

3rd March 2024

To the selection committee for *Arts Projects for Individuals and Groups*, Creative Australia:

I am writing with a recommendation for Catherine Deveny for the above grant.

I own and manage a live classical music venue in Brunswick, Victoria, called Tempo Rubato. We are independent and the business idea was met with trepidation by many, the whole thing a touch audacious (which we loved). I believed in it because I believed that any spaces, both figurative and literal, where the arts meet community on a level playing field, are important and valuable.

Catherine Deveny's approach to the arts, in her field of writing, has a very similar spirit to Tempo. Moreover, her spirit extends to all elements of artistic expression.

I met her when she came to Tempo in the first week we opened, to a beautiful concert, that we all still talk about now. She is always acutely aware of what is happening in her community, and she engages, explores. She is open to experience, to art, to being moved by things. When she is moved, she amplifies and promotes. She did these things for us, with her characteristic enthusiasm and effect, because she saw value in what we were doing. In particular, she moves with grass-roots reach, it is an approach to the arts that is inclusive and broad, honing straight on the core of why they are so important, and why their value needs to reach all corners.

In my years of creating an arts organisation, I now understand that her approach is rare and important, and how lucky we were that she came in to our fold. She has supported and inspired us, in effusive, unique and effective ways.

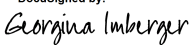
In the years since, I have observed her doing the same with other arts organisations and projects, with the same wonderful authenticity and heart.

And then there is her own artform, her work with words. Her own writing is productive and much loved, as you will know. It is her work beyond this, however, that I think is particularly relevant to highlight here. In her work with workshops and retreats, including in healthcare settings, she has helped literally thousands of people to find their voice. What an extraordinary thing! Her approach is practical and achievable, it is far from the sometimes exclusive realm of established literature, rather for the far more important realm of everyday people telling their stories, with ink, with confidence, laying it down. This is what the arts should be about.

This grant would allow Catherine to write a sequel to her memoir, it would be an investment both for her and for the broadening community who benefit from her unique approach to sharing words and experience.

Clearly, I recommend Catherine to you highly for this opportunity. If you need any further information from me, please feel free to get in contact.

With thanks,
Georgie

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