Gary Foley
Koori History Archive Program
Centre for Indigenous Education
233 Bouverie Street,
Carlton Vic. 3053.
19th June 1999

Mr John Moriarty,
Chair of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Arts Board,
Australia Council for the Arts,
PO Box 788
Strawberry Hills NSW 2010

Dear John,

Re: Support for Queensland Art Gallery *Lin Onus* Retrospective

I write, as a former Director of the Aboriginal Arts Board, in support of the Lin Onus retrospective exhibition currently being organised by the Queensland Arts Gallery and Lin's family. As you would be aware Lin Onus was, at the time of his premature death, one of the foremost contemporary indigenous artists in this country. He was also a distinguished former Board Member of the Aboriginal Arts Board and I personally recall the enormous contribution he made when he was Board Chairperson from 1988 to 1992. I also recall the momentous trip to Maningrida for an AAB meeting when Chicka Dixon was chair, and where Lin had first contact with traditional artists who transformed his style and ultimately made his work so important.

I strongly urge the Board to consider the tremendous scope of the art and scultpture that Lin Onus produced in his own very unique style. I personally believe that Lin was one of the most important contemporary indigenous artists of my lifetime. He won the National Aboriginal Art Award in 1988, the Ruth Adeney Koori Award (RAKA) in 1993 and the National Heritage Award in 1995, as well as having both paintings and sculptures in the legendary *Aratja* exhibition that toured major European capitals in the 1980s.

The body of work that he produced and its significance in the history of the urban Koori art movement demand a major retrospective at this point in time. I have been assured by Lin's widow and children that they have confidence in Margo Neale and the Queensland Art Gallery to curate this exhibition in the manner they seek, so I endorse the project and urge the Board to support it.

Thanking You,

Gary Foley
Coordinator
Koori History Archive Program