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July 21, 2004

Honr. Paul J. Keating
PO Box 1265
POTTS POINT
N.S.W. 1335

Dear Mr. Keating,

Re: The Australian Institute of Music and Prof. V. Makarov

It is with some hesitation that we have decided to contact you in your capacity as the member of the Board of Directors of the AIM. It is our understanding that the Board is ultimately responsible for the Institute's educational and employment policy, which for us as the outsiders seem to be wanting in the matter of Professor Makarov. You are no doubt aware the Department of Public Prosecution has formally charged Professor Makarov, the Institute's Piano Department head with 30 sexual offences involving minors under his care. Despite most serious nature of these allegations he is still performing his duties as an educator of young people.

This we as parents find most disturbing. In contrast, at other educational institutions this or even less serious allegations would lead to an immediate suspension. Should these allegations be substantiated through the forthcoming court proceedings, questions will be raised as to what has motivated the Institute to neglect its duty of care towards its vulnerable charges, i.e. the students?

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How can the Institute justify its current stand in maintaining Mr. Makarov's uninterrupted employment as an educator?

In our society pedophilia is considered one of the most despicable and lowliest of crimes and as such attracts lengthy punishment. Naturally presumption of innocence must be maintained until proven otherwise; but in the mean time we should not allow unobstructed contact of these (alleged) predators with their victims. Is not the Institutes primary duty to provide safe and conducive environment for unobstructed emotional and academic development of its students? Keeping possible pedophile on its list of active staff is alarming to say the least.

Plainly, why is this man still working in the midst of those he has allegedly abused and is not suspended from his duties? Which parent would like a possible pedophile to be educating his child? Furthermore, should Mr. Makarov be found guilty, this sorry saga will be dissected by the media in its minute details and the picture is not going to look good for the Institute nor for those who are charged to oversee and give direction to its activities. It seems that self-interest has somehow overshadowed duty of care.

We would be grateful if you or the Board of Directors, could give us some explanation or exert some positive influence on the Executive of the Institute to do what is only reasonable under the circumstances; that is suspend Mr. Makarov from his duties.

Yours respectfully,

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