WAR
The Prints of Otto Dix
A National Gallery of Australia Travelling Exhibition

Australian Surrealism
the Agapitos/Wilson collection

16 February – 11 May 2008 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

James Gleeson
The attitude of lightning towards a lady-mountain
1939 oil on canvas Purchased with the assistance of James Agapitos OAM and Ray Wilson OAM, 2007

Otto Dix
Lens wird mit Bomben belegt [Lens being bombed] etching, drypoint National Gallery of Australia, Canberra © Otto Dix, licensed by Viscopy, Australia 2009
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The success of the National Gallery of Australia’s twenty-fifth anniversary events in 2007 culminated in the anniversary weekend held at the Gallery in October. As our twenty-fifth anniversary year continues in 2008, we are set to explore new terrain in anniversary exhibitions, displays and programs that are ‘firsts’ for Australian audiences.

A highlight in this year’s anniversary exhibitions program will be *Turner to Monet: the triumph of landscape*, which opens in mid March and runs for three months only and only at the National Gallery of Australia. In the nineteenth century, the art of landscape painting transformed from the depiction of place to the very visceral expressions of mood and time passing. Now, in the twenty-first century, we celebrate what could only be described as the *century of landscape painting*. *Turner to Monet* presents the rise of landscape painting throughout the nineteenth century, from Europe to America and Australia, through such venerated artists as Turner, Constable, Friedrich, Corot, Courbet, Glover, von Guérard, Church, Streeton, Roberts, Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin and Monet. The exhibition will expand the horizons of Australian audiences by providing an opportunity to experience paintings never before seen in Australia. In particular, this will be the first time that German Romantic paintings, and specifically those of Caspar David Friedrich, have come to Australia. Friedrich was the finest German representative of the Romantic movement alongside his English contemporaries JMW Turner and John Constable. The German Romantics, of course, influenced Australian landscape artists such as von Guérard and Chevalier.

Some of the finest public and private collections in the world have loaned very important and rarely lent works of art for this exhibition, which plots a journey through the century, from English and German Romanticism, and French Realism, to Impressionism, Post Impressionism and Symbolism.

From the triumph of landscape to the landscape of the psyche, the exhibition *Australian Surrealism: the Agapitos/Wilson collection* presents over 160 artworks from the 290 works in the collection Ray Wilson, OAM, and the late James Agapitos, OAM, assembled over the last fifteen years. I highly recommend that you visit *Australian Surrealism* as it presents a rare opportunity to see so much of this, the most important Australian Surrealism collection ever assembled, together at one time. While the Agapitos/Wilson collection is now part of the national collection, it may be some time before so much of it is shown together again. *Australian Surrealism*, which is installed across two floors, opened at the end of February and will close in mid May.

We also have exciting news for our small but important Pacific collection. A Maori canoe figure purchased in 1978 and thought to be from the early nineteenth century has recently been tested using radiocarbon dating techniques. The results of the tests were a pleasant surprise as we discovered the object to be from the early fifteenth century, the time of the beginnings of the European Renaissance – and quite a leap back into Maori history. Testing of other objects in the collection will continue.

The Gallery’s Pacific collection has also greatly benefited from the acquisition of an exquisite early-nineteenth-
century huaki cloak from New Zealand. This Maori cloak, of which only a small number still survive in museums and galleries, mainly in New Zealand, is one of only two in Australian public collections and is unique in its design. This is the first Maori textile to join our small but extremely high quality and important Maori collection.

Fittingly for the Gallery’s silver anniversary, a large private collection of Australian nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century silver has entered the national collection. This major collection of beautiful and intricate works includes trophies, jewellery boxes, inkwells, cutlery and personal accessories – 120 pieces in all. It presents an interesting social insight into Australian history and adds significantly to our collection of Australian silver specifically, and to our Decorative Arts and Design collection generally.

Dennis Nona’s striking bronze crocodile, Ubirikubiri, familiar to audiences who have visited Culture Warriors, the inaugural National Indigenous Art Triennial, is also a welcome addition to the national collection. It has been purchased through the generosity of John and Janet Calvert-Jones. Ubirikubiri will soon travel with other works from Culture Warriors on a tour that will take it around Australia, starting with the Art Gallery of South Australia in June. When it returns to Canberra in 2009, it will be installed in the new Indigenous Art Galleries, part of Stage 1 of our building redevelopment, which commenced momentarily last year.

The Gallery also farewells Ron Ramsey, who has proven a valuable asset in a variety of roles over many years. On behalf of the Gallery Council, staff and members,

I thank Ron for his dedication and support and wish him well in his new position as Director of Newcastle Region Art Gallery.

This year promises to be an exciting year for the Gallery’s publishing program. New releases will shortly include Redback Graphix, the next in a series of books focusing on the Gallery’s extensive print collection. A major catalogue for Turner to Monet: the triumph of landscape and the final volume of the three-volume history of printmaking in Australia, Printed images by Australian artists 1955–2005, will also be released this year, as will a new and very accessible handbook on the national collection.

The coming program of publications, exhibitions, new displays and major new acquisitions will continue to be inspired by our twenty-fifth anniversary, which provided the vital energy that saw us through the challenging but exciting events of the second half of 2007.

Ron Radford
The following donations have been received as part of the National Gallery of Australia’s Twenty-fifth Anniversary Gift Program.

**Donations**

Ross and Florence Adamson  
American Friends of the National Gallery of Australia Inc.  
Donation by anonymous donor  
Susan Armitage  
Janet and John Calvert-Jones  
Canberra Art Teachers Association  
David Coe  
Gordon Darling Australia Pacific Print Fund  
Barrie Dexter, CBE  
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Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia  
Harold Mitchell, AO, and Bevelly Mitchell  
Rupert Myer, AM, and Annabelle Myer  
Jason Prowd  
Catherine Rossi Harris, AO, and David Harris

**Gifts and Bequests**

Gift of the Australian Print Workshop, 2004  
Gift of Philip Bacon, AM  
Gift of Tony and Carol Berg in honour of the National Gallery of Australia’s twenty-fifth anniversary, 2007  
Gift of Peter Cameron  
Gift of Denise Campbell, Bea Maddock, David Marsden and Penny Mason  
Gift of David de Campo  
Gift of Dorothy Danta in memory of her parents Professor FH Reuter and Mrs I Reuter  
Gift of Chris Deutscher  
Gift of the artist, Clint Deverson  
Gift of Mr Yvon Gatineau and Mr Peter Jackson  
Gift of Jonathan Hope  
Gift of the artist, Robert Jacks, AO  
Gift of Laima Jomantas  
Gift of John Loane  
Gift of Martin Munz  
Gift of the Margaret Olley Foundation  
Gift of Margaret Pask  
Gift of the artist, Lesbia Thorpes

**Masterpieces for the Nation Fund 2007**

Ruth Cutbush

**Grants**

Australia Council for the Arts through the Showcasing the Best International Strategy, and through its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Board, Visual Arts Board and Community Partnerships and Market Development (International) Board  
The Gordon Darling Foundation  
Visions of Australia through its Contemporary Touring Initiative, an Australian Government program supporting touring exhibitions by providing funding assistance for the development and touring of Australian cultural material across Australia, and through the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian Government, and state and territory governments

**Sponsorship**

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Twenty-fifth Anniversary Gift Program

To commemorate the twenty-fifth birthday of the National Gallery of Australia, the Foundation launched the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Gift Program. The program began in 2006 and aims to raise $25 million by the end of 2008 to assist with the further development of the national collection. Included in the program are gifts of cash and artworks, pledges (which may be met over a five year period), sponsorship, and notified and actual bequests.

