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NATIONAL PRESS CLUB ADDRESS JENNY MORRIS 5 AUGUST 2020

SABRA LANE: Good afternoon and welcome to National Press Club of Australia and today's Westpac address. My name is Sabra Lane, I am the club's president and also the presenter of the ABC radio program *AM*. Today, we have something very special. I think this is the first time in the club's history that we'll have a band performing, so something to watch and wait for.

The music and entertainment business has really been hit for six during the COVID-19 restrictions, and they've been crying out for help. Today, Jenny Morris, singer, songwriter and now the chair of APRA, the Australasian Performing Right Association will address the club about that. And we'll also talk to some industry representatives later about the help that they're looking for to help the industry recover once we're out of these restrictions.

Now, Jenny was diagnosed with and Spasmodic dysphonia about five years ago and that affects her speech. So Sophie Payten, who is a star in her own right – she's known as Gordi – will help deliver Jenny's speech. We'll also chat with Gordi later about her own career; she's a star in her own right, but she also has a really, really interesting back story, and I think you'll be interested with that.

John Watson will also join us in this discussion. He's one of Australia's leading artist managers since forming his own company with Silverchair way back in 1995. John's launched major artists including Missy Higgin, Gotye, Birds of Tokyo, and Wolf Mother. He's also helped steer the careers of some really big iconic Australian acts as well, including Jimmy Barnes, Cold Chisel, Midnight Oil and The Presets.

And L-Fresh the Lion from Western Sydney, a hip-hop artist, social activist, and inaugural YouTube Creator for Change. They'll all be part of the conversation later. And we'll have music from Ngaiire. So stick around for that from home. If you are following this conversation at home, you'll find us on Twitter, our user handle is @PressClubAust.

Please, everybody welcome Jenny Morris.

[Applause]

JENNY MORRIS: Thank you, Sabra. And thanks to the National Press Club for having us. I think you're one of 4,000 venues that present live music around Australia, and for that we thank you.

I begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we gather, the Ngunnawal people. From before time, music has flowed through the veins of the country. Through ceremony, celebration and culture. I pay my respects to the elders, past, and present, and to all First Nations people who share culture through song. Because that's what I want to talk to you today about: the power of the song. And to help me do that, I've brought my band, my posse who you'll hear from later, and I'm going to ask my good friend Sophie Payten, who you know as Gordi, to join me. She just performed an amazing concert at the Sydney Opera House, which I think you can still watch online. You need to go and watch it. Do yourself a favour. She's also put a really extraordinary new album called *Extraordinary Life* which you should all support. Otherwise, you'll have me to answer for.

Thank you, Sophie, for conveying my words. Can you get up here and do this very strange thing?

[Applause]

SOPHIE PAYTEN: David Byrne says you have to write a lot of crap songs to get a good one out. I am a songwriter, and there's no better feeling than to get a good one out. It's a work of great value to me, yes, but more importantly to my audience, my community, my culture and, of course, to our economy. A good song creates jobs, lots of jobs. Tens of thousands of Australians earn a living from music. A good song also builds Australia's intellectual property assets, generating big incomes, including export earnings. Because a good song travels around the world finding new performers and new audiences. I am Chair of the Australasian Performing Right Association. We are the more interesting APRA. We've been around since 1926, and today we represent the rights of 103,000 song writers, composers and publishers across Australia and New Zealand.

At the heart of what APRA does is collect money for the use of our members' intellectual property, their songs. And what is a song? At its simplest, it is words to music. But songs are so much more. They beat humanity's pulse, they're our connection to time and place.

Songs are bridges between people; between joy and heartbreak, memory and understanding, connecting generations and spanning the globe. Think of songs like *Imagine* by John Lennon, or *Took the Children Away* by Archie Roach, or *Better in Blak* by Thelma Plum. Each is a unique, emotive form of words given a pulse and spirit by music, with a performance that can change lives.

I know this band of three brothers and two friends. They began in the family garage, young, naive, but enthusiastic. What they lacked was a singer that, big focal point. For a laugh, the keyboard player asked his friend who insisted he couldn't sing if he could come and stand in for a bit. He was shy and gawky, but soon those best friends began writing. They used poetry, lyrics, and melody to express their emotions. And that desire to express became bigger and more necessary. Together, they took this garage band and captured the imaginations of millions. They were Michael Hutchence and Andrew Farris, and the band was INXS.

