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25 April 95

Ms Irene Stephens
Executive Director
Literature Board
Sydney

Dear Irene,

Re Ouyang Yu: applicant for Writer's Project Grant.

I am most happy to support Ouyang Yu's application for a writer's grant to prepare a further book of his poems.

Since he arrived in Australia in 1992 I have been privileged to see Ouyang's work in poetry and prose, both his own work in English and his translations from Chinese. As then Associate Editor and now as Editor I have read his work as it has been submitted and have been instrumental in publishing some of it in all his forms. Only limitations of space have prevented us from publishing more.

Of over 500 stories and 3000 poems we receive each year, Ouyang's work is always in the minority that raises immediate interest and demands attentive reading. He is energetic, committed to writing, and prolific, and it is with genuine regret that we have had to return some of his submissions to him. We are honoured that we have frequently been able to include him among our contributors.

Ouyang has a command of both the English language and poetic form, and brings to his work a unique sensibility shaped by his education and upbringing in China and by a deep knowledge of western, and particularly Australian, literature. He thus works at the intersection of cultures that is characteristic of so much of the most interesting writing being produced in Australia today. Ouyang's own contribution to this work is already significant, and I am sure will become more substantial as he is given the opportunity to write and publish.

Yours sincerely,

John McLaren
Editor