

Author: kanderso at nac
Date: 06/03/97 12:09
Priority: Normal
TO: kbeaton
Subject: Re[2]: Panek Bust - Controversy

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Kelly:

As you are aware, I was brought into this after John had agreed to accept the bust.

If we are to solicit or receive future such donations, I would suggest that we strike a committee to consider such offers, have Gerry Grace in his new responsibility for our permanent art collection conduct the required research and consultations and to bring forward recommendations to the Committee.

As an example, [REDACTED]'s agent has suggested he may wish to donate an original work to the NAC. Other offers have been made over the years, however, we have no policies or mechanisms in this regard.

The research on Pal Patzay was supplied to me (as far as I recall by Mr. Panek). It was clear that the sculptor was not only a state-funded artist, but that he acted as Minister of Culture during the period of Communist rule. Furthermore, it is fact that the current Socialist government in Hungary is not only the successor to the former regime, but many of the same people are still in positions of power. In other words, even in the post-Communist era, Socialists rule Hungary, it is just the name of the party which has changed.

As John suggested this morning, this issue raised by Mr. [REDACTED] is quite beside the point. While the NAC is state-funded, we do not and should never allow our artistic decisions to become coloured by political considerations. I cite the award of the Governor General's Performing Arts Award to Gilles Vigneault as a clear demonstration of this principle in action.

Therefore, our response should note the following:

1. The arm's-length relationship between artistic decisions and politics
2. The recognition accorded Zoltan Kodaly and Pal Patzay in this period of post-Communist rule in Hungary, especially by the presence of His Excellency the Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary and a letter of greeting sent by the Hungarian President.
3. The value of state-sponsorship of the arts, including the NAC and the National Arts Centre Orchestra.

Ken

Reply Separator _____

:Panek Bust - Controversy
kbeaton at nac
05/03/97 18:13

John received a letter from Mr. [REDACTED] who states that pal Patzay was a communist and Zoltan Kodaly would have never agreed to have his bust done by this person. Mr. [REDACTED] states that the NAC should never accept such a sculpture.

John asked if any research was done on the sculptor. Could we please discuss what research was done and what should be our next step.

Many thanks