How did their music create such powerful inspiration? It's no great mystery: skill and craft. The craft of song writing. But song writers are driven by passion too, that's why we keep on keeping on even when our work isn't supported. There's a force bigger than us that propels us into artistic expression. Let me put this to you: Australians are unusually good at music. We're more than good; we're exceptional. Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised for tens of thousands of years, the songlines of the first people shaped this sacred land. There's something about this place. There used to be years and years between Australian artists breaking internationally. Now, our global popularity multiplies every year. There's so much international achievement that it's hard to keep track. There's a big conscious rising of First Nations Artists, Kid Laroi, Birds (*), Electric Fields, Thelma Plum, Baker Boy, getting big applaud from global markets. And while Flume and the Australian Chamber Orchestra win Grammys, improvising jazz trio The Necks are quietly named best band in the world by the *New York Times*. While Tina Arena is awarded a Chevalier de Arts by France, Tame Impala take home International Group Award at the Brit Awards. Just last week, Antonio Gambale, one of our nation's leading screen composers, picked up two Emmy nominations. There's a not so quiet revolution happening, and our diversity is growing. Sia, Gotye, Courtney Barnett, Vance Joy, Rufus Du Sol, 5 Seconds of Summer, Alex Lahey, Alison Wonderland, Middle Kids, Tash Sultana, Dean Lewis, Amy Shark and Stella Donnelly – the list goes on – are just some of the Australian artists who are writing and recording, and appearing on global stages and screens.

Last year, the music export office, Sounds Australia, stood strong alongside Australia's export powerhouses, the food and wine industries at one of the world's biggest marketplaces South by Southwest in the US. Year upon year, Australian acts are booked for

career-defining festivals like Coachella, Bonnaroo, Glastonbury, Lollapalooza, and Governors Ball. They're on NPR, NME, and Hype Machine, end of year, best of's, ones to watch lists. Making show-stopping appearances on US shows like *Ellen*, *Jimmy Fallon*, *Conan*, and *Jimmy Kimmel*. Young artists are leading a new wave like Gordi, L-Fresh and Ngaiire who you'll hear from later, creating distinctly local sounds with global appeal.

It's impossible to talk about Australian music without talking about *Dance Monkey*, the song of the year, number 1 in 25 countries. Before the global fame – and the irony of this is not lost on anyone – when Tones and I was busking in the streets of Byron Bay, the crowds got so big that police took away her busking permit. What a perfect illustration of Australian music's historic relationship with government. Publicly adored, but rarely supported. Often seen as a nuisance, and regularly shut down.

Australian music has largely been absent in our cultural policy. Literature funding started way back in 1908 and then the Australia Council and old Film Commission were founded in the '70s. But it wasn't until the '80s that a government committee recommended to the Australia Council should help develop contemporary music. It recognised that rock music is Australia's most popular performance art, is the country's largest cultural industry, larger than all others put together and is capable of producing high export earnings. It was true then and it's true today. Music is a major commercial activity trading in the power of song. So why are governments struggling with policy? Maybe because music and song writing demands the attention of so many parts of government and so many portfolios at both federal and state levels. There's the arts minister to be sure, but also the trade minister for digital exports and tourism, foreign affairs for cultural diplomacy and touring, small business – every song writer, musician and music business is a small business – state planning for laws that either support or kill off live music venues, and education, training and skills ministers given the limitations of the music syllabus, resourcing and music activity in our schools.

Now, for a moment, I will digress from Jenny's words, go a little *Flea Bag* and break the fourth wall and talk about my own experience of music at school because I finished high school in 2010. By any standard, I was extremely lucky that my school offered music as a subject because most don't, and that number is falling. The mandated curriculum left me completely uninspired and doubting there was any way I could actually make a living from music out in the real world. How could I have that impression when what was impressed upon me was that music is a language of the past? Concertos, sonatas, Gregorian chants. I was so desperate to find my own musical voice but was only encouraged to mimic the voices of men that had been dead for centuries. Instead of focusing on the curriculum, I spent my time listening to Missy Higgins. I would put down the textbook, lock myself away

in a room with a piano and write songs. Imagine the head start I might have had if someone had actually taught me how to do that, how to find my own voice and be a successful musician in today's world.

But I digress. Back to Jenny's words. So, in Jenny's words, Sophie is right.

[Laughter]

Without song writing and quality music education for every child, we're robbing our country of the full potential of our talent. I'm no expert, but as far as I know, in visual arts education, students aren't stuck painting and repainting reproductions of classic works. You learn the techniques, you study the history, and then you find your own voice. There's so much research showing how music education improves students' grades across all subjects. Even better, teaching composition and song writing invests in Australia's intellectual property. So, we're creating careers and generating income for the nation. Not only that, but music is often the subject that entices school attendance, especially in low socioeconomic and remote areas. It is well documented that First Nations arts and culture participation can support and develop a strong and resilient First Nations children and improve school attendance and engagement as well as higher levels of educational attainment. Education is the first of three main points, hurting the sustainability of our industry and stunting the growth of a major cultural export.