The program has raised $15.5 million to date. We are extraordinarily grateful to our sponsors and donors whose generosity has assisted us so far.

Two significant corporate partnerships that have been established as part of this program are the National Australia Bank’s naming rights sponsorship of the recently refurbished National Australia Bank Sculpture Gallery, and the BHP Billiton sponsorship of Culture Warriors, the inaugural National Indigenous Art Triennial. These partnerships are important because they are long-term relationships between two of Australia’s leading corporations who will be working with the Gallery to ensure that the national collection is promoted and available for the people of Australia.

The National Gallery of Australia is deeply grateful the generous benefaction of many donors, some of whom have been donating to the Gallery for many years and others who are new members of the Foundation. This heartfelt and significant commitment by individuals has greatly assisted us in achieving our target.

Significant to the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Gift Program, benefactors include Mrs Roslyn Packer, AO, who has enriched the national collection with her generous support of the acquisitions of Cy Twombly’s *Untitled* 1987–2004 and the Kushan dynasty *Seated Buddha*. Bevelly Mitchell and Harold Mitchell, AO, and Rupert Myer, AM, and Annabel Myer joined in purchasing Giorgio de Chirico’s *La mort d’un esprit* [Death of a spirit] 1916, which now hangs in the newly refurbished international galleries. An important work that received much publicity in the media is
Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri’s Warlugulong 1977, which was purchased with the magnanimous assistance of Roslynne Bracher, AO, Mariynne Paspaley, AO, and Nick Paspaley, David Coe and Michelle Coe, and Charles Curran, AC, and Eva Curran. All works have added profoundly to the national collection and have become destination pieces for visitors to the National Gallery of Australia.

Dr Margaret Olley, AC, one of Australia’s most respected living artists, is also a very generous philanthropist. The exquisite early Mughal empire architectural brackets and lintels as well as the late seventeenth-century Mughal dynasty marble arcade, which adorn the Indian Art Galleries, were both purchased with the assistance of the Margaret Hannah Olley Art Trust.

An outstanding act of philanthropy to the Gallery during the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Gift Program is the gift and purchase of what is considered the most important collection of Australian Surrealist art. Covering the period from 1925 to 1955, the collection put together by Ray Wilson, OAM, and the late James Agapitos, OAM, includes 285 paintings, prints, collages, drawings, photographs and sculptures by the foremost artists associated with Surrealist art practice in Australia. Australian Surrealism: the Agapitos/Wilson collection, which is currently on exhibition at the Gallery, pays tribute to Ray Wilson and James Agapitos as passionate and generous collectors. Sadly, James Agapitos passed away early in 2007 but his devotion to Australian art lives on through this wonderful gift that will be appreciated by Australians for many generations.

The patron of the Foundation is the Governor-General, Major General Michael Jeffery, AC, CVO, MC. The Foundation is very grateful to the Governor-General for the time both he and Mrs Marlena Jeffery devoted to the Foundation this year. They have hosted events in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra to promote the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Gift Program and to thank those Foundation members and sponsors who have supported the Gallery during this time.

The most recent function was held at Government House in Canberra. Complementing the Governor-General’s welcome, the National Gallery of Australia’s Chairman of the Council Mr Rupert Myer, AM, and Chairman of the Foundation Mr Charles Curran, AC, attended and delivered inspiring speeches. The Governor-General’s speech highlighted the importance of the Gallery’s work to Australia’s cultural landscape and how vital the work of the Foundation and many benefactors is to the Gallery’s role:

I have no doubt that the Gallery’s next twenty-five years will be just as impressive and exciting as the last. And, equally, I have no doubt that the Foundation will continue to make a significant contribution to its continuing success as a cultural institution for all Australians.

For example, the Gallery is about to undergo major physical changes, with the start of a new and exciting program to extend and restore the building and radically reconfigure the major collection displays. The changes will provide the first increase in collection space since the building was conceived in 1969.
During this time of change, the work of the Foundation will be even more important, both in providing continuity and in raising awareness and support for the Gallery’s future plans.

I congratulate the Foundation and its supporters for the wonderful efforts in helping to maintain the national collection and supporting the acquisition program.

Mr L Gordon Darling, AC, CMG, and Mrs Marilyn Darling have made a profound impact on the collections, publications and life of the National Gallery of Australia. Their impact can be seen in their personal gifts and through the support of the Gordon Darling Australia Pacific Print Fund. In its eighteen years of existence the Gordon Darling Australia Pacific Print Fund has funded the acquisition of over 6000 prints for the national collection, an internship, a fellowship and the Australian print database. The Gordon Darling Foundation has also seen major projects such as Crescent moon and the three-volume survey of the history of printmaking in Australia, entitled Printed, by Roger Butler come to fruition.

American Friends of the National Gallery of Australia

The American Friends of the National Gallery of Australia Inc. (AFNGA) is an important organisation to the life of the Gallery and one that it values highly. Based in New York, the American Friends has been active in facilitating support and raising the profile of the National Gallery of Australia and the national collection to its American and expatriate Australian benefactors.

This year has been no exception. AFNGA President Susan Talbot and Administrator Jill Viola visited Canberra during the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations in October to formalise the loan from AFNGA to the Gallery of the sculpture Duccio variations no. 7 2000 by Anthony Caro. The gift of the sculpture to AFNGA was made possible through the generous support of Kenneth Tyler and Marabeth Cohen-Tyler. This important work has been installed in the recently refurbished National Australia Bank Sculpture Gallery.

We take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of Susan Talbot and Jill Viola and all the Trustees of the AFNGA and sincerely thank them for their unwavering support of the National Gallery of Australia.

Thank you to all of our benefactors who have supported the National Gallery of Australia through the Foundation during our twenty-fifth anniversary. If you would like to donate towards the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Gift Program or would like more information about the Foundation please contact the Executive Director Annalisa Millar on (02) 6240 6691.

For enquiries regarding sponsorship and development please contact the Head of Development and Membership Belinda Cotton on (02) 6240 6556.
The National Gallery of Australia’s landmark exhibition of nineteenth-century landscape painting is presented in Canberra only from March to June 2008. *Turner to Monet: the triumph of landscape* surveys the nineteenth century, examining landscape as it rises to importance as an independent genre in Western art. From its early predominance in Britain to its extraordinary manifestations in France, Germany and the rest of Europe, the exhibition also shows the spread of landscape to new territories as European artists in Australia and America extended the tradition.

*Turner to Monet* features one hundred works by many of the greatest artists of the time. All of the major nineteenth-century art movements are represented: Romanticism by JMW Turner, John Constable, Caspar David Friedrich and Eugene von Guérard; French Realism and the Barbizons by Camille Corot, Gustave Courbet, Charles Daubigny and Théodore Rousseau; Impressionism by Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro and the Australians Tom Roberts and Arthur Streeton; Post-Impressionism and Symbolism by Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Georges Seurat and Charles Conder. These oil paintings and watercolours are drawn from public and private collections, as well as major public institutions in Australia.

The exhibition includes a selection of presentation watercolours by early exponents of the medium such as Thomas Girtin and Paul Sandby. It also demonstrates the influence of topographic traditions on painters such as Conrad Martens and William Westall, as well as those artists who took watercolour to new heights. In *Scarborough town and castle: morning: boys catching crabs* c. 1810 we find Turner’s interest in the cycle of continuity, sense of place and the richness of the everyday in a productive society, all rendered on an unprecedented scale. The scene is bathed in a glorious pale-gold light with touches of blue, a masterful display of his control of the notoriously unforgiving medium.

