



LAI'D UPON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE
THE CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENT

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15/10/03

Ministerial Statement

**The Honourable Matt Foley MP, Minister for Employment,
Training and Youth and Minister for the Arts**

Writing Initiatives in Queensland
15th October 2003

Mr Speaker,

Queensland writers are ~~becoming~~ a force to be reckoned with.

Earlier this year, Arts Queensland undertook a comprehensive review of writing in Queensland with the diagnosis - a healthy industry growing annually and well supported by Government ~~spending~~.

There is a strong community of writers choosing to live in Queensland, a proactive Writers Centre, a nationally significant publisher in UQP and a range of exciting annual events and initiatives.

The public display of all this activity was highlighted during the recent Brisbane Writers Festival.

And now there is a new suite of cutting edge initiatives for writers in the 21st Century.

Writing for Screen, Writing for Music, and Writing for Games are new ideas to encourage writing in the creative industries – for television, film, music and computer game development.

Each category will be funded to the tune of \$10 000 each year.

The plan is for these initiatives to be auspiced and delivered by relevant industry bodies – QPIX for screen writing, the Queensland Biennial Festival of Music for music writing, and *Fantastic Queensland* for computer games.

These initiatives focus on professional and commercial assistance to writers for the production of new works in these lucrative areas.

At the recent Queensland Poetry Festival, I also announced a three month annual Poet in Residence program at the Judith Wright Centre.

An internationally recognised poet on a stipend of \$20,000 will work with our local companies to develop new works and be involved in writing programs at the centre.

Other indicators of the Queensland government's strong support for writing are the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards, Arts Queensland's Steele Rudd Australian Short Story Award, the David Uniapon Award for Indigenous Writing, the Judith Wright Calanthe Award for Poetry and the State Library of Queensland Young Writers Award.

As Minister for the Arts, I am very proud of a State where we now know Queensland writers.

They are no longer "old and living somewhere else."

They are living here, interacting with our children, inspiring emerging writers, debating at the Southbank and reading poetry in the Red Chamber.

ENDS