

ARTS AND CULTURE TRUST BILL 2021

Second Reading

Resumed from 4 August.

MS J.J. SHAW (Swan Hills — Parliamentary Secretary) [10.10 am]: It is a genuine pleasure this morning to speak to the Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021. This is the first piece of legislation that I have had the privilege to ride shotgun on with the Minister for Culture and the Arts in my capacity as his parliamentary secretary. It was absolutely fascinating to go through the development of this legislation over the road at Dumas House and now to speak on it in the Parliament. It is a significant piece of legislation that reflects the importance of thinking outside the square in not only our economic development priorities but also the role that arts and culture has to make Western Australia a thriving, fascinating place to live, work and visit.

The Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021 is a reform initiative to improve the governance of state-owned arts and cultural assets. It will create a contemporary statutory authority that will have much broader powers than the Perth Theatre Trust, which currently governs these assets. The trust is limited to managing performing arts theatres. I am sure everybody appreciates that performances can occur in all manner of spaces and that many opportunities present themselves in the commercial sphere for the arts sector that the trust needs more scope and capacity to pursue.

The Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2020 was passed in this place in the fortieth Parliament and was read into the Legislative Council, but like so many other pieces of legislation it languished there because of the inability of some members in the other place to get on and do their job and pass some fabulous legislation. So the bill has come back to us. It is probably fortunate that was the case with this legislation, because during the course of the election a \$100 million commitment was made to a screen production facility. On review by the State Solicitor's Office, it was found that although the 2020 bill could have been interpreted broadly enough so that the trust could develop the screen production facility, the legislation could be improved. This bill will put that in no doubt and enable the trust to get on and develop what I have no doubt will be a fabulous facility and a genuine enabling facility.

This current iteration of the Arts and Culture Trust Bill was introduced into our Parliament on 23 June. Following the passage of this bill, the new Arts and Culture Trust will have the power to manage all kinds of arts and culture venues, including outdoor spaces such as the Perth Cultural Centre. I have a particular vested interest in the Perth Cultural Centre, being the chair of the task force that is developing the future plan for that precinct. But I am not the first chair, so I acknowledge the excellent work and driving force behind the reinvigoration of the Perth Cultural Centre, the member for Perth, now the Minister for Housing. He put an extraordinary effort into that. I acknowledge his leadership. I feel a bit like Steven Bradbury, skating through at the end and bringing home a project that was led magnificently by the member for Perth. Indeed, the task force acknowledged his contribution to this project at our most recent meeting, and I look forward today to cutting some ribbons with him. He will make a fine ribbon cutter at the Perth Cultural Centre.

This Arts and Culture Trust will hold state-owned assets that are assigned to it and, potentially, any privately owned assets from partnerships that it enters into. The bill creates scope for better and more partnerships between public and private sector entities. I am a strong believer in those partnerships. These partnerships will bring capital that the state may not necessarily have had access to and will enable both entities to learn from one another. State-owned entities will have a window into commerciality and the drivers that the private sector perceive as necessary to bring assets into being. Private sector entities will understand the drivers that public entities have in deepening the cultural tapestry around the state and delivering public value. These sorts of partnerships can be remarkably effective. Far more scope exists for these partnerships across a range of sectors, and I am very interested to see how this bill will assist those sorts of market innovations to be brought to bear.

The existing institutions under the auspices of the Perth Theatre Trust, such as the Western Australian Museum Boola Bardip, the Art Gallery of Western Australia and the State Library of Western Australia, and the buildings and collections that they care for will be linked to a purpose-designed contemporary statutory authority that has specific focus on arts and culture assets. The bill makes a whole heap of improvements to governance, particularly the composition of the board. At the moment, the Perth Theatre Trust board must have three of its eight members coming from the City of Perth. The trust owns a series of assets all around Western Australia, so it is more appropriate that the board is modernised and it is more broadly constituted and reflective of the jurisdictions in which it could potentially own assets—as I will talk about shortly—or at least temporarily manage them.

As I was saying before, the trust will have increased power to participate in commercial activities and business arrangements. The bill will allow the trust to optimise those commercial opportunities and the business potential of the assets. The trust will have the ability to operate under different trading names and to have much broader employment powers, so it can be far more nimble than it has been. The government will also be able to declare

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 5 August 2021]

p2437b-2452a

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

a state-funded arts organisation to be a resident company in these assets. A really interesting part of this is that the trust will be able to hold short-term events or take up opportunities that often arise in the culture and the arts sector. With the agreement of all parties, events will be able to be held anywhere and the minister can declare that venues for these types of events fall under the purview of the Arts and Culture Trust, and a place can be designated for any duration that the minister thinks appropriate. That will mean that all sorts of events can happen in all sorts of spaces such as parks and heritage assets. We can start thinking outside the square about the sorts of performances and experiences that will enrich our communities.

There are requirements now around the possession of certain skills and the experience of board members, and I think that is important. Boards themselves need subject matter experts and no doubt people who understand culture and the arts, but they also need skills around financial management, corporate governance and strategic planning. The broad array of skills and the composition of boards will be integral to leading our cultural and arts institutions forward and, indeed, developing the sector as a whole. If we want a flourishing culture and arts ecosystem, we need diverse boards with membership, as much as possible, drawn from all around the state and with a range of skills and experience to help develop that ecosystem.

As I was saying before, that was pretty much the intent of the original iteration of the Arts and Culture Trust Bill. The government made an election commitment to develop the film studio, which I want to speak to briefly, because this legislation will enable that facility to come under the Arts and Culture Trust. The \$100 million commitment is for a state-of-the-art film studio, which will be a really amazing critical piece of infrastructure to help our film industry nudge up to the next level. It is accompanied by a \$20 million commitment for a screen production attraction fund that will help us get our hands on some federal money. This sort of world-class facility will generate I think not only around 580 jobs in construction, but also another 2 800 film production and precinct hospitality jobs each year over the longer term. It is not just about the jobs at that facility. In my new role, I have been speaking to a heap of stakeholders in the sector. The idea is really quite appealing for a hub to emerge in Fremantle where companies that have a much broader interest than just using the film production facility would co-locate, so the production companies, sound engineers and all sorts of businesses could spring up around the production facility itself. At the moment, a lot of those businesses are dispersed throughout the Perth metropolitan region. They would love a hub. We know what happens: we bump into someone in a cafe or as we are walking down the street or sitting down having lunch in a nearby park and we just start chatting. That can spawn some fabulous ideas. Innovation hubs are integral to promoting and helping an industry to develop. I am really excited to continue to observe the development of that project and the characteristics of the screen production attraction fund. We already have funding to encourage film production in the regions, but to see something developed and delivered also for the metropolitan area will be fantastic.

One of the things that I was most excited about when I was given the great privilege to serve in the government as a parliamentary secretary was the portfolios I have been assigned—culture and the arts, tourism and heritage. I am a bit of a one-trick pony sometimes and I have spent the last 15 years of my career focused on energy. Everyone knows that and I can become a bore, frankly, so I will not speak on it today, but I am a bit of a one-trick pony on energy! It is funny when we are asked to think outside our comfort area how we realise that there are significant opportunities in other aspects of government. It is a deep privilege to do this job. I am all about energy because I see the genuine potential to unlock the economic potential of the state. It is a driver. Cheap energy means we have competitive manufacturing, which drives exports and a series of different processing industries and, indeed, it eases the burden on our households. Energy is a great enabler. However, coming into a new set of portfolios, one of the things I have come to very deeply appreciate is that, as a state, we are quite rightly typically rather focused on resources, energy and mining—fabulous. But we need to think outside the square and genuinely think about what else we can do to diversify our economy. Where else are our core strengths and what can we do for our economic development objectives?

I think there is a fabulous set of opportunities in tourism and culture and the arts. It is a great privilege to, firstly, speak to this legislation, which I think will unlock a heap of that economic potential in culture and the arts and cultural industries. But we need also to think more broadly: if we have a thriving arts centre, it will make Perth and Western Australia not only a fabulous place to live but also a great place to visit. If we think more broadly outside tourism and start thinking about a visitor economy and consider all the film production entities that come into the state, we realise that there will be people coming in from outside and other people will be accompanying them. That itself will drive forward a tourism or visitor economy. This will be a fabulous piece of infrastructure for those who are into the arts and love hearing Western Australian stories and want to see more of those stories told about us as a society. However, it will also be a significant economic enabler and because it will tell people stories about Western Australians, it will pique their interest to come and see us, and that is what we want.