Turner’s magnificent *Waves breaking against the wind* c. 1835, an unfinished oil painting, reveals the artist’s working methods and thought processes. The active brushstrokes, reduced palette and contrasting compositions of the subject communicate the artist’s exacting observation of the effects of changing light – and awe at the power of nature. Constable’s *The leaping horse* 1825 is grand in conception, undoubtedly one of his most significant paintings. The canvas shows his inimitable combination of concentrated observation and bravura, seemingly spontaneous exposition. These paintings show why Turner and Constable – and broader notions of the pastoral and the picturesque – were so influential for the Impressionists and other modern painters.

In *Turner to Monet: the triumph of landscape*, the indomitable Friedrich is represented by a number of exquisite works; even though it is difficult to overstate his influence, none of his paintings has ever been shown in Australia. Friedrich’s *Easter morning* 1833 expresses the
introspective melancholy of dawn. The viewer is invited to contemplate landscape and, through this meditation, to gain an understanding of man’s place in the world. The origin of life was one of the most compelling intellectual controversies of the 1830s and 1840s: the nature of creation as told by the Bible was increasingly brought into question by a growing awareness of the natural sciences.

The fascination of Eruption of Vesuvius 1823 is a result of Johan Christian Dahl’s combination of the opposing elements of fire and water. In 1820 the artist visited Mount Vesuvius during one the volcano’s many eruptions, and this firsthand experience is key to his paintings, which subsequently became exceptionally popular. The dominant art-historical narrative has neglected the importance of German and northern European artists – especially Friedrich, Dahl and Carl Gustav Carus – in the American and Australian landscape tradition. This exhibition helps to redress the balance by including great works by the best German Romantics.

English- and German-trained artists reinvented landscape conventions to portray the new, and often startling, continents of Australia and America. From the orderly beauty of the artist’s garden and portraits of estates, painters began to portray terrains newly explored by European settlers. In his exquisite A view of the artist’s house and garden, in Mills Plains, Van Diemen’s Land 1835 John Glover combines the two: the embroidered beauty of his English flower garden has a backdrop of scrubby Tasmanian bush under a brilliant southern sky.

Artists then ventured further, into the wilderness. First in Europe, then America and Australia, they sought the extremes of nature, elemental and untameable: stormy coasts and mysterious mountains, volcanic eruptions and raging fires. South American landscape 1856 shows Frederic Church at the height of his powers. Church travelled in search of ideal locations, as well as suggesting more metaphorical possibilities for the landscape genre. The parallels between Church and Australian Romantic masters such as von Guérard and Nicholas Chevalier are articulated in Turner to Monet, exploring the ways in which these immigrant artists pictured the dramatic and unfamiliar new territories. The land itself became a heroic
character in the New World, with vast skies of crystalline air, dramatic sunsets, expansive plains and valleys all emphasising the size of the continents.

Studies of clouds, rural scenes, marine and picturesque views by Constable, Dahl, Corot and Samuel Palmer are complemented by the intense naturalism of the Barbizon school. Paintings by Gustave Courbet, Charles Daubigny and Théodore Rousseau investigate an idea of nature as an escape from urban life. In 1865 Courbet was working en plein air at the coastal resort of Trouville, and painted twenty-five ‘landscapes of the sea’ over a three-month period. The sea and sky of Low tide, the beach at Trouville 1865 are rendered in a palette limited to blue and white, creams and flesh-tones, with merely a hint of human presence. Courbet adjusted his colour range to capture variations in light and weather conditions – a serial approach later adopted by Monet.

The Symbolists working at Port-Aven and Le Pouldu on the Brittany coast absorbed peasant traditions, as well as the radical flattening of Japanese prints, to produce dramatically simplified works. In Haystacks in Brittany 1890 it is Paul Gauguin’s combination of colour and form, rather than narrative or sentiment, that appeals to the viewer. This glorious patchwork of colours is a dramatic prelude to the more saturated palette of his Tahitian period. Gauguin builds on the structure of traditional landscape – the sky, fields and crops are composed as a series of bands – but interrupts these conventions by placing a ‘frieze’ of cows with a young female cowherd along the front of the composition.

Increasingly, humans were shown in modern surroundings, the all-enveloping city in which nature seems controlled. Turner to Monet includes a range of cityscapes showing how, in the last decades of the nineteenth century, artists used the genre of landscape to experiment with colour, form and movement – and eventually, to question the nature of painting itself. Allegro con brio, Bourke Street west c. 1885–86 is structured around one of the avenues that bisects the central business district of Melbourne. It is a distinctly Australian portrait of a city that was one of the largest in the industrialised world at the time. Tom Roberts, as his title suggests, was certainly painting ‘quickly,
brightly’. The elevated viewpoint, reduced palette and fractured brushstrokes signal his determination to embrace modernity, conveying the heat and light conditions of the busy city street.

As modern art developed into a fresh way of thinking about the world, artists such as Paul Cézanne and Monet returned to the same motif with endless variations. The exhibition traces Monet's development from his pastel palette in the 1870s to his explorations of the Normandy and Brittany coasts in the 1880s to his serial works of the 1890s which culminated in *Haystacks* and *Ice floes*. In *Morning haze* 1894, the combination of reflective surfaces and the heavy atmosphere of snow, ice and water almost seems to cause the substance of the painting itself to disappear. Like Turner, Monet paints the ineffable effects of light and water, and infinite arrays of land and sky.

Turner's and Monet's comments quoted earlier encapsulate two approaches to the painting of landscape, at the beginning and at the end of the nineteenth century. Both artists dominate their respective periods and are renowned for their ability to have us rethink landscape. In the first part of the century, Turner represents the European idyllic landscape tradition and the influence of Claude Lorrain; later, he is the apotheosis of the Romantic Sublime – the increasingly abstract forms of his investigations make him seem surprisingly modern. In the final decades of the century, Monet's painterly explorations of mood and the passing of time transform the art of landscape.

Through masterpieces drawn from around the world, *Turner to Monet: the triumph of landscape* surveys a century of the rise of landscape, new subjects and techniques. We see how the work of these artists continues to resonate in our time.

Christine Dixon, Lucina Ward and Niki van den Heuvel
International Painting and Sculpture

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**Paul Gauguin** *Haystacks in Brittany* 1890 oil on canvas 74.3 x 93.6 cm National Gallery of Art, Washington Gift of the W Averell Harriman Foundation in memory of Marie N Harriman

(opposite)

**Claude Monet**

*Morning haze* 1894 oil on canvas 65.7 x 100.3 cm Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia Bequest of Mrs Frank Graham Thomson, 1961

**Tom Roberts**

*Allegro con brio: Bourke Street west* c. 1885–86, reworked 1890 oil on canvas on composition board 51.2 x 76.7 cm National Library of Australia and National Gallery of Australia, Canberra Purchased 1918
Surreal landscapes
Australian Surrealism: the Agapitos/Wilson collection
16 February – 11 May 2008

He [James Agapitos] could be very naughty and get away with it, and incredibly cheeky but with a smile and twinkling eyes that made you forgive him anything.

