Mr. James Strong, Chairman of the Australia Council for the Arts,
Ms. Kathy Keele, Chief Executive Officer of the Australia Council for the Arts; and
Mr. Simon Crean, Minister for the Arts,

I call on the Australia Council for the Arts to procure a new Australian Pavilion for art and architecture through an open architectural competition.

The Australia Council, as commissioner of the pavilion, has the potential to direct the creation of an exciting, visionary building designed specifically to display the best of Australian art and architecture. Procurement of the pavilion through closed competition is to the detriment of the Australian architectural profession, to architectural discourse in Australia and to Australian art and design culture in general. In particular, a closed competition prohibits the opportunity for a younger member of the profession to participate in the competition, which is particularly disappointing given that the best work in the Giardini – including the Scandinavian Pavilion by Sverre Fehn – were designed by young architects at the time.

I believe the design should be the result of an architectural competition open to all Australian architects and artists. The Australian Institute of Architects has a Competitions Policy and relevant guidelines that could easily be applied to this project for either a single stage or two-stage competition.

An open competition will:

- Ensure the best functional and design outcome;
- Broaden public interest in Australia's participation at the Venice Biennale;
- Engage the public in a conversation about what Australian art and architecture can offer an international audience;
- Provide a space for experimentation;
- Generate innovative, exciting and visionary outcomes;
- Allow for a broad range of responses;
- Explore the idea that the new pavilion is as much a cultural embassy as it is a functional pavilion;
- Advance the idea that inspirational art and inspirational architecture are not mutually exclusive.

Yours sincerely,



Gerard Reinmuth
Director