



## **PRIME MINISTER**

**ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER THE HON P J KEATING, MP  
LAUNCH OF WESTFIELD ENDOWMENT FOR ENSEMBLE  
DEVELOPMENT, CANBERRA  
10 FEBRUARY 1994**

**EMBARGOED AGAINST DELIVERY**

I am very pleased to be here today at the launch of this significant development in Australia's musical life.

My regard for music and those who make it is no secret. I believe music brings out the best in people. It inspires them, it sustains them, it soothes and comforts them.

It's difficult to imagine life without music. Such a life, I'm sure, would be very bare indeed. The thought of not being able to settle down with a CD after a day in this place, for example, is pretty horrible to contemplate.

Musicians are among those creative artists who put a premium on the use of imagination, whether as composers or performers. And in this they provide a lead for all of us.

We need, as a nation, to put a premium on imagination. And creativity. And innovation.

Successful societies place a high value on these things. They are prepared to take the trouble to develop them, and that means nurturing the talented individuals in whom these qualities reside. Particularly the emerging talent.

As I've said before, this Government is more than prepared to play its part in the process. We've demonstrated that with our support for the arts in the years we've been in office, and particularly in last year's Budget.

~~We are determined to forge a new role for the arts in Australia, and our forthcoming cultural policy statement will articulate what we believe this role should be, and how we intend to help bring it about.~~

In the meantime, however, we've put the Arts Ministry into Cabinet, where it belongs. And we've combined it in a portfolio with Communications, in recognition of the fact that cultural and communications development are inextricably linked together.

But we can't and won't do it all alone.

We are also determined to see the level of private support for the arts in Australia substantially raised.

The arts need more corporate support, more patronage. We need to get up to the level of other countries in this area.

The smart people in our corporate world know this.

They know that the arts take a lead in projecting Australia to the world as an exciting, dynamic country with which it pays to form partnerships..

They know that by helping Australian artists they are also, ultimately, helping all Australians.

Frank Lowy and the Westfield Group, with this award have confirmed (as if it needed to be) not only their acumen and far sightedness as eminent members of our corporate sector, but also their generosity as long time supporters of the arts in Australia.

In one sense, of course, they couldn't help it. Genuine lovers of the arts, I believe, feel the frisson that a work of art conveys. They recognise the essential part the arts play in their lives. Just as they recognise the inescapability of the debt to art that this creates.

Its a debt that can be repaid in many ways, but one of the most important is by direct financial support of artists. We need to do more for our artists. All of us.

That is why this award is particularly well directed.

It is the first award in Australia specifically designed to support developing ensembles.

It means that young Australian musicians will have some financial security while they work together to achieve professional excellence.

And the size of the endowment means that an annual award can be given in perpetuity.

It is with great pleasure, then, that I officially launch the Westfield Endowment for ensemble development.

I am sure that you will join with me in applauding the generosity of Westfield in their extraordinary gesture to honour Tony Berg in his professional capacity as a businessman, and in his private commitment to Musica Viva and to music development in Australia.

It is an honour richly deserved.

Thank you.