

National Gallery of Australia announces \$7 million philanthropic gift from Pauline Gandel and John Gandel AO

The National Gallery of Australia today announced a landmark gift of \$7million from well known Melbourne based philanthropists Pauline Gandel and John Gandel AO.

“The National Gallery of Australia has an essential role in developing the national art collection for future generations of Australians. Pauline and I hope that our support will inspire others to follow in our footsteps,” said Mr Gandel.

“This is a truly visionary and extremely generous act of benefaction. The National Gallery of Australia is deeply grateful to Pauline and John Gandel for their support of our vision,” said Mr Rupert Myer AM, Chairman of the National Gallery of Australia Council.

The announcement comes at a time when the National Gallery of Australia is experiencing a period of significant revitalisation with the opening of the new Stage 1 redevelopment including 11 new Indigenous art galleries and a stunning new Function Hall due to open in Spring 2010.

“Pauline and John Gandel were founding donors when the National Gallery of Australia opened its doors in 1982. To follow up with this incredible gift while the Gallery is undertaking the most substantial redevelopment since it opened, demonstrates their commitment to the Gallery, the national art collection, and its importance to all Australians” said Rupert Myer.

“Benefaction of this nature is not only essential for the ongoing development of the arts in Australia but also inspires others to consider philanthropy that can make a lasting difference,” he said.

The Director of the National Gallery of Australia, Ron Radford AM said “This wonderful act of generosity by Mr and Mrs Gandel will be honoured by the National Gallery of Australia through the naming in perpetuity of the new function hall which will be known as the *Gandel Hall*.”

“This is an historic time for the National Gallery and the support from Pauline and John Gandel will help us to continue to develop the national art collection and to make the Gallery experience more accessible and exciting,” he said.

Gandel Hall will be used as a venue for openings and special events, as well as public programs, school and education activities. Part of the Stage 1 redevelopment, Gandel Hall will be a dedicated function space seating up to 350 guests for dinner or up to 1,000 for stand-up functions.

Gandel Hall will open out onto the landscaped Australian gardens which features the new Skyspace sculpture, *Within without* by renowned American artist James Turrell.

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