I remember being in Singapore—I cannot remember when, it was so long ago—wandering around the streets. I did not realise that in Singapore nothing happens until about lunchtime, but I was ready for a good hardcore shop from

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 5 August 2021]

p2437b-2452a

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

nine o'clock in the morning! I wondered why all the shops were closed and thought: what is this place? However, on the steps of the Singapore library, I happened to stumble across a Bollywood film being shot. It was absolutely unbelievable. There were incredibly bright colours, expansive crews and lots of dancing going on. It was mesmerising; it was a genuine Indian cultural experience in Singapore and it was one of the highlights of my trip there. Would it not be wonderful if we could see things like that pop up around the Perth metropolitan area?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk): Member, I have an idea of having a Bollywood movie set in Rottneest with the quokkas! I think that would be priceless.

Ms J.J. SHAW: That would be fabulous; it would be great. There are possibilities and potential. It is not about just film. The screen production facility will prompt a lot of innovation with virtual reality. I do not know; to be honest, I can be a bit of a Luddite sometimes, but some really smart people are doing cool things with video games, and a lot of them are in my electorate. This will certainly be something in the augmented reality space that, again, we could promote.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms J.J. SHAW: I have spoken this morning on the economic development objectives and the great potential for the state with the establishment of the Arts and Culture Trust. However, I want to speak about the more specific and highly localised benefits that a facility like this can deliver. As I have said, this legislation will enable the identification, operation and holding of events at sites right around the state. I want to highlight how important that will be to bringing the arts to the outer metropolitan region, which is an often overlooked aspect. I represent probably one of the outer-most metropolitan seats—Swan Hills.

Ms C.M. Rowe: Peri-urban.

Ms J.J. SHAW: It is peri-urban, thank you, member for Belmont. I represent Ellenbrook and an area all the way up into the Perth hills. We have a thriving and diverse arts community out there and I want to see more outer metropolitan arts events. I particularly want to highlight and encourage these outer metropolitan communities to celebrate their diversity and creativity. I think this trust will be a vehicle for that. Beyond the economic development imperatives, there is so much to say about enriching our cultural tapestry and deepening our community links around the arts. These are important points to highlight.

I want to speak about some arts events that have been held recently in my community, which demonstrate the depth of talent we have, the interest in arts participation in our communities and the prospect for hosting arts events in the outer metropolitan area. In Ellenbrook, we have the Ellenbrook Cultural Foundation, and on 16 July it held its Ellenbrook Open Art Award. That has been going for seven years. I have been sponsoring those awards for five of those seven years and at the very least I always sponsor the youth prize and some other awards as we go through. I want to congratulate the executive director of Ellenbrook Arts, Gemma Ben-Ary. She is amazing. I think she has been with Ellenbrook Arts now for three years. She does a great job. I also acknowledge the chair of Ellenbrook Arts, Danny Murphy, who really has made such an astonishing contribution to the development of Ellenbrook, and shepherds the Ellenbrook Cultural Foundation very aptly. The Ellenbrook Open Art Award is an open award. It is a non-acquisitive prize open to all Western Australian artists, but we have a particular focus on Ellenbrook and our surrounding areas. The aim of the award is to promote, nurture and cultivate excellence in the visual arts for the Ellenbrook community and allow members of Ellenbrook Arts to participate and become involved in various ways. We have a beautiful and really iconic building in the centre of Ellenbrook. It has beautiful light. The exhibitions that are hosted there, and particularly the Ellenbrook arts awards, are just fantastic. We have travelling exhibitions in there and the studios themselves are well attended. A lot of people in Ellenbrook pop in. It is across the road from a coffee shop. It really is a fabulous facility that is very well utilised and could be a fabulous performance space. It is associated with surrounding parks as well.

I want to acknowledge the three judges of the Ellenbrook Open Art Award, Polla Posavec, Stuart Elliott and Danielle Fusco. They gave me these expansive descriptions of the winning artworks that were genuinely tongue-tying, so I stumbled over that bit during my speech! I will quickly run through the winners. The winner for sculpture in 3D was Bianca Butler for *Forage*, for painting it was Kat Ferguson for *I Love Me*, and for works on paper it was Amy Marshall for *Thunderstruck*. That was an amazing picture. It was a picture in pencil of this little kid and he had this AC/DC T-shirt and he was giving little hand gestures. It was such an expressive picture. I absolutely loved it. The mixed media prize was awarded to Josephine Duval for *Cottesloe Colours*. The photography prize went to Dan Robinson for *Café Break*. It was a really interesting photograph. It is just of a gentleman sitting in a cafe drinking his coffee while reading the paper, but the surrounding setting and the way that the light came into the windows made it a really fabulous photograph. The prize for printmaking went to the work *Three for Tea in Colour*. That was a lino printing of three teacups that had been water coloured in, and that was really beautiful. The Wulff glass award went to Philip Maher for *Static Falls*. The

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 5 August 2021]

p2437b-2452a

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

youth award went to Ellie Sutherland for *Willows*. That was a really cool picture. It was almost like anime, with really dark colours and really chiselled features. It was a really beautiful work of art. In fact, Ellie won the youth award prize last year too. A few years ago the art prize was won by a young woman called Sahara du Pont and she did this incredible picture of this island with storm clouds coming over it and this ship in the distance. It was really atmospheric. I actually bought it and it hangs in my office, if anyone wants to pop in and see it. It always gets comments. People either love it or hate it, but it always gets comments. The City of Swan award went to John B. Whitehead for *Memories*. The highly commended award went to Norma Schwind for *The Waiting Room*. The overall winner award went to Eve Wolf for *Pilings*. This is a really amazing piece of art. It is like these pylons, if you like, on a jetty above a body of water opposite the old Fremantle power station. Rather than it being a painting as such, it is like these giant pixels of colour, and you really have to step back and see the power station reflected in the body of water itself. It is a really interesting piece. I want to make special mention of a piece by Corrine Rapley called *Moon Clouds over the Estuary*. I mention it for two reasons. Firstly, I fell in love with it and I bought it. I thought it was the most remarkable piece of art. The Minister for Culture and the Arts may be interested to know that I got in touch with Corrine Rapley, who is a constituent of his, and I understand she has painted a portrait of him.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Yes, of course, I did sit for her.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, is it sitting in an attic looking older as the days go by?

Ms J.J. SHAW: If the minister keeps up his singing, he may end up tattooed on someone's calf! It was quite interesting. She said she had painted David Templeman, so there we go. I meant to mention it to the minister the other day, but I overlooked it, so I thought I would just throw it in then!

The Ellenbrook art awards were absolutely fabulous. On Friday just gone, I went back to the studio—I try to get along there quite frequently—because we launched the opening of the Ellenbrook–Swan Open Studios. There are all these little ecosystems of artists all through the Ellenbrook–Swan Valley region and they had an open studios event. Twenty-one local artists opened their homes and studios. People could call in on the artists and see them at work, have a chat to them about their process and what inspires them, and they could buy some of their artwork. So many of them are in these little houses in Ellenbrook, and it brings home just how many people are in the arts and the reasons that so many people participate. A lot of people got into the arts because they were feeling stressed or anxious, particularly during a COVID lockdown, and they find it a really great way to relax, improve mindfulness and express creativity. When I visit artists in their studios, I find they seem very comfortable to speak about their process and their work. The passion is palpable. It is a genuine pleasure to have the opportunity to speak to our artists. I know the Margaret River Region Open Studios event is coming up shortly. That was the inspiration for the Ellenbrook–Swan Valley Open Studios. It had to be cancelled last year because of COVID, so this is the third year. We just skipped a year for COVID. I really hope this event continues to come along. It reminds us again of just what a fabulous, vibrant arts community we have.

There are also many artists peppered throughout the hills region of my electorate, but I am sure all of us have our stories about our vibrant arts communities. All of us will be able to talk to the talent, diversity, depth, excitement and energy we have. I think we need to celebrate the arts for our children in particular, because there is a lot put into kids in sport. I love kids in sport; it is great. It is a healthy way of being, but not every kid is a sporting superstar. I certainly was not. I wear bulletproof glasses! I got smacked in the face by my fair share of basketballs and God knows what! I am not particularly talented either, I might add. Letting children feel that they can be included, they are talented and that we appreciate the effort that goes in piques interest in the arts at a young age. Interests in the arts at a young age will just foster a lifetime of love and learning about the arts and participation in the arts. It will help children find their tribe, when sometimes in a bit of a sport-obsessed culture it may be difficult for them to do so. I am very excited about the passage of this bill.