The second is absurd planning decisions and overzealous councils closing down live music venues. The places Paul Kelly calls his universities. These are our industry's workplaces, but red tape is devastating them across our states and territories. In New South Wales alone, there are seven different agencies that regulate noise or, as I like to call it, sound. New South Wales regulates music genres, types of musical instruments and artist numbers. There's one particular venue with conditions saying music can only be performed in a southerly direction. That is true.

The third point is the cultural straitjacket that we've put ourselves in. While most of our larger trading partners celebrate and support their creative industries with healthy local content quotas and investment, ours have been traded away and capped in our US Free Trade Agreement. Local radio and TV broadcasters argue the impost and cost of local content quotas, and global streaming services are reluctant to deal with any notion of local content reporting. Government policy could provide a big carrot rather than the stick to the production and performance of Australian content. It's a triple lock around learning, creation, presentation and performance of music. It is the great tragedy of our sector and the real job killer in our industry.

Composition and song writing generate capital, cultural capital that expresses an Australian voice and economic capital in global income because recordings and performances go on for years. There are now 400 million paid music streaming subscribers worldwide, and over the next decade, this will triple. But there's only a handful of net exporters of music. The US and UK are the obvious ones, but following closely is Sweden. Swedes have more US Billboard number ones than any European country besides the UK, but their success isn't tied to any specific style, genre movement or trend. Sweden is one of the best countries for live music, home to many internationally renowned DJs. They celebrate music like we celebrate swimming. Crucially, they have a comprehensive music education that includes song writing.

Despite the devastation of COVID-19, a Goldman Sachs report into the international music market released in May estimates global industry revenue will soar to around US\$140 billion by 2030. Australian artists, publishers and creators have the potential to earn at least 5 per cent of this, if we get the framework right. So where are we at? On 10 June, the Australian music industry put out an SOS, an open letter with over a thousand signatures. Australian music is a proud, national asset that entertains comforts, and uplifts our communities, it read. It helps to define who we are as a nation, is an essential pillar of our health and wellbeing and is a key driver of learning in schools. Our artists and industry are always there to come to the aid of our nation during a crisis. Now it is time for the nation to come to our aid, it read. It was a scream for help like never before. One of you reported that the signatories read like the greatest homegrown festival bill of all time – Jimmy Barnes, Archie Roach, John Farnham, Thelma Plum, Nick Cave, Icehouse, Kate Miller-Heidke, Jess Mauboy, Gotye, Jack River, Savage Garden. Artists were joined by venues, festivals, managers, crew, agents, promoters, publicist, labels, publishers, the thousands of people who make music happen. Since the March shutdown, a conservative estimate puts the live music loss at half a billion dollars. This is a crisis at a scale that the industry has never seen before. Our artists are often the first to put their hands up in a crisis. Volunteering in concerts and donating time, recorded music or money when they can. And we are just small businesses who rely on the money we earn from performing live and the licences we collect from businesses who use our music. I know I'm not alone in feeling happy to put my hand up because it's the right thing to do. And making music is also wherever, why ever, whenever. That's why musicians will often play for next to nothing, for the love of it. We're the biggest subsidisers of our art form by a country mile. But while artists bring joy and excitement to so many, they often struggle to support themselves and their families. So many musicians fall through the cracks because they are not in the conventional employment. They're outside the nine to five economy. We are the original gig economy, but COVID has laid bare the downside of the gig economy. It is unsustainable.

Nations like South Korea and Canada are realising the massive cultural and economic benefit of investing in music. They're building a national pride around their songs. With markets like Latin America growing faster than anywhere else in the world, with countries in Asia maturing quickly, Australia is primed to harness unique opportunities with our beautiful diversity. Now is the time for Australia to make a big statement about the economic value of our culture. The federal and state governments have invested heavily in our screen industry and we have globally recognised food and wine industries. The contemporary Australian music industry is yet to achieve its full potential. We need a clear vision, and I think that vision should be for Australia to become a net exporter of music. This won't happen overnight and it could well take a decade, but you need a clear vision in order to start change now. Aussies have never backed away from a challenge, and we need to back ourselves. The potential reward is nation defining.

To achieve that vision, we need four things. Firstly, a federal, state, and local whole of government policy, an investment commitment to Australia as a net exporter of music. Secondly, a commitment to provide equity of access to music in schools nationally, and song writing as part of the national curriculum. We need to protect and promote the cultural infrastructure of live music venues and we need to incentivise and ensure the production and performance of local music content across all media platforms. With the right approach and the singularity of purpose, Australia can join that handful of nations who are net exporters of music and create a sustainable and thriving local industry. With ambition like this, not only will we secure this renaissance that we're experiencing, we'll culture the imagination and power the careers of next generation of Australians ready to emerge. With First Nation songlines reaching back more than 60,000 years, our diverse nation, here at the Asia-Pacific rim, is ready. Because the whole world is waiting for us and they want to hear more. Thank you.

