

Saturday 12 September 2009

COALITION TO SUPPORT VICTORIAN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

The Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition will in government restore the shortfall in funding to allow the Victorian College of the Arts to fulfill its purpose, and ensure its long term future.

The Victorian College of the Arts is one of the great arts institutions in Australia and its future viability is threatened under the Brumby Government.

A Coalition Government will:

- ensure the shortfall of up to \$6 million currently preventing the VCA from fulfilling its purpose is restored;
- will move to return the VCA to its previous independent and autonomous status, if Melbourne University is unable to adequately meet the requirements of the VCA and the intent of the *Melbourne University (Victorian College of the Arts) Act 2006*;
- ensure the college is able to provide practical training, teaching and instruction in accordance with the needs and requirements of a school of the arts; and
- ensure the VCA has full control and direction of its curriculum, operation and the structure of its schools and courses.

We do not believe the absorption of the college into the Melbourne model should go forward in the manner currently proposed.

As it stands, we risk losing one of the most significant arts institutions in the nation, and some of the best arts students and staff in Australia.

In 2006, the Minister for the Arts made a commitment to Parliament that the integration of the VCA and Melbourne University would *'guarantee that the college's role as Australia's pre-eminent provider of visual and performing arts training and education can continue'*.

This guarantee has not been fully met and the VCA cannot continue to flourish without the full restoration of its practical teaching and training.

The Victorian College of the Arts is one of Victoria's great treasures. If we are to remain the arts capital of Australia, we cannot lose the special quality of the VCA.