There is one last thing I will mention while I have the opportunity and the floor. Ellenbrook Arts does much more, and this is a very important point. It is not just about displaying works; it is about bringing people together. Ellenbrook Cultural Foundation, Ellenbrook Arts, is working with the Ellenbrook Multicultural Community, which is a little community group that I have helped a number of people to come together and establish. We want to celebrate the diversity in Ellenbrook. Ellenbrook Arts is working with us to develop a spring festival. We had our first event in March last year—I mean this year in March, not last year in March; nobody was doing anything then. We had the Ellenbrook Mile Harmony Walk. We all walked together. We did this walk and all different communities came together. We had a little celebration in the park at the end of it, with dance and art from all our different communities. We want to make it even bigger this year.

I want to congratulate the chair of the Ellenbrook Multicultural Community, Prabhjot Singh, from Bennett Springs—what an upstanding and remarkable young man Prabhjot is—and also Robyn Pickrell from the Ellenbrook Mile. The two of them put so much energy and effort into both the Ellenbrook Mile and the Ellenbrook Multicultural Community.

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

The other members of the committee for this multicultural event are Irene Chong from the Ellenbrook Mile; John Aciek from the South Sudanese society; Helen Pickett-Gale from the City of Swan; Glynn Davies and David Karr from the Ellenbrook and Districts Residents and Ratepayers Association; Chai Chua from the Ellenbrook Asian community; Rod Simeons, the principal of Anne Hamersley Primary School, which is probably the most diverse primary school in my electorate; Aniwa Graham-Siliva from the Cook Island community; Gemma Ben-Ary from Ellenbrook Arts; and Susan Ketchi, who has an amazing passion for African dance and drama. She is infectious. I want to thank as well Vaughn McGuire for bringing sensitivity to and grounding our events with such a sense of history and place, and for recognising and forcing us all to reflect on the importance of our Aboriginal community, particularly in our part of the Swan River, the Derbarl Yerrigan, which has such an important and significant Aboriginal cultural history. Our spring event will hopefully be a real celebration of art, diversity and the richness of our community. It will bring us all together—the arts do that. This Arts and Culture Trust Bill will enhance our capacity to continue to do so.

Congratulations, minister, on bringing this bill forward; I am really looking forward to working with you to implement it. Thank you to all the public service officers who also put so much into developing this bill for us now to debate.

MR S.N. AUBREY (Scarborough) [10.41 am]: I rise to speak on the Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021 and to show my support for the vision of this McGowan government for a vibrant and strong culture and arts sector in Western Australia. By transforming the Perth Theatre Trust into the Arts and Culture Trust, the new trust will be given greater responsibilities, broader powers, and greater flexibility to carry out its duties. It will ensure the vision of the McGowan government to have a trust that can manage cultural assets extending past theatres, and ensure that the arts and culture sector in Western Australia is supported to grow and compete on both the national and the world stage. This is one of several reforms by the McGowan government to ensure that our public sector is a highly capable and modern service able to deliver high-quality services to the Western Australian public.

By allowing the wonderful and talented Minister for Culture and the Arts to declare state-funded arts organisations to be resident companies, this reform will recognise the importance of these organisations to the cultural and artistic fabric of Western Australia by requiring the new trust to consider their activities when conducting programming of trust venues and other similar activities. It will also provide the trust with flexibility to support and create events not just in theatres, but also in venues around the state and in our local communities.

I am proud to say that my local Scarborough community is home to a strong arts and cultural scene. One of our longest serving clubs is Trigg Art Club, which was formed in 1969 and has grown from 10 members to around 100 members since that time. Trigg Art Club is based out of Trigg Island Surf Life Saving Club. The main objective of Trigg Art Club over its 50 years of operation has been to raise money for the Trigg Island surf club by exhibiting local art within its premises and selling it to the local community. The club raised over \$9 000 at a recent exhibit, which will go directly to the surf club to assist in saving lives on our local beaches, a matter close to my heart. I currently have a beautiful piece of art painted by the wonderful Sandra Menegola above my desk in my office in Parliament.

I would also like to thank Ann Dunstan, the president of Trigg Art Club, for welcoming me to one of its community art sessions. I must admit that my talent for art is not the best. I can say that I will not be putting any of my artwork above anyone's desk in this Parliament, but I will say that I was wonderfully welcomed and very much enjoyed the opportunity to have a crack at painting, even though it is not my best talent. I would also like to thank Hon Graham Edwards, a former upper house member of this Parliament for the Labor Party, for his ongoing support as patron of Trigg Art Club.

In Scarborough, we have not only Trigg Art Club, but also local town teams that put art and culture at the top of what they are doing to try to increase the vibrancy of our local community. Bend in the Road is a community group that is located in Doubleview in the Scarborough electorate. It consists of local residents and business owners who are passionate about activities and aesthetics along the stretch of Scarborough Beach Road known as “the bend in the road”, as well as the vibrancy of the community that feeds into and out of this local business precinct. It is doing this by supporting local artists and the community to brighten our community with beautiful murals on local businesses, such as the mural recently painted on local cafe Dunn and Walton in Doubleview, and also through its community art trail, which features artworks by local community members, artists and creatives that celebrate our diverse neighbourhood. It also does this by hosting events such as Jazz in the Park to provide local residents an opportunity to get out and enjoy some of our local artists in the Scarborough community.

As well as this group, we have Art Space Collective. I had the pleasure of attending a recent event by Art Space Collective exhibiting local art and live music by local artists. Art Space Collective is an inspired and innovative community hub, which, in the words of Leon Pericles, aims to “inject art into the non-believers”. I cannot say I am a non-believer, but it definitely did inject some good art into me. It is run by a team of skilled, dedicated, humorous and elegant volunteers. Art Space Collective is housed in what was Scarborough's first gallery, alongside an area

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 5 August 2021]

p2437b-2452a

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

of artisan workshops in which creatives and the local community can come together to connect with art and ideas, and each other.

For other local artists and photographers who want to display their works, there is no better place than the bustling Livid Skate Cafe. Owner Oska Tallis is passionate about supporting local artists and creating a vibrant and cosy venue for people to enjoy local art and coffee. Livid is also well known for its street parties, regularly providing opportunities for local talent to entertain Scarborough residents, including me, through live music in the confines of its activated alleyway. Livid is one of the eight businesses across the Scarborough Beach precinct that host Jazz by the Beach. This is an annual initiative run by the Scarborough Beach Association. It is a cultural and lively experience running over two days. It will be held this weekend, on 14 and 15 August. I encourage all members of this house in the area to attend and enjoy the weekend. It is an exciting program that activates the Scarborough Beach precinct with some of Perth's best performers.

Scarborough is continuing to grow and reach its potential, not just as a world-class beach precinct, but also as a cultural and arts hub. I look forward to seeing the support of the Arts and Culture Trust for the local talent of the Scarborough arts and culture community.

I also look forward to seeing both young and old members of the Scarborough and Western Australian community achieve their dreams on the big screen here in Western Australia with the Arts and Culture Trust's responsibility for delivering on the McGowan government's commitment to the proposed \$100 million state-of-the-art screen production facility in Fremantle. The studios will support the creation of feature, factual and animation productions for television and cinema, as well as commercial streaming and gaming. The government's commitment to this facility will fill this gap, which has been a major disadvantage in being able to attract international productions to Western Australia. It will assist in helping to share our state's unique and diverse natural and pristine beauty, stunning light and vast open blue skies, our local talent, and our Western Australian stories, culture and landscapes, and showcase our state to the world, providing a boost for tourism.

This is a clear example of how the McGowan government is fulfilling its vision for a brighter and more vibrant future for the arts and culture industry in Western Australia. I commend this bill to the house.

MS M.J. HAMMAT (Mirrabooka) [10.48 am]: I also rise to speak in support of the Arts and Culture Bill 2021. I want to begin by congratulating the Minister for Culture and the Arts for introducing this important bill to the house. I also want to commend all the speakers who have spoken before me on this bill.

I have to say that I have been impressed to learn much about the hidden talents of my colleagues in this place. Although the minister's skills in cabaret and singing are legendary, I have also enjoyed learning about the karaoke talent of the member for Kingsley and the film interests of the member for Belmont, and the talents of many other members as well. What I take away from the many reflections of other members during this debate is how important the arts and culture is to our lives and how essential the arts and culture is to all of us. We all have a story to tell about how arts and culture has shaped us and impacted our lives. We can all remember a performance or a show that has stirred strong emotions or perhaps given us a new insight. It is arts and culture that gives our lives much colour and meaning. Arts and culture helps us tell our story to each other and to the world. It helps us to understand not only our human experiences that we share, but also our unique journeys, and it helps us to understand who we are.