[Applause]

SABRA LANE: Thank you very much Jenny for your speech, and thank you so much Sophie, or Gordi, for giving it. Before we start our panel discussion, for those at home, we'll just show you a quick clip of Gordi performing so that you know what she sounds like.

[Gordi's song plays]

SABRA LANE: Congratulations with that. You are a folk singer, you won an APRA award I think last year, you've toured, you've collaborated with artists like Sam Smith, you recently released your second album, *Our Two Skins*, but the thing is, you're also a qualified doctor.

And how hard is it to launch a second album while you can't tour, and tell us, you are going back to the doctoring business to help out with COVID, so tell us about that, too.

SOPHIE PAYTEN: Yeah, it is a strange set of circumstances. So, I studied at the University of New South Wales in Sydney and I completed my internship at Prince of Wales Hospital in Sydney last year, and then I resigned at the beginning of this year after I got my general registration for a year of international touring, and here we are in Canberra.

[Laughter]

But I actually- once this concludes, I'm driving back to Melbourne this afternoon to start working at St Vincent's Hospital between the emergency department and the COVID ward. So, you know, it felt strange to sit on the sidelines when I have, you know, a set of skills that I'm able to use, so anything we can do, I suppose.

SABRA LANE: Yeah. Well, thank you for your service. At school, you talked about when you broke away from Jenny's voice and were your own, you talked about the fact you weren't taught how to write your songs. How do you get the attention of politicians – you've got one in the room now, but he's not a minister. But how do you convince them this is really, really important stuff? It can change lives, yeah.

SOPHIE PAYTEN: [Talks over] Yes, [indistinct]. Absolutely. You know, I think coming out of school- yeah, like I said, I didn't think that being a musician was sort of a viable career option that would provide me with a stable income, and so, you know, I went and studied medicine. But I think that, you know, we have to sort of look at the music curriculum and think people who are doing music are obviously interested in pursuing it outside of school, and the curriculum should sort of run in parallel to the kinds of jobs that are available after school. So, instead of teaching everyone the classical curriculum when there are 600 chairs in symphony orchestras around Australia, then teach them that if you want to be an artist, you're gonna be a small business owner, you're gonna have to employ contractors, you're gonna have to learn how to coordinate with a bookkeeper, you're going to have to file for visa applications in the US, all these sorts of multi-pronged things. But even just teaching song writing would be a really good start.

SABRA LANE: Yeah. L-Fresh the Lion, Sukhdeep Singh Bhogal – that's your name. I'm going to bring you in here, and again, for those at home, we're going to have a quick clip about what your work sounds like.

[L-Fresh the Lion's song plays]

SABRA LANE: Congratulations. You too, you've just launched an album, *SOUTH WEST*. I know that our kitchen, they all want to meet you after you're done here. Now, you too have got a really interesting story. You're from western Sydney. You grew up in Pascoe Vale, am I right?

L-FRESH THE LION: No, I grew up in south-west Sydney, I lived in Melbourne for a couple of years, but always been in south-west Sydney.

SABRA LANE: How important is music to young kids in south-western Sydney in getting kids to school? I mean, that was a point that was touched on in the speech. Music is sometimes the most important thing about school.

L-FRESH THE LION: Yeah, most definitely, you know. And I could probably recount endless stories of people from south-west Sydney and western Sydney, drawing so much from music. To speak of one example, pre-COVID, I would go to a high school in south-west Sydney called Miller Technology High School. They have a program there that's been running for a number of years called Game Plan, and it's really been the pet of the head music teacher there, and it's a program designed to engage the kids who are, you know, at risk of disengaging with school, and it's a program that's specifically designed around song writing and composition and how to create your music and how to turn that into an opportunity to potentially- you know, for a lot of them it might not be career paths, but a way to express yourself and a way to build confidence in yourself. That program is, I would say, personally I would say it's one of the main reasons why a lot of those kids still go to school. It's a way for them to recognise that there are many things there they can get from a holistic education, and music can be a central part of that.

And, you know, this is an area where- that program doesn't receive any funding. I don't get paid to go there. I live in the area; I see these kids. It's important for the area, and there are countless schools like that in western Sydney who don't have programs like that but it's an area now that is at the forefront, especially in terms of hip-hop music. The conversation of what it looks like to be a successful artist is- you know, the face of that is a lot of western Sydney hip-hop artists who, one, given the opportunity to engage with music in any kind of way, and who were counted out in many ways as many people are from western Sydney on multiple levels. So for them and the area to be a beacon for music at this particular point in time speaks to just the strength and resilience of the area but also the commitment of people in the local community who are dedicated to music and who know how important music can be to those who don't necessarily have much opportunity.

