

**Submission  
No 585**

## **SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

**Organisation:** Limelight Arts Media

**Date Received:** 2 July 2019

**Regarding: Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Sydney's night time economy**

**Attention:** The Hon Natalie Ward MLC  
Committee Chair  
Joint Select Committee on Sydney's night time economy  
Parliament House,  
Macquarie Street,  
Sydney NSW 2000.  
c/o [NightTimeEconomy@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:NightTimeEconomy@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

**Date:** 2 July 2019

**From:** Cara Anderson  
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**About Limelight**

Limelight Arts Media Pty Ltd, publishers of Limelight Magazine, provides independent media coverage across the arts and classical sector. Offering Australia's most comprehensive coverage of music, opera, theatre, dance and visual art from at home and abroad.

*Limelight* is an Australian monthly classical music and arts magazine and digital platform with a 40+ year history. It has a unique place in Australia's arts scene, and is recognised as the journal of record in classical orchestral and vocal music, as well as providing extensive coverage of related art forms. Limelight publishes reviews, news, interviews, artist profiles, event and listening guides through its digital offerings and via the 11 printed issues of the magazine each year.

*Limelight* wishes to identify issues in relation to Terms of Reference that the Joint Select Committee on Sydney's Night Time Economy inquiry and report into Sydney's night time economy, including any measures required to:

- (a) maintain and enhance community safety;
- (b) maintain and enhance individual and community health outcomes;
- (c) ensure existing regulatory arrangements in relation to individuals, businesses and other stakeholders, including Sydney's lockout laws, remain appropriately balanced;
- (d) enhance Sydney's night time economy

It is the opinion of *Limelight* that the current regulatory arrangements in relation to individuals, businesses and other stakeholders, including Sydney's lockout laws, are not appropriately balanced and that further work is required across the state to ensure that a fair and equitable balance is returned. Addressing this issue will then have a trickle-down effect of helping to address terms of reference (a) maintain and enhance community safety; (b) maintain and enhance individual and community health outcomes and (d) enhance Sydney's night time economy.

In 2018 The Music and Arts Economy in NSW Inquiry (Portfolio Committee No. 6, Planning and Environment)<sup>i</sup> was held. This inquiry highlighted a number of findings and made a series of recommendations based on industry feedback to address the current environment within the state, this included a series of negative consequences which have been exacerbated from the introduction of the lockouts in 2014 especially as they relate to artists and the broader music industry and its surrounding ecosystem.

The Committee for Sydney in its 2018 report Sydney as a 24-HR City<sup>ii</sup> which explored the economic, social, cultural and civic potential of Greater Sydney as a 24 hour city, delved deep into a series of core recommendations which are relevant to the topic of this enquiry and can be summarised as:

- Expanding the diversity of night-time activity (relevant to term (a) (b) and (d))
- Effective governance and regulation (relevant to term (c))
- An integrated approach to planning and transport and (relevant to terms (a) and (c)) and
- Promoting greater Sydney as a 24 hr city (relevant to term (d))

Outside of the afore mentioned pieces of work *Limelight* contends that there is no shortage of evidence based approaches that can be called upon to illustrate that the lockout laws have not achieved their intended purpose of a reduction of alcohol fuelled violence, whilst there may have been a reduction of violent behaviour in affected zones, there are significant questions that can be posited regarding causation, and multiple adverse impacts. Leading *Limelight* to be of the opinion that the existing regulatory arrangements in relation to individuals, businesses and other stakeholders, including Sydney's lockout law are not appropriately balanced and can be viewed as concurrently over inclusive and underinclusive at the same time and in effect, have had significant detrimental consequences to the vitality and very fabric of the city.

The consequence of this can be summarised as a series of unfavourable impacts on not only the night time economy, music industry, city branding and cultural tourism.

Music and arts and culture need venues and support to thrive “figures from Liquor & Gaming NSW show 418 licensed premises had closed in the Sydney CBD and Kings Cross since 2014”<sup>iii</sup>. This represents an incalculable amount of lost opportunity for the artists/musicians to have venues to perform and rehearse their work. The loss of these venues has meant an erosion of pathways for artistic development. For creative communities to thrive there needs to be access to a wide range of differently sized venues, which are centrally located on transport routes. At the moment across the city of Sydney there is a critical lack of venues to support artists career growth and development.

What is needed for Sydney and the night-time economy is series of strategies and regulatory reforms to be implemented to drive change and rebuild upon years of steady decline which the city has suffered. It should take into consideration that the live performance and music is a complicated and fractured ecosystem and as such there is no one fit model that will work across the various genres and artforms to bring people together in a unified and cohesive fashion unless an independent association/function is formed that represents the views and opinions of the whole of the arts not just advocating for the needs of contemporary music which itself is highly fractionalised and only tells a small part of the story of the entire music and artistic landscape of the city.

Limelight Arts Media Pty Ltd thanks the Committee for the opportunity to make this submission to the Inquiry. Please don't hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

## References

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<sup>i</sup> *The Music and Arts Economy in NSW* Portfolio Committee No. 6, Planning and Environment, 15 November 2018. [https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2471/Final report website.pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2471/Final%20report%20website.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> The Committee for Sydney (2018) *Sydney As A 24 Hour City*: [http://www.sydney.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CFS\\_Sydney-24hr-City\\_SINGLES\\_WEB\\_V11.pdf](http://www.sydney.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CFS_Sydney-24hr-City_SINGLES_WEB_V11.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> 'What the hell is going on in Sydney?' 176 venues disappear Sydney Morning Herald 27 May 2018. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/what-the-hell-is-going-on-in-sydney-176-venues-disappear-20180527-p4zhst.html>