It was just this week that many of us in this chamber witnessed the excellent performance of *Edith*. The story of Edith Cowan, the first woman elected to the Western Australian Parliament, might be a story that we are in fact very familiar with. But the performance earlier this week really brought her story and her experience to life for me. I thought that that performance brilliantly captured the very lonely but resolute figure she must have been as she walked through these corridors and stood to make her maiden speech, as it was known at the time. This was brilliantly contrasted with the Aboriginal woman who represented our current generation, looking back at that historical moment and making sense of all that has happened since Edith Cowan was elected, and also with the ghost of Sir John Forrest who disbelieved that a woman could be elected into the WA Parliament. That very simple performance actually gave us a better, deeper and more profound understanding of our history, our Parliament and the story of women's journey into this place from not only Edith Cowan's election 100 years ago, but also our collective journey since that time. That is a perfect illustration of why arts and culture is so valuable to our society. It helps us to understand our place in history and the world and it helps to reimagine who we are.

As there has been much disclosure of artistic talents during the comments on the Arts and Culture Trust Bill, I want to share that it is a little-known fact that I have some limited artistic talent myself. I use the word "limited" with purpose. My debut performance was playing the recorder—not very well, I add—as a grade 3 student at the Wagin music festival. I am sorry that the member for Roe is not here to hear that that was my debut performance and to hear me reflect on the Wagin music festival because I am sure that he probably remembers it fondly. It is true that my dreams of becoming a musical prodigy ended early with that debut performance being my only performance

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 5 August 2021]

p2437b-2452a

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

before I retired from playing the recorder forever. No doubt my parents were thrilled with that decision. I was, however, part of the Broomehill Primary School choir that went on to win the choir section of that same festival the following year. It was possibly the best result ever achieved by Broomehill Primary School at that festival despite the fact that we travelled to Wagin every year to participate. I would like to think that perhaps my choir contribution helped to secure that outstanding performance in that one year.

The place my artistic talents really came to the fore was in high school drama productions. I have to say that probably very few of my former school colleagues have been surprised to discover my current occupation. I was a keen participant in drama productions throughout my high school years, performing with very little public acclaim, but with a great deal of enthusiasm on my part. I think it is safe to say that all of my stage exploits from that time have disappeared without a trace into history to be very happily forgotten. But the point of this is really to reflect how my experience as a student and as a young person is one that is common for many young people. Despite there being no prospect that I would make a career from my artistic pursuits, I was encouraged to participate and I got a great deal of joy and happiness from doing so. Perhaps it is true to say that my passion for drama and an understanding of voice projection may have assisted in my eventual career choices—who can say?

We continue to encourage our students and our young people to participate in the arts, in drama and in cultural pursuits because it helps them to build confidence and self-esteem as well as learn about our history and the world around them. It also helps our young people learn new skills. It gives kids who are less academically talented an opportunity to shine and it provides a creative outlet that can be a welcome relief from the demands of schooling and the curriculum.

It is impossible to imagine our young children participating in kindy or pre-primary without also recognising the dazzling array of craft and paintings and buildings made from cardboard boxes that they bring home from kindergarten and pre-primary. I can attest to a great many objects that are still in my home, lovingly made by my two boys many, many years ago. Art, performance and creativity are essential parts of early childhood development and engagement. This is true for not just our generation; throughout all of human history we have expressed ourselves through dance, performance, drawings and sculpture.

With the current focus on our young people acquiring skills in science, technology, engineering and maths, it is important to remember the important role that the arts play in this as well. Many people advocate for not just the concept of STEM, but STEAM—science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics—recognising that arts and creativity need to be central to our creative pursuits and that we cannot be at the forefront of technology and innovation unless we also creatively and artistically develop our minds. It is through the meeting of the technical and creative skills that we are able to imagine great innovations and take those significant steps forward. It remains essential that we continue to support and foster the arts, particularly in our young people.

I am particularly pleased that the McGowan government has committed \$4 million to build a performing arts centre at Balga Senior High School in my electorate of Mirrabooka. This is an example of some of the great work being done by the McGowan government to support the arts and our young people's education. Students at Balga Senior High School and, indeed, at all schools need a range of pathways and learning opportunities to ensure that they not only remain engaged with the education system, but also have access to a wide range of career paths and opportunities. I want to congratulate the principal at Balga Senior High School, Mark Carton, and also the board and staff for their hard work to ensure that students at Balga Senior High School always have access to a wide range of pathways and who help their students to find their feet and career paths that are they are passionate about. The new performing arts centre will provide excellent facilities for our students. It will enhance their career opportunities and I hope that it will nurture great local talent to high levels of success. I am very excited about this project and what it will contribute to not only our local students, but also the whole Balga community, because community groups also use the high school campus for a range of after-hours activities.

Members will know that Mirrabooka is a vibrant and multicultural part of our metropolitan area. A great many vibrant cultural performances and activities occur every weekend in my electorate. They showcase culture, dance and music from around the world, and whilst international travel remains difficult for the majority of us, I encourage all members to experience the cultural pursuits that they can readily pursue in the electorate of Mirrabooka. It is a way of travelling the world without leaving the metropolitan area.

The bill before us not only will replace the Perth Theatre Trust with the Arts and Culture Trust, but contains amendments to provide the legislative authority for Western Australia's proposed new screen facility. Many members before me have spoken on this. The amendments will enable the state government to establish, own and operate the screen production facility business, and enter into a management agreement. I want to add my voice to the speakers before me to say how excited I am about the government's commitment to building a \$100 million studio in Fremantle. Although Fremantle is some distance from Mirrabooka, I think we can all agree that it is an exciting proposal for the whole state. It is a project that will benefit us all. It will provide jobs and opportunities in both its

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

construction stage and when it becomes operational. In building such a facility, we create jobs along with opportunities for the future. Bringing the film industry to Western Australia is also an excellent way of creating ongoing employment and skilled jobs—not only in the arts but also in other areas. Not only artists will benefit from access to the film studio; people in other occupations will also benefit, including those in catering, lighting, other technical roles and a wide range of ancillary services. I think we can all recognise that building this world-class facility in Fremantle will bring fabulous opportunities to showcase our state and hopefully bring tourists to Western Australia. I am excited about the government’s commitment to building this studio because of what it will provide, not only for those whose pursuits are artistic, but also for those who want to see our economy further diversified through the jobs that it will create and the opportunities it will create for our young people.

I am equally excited about the election commitment of funds towards an Aboriginal cultural centre on the banks of the Derbarl Yerrigan. The government made a \$50 million election commitment towards work on this proposal. I think we all agree that highlighting and celebrating the culture and history of our First Nations people is a good thing to do and the right thing to do; we should do it. But it is also much more than that. It is, again, an important contribution towards a world-class tourism facility. When our international borders reopen, I think it will bring many visitors to our state and encourage a deeper understanding of the First Nations people’s connection to land and culture. The government is making many investments in arts and culture to recognise that our cultural heritage is an important part of who we are. Investing in the arts and culture is not just a frivolous pursuit; it is an opportunity and an important strategy to diversify our economy and create a range of job opportunities for the state today and into the future.

Given that the arts and culture is so central to our social and economic wellbeing—many members have spoken about that—I want to reflect on the fact that the arts sector has been badly neglected by the federal Liberal government during the COVID period we have just experienced. I particularly note that many performers I have spoken to and am aware of have suffered during this time due to the inherently insecure nature of their work. Because of this, they were unable to access the federal government’s JobKeeper payments over the last year. Despite many representations and calls for the federal government to address this, it has declined to provide support to workers in the arts sector. It has been a very difficult 18 months or so for those who work in the performing arts.

Although today we are quite rightly celebrating our artists and performers, we need to remain vigilant to ensure that artists are able to make a living from their artistic endeavours. Because of the lack of shows and artists’ inability to access financial support through JobKeeper, many performing artists have found the last 18 months incredibly difficult. I want to put on the record today my appreciation of them and my hope that the federal government’s decision has not left a lasting legacy of devastation of our arts sector.

I am very heartened by the debate we have had on the Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021; it reconfirms the centrality of the arts to our identity. However, those sentiments are meaningless if we are to throw our artists and creative workers under the bus. They do not enjoy the same employment benefits that many others in our economy enjoy because of the inherently insecure nature of their work.