SABRA LANE: Some people would be familiar with your work in Sydney, you also wrote music for the Sydney Kings, the basketball team, but you were also hoping to tour this year overseas. COVID put pay to that as well. Tell us about that and how do you go about selling an album if you can't tour, and venues with the restrictions now, how do you do that?

L-FRESH THE LION: Yeah, so, to paint a picture for you, last year and- you know, was a really pivotal year for me and my career. My team and I had been working on a strategy for a number of years to try to export to India, seeing it as an opportunity for a new market, and we realised an opportunity over there to be able to perform on a TV show called *MTV Hustle* on MTV India, which is broadcast to over 30 million people. It was a top-ranking reality TV show, which was essentially like *Australian Idol* but to discover the next big rap star from India. And so I had two opportunities to go and perform on that stage and the benefit of that was something I hadn't seen before for my own platforms. And we wanted to realise that this year by continuing that engagement by travelling over there and performing as well. So obviously we can't do that, the industry over there has taken a huge hit, or India has taken a huge hit generally, and in the context of promoting an album, it's called south-west. The whole idea was that we were going to launch it in real space and be across the areas that I'm from and have pop ups and local shows and do a big three-day festival for people to engage with and partnership with local council and all those plans were put on hold. You have to pivot and adapt. Thankfully there's people in the industry, and the music and arts industry is one where we're able to think on our feet and adapt. In many ways where possible where the absence of being in real space we did a launch of the gig delivered via a live streaming platform and launched the album in that way. It's not a perfect substitute but you have to kind of make do in this situation.

SABRA LANE: John Watson, coming to you, the government's had JobKeeper and JobSeeker and it's helped a number of key industries keep afloat in the last couple of months. It also last month announced a JobMaker package and is big on film and TV production but not much for music. What could the government do in your view in the next 12 months, presuming we can get performing again in that time?

JOHN WATSON: Well, we'd be here all day. But I think the first point to make that traditionally contemporary music has not sought government support, it's been entrepreneurial, lots of small businesses, unlike some of the high arts if you like. Contemporary music has always been getting on with it. So, this is probably the first time ever that contemporary music has been putting up its hand for help. The help comes in two forms, short term and sort of the longer term. A lot of the things Jenny spoke about are really important longer term things, investment in developing export markets, investment in music education. In the more short term though, from our standpoint the house is on

fire. Live entertainment was one of the first things to be shut down and it will be amongst the last things to be reinstated. Half the reason we're here today is it's about the only place in Australia that you can do a gig. But the reality is that unless and until there is some certainty around the return to live performance that's a large chunk of most musicians' lives, so we'll continue to struggle. The government has funded support act, which is the industry charity. I'm on the board of that charity. In the weeks after COVID hit, the cries for crisis relief from that charity went up 2,900 per cent, 2 9 0 0 per cent. And that was - that was a useful Band-Aid solution but the solutions we require where much bigger and much broader. The JobMaker program you mentioned, the broader arts package, we call on that to happen as a matter of urgency. Not something that can wait until next year and also something that needs to be expanded to recognise the unique situation which contemporary music finds itself.

SABRA LANE: We're not just talking about headline acts like L-Fresh and Gordi here. Like all the jobs that rely on what you do, you know, sparkies, stage hands, roadies, make-up, food vans, we're talking about a whole number of - hundreds, thousands, of people that rely on what you do.

JOHN WATSON: Of course, artists will always, and rightly so, be the public face of the music industry, but the truth is your average person in the music industry is tuning a guitar or they're underneath a stage with a spanner building scaffolding. That's really much more of where - and many of those people are very skilled but their skills don't necessarily transfer. You know, the crew care organisation, for example, that helps road crew, it's been devastating what's happened, and it's through nobody's fault. We understand that and you have to prioritise public health, but in the meantime the absence of live performance is depriving many people of their opportunity to take a living and there needs to be recognition of that fact, particularly given that many of the people involved do fall through the cracks as Jenny had said earlier when it comes to JobKeeper and other programs.

SABRA LANE: Part of Jenny's speech also focused on the huge amount of red tape that you had to deal with. This government had made a point of being red tape killers. How do you make that message clearer, that this is something that they could tackle?

JOHN WATSON: I think the answer is a whole of government approach. Much of that red tape is actually happening at a state level. Some is federal but much is happening at a state level and even local council level. Part of the reason for the complexity is time honoured issue of layers of government in Australia. But nonetheless if we're going to solve it, it will require tackling that. If there's positives to be taken from COVID perhaps it's the realisation of what can happen when governments work together.

