



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

PG/300

1 July 2009

APPOINTMENT OF AUSTRALIA COUNCIL CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR

Minister for the Arts Peter Garrett today congratulated James Strong AO on his reappointment as Chair of the Australia Council and John W.H. Denton on his appointment as Deputy Chair.

Both positions will be for a term of three years.

“The reappointment of Mr Strong and appointment of Mr Denton to the critical roles of Chair and Deputy Chair will provide strong and experienced leadership for the Australia Council and the arts sector,” Mr Garrett said.

“Mr Strong has a wealth of expertise gained through his experience on the boards of major Australian companies such as Woolworths and Qantas, and with arts organisations such as the Sydney Theatre Company and Opera Australia.

“As Chair for the last three years, Mr Strong successfully steered the Australia Council’s strategic priorities to include art in the digital era, a knowledge centre on the arts and the further growth of *Artsupport Australia*, the Council’s very successful philanthropic development project. In particular his work to restructure the organisation has ensured the Australia Council is more responsive to artists’ needs.

“Mr John W.H. Denton’s mix of business, legal and arts sector skills is a great asset to the position of Deputy Chair of the Council.

“Mr Denton is a partner and CEO of Corrs Chambers Westgarth and holds a number of leadership roles including: one of Australia’s three representatives on the APEC Business Advisory Council, Board Member of the Business Council of Australia, Deputy Chair of the Melbourne International Arts Festival and a councillor for the Victorian chapter of the Australia Business Arts Foundation (AbaF).

“I’m very pleased that Mr Strong and Mr Denton have agreed to serve in their respective positions, where they will make a considerable contribution to supporting and celebrating the creative endeavour.

“I also want to thank Mr Joe Gersh AM for his valuable contribution as Deputy Chair for the last three years. The Council has benefited considerably from his experience and practical knowledge of the Australian arts and business sectors.”

The Australia Council for the Arts is the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body.