According to his partner Ray Wilson¹
Together James Agapitos and Ray Wilson built a great collection of Australian Surrealist art, the largest and most important collection in private hands. These works are now part of the National Gallery of Australia’s collection as a result of a combination of gift and purchase. They include major Surrealist works by Australians James Cant, Max Dupain, Ivor Francis, James Gleeson, Robert Klippel, Sidney Nolan and Jeffery Smart, complementing important Surrealist images by the international artists Giorgio de Chirico, Salvador Dalí, René Magritte and many others.

As writer Bruce James has remarked, Agapitos (and Wilson) ‘always saw the collection as a national holding; he had a profound sense of indebtedness to the country that had taken him in as a young migrant in 1952’.2

But perhaps it was not just a sense of indebtedness to Australia that motivated Agapitos and Wilson to create this collection and give a major part of it to the nation; perhaps it was also an awareness of place. To many non-Indigenous Australians there is an intensely surreal quality to our being in this land – an ancient land full of mystery and magic upon which, even after many years of colonisation, we find ourselves somewhat perilously situated. Joan Lindsay reminded us of this in her powerful novel Picnic at Hanging Rock (1967). We may love our country but we generally turn away from the centre and cling to the shore, snuggled cosily (or not so comfortably) in suburbia.

Although there was no organised Surrealist movement in Australia, there is much Surrealist art – art which reflects the weirdness of our presence in this land. When artist Klaus Friedeberger was sent to Australia from Britain in 1940 and locked up as an enemy alien at Hay in western New South Wales, he saw the terrain as seeming ‘to epitomise the surrealist landscape’, and created images that convey the sense of uprootedness he and others felt at this time.3

Nolan visualised this sense of surreality in his highly evocative images of abandoned beasts in works such as

Sidney Nolan
Drought 1953 enamel and oil on composition board 91.1 x 121.4 cm. Purchased with the assistance of James Agapitos OAM and Ray Wilson OAM, 2007 © The Sidney Nolan Trust

(opposite)
Peter Purves Smith
The chess game 1948 pen and ink and pencil on paper 16.7 x 23.8 cm Gift of James Agapitos OAM and Ray Wilson OAM, 2007
Drought 1953 and Clay horses 1953. The bold simplified forms and expressive gestures of the animals are powerfully moving as they writhe in their death throes; the single eye of the bullock in Drought seeming to stare us down and ask, ‘What am I doing here?’

Drysdale also understood the surreal quality of the Australian outback. He remarked:

It is not the obvious, but the underlying incomprehensibility, the incongruity, the pervading enigma of a land, its people, flora and fauna … that wrenches the mind into an awareness … A world where incongruity becomes the accepted commonplace.

He visualised this in his haunting images of decayed forms, such as Studies of tree forms (drought sketches) 1944, made after viewing the drought devastation in north-western New South Wales in 1944. Here, the tree forms take on a life of their own and seem to be animated grotesques, gesticulating with their arms and legs, twirling and standing on their heads. Peter Purves Smith achieved something similar with his figures in The chess game 1948, in which strange mutations look down from the lofty height of a wall, watching the posturing of other exotic figures. Animated plant forms become even more menacing in the drawings of Robert Klippel such as not titled [P19] 1949 (in this instance, made in Paris). Here, the tall cactus-like plants bare their teeth as if to gobble up a floating biscuit and then, perhaps, to consume one another.

But it is not just the Australian outback which can be perceived as surreal – an everyday tree can seem to pulsate with life as in James Cant’s The fig tree 1932. Cant has presented this tree as if it is alive, a creature from a forest of Tolkien, wriggling and throbbing.
Furthermore, as Jeffrey Smart has so evocatively shown us, there can be a sense of menace in our everyday streets – in the haunting quiet of a playground. In *Playground (children playing)* 1951, for instance, time seems to be suspended for all time.

This collection is an important one because it includes major works by significant artists, linking their work to the international Surrealist movement. It is significant also because it makes us aware of the surreal around us, it makes us see ourselves in our place with intensity and it visualises a strangeness in the world that we may otherwise overlook.

*Australian Surrealism: the Agapitos/Wilson collection* will showcase over 160 works from the collection that James Agapitos and Ray Wilson so lovingly and intelligently put together. It will be the fulfilment of their long-time desire to make their collection available for all Australians to view.

It is the result of great generosity and a testament to their commitment to Australian art and the Australian public.

Anne Gray  
Head of Australian Art

notes

In 2008 the National Gallery of Australia recognises and celebrates the work of Richard Larter, one of Australia’s most engaging and lively artists. In this retrospective exhibition, which covers his artistic practice from the late 1950s through to the present, visitors will have the chance to engage with a spectrum of works that are at times provocative and dazzling, and at other times evocative and lyrical – but never dull.

Since the 1950s several themes have been present in Larter’s work. These themes will be conveyed in the exhibition, including an ongoing interest in the human body and sexuality, a fascination with popular culture, and a strong opposition to censorship, authority and the Vietnam War. His paintings often challenge the perceived boundaries between abstraction and figuration and between so-called high art and low art.

A sense of theatre pervades many of Larter’s works, including those of the 1970s that bring together well-known public figures – musicians, actors, politicians – with anonymous faces from magazines and cult figures from underground comics. The most consistent image in his art over the years has been Pat Larter, his late wife and most passionate obsession, who was also an artist and performer in her own right. In many of his drawings and paintings over the years, he fully engaged with the energy she imparted and shared. A selection of these works will be shown in a room devoted to Pat. The exhibition will also reveal lesser-known aspects of Larter’s art such as the glowing non-figurative works that convey his love of intricate patterning and often refer back to memories of time he spent in the 1950s in Algiers. There are also works from the 1980s onwards that relate to landscape, music and science, including a number of spectacular multi-panelled paintings.

The aim of the retrospective is to create a wider appreciation of the range of Richard Larter’s artistic contribution. Over nearly five decades he has proved himself to be one of Australia’s most audacious artists. This retrospective will also reveal him to be a remarkable colourist, a technical innovator and a painter of lyrical landscapes and radiant luminosity. It will provide the opportunity to see a broad range of works from public and private collections brought together for the first time.

Deborah Hart
Senior Curator of Australian Paintings and Sculpture after 1920
Curator, Richard Larter: a retrospective
The opening of the new Pacific Arts Gallery at the National Gallery of Australia has allowed objects that have rarely or never been out of storage to be put on public display. Two of the most striking works are the house-post figure known as Mogulapan and the Uvol dance mask. Both of these objects underwent extensive conservation treatment prior to display.

The Uvol mask is an exceedingly rare and significant dance mask. Uvol are created for a ceremonial performance enacted once every twenty or so years by the Sulka-Mengen people of New Britain. Believed to have been privately collected prior to 1920, it came into the national collection in 1970 in a highly deteriorated state, including severe distortions, numerous splits, separation of component parts and splashes of metallic paint across its surface. Due to the extensive nature of the conservation treatment required to prepare it for display, it has remained in storage since its acquisition – that is, of course, until the new Pacific Arts Gallery provided a fantastic opportunity for its exhibition. The mask is made from a moulded palm sheath and decorated in bold colours to form both a butterfly and a fierce face in the same design. At the top of the mask is a pointed headpiece created from leaves over a plant-fibre frame. Originally feathers would have been inter-dispersed with the leaves but all that remains of this striking decoration are a few short quills. Around the edges of the mask are long, hanging strands of plant fibre that conceal the wearer and give the appearance of hair.