SABRA LANE: Now I'm going to, before we take some questions from the floor. I'm also going to come back to you Jenny Morris because we had here last week, we had Peter Strong from the Council of Small Business. He actually named APRA and said that APRA was a job killer because of all the rights that were involved in the businesses had to pay huge amount of rights and he made several points about that. I guess this is your opportunity to rebut that.

JENNY MORRIS: Yeah, thanks. Is this on? Mr Strong made a lot of accusations against APRA and they were all wrong. And including the title of one of my songs, he got that wrong, too. We, the people at APRA, have put together a fact check about all of his accusations, and they are putting them up on the website, on the APRA website. But, you know, the real issue here is that we are all small businesses. You know, we're small business owners, too, and the only way we can make an income is through royalties and our live gigs, and, you know, it seems that if you take away the priority of the value of all of that, you know, we sink or swim by that income. So, I guess the message to Mr Strong is, you know, look at us as a small business and let - you know, get the government helping us, you know, as they are pertaining to do to other small businesses, because, you know, at the very least we can generate as much income if not more. We're a \$10 billion a year industry.

SABRA LANE: Thank you very much for that, and I do understand that statement might be up on APRA's website right now. Our first question from the floor is Tim Shaw. Tim I'm sure whether you have any music capabilities.

QUESTION: My music capability commenced on 13 November 1977 at my first live outdoor concert. It was rock arena at the Sydney Cricket Ground - Santana, Little River Band, and Fleetwood Mac. Two of the three artists, of course, were overseas artists. Just following on from what Jenny was talking about there about the billions industry to the panel, during this incredibly difficult time where live music can't be conducted, should those fees collected from those businesses right around Australia, some of which are actually shut at the moment, those performance fees, many of those artists are American artists and foreign artists and I'm wondering whether the fee structures should be seriously considered during this COVID time for more direction back into the Australian music industry. Secondly, the creative economy that you're talking about, do you want government to really get out of the way and for the industry to find its own level or do you want that kind of support that was extended to the Australian film industry as part of, if you like, a support and rescue package. I'll be interested in the panels' view on those two issues.

SABRA LANE: Who wants to tackle that first?

JOHN WATSON: I'll have a go. To the first point, while philosophically and morally I may be sympathetic, I think you probably run into some legal issue there is in terms of the entitlements that those artists who those who own their rights have. We'll be running into a bit of a Jack Lang situation I think. In terms of depriving – refusing to honour existing contracts so there are probably other ways that we could look to lift up local music without having to drag down international music. As to the second point, I think that we are saying that we want government to be more involved but in a constructive way. So the issue with live performance, for example, that actually requires government action. It's not about, you know, the government being the problem, the government is the solution in that instance but it's about having a coordinated whole of government approach. Similarly, when it comes to the film industry that you mentioned, I don't think we're looking for anywhere even near as much as what film has got. With we're looking for recognition in the first instance, the cultural value of music, the export value of music and a provision of greater training to allow more people to play a role. Contemporary music has traditionally been more than capable of standing on its feet. We could do even more though with government support and right now we need that support more than ever.

SABRA LANE: Do either of you guys want to add to that?

SOPHIE PAYTEN: Yeah. Look, I think the Government need to be involved because we're asking them to help develop a sort of national long-term strategy to make Australia a net exporter of music. I think as we talked about, that starts with adapting the mandated curriculum for music, providing support for song writers as they're coming through, you know, working on programs to have interns come along on the road and learn how to be a tour manager, all those sorts of things. And then you know, the support for the screen industry, it would be nice if they could say for content made in Australia for this period you have to use Australian music, you know, because it's kind of bringing that income back when we need it most. And the APRA licences, I would like to encourage businesses that are open at the moment to pick a playlist that is Australian only music. That's a very tangible way they can make a difference and as an artist the monthly APRA cheque that I get is, you know, one of my only sources of income at the moment. So I think to question the sort of validity of those licences and the difference they make, you need to consider who you'd be taking money away from in you ever got rid of them.

SABRA LANE: Lion, is that annoying that people are sort of questioning why you're getting these royalties? I mean, that's how you make a quid.

L-FRESH THE LION: Yeah, look. They're really important, you know, they're really important. And it's a difficult system to understand if you're not a songwriter and you don't necessarily understand how it works or why you should be entitled to that. But as Gordi was saying for a lot of songwriters it's what's getting them through right now and APRA has been quite proactive during COVID to try and support songwriters even in instances where we can't perform live, to still ensure that those royalty payments are coming through and that's huge for artists. I think we have an opportunity. I think we definitely have an opportunity, you know, and John kind of mentioned it, like in this period right now we are being asked to self-reflect on what's working and what's not working and what the gaps are and where we can go moving forward. And I think by setting a bold vision, knowing that there is not only the talent here but the skill, the expertise, there's a proven track record, to get behind and back an industry like the music industry I think would be a wise investment thinking long-term. The industry isn't - as mentioned - not just asking for patch work and Band-Aid solutions. You know, it's something that given the right support from an infrastructure standpoint, it can really excel on its own.

