



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard 21 April 2004

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Indigenous Art, Exports

Hon. P. D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (10.03 a.m.): Finally today I want to make reference to the success of an indigenous art export. In 2001 the government set out with a new determination to give Queensland indigenous art an international profile. To achieve this, we knew we would have to work solidly with indigenous communities and artists. Initially we worked with an indigenous reference panel, and in October 2003 I informed the House of the membership of a new Queensland Indigenous Arts Marketing Export Agency advisory board. I am delighted to now report that Queensland indigenous artists made a splash at a prestigious international show—the Great Art Exhibition in Dusseldorf, Germany, in January. They displayed 39 works and sold 19.

The exhibition carved an inroad into the German art world which would otherwise have taken years to forge. It has opened doors to new employment, economic and export opportunities for artists and communities all over Queensland. Eleven artists were involved in the collection and they came from the Torres Strait, Cape York, the Gulf, Atherton Tablelands, central Queensland and western Queensland. While there were more than 280 artworks from across Europe at the show, Queensland's own exhibition was very special. Every year a section of the Dusseldorf exhibition is set aside for a foreign country and this year Queensland was the showcase 'country'.

To top it off, the Great Art Exhibition Foundation bought works from Lilla Watson, Joanne Currie Nalingu and Lisa Michl and other artists which are now part of its permanent collection. So that is an important part of taking indigenous art to the world. The sales were made possible by the Queensland Indigenous Arts Marketing and Export Agency and the Queensland Government Trade and Investment Office in London, who worked with a promoter in Dusseldorf. I congratulate the organisers, and particularly the artists: Michael Boiyool Anning, Joanne Nalingu Currie, Shaun Kalk Edwards, Margaret Henry, Joey Laifoo, Glen Mackie, Lisa Michl, Rosella Namok, Alick Tipoti, Ian Waldron and Lilla Watson.

I am happy to advise the House that the Indigenous Arts Marketing and Export Agency is now gearing up for its first foray into the United States, with a touring exhibit of more than 60 works by 29 artists. I have asked the Minister for Education and the Arts, Anna Bligh, to open *Out of Country* at the Australian embassy in Washington DC, where it will run until 27 May. It will then exhibit at the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection—a highly respected institution at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, from 11 June to 14 August. The artists in *Out of Country* will include Rosie Barkus, Richard Bell, Fiona Foley, Samantha Hobson, Craig Koomeeta, Rosella Namok, Ken Thaiday senior, Alick Tipoti and Lilla Watson.

The exhibition will include paintings, carvings, sculptures, prints, burnings and linocuts. This is an important part of taking indigenous art to the world. I seek leave to have the remainder of my ministerial statement incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Two experts in Queensland Indigenous art, Jennifer Herd and Vic McGrath, will further spread the message by giving lectures in a program presented by the Smithsonian Associates on May 3 and 4.

Ms Herd and Mr McGrath are members of an Indigenous curatorial working party which ensures the artistic merit and cultural integrity of all works in our exhibitions.

Like the Dusseldorf show, the US tour will help Queensland Indigenous artists win the international recognition they richly deserve.