The plant-fibre hair was matted and a large section of it missing. The first step in the treatment was to stabilise these fibres so that the object could be safely handled. The fibres were untangled and unattached pieces separated out. The strands were extremely dirty and fragile and were gently vacuumed through a net to remove surface dust.
Dance mask (Uvol)
Mengen people, Wide Bay, New Britain, Papua New Guinea wood, paint, fibre
89.0 x 24.0 x 28.0 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

(above and opposite)
Details of the damaged mask prior to conservation

(left)
The mask after conservation treatment
They were then impregnated with a weak adhesive to strengthen them. Many of the fibres were found to have breaks or weak points along their length. These areas were reinforced with thin strips of Japanese tissue. The extra lengths of fibre, removed during untangling, were sewn together and used to replace a large section of missing hair along the bottom edge of the mask.

Once the hair had been stabilised it was possible to move the object without causing further damage. Silver paint had been smeared onto the decorated surface of the mask prior to it entering the collection, and flecks of this paint were found throughout the plant-fibre hair. Solvent tests showed that the silver paint could be removed with xylene without affecting the underlying dyes and decoration. Due to the nature of the damage a permanent brown stain remains in some areas.

The mask exhibited numerous splits in the palm sheath, a result of transporting it from the humid environment of New Britain to the drier climate in Canberra. These splits were gently realigned under humidification with steam and backed with a thick Japanese tissue.

The final task was to secure the headpiece to the mask. The fragile and brittle nature of the dried leaves on the headpiece was a concern. As a precaution, the leaves were covered with thin gauze, which was sewn into place before the headpiece was reattached.

This treatment took three months to complete, resulting in an object that is more stable and has a vastly improved appearance.

Mogulapan is a primordial ancestor in the creation stories of the Sawos people and was once tied to the post of a house at Torembi village located in the Sepik River region of Papua New Guinea. Months ahead of the Pacific Arts Gallery opening, the large wooden figure of Mogulapan came into the Conservation lab for treatment. The carved surface was covered in a pale mud, with faint colour visible around the edges of the face and across the top of the forehead, suggesting that at one time it had been painted. Previous displays of this figure had focused on the carved features and tribal markings as its most distinctive and beautiful attributes. However, a little-known photograph of the post – taken in 1956 while it was still in Torembi village – showed strong, painted markings across the face, complementing the underlying carved form. This decoration included black triangles on the cheeks, heavy eyebrows and colour on the lips, all of which were obscured by the mud. Seasonal flooding is thought to have been the cause of the mud deposited on the surface. The designs were likely repainted after each flood, creating the coloured design against a pale clay background.

Spot tests, done by swabbing small areas, showed that red, yellow and black pigments were still present beneath the mud. Working carefully and using the 1956 photograph as a guide, mud was removed from the pigmented areas of the design by gently swabbing with saliva. The mud on the rest of the object was retained as it could be valuable to future research on the object, and it maintained the contrasting background to the strong pigment covered areas. The design was gradually revealed over several months and had retained fine details, such as the coloured dots along the edges of the triangles on the cheeks. The newly revealed colour alters the entire feel of the object, returning its former character.

The treatment of the Uvol dance mask and the house-post figure, Mogulapan, as well as the other works on display, was the culmination of many months of work, allowing previously unseen objects to be exhibited at their best.

Catherine Collins and Sarah McHugh
Objects conservators
Maori canoe guardian figure: a survivor from long ago

It has been said that you can never judge a book by its cover alone. This saying certainly applies to a work in the Gallery’s Pacific Arts collection – the impressive Maori canoe guardian figure, or hauki. The guardian figure, which spent the greater part of the twentieth century sitting under a hall table in an English home, was thought to have been carved around the beginning of the nineteenth century; however, advances in scientific dating techniques show the hauki to be far older than originally thought.

New Zealand is considered to be the last landmass of the Pacific to be discovered and settled by eastern Polynesian people from the Cook Islands or Society Islands 3000 miles to New Zealand’s north-east. The time of arrival and settlement of New Zealand by the Maori iwi (people) is still unclear although archaeological research suggests landings along the east coast of the North Island some 700 to 800 years ago in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; oral history of some Maori iwi indicates arrival from the ancestral land of Hawaiki around 1000 years ago.

For centuries, prior to the mid nineteenth century, waka taua (war canoes) transported Maori warriors along the coast and rivers to raid enemy settlements in an endless cycle of utu (revenge) skirmishes. The war canoe was a spiritually charged symbol of community identity. The long hull of the canoe with its ornate prow and stern was believed to be the physical body of an ancestor in which warriors travelling towards warfare could become connected to ancestral strength, a vital source of power and protection. Each canoe had a decoratively carved prow where a squatting hauki guardian figure faced inwards with a fixed gaze on the warriors. A canoe’s hauki was a powerful reminder of those eminent ancestors who spiritually accompanied them. The war canoe that the Gallery’s hauki came from would have been exceptionally huge and capable of carrying a small army of around a hundred or more warriors.

There is a distinctive style to the hauki. Its massive head, the seat of a person’s spiritual power, and rich carved texture playing across the surface suggest it was made during Te Pu waitanga (The Flowering), a classical period for Maori art. This period – thought to have its beginnings around the start of the sixteenth century and lasting until the late eighteenth century – is characterised by a radical shift away from earlier geometric designs to curvilinear designs of increasing complexity and strong sculptural compositions as seen in this work. While the hauki is only a fragment of a canoe’s prow, the sumptuous male figure has retained a presence exemplifying the skill of its maker, a tohunga whakairo (master carver) whose ability and knowledge of sculpture elevated him to a priest-like status.

To build a waka taua, the totara tree was traditionally used and the first chip of wood from the tree was ritually burned to remove the sanctity of its life. Constructing a huge canoe, such as the one the Gallery’s hauki came from, would have taken up to five years to complete so it is highly likely our guardian figure was carved a short time after the tree died.

The majority of traditional Pacific art was made from perishable materials, lessening the number of older objects that survive today, and this has regrettably created gaps in our understanding of art histories in the Pacific region. In New Zealand, however, important objects were well preserved. Called taonga tuku iho (treasure handed down from the ancestors), these items were painstakingly repaired and cared for, growing in significance as they were passed down from generation to generation as heirlooms. The Gallery’s hauki guardian figure, with its bronze-like patinated surface, is one of these rare survivors from an earlier time.

Two small samples from the hauki were collected by the Gallery’s Conservation department for radiocarbon dating, a method of dating organic material. One sample was sent to the Rafter Radiocarbon Laboratory in New Zealand and the other to the Australian National University in Canberra to gain two independent results.

Simply speaking, radiocarbon dating is based on the measurement of the amount of a naturally occurring carbon isotope with an atomic mass of fourteen. Atmospheric carbon (in the form of carbon dioxide) is taken up by plants during photosynthesis and ingested by animals, so every living thing maintains constant levels of carbon 14 during its lifetime. Once it dies, however, this exchange stops and the amount of carbon 14 gradually decreases through radioactive decay. The rate of such decay
is known and used to calculate the amount of time since the living organism died. This amount of time, expressed in radiocarbon years, is then converted to calendar dates by calibration using methods such as dendrochronology – the examination of tree growth rings.

The calibrated date returned for the hauki was surprising as staff initially expected a result confirming the object to be from the mid to late eighteenth century, as it was thought the hauki came from a canoe used during the era in which Captain Cook first sighted New Zealand. It seems, however, that the canoe this guardian once looked upon would have been decommissioned centuries earlier. The information received from the two separate tests indicated the tree died or was felled for carving this work over five centuries ago, between 1400 and 1450 CE – quite a substantial leap of some three hundred years before Captain Cook’s Endeavour appeared on the horizon and markedly changed life in New Zealand. The figure’s early origin places it as one of the oldest works from the germinal seeds in the flowering of the classical Te Puawaitanga Maori art period.