JOHN WATSON: I would make two quick points. The first is there's always this perception that artists are making a fortune. The vast majority of artists, including many people who are household names, are making below average weekly earnings. So that is a reality that's rarely appreciated by people. The second thing is that one of the ironies is that music comes to mean a lot to audience. We feel like we own our favourite songs. They belong to us. That's the song I first danced with my wife to. And so they belong to us and therefore sometimes people resent paying for them or see it as sort of an injustice that somebody else should earn from them and they forget that actually, someone created that, someone took a risk to fund that. That is actually another person's work. The fact that it means something to you should make you feel like you want to pay for it, not feel like you have no obligation.

SABRA LANE: Laura Tingle.

QUESTION: I want to ask a Canberra bubble question. And I mean, the case that you've made here today goes to the cultural and economic value of music and contemporary music, and my question is really why do you think it is that this isn't recognised in a political sense? I mean we had the Prime Minister a couple of weeks ago go to Rooty Hill and emphasise that the support he was giving to the film and television industry was really for the sparkies and the tradies. I suppose what I'm asking is what sort of interaction do you get with the political establishment, that they- that you are so invisible to them? But as you say, it's both the federal and the state issue I mean apart from our local enthusiast here. Do

politicians at a local level, at a state level, are they engaged in this industry and do they actually recognise this extraordinary export earning potential, and do you always have to put it in dollars before people do take notice?

SOPHIE PAYTEN: I'll start by saying that when I launched my record about a month ago, we had a very small sort of party at a record store and there were probably 30 people there, and two people that walked in the door were Tony Burke and Anthony Albanese. So it was- in that particular instance there was some very nice support from political people. But I think generally speaking, you know, you look at the package that was announced that roughly equates to sort of \$10 a head in the population, \$250 million supporting the Australian music industry, and then you look over at the UK and that approximately equates to \$20 a head per person for the support of the arts industry. And, you know, for all Boris Johnson's faults he did make quite an impassioned speech about the importance of the arts and culture. And yeah, I think it's just no-one has made those same points from the actual Government at this point and I think when, you know, in a time like this it's all about what is essential and public health and essential workers and, you know, the music industry is sort of cast aside. But, you know, it's an ongoing pattern like you've said, they're talking about engagement with crew members which is vital but back to John's point, I think people just have this impression that artists are sort of lying on beds of cash and that couldn't be kind of further from the truth and I think we do always have to come back to the economic point to make them actually listen.

JOHN WATSON: I think historically we probably haven't done ourselves any favours. You know, back in the day there were probably a few cowboys and people who didn't necessarily feel that they wanted anything to do with authority and, you know, the formalities of government and they were happy to just be cowboys existing on the periphery. The music industry has matured greatly since those days and recognises now I think the need to interact with government and the need to be heard in a way that perhaps other businesses recognised earlier because they weren't able to stand on their own two feet, they had to do it. Because we were standing on our own two feet it was always something that could be shuffled down the deck a little. Everyone knew it was important but we didn't really get to it. And I do think that yes, the Government typically does not recognise the cultural value of contemporary music to the extent that we believe it should be recognised. And, yes, the arguments need to be framed economically in order to be heard. We're happy to argue either case, we think both cases are good.

JENNY MORRIS: Can I just add to that and say that I think...

SABRA LANE: Sorry, I think we just have to make sure your mic is on.

JENNY MORRIS: Hello, test, one, two. I felt the alarm bells ringing back when streaming platforms became a really important part of our delivery system, and the big fight that we had with pirating. And at that point I thought why - you know, they were interviewing young people - why did these young people say that they deserved to get our music for free? And it goes back to the educational issue, I think. At the same time, you give your kids a really solid grounding in music, and you also should give a solid grounding on the value of intellectual property and what that means, what is intellectual property, and therefore it's not a stretch to understand why you should pay for someone's intellectual property. So I think it sort of has filtered into all aspects of our society that music is something that we enjoy but we don't necessarily value it as a commodity or as an industry. And I think it's a mindset that really needs changing from that really grassroots level.

L-FRESH THE LION: We have champions I think in the industry, some in this room obviously and speaking to it from a local level, local councils in south-west Sydney, for example, whether it's Liverpool or Campbelltown, do a really good job now in championing and trying to get behind local music and investing in local contemporary artists. It hasn't always been that way. And when you speak to people in those councils, for example, a lot of their job is banging on the doors of those- their superiors to try to convince them as to why this is an important thing to do. You- so, the conversations can be hard and there's great opportunity there. But it often seems that that conversation around values is one that I think is really important. And one- we shouldn't take music for granted. I think it's providing a lot of comfort to people during this challenging time, and can we panel a world without music? I think it would be a very difficult one to imagine. So a lot of work and effort goes into creating a song, and it's something we should cherish and value.