The arts in WA have evolved substantially since the Perth Theatre Trust was first established in 1978. We now enjoy many vibrant arts festivals, like the Fringe World Festival and the Perth International Arts Festival. We recognise that many of these performances are held in a wide variety of spaces and different places. That is, indeed, part of the attraction of many of those events. It is no longer the case that attending an arts performance requires attendance at a well-known bricks-and-mortar theatre. For example, it is a wonderful experience to see a performance in the Spiegeltent at the Fringe World Festival; the venue itself is a work of art before any performances take place. We can also all recognise the opportunities that the wonderful WA Museum Boola Bardip at the Perth Cultural Centre provides to ensure we can properly activate a space that is already dedicated to the arts but now also includes a wide number of truly excellent buildings and spaces that can be activated for the purposes of artistic pursuits.

These are all fantastic developments. Our climate and our magnificent landscape mean we are well placed to deliver arts and culture in a wide variety of places, both permanent and temporary. As speakers before me have noted, we are blessed in Western Australia with a landscape of great beauty and magnificence. Does it not then make sense that we should celebrate the unique cultural beauty of our landscape by including it where possible in a wide range of outdoor venues?

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms M.J. HAMMAT: These kinds of developments are envisaged by this bill, which gives the trust powers to manage all kinds of arts and cultural venues, including outdoor spaces such as the Perth Cultural Centre. Regional members of Parliament will be very heartened by the potential this has for bringing performances to their regions and delivering them in spaces that might not necessarily have traditionally been used for artistic pursuits.

I think one of the great things about this debate is the opportunity for members of Parliament to reflect on how much the arts enrich our lives and enhance our society. It is also a wonderful thing to have the opportunity to speak

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

about the arts and what they mean to us. We have collectively reflected on many great memories of the performances we have seen—or, indeed, the less great performances we may have given! For me, that really underlines the fact that we all have a connection to the arts. Arts and culture is important to us all. They are important to our society and are an important part of our economic diversity. Arts is a part of all of our journeys, whether we are talking about simple paintings in preschool or less than impressive dramatic performances in high school, or about those who go forth and make a career from the arts or are actively watching and viewing arts. It is right for the arts to be supported in our state, and it is right for the arts to be supported throughout our lifetime. For those reasons, I commend the bill to the house.

MS E.J. KELSBIE (Warren–Blackwood) [11.07 am]: I live in an electorate, Warren–Blackwood, that is rich in culture and swollen—as Minister Templeman would say—in the arts. It is something we celebrate, and something we celebrate loudly, proudly and often. We are home to some of the state’s most beautiful and iconic venues and events, and we love festivals. To name a few, we have the Bridgetown Blues Festival, the Boyup Brook Country Music Festival, the Nannup Music Festival, the Denmark Festival of Voice, the Margaret River Readers and Writers Festival and the Bridgetown–Greenbushes Fridgetown Festival.

Warren–Blackwood is an electorate that sweeps from the Porongurup Range to Margaret River, up to Balingup and across to Boyup Brook. It is an electorate that is full of opportunity and it is bursting with talent. It is a region that is proud to be part of the rich tapestry that binds culture and the arts together across our state. I am proud to stand here today to commend the Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021, which will modernise the Perth Theatre Trust Act 1979.

Let us think about that for a moment. In 1979, I was 13. The Perth Entertainment Centre opened five years earlier, in 1974. I remember the Perth Entertainment Centre well. A year after it opened, I queued up with my mum and my sister and slept out to get tickets to see my favourite band at the time, Kiss. As the years marched on, during my teens I remember seeing Skyhooks, the Angels, Adam and the Ants, Billy Joel and Cliff Richard—I know!—at the centre.

Ms J.J. Shaw: Oh, you were the one!

Ms E.J. KELSBIE: It was just me there, with my parents! I am pretty sure this whetted my appetite for live music and celebrating arts and culture throughout my career.

For many decades, the Perth Theatre Trust has served its role in accordance with the powers granted to it under the Perth Theatre Trust Act 1979. But it is time to move forward to 2021 and away from a metro-centric trust. The McGowan government reforms aim to ensure that the Western Australian public sector is modern, high performing and capable of delivering future services to our fabulously diverse and culturally rich communities across the state. Currently, the trust can manage theatres, but the McGowan government’s vision is far broader and bigger, and will enable the activation of cultural assets entrusted to its care, as well as enabling the Minister for Culture and the Arts to declare any part of our state a venue.

Imagine The Waifs, who are from Albany, supported by Dulcie, a four-girl indie-pop band, with two members from my hometown of Denmark, wooing audiences at sunset at William Bay. Imagine feeling the vibrations of any one of your local choirs, performing among the beauty of the south west forests. Imagine being part of a mixed art performance of poetry, dance and storytelling in an art gallery situated anywhere in WA. This vision cannot be achieved with the Perth Theatre Trust in its current form.

The establishment of the Arts and Culture Trust will help ensure that all kinds of art and cultural venues will be activated into performing spaces, not just limited to theatres. The Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021 will enable the minister to declare spaces and places to be venues if they are to be used for cultural or artistic purposes. These can be temporary and only have effect for a defined period. The bill will provide broader powers and stronger governance, strengthening and modernising the 1979 act to become a contemporary bill for 2021 and the years ahead. This bill is close to my heart, and I endorse it as it removes boundaries and enables innovation.

I spent many years working in the arts and culture sector in London. I started out with a music management company for bands like Marillion, Poison and Status Quo.

Several members interjected.

Ms E.J. KELSBIE: I did!

I then worked as the arts and entertainment editor for *TNT Magazine*. It was a great job in an exciting industry, back in the day. I interviewed artists like Doug Anthony All Stars, Jimmy Barnes and Dannii Minogue. I wrote theatre, arts and restaurant reviews. Along the way I was trained on the job and learnt skills that enabled me to go on to work in publishing, production and talent management across platforms.

This bill will also ensure that the board will have access to possess the skills and experience that directly relates to the Arts and Culture Trust’s operations. There will no longer be a need for representational members from the

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 5 August 2021]

p2437b-2452a

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

City of Perth, as the current Perth Theatre Trust Act 1979 dictates. This will open opportunities for broader regional representation. Excitingly, the trust will own and operate a \$100 million state-of-the-art screen production facility—a key McGowan government election commitment—in Fremantle.

I worked for eight years in media production at the BBC in the UK in interactive media and in talent management. I worked with production crews from across the globe. The idea of Western Australians being provided real opportunities to work in that space at our own production facility in Fremantle is incredibly exciting. It is a real pathway for the talent in our own state. My last role at the BBC was as a head of production talent for BBC Multiplatform Productions—a department that delivered innovation, creativity and multi-platform solutions across linear programming, interactive media and mobile services. I was lucky enough to work with some of the most creative people in the industry and with iconic brands such as *Top Gear*, *Big Cat Diary*, *Eurovision*, *The Graham Norton Show*, *EastEnders*, *The One Show* and *Antiques Roadshow*. I have also been a senior producer of interactive games for young people, which included *Snowboarding Cows* and *A Flea Circus*, and I was part of artificial intelligence innovation over 10 years ago. This experience related to science and education for young people.

I am incredibly excited that we will have a purpose-built facility in WA that will enable us to create and play on the world stage. As my esteemed colleague the member for Swan Hills, Jess Shaw, indicated, the purpose-built screen production facility will not only enable our creativity to shine, but also create more than 580 jobs and approximately 2 800 film production and precinct hospitality jobs. In my role at the BBC, I led a research program that looked at how to make traditional linear television teams more innovative across platforms. The outcomes of that project changed the way we delivered our training at the BBC. We led the way, delivering the findings to other media agencies such as Sky and ITV. This experience helps me understand why it is very important to have modern, contemporary and enabling legislation. We are cutting edge in WA, and the Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021 will enable the McGowan government to support the growth of these industries, with the studios enabling the creation of feature, faction and animation productions for a range of platforms.

We live in an amazing place. We have abundant talent to grow and opportunities to share. We have incredible stories to tell and cultures to celebrate. We have landscapes that take your breath away. It is our time to shine and show the world what we are made of when it comes to our arts and our culture. It is time to modernise the Perth Theatre Trust Act 1979 and bring it up to speed with the current times. I commend the Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021.

DR J. KRISHNAN (Riverton) [11.16 am]: I rise to commend the Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021 to this house. Recently, after being elected, I went through a self-assessment activity with the help of a professional. I ticked all the boxes, in flourishing colours. But he said that I utterly failed when it came to hobbies. He described what a hobby means: converting one shape to another shape, or one form to another form. That is exactly what art and culture does. He said that I utterly failed in it. That made me very inquisitive about knowing more about it, and I started doing a bit more research. It is very important for everybody to have their mind switch off and rest so it can be more productive and effective. Art and culture play such a vital role in our daily lives to create balance. It brings together families, communities and friends. It creates an opportunity to build relationships, to spend time together, and that should not be underestimated.