Crispin Howarth
Assistant Curator, Pacific Arts
Beata Tworek-Matuszkiewicz
Senior Objects Conservator

The tirelessly gazing canoe guardian is currently on display in the National Gallery of Australia’s foyer as part of the twenty-fifth anniversary events.
We take trees for granted. They are always there, small and thin, huge and overpowering, healthy and green or struggling through the drought. They are a part of our visual and tangible environment, making the tree a natural subject for artists to explore. This exhibition for children, Treescape, displays the many ways in which artists represent trees. Some take photographs and make drawings and prints of trees and creatures that live in trees, others make objects from trees or interpret trees in a symbolic or spiritual way.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Pictorialist photographers such as John Kauffmann (1864–1942) were influenced by the soft blurring effect of etching, creating atmospheric images of trees; whereas, decades later, American photographer Ansel Adams (1902–1984) explored the clarity and precision of close-focus photography. Helen Ogilvie (1902–1993) used relief printing to produce dramatic, stylised and intricate tree images, and Laurel Nannup has attached brightly coloured lolly papers to her print The lollie tree 2001.

Sally Smart’s Family tree house (shadows and symptoms) 1999–2002, made from hundreds of pieces of black felt pinned to the wall, is a life-size silhouette of a tree filled with objects, people and fantastic creatures. Dominating a wall in the exhibition, this amazing work combines the idea of animal and human habitats with a spiritual and magical quality.

Animals and birds that live in trees also feature in this exhibition. Ceramic koalas and birds, and bark paintings of possums and flying foxes are just some of the artworks that will excite children when they visit this intimate space. There is even a John Olsen print of a green tree frog.

Many artists and craftsmen make intriguing objects from wood. In this exhibition, pieces of furniture have been selected for their idiosyncratic approach to carpentry. A table with three animal legs, a chair made from twigs, and another made from recycled timber and animal fur can be seen near showcases full of smaller objects, including a wooden snail broach and bracelets made from paper.

For many cultures the tree has spiritual significance, forming a metaphorical connection between the prosaic and the ethereal, the secular world and the heavenly world. Southeast Asian textiles often present images of spiritual trees in stylised form and give the textile the power to protect the wearer or observer during ceremonial activities. By incorporating these symbolic works, children are introduced to another function for art, where the object’s spiritual and religious significance is as important as it’s aesthetic appearance.

Children love trees: they climb them, build tree houses in them, look at them through their windows, watch them change colour. This exhibition, designed to appeal to the younger audience, will hopefully stimulate an even wider appreciation of trees as a subject for interesting and exciting artworks.

Jenny Manning
Manager of Education
Few and far between are the singular occasions that truly rare art of the Pacific Islands becomes available. The recent acquisition of a cloak made by the Maori people of New Zealand is the result of such an occasion. In the repertoire of traditional Maori clothing there are several distinctive types of cloak. The most finely worked flax cloaks are known as kaitaka. The main body of a kaitaka was left undecorated to display the golden shimmering quality of New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax*) but a decorative border called taaniko was added along the bottom edge. Of all kaitaka cloaks the most prestigious form was called huaki, which sported two taaniko borders rather than one. The huaki are represented today by only a small handful in museum and gallery collections mainly in New Zealand. The National Gallery of Australia’s huaki cloak, however, is singularly exquisite, not for its remarkable colouring, condition and size but for having three intricately woven taaniko decorative borders. Called harakeke by the Maori, New Zealand flax grows in fans of large sword-shaped leaves and has many uses – it was even exported for making ship rigging in the early nineteenth century. The flax used to produce this huaki has been delicately prepared.

Cloak-making was a specialised art closely guarded by women, who observed structured rituals associated with weaving. Maori weavers did not use looms, and such things as heddle pulleys, shuttles and spinners were unknown; instead, hands were used to twine the threads together. The weaving technique uses two pegs firmly inserted into the ground. One peg was considered spiritually potent, associated with the sky, while the other had earthly, or mortal, connections. Weaving was conducted in private; if a peg fell down it was a sign that strangers were approaching and work could not continue that day.

The restraint shown in the geometric detail of the taaniko border of the Gallery’s cloak is the work of an exceptional weaver. The patterns along the top and bottom border depict *rau k mara* (sweet potato leaves). Sections are dyed various shades of red, a sacred colour traditionally reserved only for important treasures. Black, a colour produced from soaking the flax in mud, forms the background to all the patterns. *Tanniko* borders are visual designs indicating the spiritual and social strength of the wearer who, for this cloak, would have been a tribal chief of great importance.

In the early-nineteenth-century, elegant huaki cloaks gave an air of resplendence akin to the robes of European royalty from the same period. The cloak lent colour and grandeur to its wearer, its form stressing the verticality of the wearer and emphasising the horizontal line of the shoulders. At important events the chiefly owner of the huaki cloak that is now in the Gallery’s collection would have cut a striking impression. The wearer certainly wore a deeply chiselled facial tattoo (*moko*), accentuated by his hair raised in a tight topknot, jade ornaments adorning his ears and chest, and his body wrapped by the flax cloak.

For decades this cloak was part of the James Hooper collection, regarded as the finest private collection of Polynesian art amassed anywhere in the world. In 1981, the Gallery acquired other Maori works from the Hooper collection, and so it is fitting this important fibre object joins Australia’s impressive national collection of Pacific art.

Crispin Howarth
Assistant Curator, Pacific Arts
Dennis Nona is one of the most exciting contemporary Indigenous artists working today. His reputation for innovation is gaining recognition throughout Australia and overseas, especially since he became the first Torres Strait Islander artist in the almost quarter-century history of the Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award to win the overall prize in August 2007 for his majestic bronze sculpture *Ubirikubiri* 2007.

Nona is from the Kala Lagaw Ya (Western Torres Strait Island) people, whose totems are *Tabu* (snake) and *Tupmul* (stingray). Renowned as one of the leading Torres Strait Islander printmakers, Nona recently expanded his oeuvre to include three-dimensional works, masterfully transforming his two-dimensional visionary depictions from linocuts on paper – already stunning in their complex portrayal of customary stories – into the medium of bronze.

_Ubirikubiri_ was preceded by _Apu Kaz_ (Mother and baby dugong) 2007, an equally impressive bronze work comprising two intricately cast, life-size dugongs, which in turn developed from earlier life-size carvings of dugongs – a highly prized traditional food for the traditional custodians of the Torres Strait Islands – hewn from far north Queensland cedar.

Both these bronzes are included in *Culture Warriors*, the inaugural *National Indigenous Art Triennial*, which opened on 13 October 2007 as part of the Gallery’s twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations, and which will start its national tour at the Art Gallery of South Australia on 20 June 2008. Nona’s sculptures greet visitors to the exhibition, alongside fellow Queensland artists Danie Mellor’s phantasmagorical installations and Vernon Ah Kee’s wall-text work, creating a whimsical, historical fantasy-scape.

_Ubirikubiri_ depicts an ancestral story originally from Papua New Guinea, the closest neighbours of the Torres Strait Islands. The story involves the Mai Kusi River on the west coast of Papua New Guinea, and Ubirikubiri, the crocodile. The warrior figure lying prone on Ubirikubiri’s reptilian back was killed in retribution for maltreating the crocodile. The intricate carving on the sculpture relates various aspects of the story and is a masterly development of Nona’s skill as a printmaker, evident in the near-biblical creation narrative represented in the impressive 6-metre-long linocut *Yarwarr* 2007.