SABRA LANE: Well, often the country does turn to you in times of trouble and bushfires, the artists helped give solace to the population. To those watching now, what would you say to them about your need for people to really listen to what you're saying?

L-FRESH THE LION: Yeah. You know, it's within the spirit, I think, of musicians and artists to really be open and empathetic. We're acute listeners because we have to be as song writers and we pay attention to what's going on in the world because we draw our inspiration from it. So often the people- many people who I know who have the biggest hearts are musicians and artists. They will give you their life if they had to, if they knew it would help you. The people who I've worked with my team have taken massive gambles on me, believing in me when there was nothing there for me to offer them, purely out of the big hearts that they have and in return, artists often give back in times of need as well. The industry really is, through that open letter, making a cry for help, saying right now we do

need support and using that to also say that there's an opportunity here to think of a longer term vision, which has been something that the industry has been advocating for a while.

SABRA LANE: Excellent. Max Mason, thank you.

QUESTION: First of all, I was a kid from western Sydney, thank you for continuing to push against the stigma. I had two questions. The first was during lockdown, what are some of the more innovative ideas that have come of our colleagues, yourselves? I'll admit to getting my 3-year-old dancing to a Hot Tub Time Machine, a live streaming concert on a Saturday night. And second of all, in Victoria in particular, do you see the lockdown as an opportunity to, I guess further the curriculum changes or a hindrance, given parents are struggling to teach their kids?

SOPHIE PAYTEN: Sure, I'll begin. The- yeah. We have all been forced to get really creative and pivot in the lockdown and the live streaming from the bedroom was sort of the first cab off the rank. I think people have slowly started to perhaps weary of that, but I think that creates an exciting opportunity to, if we're going to be in this for a while to say, okay, how can we still engage with people and also how can we monetise it and how can we sort of create opportunities out of it? And for example, I played a live stream show from the Sydney Opera House a week ago, which meant I could pay my band, and my crew and the Opera House crew could all get paid to be there, and I could launch my record and people can watch it forever. We also like filmed a show we're going to be releasing probably later this month in virtual reality. So we sort have made this almost like a computer game where you can enter into a venue, go into different rooms and see different songs performed and if you have a 360 headset it's like you're in the room. So things like that, we would have never done that if not for this. So you have to be kind of versatile in this industry, yeah.

L-FRESH THE LION: I was just going to add to that and say where you can adapt in situations like this, there's positives and there's also negatives. There are some situations where you just may not be able to adapt in ways that will provide means for you to be able to earn a sustainable living. So the live streaming opportunities are great, but if you're doing it from your own platform and thinking of DJs, for example, who would have regular gigs throughout an entire week that was sustaining them, to live stream a gig on your own platforms doesn't earn you any income. So it's more so them doing it because that keeps them sane. It's giving them an opportunity just to do what they love to do. To be robbed of that is really devastating. Other people within the industry, for example, rely on delivering workshops, whether that's in schools or different community organisations, and with social

distancing measures in place and schools being very- needing to restrict access, that just removes an entire source of income for people who were relying on their workshop schedule throughout the calendar year. So- and even in adapting in a digital space, working with kids in a digital space presents challenges as well. So it's not always the perfect replacement. So while we can and many have tried to adapt, they're still presenting challenges. That's where innovation is definitely required, and musicians and artists and those working in the industry do their best to adapt, but at the same time there are some challenges that require a bit more support.

SABRA LANE: John, could you give us a quick wrap in 60 seconds, because we're being given the wind.

JOHN WATSON: Yeah, I would just differentiate between the audience engagement part, which is what we're talking about here, and the commercial part. There's lots that can be done and fun ways to engage the audience. So if you follow Jimmy Barnes on social media, you'd know that his wife Jane has learnt to play guitar and they've been doing a song a day, every day. Hundreds of thousands of people have been getting through lockdown with it. That's been great, but it doesn't obviously earn anywhere near what his band would get out of doing a concert. So we're going to be selling some Cold Chisel face masks, they're not going to replace what we would have made in t-shirt sales. So the fact that artists continue to engage with audience shows what motivates them, it helps the community, it helps people get through these tough times. On the other side of it, though, they have to be able to earn a living and we need help.

SABRA LANE: Alright, guys, thank you so much for being part of our discussion today. Jenny Morris, thank you also for being here today. We really do appreciate it. And taking us out, we've got R&B artist Ngaiire, who's joined by Novak on keys and Michael and Billy on backing vocals. Thank you so much.

[Applause]

[Ngaiire performs]

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