

**Submission
No 411**

**INQUIRY INTO THE MUSIC AND ARTS ECONOMY IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you to express my concerns about the current state of the live music scene in Sydney.

In the 30 plus years I have lived and worked here as a professional musician I haven't seen it in such a bad state. Whilst I accept the fact that society changes in many different ways, and that musicians need to adapt to this, there are factors involved that are separate to these that I see as part of government over regulation, and disrespect to the cultural activities (particularly music) that used to be such an important and major part of the life of this city.

I acknowledge that there have been initiatives to try and stimulate the sector, but there are a number of substantial issues that seem to undermine these positive steps.

One of these is the well known issue to do with noise complaints, where often a small number of people have an unfair and disproportionate influence over situations where live music is performed, often when the volume level is quite modest, or comparatively minor considering the surrounding environment. A good example would be the problems that have occurred with respect to live music at the Opera Bar. A small number of nearby residents made continual complaints about music being played (at a volume that was not loud) in what is obviously a busy and central area in a major international city, resulting in a situation where the musicians now perform at such a low volume, with such strict restrictions, that it borders on the ridiculous. The level of preciousness that the powers that be have allowed these few residents to have is lamentable, and at odds with a culturally vibrant city, and has happened in many other instances.

The kind of over regulation that has allowed this to occur has, in other forms also contributed a great deal to the demise of so many venues in Kings Cross. The motivation for the introduction of the lock out laws etc. was understandable but they really appear to be excessive and often enforced in an un-necessarily heavy handed way. Currently there are five theatres operating in the Kings Cross area, and it seems to me that there's the potential for this to create a complimentary quality live music scene if the government is able to review the current situation and relax the regulations in a sensible way.

I suggest that this could be the beginning of a cultural rejuvenation that Sydney really needs to regain its former status as a world class city in all the aspects that that title suggests.

Yours Sincerely,

Tim Bruer