This magnificent sculpture has been acquired for the national collection through the magnanimous support of Janet and John Calvert-Jones and will be a key work in the Stage One extensions of the greatly expanded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander permanent collection galleries.

Brenda L Croft
Senior Curator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art
Julius Schomburgk and JM Wendt
Inkwell with mounted emu egg and Aboriginal figures

The National Gallery of Australia has recently acquired a collection of Australian silver and gold works by many of the leading Victorian, New South Wales, South Australian and Western Australian silversmiths and jewellers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Amassed by one collector over a period of thirty years, it includes presentation and testimonial objects, sporting and achievement trophies, inkwells, boxes, jewel cases, wine jugs, cutlery and personal accessories in styles ranging from rococo and renaissance revival to naturalism and art deco. Australian floral and faunal subject matter pervades the collection, contributing further to its importance as a document of nationalist fervour, achievement and aspiration during the colonial and post-Federation periods. While many of the works are ornate and extravagant in material, form and decoration, other, smaller objects show how the craft of the silversmith was applied to functional everyday articles for the home and for personal use. Many of these objects are personalised with engraved inscriptions, providing insights into personal and professional achievements and family, social and business relationships.

Of particular interest as social documentation are works depicting Aboriginal people in the form of small, sculpted figures as part of the overall design compositions of elaborate and ingenious decorative objects. Such extravagant objects heightened the economic and social division between Indigenous Australians and those new arrivals who displaced them. They reflect the mid-nineteenth-century Social Darwinism, which allowed some Australians to intellectually distance themselves from the plight of a displaced and decimated Indigenous people that was believed to be on the verge of extinction. The depiction of Indigenous Australians, set alongside native animals and plants in miniaturised dioramas on these tabletop objects, was in keeping with the prevailing romantic view of Indigenous peoples as one with nature, existing in a parallel world to the newly arrived dominant culture. Several works depict Aboriginal people in subservient positions, their tiny figures supporting luxurious jewel cases and photograph frames. Such objects reflect a confidence in a social order that is now seen as cruelly ironic given that much of the wealth that supported the production of such items was built upon the dispossession of those depicted on them.

Silver objects were produced in quantity by leading jewellers and retailers such as JM Wendt and Henry Steiner in Adelaide, and William Edwards in Melbourne, and most often were assembled from cast parts used as mounts for emu eggs, a convenient and exotic alternative to expensive, and time-consuming to produce, raised silver vessels. The use of the emu egg emulated a European fashion for the mounted display of ostrich eggs that had been popular in Germanic countries since the sixteenth century, a tradition that was maintained with the use of an indigenous material by German-born and trained immigrant silversmiths active in South Australia in the late nineteenth century.

Such elaborate objects were exhibited in intercolonial and international exhibitions, bringing Australian silversmithing achievements to an international audience and offering for many people their first encounter with Australian subject matter.

One of the most accomplished of these works is this c. 1870 silver and emu egg inkwell made by South Australian silversmith Julius Schomburgk (born Germany 1812, arrived Australia 1850, died 1893) for Adelaide jewellery and silversmithing firm JM Wendt. It depicts in blackened silver a caped Aboriginal hunter standing astride a killed emu, a posture emulating European hunting imagery. Kangaroo figures form part of the composition but their stiff rendering indicates a different hand, evidence of the collaborative nature of large silversmithing businesses employing workers of different skill levels. These composite works reveal a great deal about the nature of the craft as practised in Australia during the nineteenth century.

A selection of works from this collection is on display in the Australian Art Galleries.

Robert Bell
Senior Curator Decorative Arts and Design
Local heroes of early photography in Asia and the Pacific

Many foreign photographers working in Asia and the Pacific have been celebrated as the most important pioneer photographers in the region – in particular, British photographers working in the 1860s and 1870s, such as Samuel Bourne in colonial India and John Thomson in Southeast Asia. The predominance of foreigners is to be expected: photography was an import from Europe and America in the 1840s and 1850s, and much of the Asia and Pacific region was under European or American control during the first century of photography. Often overlooked, however, is the first generation of Asian-born photographers, many of whom began as assistants to European photographers before forming their own studios from the 1860s to 1890s. Some, like Indian photographer Lala Deen Dayal (1844–1905), became quite well known in Europe. Most nineteenth-century Asian photographers, however, are not as well known outside their own countries, but their role in the history of photography in the region is as important as that of the more-celebrated foreign photographers.

It is apparent from the trade directories that from the 1860s onwards Chinese photographers not only worked in the British colony of Hong Kong in considerable numbers but many Chinese also operated portrait studios across Asia and the Pacific Islands, including Indonesia and Hawaii. When writing about his time in Asia, John Thomson, who remains one of the most revered pioneer travel photographers, paid special tribute to a landscape photographer in Hong Kong who traded as Afong studio. Lai Afong was in business from 1859 to the 1890s, after which his son continued the firm. He was one of the few nineteenth-century Chinese photographers to market a...
range of very fine topographical and landscape images as well as studio portraits. Several Afong albums survive that show his beautiful landscape work as well as fine examples of his studio portraiture.

In Japan, the dominance of foreigners was short lived. One of the most successful early local photographers was Kusakabe Kimbei (1841–1934) who started in 1863 as an assistant to Italian-born British photographer Felice Beato, who had introduced hand-colouring to photography in Japan. Kimbei started his own studio in 1881 in Yokohama and was active until 1900. He was known for his hand-coloured work and richly decorated album covers.

In Thailand, Francis Chit (Khun Sunthornsathitsalak, 1830–1891) was a Thai Christian who learnt photography from the French Bishop in Bangkok. Chit was court photographer to King Mongkut (Rama IV) and his son Chulalongkorn (Rama V). He started his own studio in Bangkok in 1863, catering to foreigners for the most part. Chit made portraits and landscapes, including one of the earliest and largest panoramas in Asia.

Kassian Cephas (1845–1912) was the first local Indonesian photographer of note. He worked for the Jogjakarta court from the 1870s, and in 1884 he photographed a rare dance performance for Dutch ethnographer J Groneman. The pictures of the performance were printed as photomechanical reproductions called collotypes in In den kedaton te Jogjakarta: oepatjara, ampin, a two-volume book published in Leiden in 1888. A number of works by Cephas, as well as the Groneman volumes, are now held by the National Gallery of Australia, as are works by Chit, Afong, Kimbei and Deen Dayal. With these holdings the Gallery pays tribute to the local heroes of early photography in Asia and the Pacific.

Gael Newton
Senior Curator, Photography

Works by these photographers and others from the region are included the Gallery’s major photography exhibition Picture Paradise: The first century of Asia–Pacific photography 1840s–1940s, 11 July – 9 November 2008, which is part of Vivid: National Photography Festival
Pushpamala N and Clare Arni  The native types

Rather than looking at it as a perfect art work it should be seen in the light of the number of questions that it raises in so many areas: of female representation, high and low art, ethnography and ideas of race and caste, colonialism and Indian modernity – and the history of modern Indian art and photography itself ... This project somehow touched a chord by dealing with very familiar material and remaking it into the form of art.

