

LOWER NORTH SHORE

Artistic embrace no culture shock

Statistics reveal strong engagement with events

Kate Crawford

IT'S official – people living on this side of the Harbour Bridge are the most cultured in NSW.

Forget celebrity magazines and reality television, residents of suburbs like Mosman and North Sydney love art galleries, theatre and concerts.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has released new figures, commissioned by the Australian Council for the Arts, showing residents from Mosman to Hornsby are the most culturally engaged in NSW.

The figures reveal that 94

per cent had attended an arts or culture venue or event in a 12-month period. This compares to 75 per cent in areas like Sydney's south west

In the Mosman-Hornsby area, 39 per cent of people actively took part in a cultural event compared to 14 per cent in the south west or 17 per cent in Blacktown.

Rebecca Pierce, of Traffic Jam Galleries at Neutral Bay, said the figures reflected just how engaged lower north shore people were in art and culture.

"The figures may well dispel the long-held assumption that the inner city and eastern suburbs are far more art

centric than the northside of Sydney," she said.

Mosman opera soprano Amelia Farrugia said she wasn't surprised.

"The residents of the lower north shore are certainly an affluent and well-educated bunch. I would personally like to see more people from all over Sydney engaged in cultural experiences."

Comedian Steve Lynch said the area loved culture.

"We have so much culture it's coming out of the exhaust pipes of our MX5s," he said.

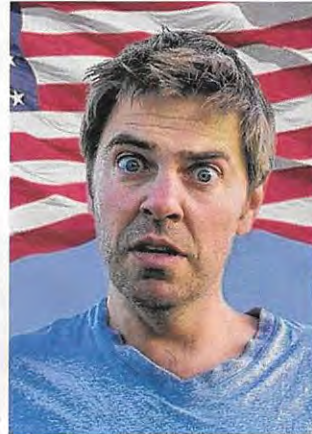
"Anyone who questions our commitment to culture has clearly never been in the Pickled Possum at 1am."



Mosman soprano
Amelia Farrugia.



Artist Rebecca Pierce.



Comedian Steve Lynch.