The Perth Theatre Trust is very old. We are trying to be modern. Successive governments have acknowledged that change is needed to make it modern. The main aim of the McGowan government, which has a vision for the future, is to create an opportunity for the young talents and the older talents as well, like our Leader of the House who performs often. I cannot wait for the first Christmas to come so I can listen to his singing. That vision has been transformed into the bill before the house. What is the transformation? The transformation improves the governance structure of the trust, bringing in a modern way of running it rather than the old way, which was stuck with managing the theatre but not other venues.

There are opportunities in every community in every electorate. In my electorate, submissions are open to enter the Canning Arts Awards 2021, the exhibition for which will be held between 21 and 28 August. If anyone has the time and opportunity, please visit to see our talented artists in the electorate exhibit their arts in Riverton Library between 21 and 28 August.

This particular bill extends the responsibility to all kinds of arts and culture venues rather than restricting it just to the theatre. Other members very clearly stated that modernising the governance structure of the Perth Theatre Trust will allow commercial partnerships. It was stated very clearly that commercial partnerships will bring about capital investment, new opportunities, modernisation, technology exchange and international opportunities. The current Board of Trustees on the Perth Theatre Trust comprises eight members. How is a majority defined with eight members? This bill recommends that the number of members be increased to nine and not just restricted to members from metropolitan Perth. The electorate of Warren–Blackwood has more artists than a suburb of Perth.

The bill also recommends using trading names, because branding and marketing is important. The PTT cannot be stuck with being permitted to use only one name and not being able to transform according to modern-day practices

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 5 August 2021]

p2437b-2452a

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

to market an event more successfully. The bill also recommends that the board members should have the appropriate skills and experience so that they can contribute towards the betterment of the trust rather than anyone and everyone sitting on the board and not being useful in the development of the arts and culture sector.

Under the bill, the Minister for Culture and the Arts will have the authority to declare a place a venue. Other members have spoken about how important that is. At short notice, for a short time, multiple places can be designated as venues to promote great events. That will create opportunities for local people to exhibit the talent that they have brewed for many years. The creation of that vehicle and the opportunity is essential for them to progress to the next level rather than being stuck where they are.

More importantly, there is scepticism about how the new trust will take over from the old trust. This bill has clearly covered the transitional arrangements for how it will transform from old to new. Those arrangements have been very clearly explained in the bill. I am sure that those transitional arrangements will make the transition smooth and efficient in getting the modern trust up and running.

I really appreciate the McGowan government's contribution towards a new Fremantle film studio and screen production facility. I cannot wait for Perth-based artists, actors, production people and technology people to be hands-on in the brand new facility and produce world-class films here in Perth that we can all be proud of. I commend the bill to the house and thank the Acting Speaker for the opportunity to speak.

MS A.E. KENT (Kalgoorlie) [11.23 am]: I rise to talk on the Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021. Arts and culture is important to all communities in Western Australia, and my electorate of Kalgoorlie is no different. Unfortunately, I have no specific skills in this area. Many people expect me to be able to sing, being Welsh, but I will leave that to Tom Jones! This does not stop me from appreciating and enjoying arts and culture in all its different forms.

Until elected in March 2021, I was an active board member of Artgold, which has been promoting arts and culture in the goldfields since 2008. Artgold supports local artists and art groups, craftsmen and artisans and helps showcase their talent to the wider community. I was also a member of the Museum of the Goldfields Advisory Committee. The museum is responsible for showcasing the rich history of the eastern goldfields and Kalgoorlie's mining heritage. Step into this museum and members will discover the unique role Kalgoorlie–Boulder has played in Western Australia's development, both as a centre of mining and its place on the edge of the Nullarbor Plain. Visitors can explore the largest display of the state's collection of gold bars and nuggets, as well as see how prospectors search for this precious metal, and learn about life and the hardships faced by mining families during the early 1900s. If members have not been there, I encourage them to go. It is well worth a visit.

Such is my interest in arts and culture, I spent many months talking to different groups in my electorate to discuss what projects would make a difference in their communities. I came up with a collective list of commitments that I would like to share with the house. The Golden Mile Art Exhibition Group—GMAEG—has received \$15 000 to fund an external wet area enclosure adjacent to the existing Art House. This wet area enclosure will be used for ceramics and fabric-dyeing workshops. Over the past year alone, almost 50 exhibitions, workshops and events have been held at Art House, which has attracted over 2 000 Kalgoorlie–Boulder community members. GMAEG is well known in the goldfields through its important work supporting as many local artists as possible, as well as helping to get their artworks exhibited and sold. This grassroots organisation has, for over 40 years, allowed many artists to pursue their passion for creative art and, importantly, many young local artists have had the opportunity to exhibit their work and grow as artists.

I also committed \$5 000 to the Inland Art Prize in Leonora. The art prize attracts around 250 artworks, and this funding will encourage more local artists to enter and promote their work in the region. I will continue with Leonora, which most members will know solely as an important mining town in the northern goldfields, but I am sure most people do not know that it is also home to Barnes Federal Theatre, which was once considered to be the best hall outside of Perth and saw many balls, dances and concerts take place. In fact, Slim Dusty once played there! That is a little-known fact. Opened in 1901, the theatre has unfortunately been closed for many years, due to internal and external damage. I have committed \$100 000 towards the overall renovations, in collaboration with the Shire of Leonora. Barnes Federal Theatre can now be restored to its former glory and will provide a unique and historic building to host myriad shows, concerts, exhibitions and conferences.

I will move now to the Shire of Coolgardie. I have provided \$5 280 to the Kambalda Cultural and Arts Group for much-needed air conditioning for its art gallery and \$5 000 to CAPS Kurrawang Primary School to create a cultural garden that will provide Aboriginal students with a sense of culture and belonging. It will include a yarnning circle, native plants, dot painting using mosaic tiles, animal cut-outs, animal footprints, and paving and pebbles. That will all add to this unique place.

I turn now to Norseman. I have provided \$20 000 to deliver a public art project. As demonstrated in Kalgoorlie–Boulder with the Heartwalk project, high-quality public art can be a hugely effective means of adding appeal to a town centre. This project will engage local artists, in a collaborative process, and I cannot wait to see the collection of murals.

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

Acknowledging and celebrating cultural diversity is paramount worldwide, and Kalgoorlie–Boulder and the goldfields is no different. We are lucky to have an active Indian community of around 600 members. The Indian Association of Goldfields WA Inc regularly runs celebrations, festivals and community events, but it requires much-needed funding to buy music, lighting and cooking equipment to facilitate those events. I am pleased to be able to provide \$7 000 to this important group that is part of the multicultural fabric in Kalgoorlie–Boulder.

I have left an important piece of news until last. Every year Kalgoorlie–Boulder hosts the Golden Mile Art Prize. This was held last Friday in Kalgoorlie–Boulder. This year’s overall prize winner for 2021 was Shayna Moses-Taurima. Shayna’s winning art piece was an extraordinary 3D construction made out of Lego. Shayna used hundreds of individual Lego-like blocks to depict—wait for it!—our Premier, Mark McGowan, in a work called *Our Fearless Leader*. I hope all members can see this picture. She said that a lot of artists were using the Premier as inspiration because of his remarkable popularity. Politics has found a way to be woven into our arts and culture. People are showing in all different aspects of their life how the McGowan state government is influencing them. Everywhere I go in my electorate—I am sure my colleagues hear the same stories—people tell me, “Make sure you tell Mark thank you for keeping us safe.” I am proud to be part of the McGowan state government, which is not only keeping us safe but also contributing so heavily to arts and culture. I commend this bill to the house.

MS M.M. QUIRK (Landsdale) [11.31 am]: I am not nearly as well prepared to speak on the Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021 as the preceding speakers were, so I apologise in advance for what will be a succession of random thoughts and a stream of consciousness.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms K.E. Giddens): Very artistic!

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Before I go on to the issues that I want to talk about specifically, which is the hardship that the arts sector has had to endure through the pandemic, and to flog a horse that I constantly raise in this house, which is the timing of arts events for seniors in our community, I will make a few other observations. The first of which concerns the member for Mirrabooka, who regaled us with stories of her artistic performances. The high point of my performing career was that I was privileged to act in a school play with Academy Award nominee Judy Davis.

Mr P.C. Tinley interjected.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I am giving away my age! The play was *The Pied Piper*. As members would expect, Judy played the lead role. Unfortunately, I was a Beethoven-esque composer, and with a very bad German accent my key line was, “Ze rats! Ze rats have eaten my symphony!”

At the outset, I acknowledge the nexus between tourism and our arts industry and how important that is. A friend of mine sold Aboriginal art in Paris for a number of years. She said that people from the European market did not want to visit Perth. They got to Perth Airport and wanted to get straight on a plane to go to the outback, the bush. It is very important that we tie in those desires and wishes and make that travel available. In that context, I note that the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards are being held in Darwin this weekend. I was privileged to attend some years ago. That is a hub for art dealers from Australia and internationally, with a lot of satellite events around it. I was so inspired after that visit that I convinced the then arts minister, Sheila McHale, and Premier Alan Carpenter that we should have a similar Indigenous arts award here, which we did for a couple of years. Obviously, it was not on the scale of the Darwin awards, but we were getting there. Then, unfortunately, we lost government. The Liberal government held it for a further year and then disbanded it altogether.

Arts has the capacity to inspire us and to tell our stories, and our stories are unique to Western Australia. Finally by way of preamble, I acknowledge my good friends Marian and Alun Bartsch from Mago Films. They are a classic example of telling our own stories. I recall the member for Belmont talking about various films that have been produced here. Their films are less well known because they are effectively non-fictional, but Marian and Alun have produced a film called *Hoover’s Gold*, which is about Herbert Hoover, later an American president, working for Sons of Gwalia in Kalgoorlie. When I visited the United States, I gave a number of congressmen copies of that film. They were fascinated by it, because they had not realised that Hoover had spent time in Australia. Mago Films also produced *Surfing the Menu*, so a claim to fame is that they promoted Curtis Stone’s early career, although apparently he does not remember that that well. Another film of theirs that I highly recommend, which some members may have seen, is *The Waler*, which is about horses in war. They are great productions, and they tell our stories that people are interested in.

I was in Canada some years ago and I was visiting a prison and the prison guard said he had just been to the Montreal Film Festival and had seen an Australian film. I said that was terrific and asked which one it was. Unfortunately, it was *Kenny*, so I had to apologise for that!

With that preamble, I want to talk now about pursuing a career in the arts. It is precarious at the best of times and it is economically uncertain, but more so in the last year or so under the yoke of the pandemic. I acknowledge everyone in the arts industry who has had to soldier on throughout that. I also commend the many people in the arts sector who

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

were able to devise new and interesting ways to continue to inspire and uplift the community, but, as the member for Mirrabooka has said, without a lot of encouragement or timely assistance from the federal government. I will read from an article in *The Guardian* from March this year. It is by Esther Anatolitis with the lead-in, “It’s been a year since lockdown devastated the arts. Here’s what the industry needs now”. The author makes this observation —

And so 2020 rapidly became a time of great focus. Artists and companies were seeing their entire year’s work vanish—and it would take the government some time to catch on to what this meant for all Australians, as well as for the economy. A modest industry package was made available at the end of the year, and with jobkeeper due to end in just weeks from now, industry leaders still have grave concerns.

The federal government failed to acknowledge two things. The first of those was the economic contribution that arts makes to our economy and that it needs to be preserved and made resilient for the future. The effects of the pandemic on the arts industry will be long term, so the inadequate measures from the federal government will continue to cause problems in the future. The author goes on to say —

... the Australian government has preferred to be a follower rather than a leader. No vision has been articulated for a stronger, more resilient future, guided by the “creative imagination” ...

The first observation I need to make is that at the best of times, those in the arts sector have precarious career paths and their fallback career is often in the hospitality industry, which was also decimated, so a lot of people in the arts sector suffered substantially. The author also says —

Policy responses need to look forward to an unknown future in ways that give us confidence. Just as the homebuilder scheme was offered without a funding cap, so too do we need a more responsive approach to the industries that inspire us most, while also supporting our tourism and hospitality sectors.

That point is well made. The second point that I raised was that despite this, there were some fantastically creative responses to the challenge. Although social distancing protocols prohibited physical gatherings, for example, some novel responses used digital or other modes of performance using radio, phone or Zoom. I think that has subverted how we think about theatre in a positive way, so we now think performances can be delivered differently. Performance spaces might be other than what is traditional theatre. The positive is that it means that access to the arts is much more broadly embraced, which is terrific.

In July last year on *The Conversation*, Kelsey Jacobson quoted some research from England as follows —

Digital analytics by the company OneFurther about online viewing of *One Man Two Guvnors* by Richard Bean, based on the 18th-century *Servant of Two Masters* by Carlo Goldoni, count a staggering 2.6 million viewers over the course of one week. Of course, such viewing numbers are far beyond the seating capacity of any theatre. That is a bit of a snapshot of the potential to be able to deliver the arts more broadly.

She went on to say —

This increased access is especially important in light of growing awareness of inaccessibility in theatre more broadly. Some progress has been made to better welcome audience members with certain disabilities, especially in the advent of relaxed performances, which seeks to “relax” or loosen audience conventions in order to create more accessible theatre. But systemic issues of racism, classism and ableism continue to exclude many potential spectators.

Again, that is a positive collateral outcome that arose out of necessity.

The other thing I found is that the streaming of performances appears to attract younger, less wealthy and more ethnically diverse members of the population. That, too, is a positive. Of course, there is the age-old chestnut of audience etiquette in traditional theatre settings; for example, people not loudly chewing mints, blowing their nose or coughing. It is no longer a problem if we are watching shows online, so audience expectations can be slightly altered given there is no need to sit there quietly. We can eat, drink, talk and be on the phone. Some of these streaming performances also enabled audience members to communicate amongst themselves on Twitter. It is a different experience. I am not saying whether it is better or worse, but anything that increases audiences or interest in the arts is to be encouraged, and I commend the arts community throughout the world for coming up with these innovative solutions. The ways in which audience members can connect with each other in the absence of a shared physical space has been very much explored over the last year.

I want to briefly mention some of the innovations that the Australian government could have explored in the context of support for the arts over the last year. For example, in Egypt, the Supreme Council of Culture shares a daily 10-minute reading by a writer of their own work. The Egyptian Ministry of Culture also supports a YouTube cultural content channel, which received 25 million visits in 60 days. The Indonesian cultural directorate pays artists and artisans to offer online masterclasses in dancing, painting, music, film production and storytelling. In Uruguay, the government has partnered with an online program called *My Song, My Stage*, which supports musicians to

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

perform a song and talk about its creation. The department is also inviting young people to participate in a program of watching and discussing works online. Quebec uses cartoons and videos to communicate COVID-19 messages to young people, which is an extremely good idea and should have been adopted in parts of Australia, I suspect. The other thing that is happening is the use of hashtags. For example, Creative New Zealand uses #TFA—Thankful for Art. In Indonesia, a hashtag, roughly translated as meaning “Fun to be at home” or “Happy at home”, is used in the context of arts material. In Cuba, the hashtag means “We are together”, or “Music for Cuba”. In Canada, under #CanadaPerforms, artists’ performances are livestreamed in partnership between Canada’s National Arts Centre and Facebook Canada. These streams generated 1.3 million views in the first 10 days. All these examples come from an article on the ArtsHub website, called “The best COVID-19 support for the arts around the world” by Jackie Bailey. It is also worth reading about alternatives to unemployment benefits and subsidies for artists.

The other issue is about finding new market audiences for arts. For example, among some of the initiatives overseas, a Danish senior citizens initiative makes sure that older Danes can have interaction with the arts and culture in nursing homes and other COVID-safe environments. The Japanese government has announced funding for children’s art and cultural experiences. The New Zealand government is boosting the creative learning program for kids in schools, providing jobs for 300 artists.

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: In Uruguay, the Ministry of Education and Culture is providing funding for productions that will be later presented in educational institutions. Governments also are buying art and so on, so there are some more imaginative ways for governments to support the arts than is currently happening at a federal level. Why do we need to do this? As I said, it is part of who we are—our identity—and is a huge generator for the economy. It is not a well-known fact that more Australians visit museums and art galleries than go to the football. It is incorrect to think that the arts is a minor offshoot of activity in our daily lives.

The other collateral that has happened from the pandemic is the use of streaming services such as Netflix. Streaming services such as Netflix have made significant profit out of the last year and I think it is time they give back by co-funding or investing in local productions of material. That is something I will suggest. Of course, we also need to look at redesigning some of our venues, so if anything similar happens in the future, it can maybe mitigate the impact.

There is a final thing I want to talk about, and I seek the forgiveness of those who have heard me ramble on about this issue before, but I think this is a very important point. Our performing arts have been supported over the years by our seniors. For example, they would have got their children interested and involved in the arts and paid for them to attend performances, so they are the future consumers, but our seniors may not want to go out at night. At the Perth Festival, for example, out of hundreds of performances there might be one or two matinees or five o’clock sessions. Seniors are less likely to want to go out at night, but they still want to consume the arts.

Mrs L.A. Munday: Young mums, too.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: There are also young mums; that is right. There might be shiftworkers and all sorts of people. There is really a dearth of opportunities for those people. I have had this discussion with the minister before and he said that some performers do not like, for example, having a two o’clock matinee and then a performance at eight o’clock in the evening. There is usually quite a short run on these things, so I do not think that is much of an excuse because the week after, performers can catch up on sleep. Also, they would get a larger audience if they included seniors. A lot of these productions are in one way or another subsidised or funded by the state government, be it a subsidy for the Perth Festival or a particular group such as the Black Swan Theatre Company of WA or whatever. I think that subsidy should be conditional upon a certain number of performances being accessible at certain times—namely, that matinees could be held so our seniors population can continue to enjoy the arts. I went to a three o’clock production of the Sydney Theatre Company on a Sunday afternoon. It was jam-packed with people of my vintage and older; it was a good time. People went to that performance and then went to a restaurant or something in Northbridge. We need to be more flexible with accessibility, not only in the physical layout of our theatres, but also when we hold these performances.

I currently have two bookings that have both been cancelled or postponed. One was for Billy Bragg on 21 January this year and it has been postponed until 21 January next year. I hope we are out of difficulties by then. *Star Navigator* (*Ihитай ‘Avei’a*) is a WA Opera production written by Tim Finn that was due to be performed next week, but because there were performers travelling from New South Wales, it has been cancelled. The last point I want to make is that I commend those involved in arts management for having to cope with these last-minute contingencies, and I encourage people to continue to support local artists, put their money where their mouth is and attend performances and exhibitions.

MR P.C. TINLEY (Willagee) [11.53 am]: It is a great pleasure to speak on the Arts and Culture Trust Bill 2021. I want to put some context to what this represents to jobs in the future of Western Australia. Some members have rightly dwelt upon the creative aspects of the arts, but I want to talk about them as part of an industry sector called

the creative industries. They are an essential component of a diversified economy in Western Australia and dovetail precisely with nearly all the markets we participate in now, of which nine out of 10 are in Asia and very much part of where we need to see our future. This bill, and the Arts and Culture Trust itself, is the enabling infrastructure that will provide the circumstances by which we can attract direct foreign investment and grow a local industry, talent pool and capacity and attract overseas talent. For example, two of my own sisters are in the film production industry, one in New York and one in Sydney, and they have been for their entire careers. They have extremely portable skills. Unfortunately, as much as they would like to be here in Western Australia for many, many reasons, not least of which is that their best brother is here, they simply cannot get work at the level they are at, as they are quite senior in their relevant parts of the industry. They are just examples of the many Australians working in creative industries across the globe who would dearly love to have a homegrown capability at a scale that is relevant and matches the global demand for some of the products they produce. This bill the minister has brought before the house has created the circumstances in which we can bring all the assets into one government structure, and in so doing focus attention on how the industry sector can be grown. This is a vital part of it.

The creative industries across their many forms find most of their potential to our economy in the film industry. When I say “film industry”, I am not just talking about feature films, which we would all associate it with. So much of what is done in the film industry now overlaps with the digital world, particularly gaming and a large amount of the content required by both TV and streaming, as the member for Landsdale identified. Corporate video work is also a significant contributor to the global filmmaking economy and very much a part of what would underpin what we can do here in our time zone. This bill provides the capacity to build a film studio in Fremantle, with a \$100 million commitment by the McGowan Labor government. It is very important that that industry has an address. The address for our maritime capability is in the industrial hub of Kwinana. The address for our medical science industry is the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research, the Australian National Phenome Centre and those sorts of places. The address for creative industries in Western Australia is not just the cultural precincts of Perth that we all know such as the museums and art galleries. For film production, it will be in Fremantle. It will be a great contribution to that town, which has a long and rich history in creative culture. It will also give Fremantle the sense of purpose that it enjoys and has had for a long time with various industries.

As I said in my opening comments, the film industry’s relationship with our traditional trading partners is ever more relevant, and no less so than with China. We often only talk about our connection to China in the context of our minerals, principally iron ore, and, of course, some of the challenges at a geopolitical level, but China represents some of the greatest global demand for consumption of film products. By 2030, it will be the largest film consumption market in the world, surpassing Europe and the United States. More importantly, China is growing its middle class, and 70 per cent of its population will be middle class by 2030. Although there are some demographic roadblocks and we know that China may well get old before it gets rich, we will deal with those issues as they come along. Along the way, there is a unique opportunity to once again use our connection to and relationship with China to grow a diversified economy. Two-way trade with China is roughly projected at \$150 billion by 2030. Much of that will obviously be taken up by the resources sector, but we need to shift as much of that as we can to alternative industries in order to diversify the economy. When we talk about China in the context of its consumptive capacity, its film market and film consumption is really breathtaking. Funnily enough, many things in China are in large numbers. For example, China currently has over 60 000 cinema screens. Between 2004 and 2014, China has had an 886 per cent growth rate in the number of cinema screens. This underscores the demand that is there for the consumption of not just its own homegrown films, but also films from the rest of the world. In fact, in China, around 27 cinema screens a day are being added to that number. I am told that by the end of 2023, or thereabouts, China will have 80 000 cinema screens, although I am sure that some of the construction in China is being delayed by COVID, as is the case anywhere else in the world.

One thing that is important for us to understand about where the creative industries can lead us is that it is not just in jobs, but also in the clustering of second and third-order supporting industries. If we can imagine a film studio in Fremantle, it will be not just the creative aspects of the writers and producers, and all the technical components that make up a modern-day film, but also the clustering of the small businesses that will reside in Fremantle to support the industry, such as accounting firms, legal practices, and copyright lawyers. Those sorts of things are very much part of this industry, and they will add to not only the locality of Fremantle, but also Western Australia as this state takes up its rightful position as one of the best trading states in this nation with China. Those sorts of jobs are fundamentally where this state needs to go. That is particularly important, because as the resource sector may in the future wane in its contribution to our economy, we will need to transition to a diversified economy. That should not be seen as just a revenue line. We need to look at a diversified economy on the basis of the jobs that it will create. Those jobs will help sustain the quality of life that people in Western Australia have become used to. Our responsibility as a Parliament and as a government is to maintain, if not grow, the standard of living of all Western Australians. The dividend from the creative industries that we are talking about in relation to this bill will be

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 5 August 2021]

p2437b-2452a

Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Ms Meredith Hammat; Ms Elizabeth Kelsbie; Dr Jags Krishnan; Ms Alison Kent; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Peter Tinley

fundamentally important to the future of Western Australia. This bill will be an outstanding piece of architecture, if you like, that will help create the flashpoint or channel by which we can grow the game.

I want to give members one final anecdote before I take my seat. It is about a little Western Australian company known as Legend Media Group, which highlighted for me the value of the film industry. Legend Media came to me when I was Minister for Asian Engagement because it was trying to get some traction from government for a visiting delegation of Chinese film producers, financiers and screen owners. Unfortunately, the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation at the time was going through a bit of a transition as a machinery-of-government agency and was finding it difficult to be a single entity. We are pretty good in Western Australia. If people want to dig a hole, we have got them covered. We are the best jurisdiction in the world for that. However, when we are trying to attract foreign investment, we need to do things differently.

I was asked by Darren Cooper, the director, and Bronwyn Barnes, the chair, of Legend Media whether the government could provide some support for its inbound delegation of 15 people. I was very happy to do that. The Governor of Western Australia, Hon Kim Beazley, was happy to hold a sundowner for the delegation. Hon David Templeman, the Minister for Culture and the Arts, was there also, and we hosted those 15 people from China. We later found out that those 15 people represented about 20 000 cinema screens in China. In April the following year, at the Beijing Film Festival, a heads of agreement was signed between Legend Media and a couple of joint venture partners for the production of five feature films based in Western Australia, and an eight-part series, whether for television or not I am not sure. As Legend Media said to us straight up, because of the way the government of Western Australia had shown that the delegation was welcome to come here to undertake that joint venture with Legend Media, that did the deal. That shows what is possible if we, firstly, say we are open for business, and, secondly, prove it when people turn up.

This bill will create the underpinning architecture from which things like film studios and other creative industries can grow and blossom into part of a diversified economy that will enable our kids and future kids to enjoy the life that we have all become used to.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr D.J. Kelly (Minister for Water)**.