Pushpamala N, 2004

Having established a career as a sculptor, in 1996 Pushpamala N (born in Bangalore in South India in 1956) started to put together photo-performances – elaborately staged, enigmatic and open-ended narratives in which she played the lead role. In these series she uses and slyly overturns popular genres, working as director with a range of photographers. Sunhere sapne (Golden dreams) 1998, purchased by the National Gallery of Australia in 2006, was shot by two artist friends under her direction at an art residency near Delhi. The work was originally printed and hand-coloured in a small town bazaar studio.

The technique of hand-colouring has a long history in India, where early portrait photographs were elaborately painted in the miniature painting tradition. In Bombay photo studio 2000–03, Pushpamala was photographed in a studio famous for Bollywood glamour work in the 1950s and 1960s. Her work is informed by a comprehensive knowledge of the history of cinema and early photography in India, where both mediums, introduced to the country soon after their invention, developed their own trajectories unburdened by the weight of a heavy European art history.

In 2000, Pushpamala and Clare Arni, a Scottish-born photographer who has lived much of her life in South India, teamed up to work on a project that after four years resulted in over 200 images that make up Native women of South India: manners and customs. The ten images called The native types, purchased by the Gallery, make up one discrete part of the overall work. As the title suggests, they set out to investigate the differing ways that women have been portrayed historically in their region. They spread their net as wide as possible: early Modernist paintings by the hugely popular artist Raja Ravi Varma, nineteenth-century ethnographic documentation, film stills, religious icons, newspaper articles, advertising imagery and art photography – all recognisable to and close to the heart of an Indian audience. Their source material made clear that women had been stereotyped and given models to conform to as much by local artists, in an attempt to define nationhood, as by the exotising and controlling intent of foreigners.

In most cases, the two women undertook an accurate and obsessive copying as their modus operandi. Many of the tableaux took up to three months to assemble and photograph and urban artisans, like hoarding and autorickshaw painters, were used to create the backdrops. This was employed as a strategy to try and fully understand the original works, deconstructing and reassembling how they were put together and speculating on what the women in the images were feeling when portrayed. In other words, the particular experience of an artwork being made, the performative aspect, is what matters. The acts of classifying and of stereotyping were and are about power and distance and about negating the individual, the particular, and replacing it with cliché. This is exactly where these artists draw their battlelines, albeit armed with toy guns. Pushpamala has noted: ‘the performance brings in autobiography and subjectivity, besides the irony and critique. One is inside the image, not just outside, looking’. The making of the final images was painstakingly recorded and these images make up the attendant The popular series and The process series where the audience is given the chance to see the behind-
the-scenes, very human side to the creative process – the hidden aspects of making that usually remain hidden and are forgotten with the passing of time.

The charismatic presence of Pushpamala is everywhere in these images. Dressing up and masquerading as different types is the way that she makes sense of the particular world she inhabits as a woman in South India, testing the boundaries and seeing where freedom lies. It is a practice that is anarchic, disruptive, compulsive, uproariously serious and deadly fun. The two artists ask us to think as deeply as they have about the imagery that surrounds us all. Their ambition is far-reaching. As Pushpamala says: ‘I comment on the world and society. I transform the stereotypical with my persona’. ³

Anne O’Hehir
Assistant Curator of Photography

notes
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Gifts from Southeast Asia

His Excellency Mr Ernesto H de Leon, Ambassador of the Philippines to Australia, presented Director Ron Radford with a gift of fine traditional textiles from the Philippines for the Gallery’s collection.

Madonna of the Immaculate Conception 19th century molave wood Gift of the President of the Philippines HE Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo 2007


The Gallery’s internationally renowned collection of textiles from Southeast Asia was recently enriched by two separate gifts – one presented by His Excellency Mr Teuku Mohammad Hamzah Thayeb, Ambassador of Indonesia to Australia, and the other by His Excellency Mr Ernesto H de Leon, Ambassador of the Philippines to Australia, on behalf of Her Excellency Mrs Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, President of the Republic of the Philippines.

Indonesia’s gift is a richly adorned ceremonial costume by noted Indonesian fashion designer Adjie Notonegoro. The costume was formally handed over as part of a celebration held in Canberra in May 2007 to promote Indonesia’s cultural heritage. Drawing on the traditional kain kebaya, it consists of a wraparound batik skirt and a velvet kebaya tunic with matching embroidered slippers. The garments combine traditional techniques of batik and embroidery with high fashion. Embellished with sequins, the design on the hand-drawn batik skirt is an adaptation of the parang rusak (broken sword) motif historically reserved for use by Javanese royalty. Adjie Notonegoro’s design deliberately echoes the style of dress worn by the prominent Javanese aristocrat Raden Ayu Kartini. Born in 1879, Kartini was a pioneer of the women’s rights movement in colonial Indonesia and is now a national heroine.

From the Philippines came a selection of fine traditional textiles from cultural groups throughout the archipelago and two santos (saint figures). The textiles – two abaca fibre skirt-cloths from Mindanao, and a man’s loincloth, a woman’s skirt and a large rice basket from Luzon – demonstrate the diversity and skill of weaving in the Philippines. Women of the Subanen and Tagakalao cultures in highland areas of Mindanao traditionally weave abaca, a thread made from the wild banana plant, using simple looms. Featuring warp ikat geometric designs, abaca textiles are integral to life-cycle rituals in traditional societies of the southern Philippines. The vibrant cotton loincloth and skirt, intricately decorated with supplementary weaving, embroidery and beads, are ceremonial garments of the Kalinga and Gaddang people of northern Luzon. As in many cultures across Southeast Asia, beads denote prestige, and the colours red, black and white symbolise status and relationships.

The santos – one representing Saint Anthony de Padua and the other depicting Madonna of the Immaculate Conception – make an important contribution to the Gallery’s embryonic collection of Christian art from Asia. Christian beliefs and artistic forms are an important aspect of the culture of the Philippines and images of saints have been prominently displayed in churches and homes throughout the country since the arrival of the Spanish, and Catholicism, in the sixteenth century. Originally the tools of proselytising missionaries, santos are now popular images for worship.

The Gallery is delighted to have acquired these generous gifts which significantly increase the collection of art from the Philippines and widen the scope of our Indonesian textile collection to include the work of a celebrated contemporary fashion designer.

Lucie Folan Assistant Curator, Asian Art
Madonna Staunton  Curtain

Madonna Staunton is a senior contemporary artist of national standing who lives and works in Brisbane. Born in 1938, she has had a long and distinguished career. Her work conveys an intuitive formal sensibility with poetic resonances of time past, fragility and physicality. A love of materials, textures and tactile experiences was cultivated at an early age by her mother and grandmother, which has continued throughout her career. Although she began as a painter, collage and assemblage have become the core of Staunton’s artistic practice with her use of elements of the everyday such as furniture, clothing, signs and coat-hangers.

Curtain 1996 shows a combination of assemblage and painting and reveals both a formal decisiveness and echoes of the tactile and personal. The use of a discarded skirt carries with it a sense of an absent body, a suggested presence of the past, with subtle undertones of the feminine, domesticity and loss. The sense of humanity that the skirt suggests is contrasted with the numbers and the letter Q stencilled onto the painted background. These, Staunton has noted, relate to the idea of numbers as a means of identifying people, and the dehumanising effect of this.1 Their displacement from symbolic order and language also alludes to a world beyond the work, to the metaphysical, the dislocation of association and memory.

Yet the content and its diverse resonances do not outweigh the formal considerations and refined aesthetic sensibility in Staunton’s art. The initial impression of Curtain is of a balanced composition with the centred placement of the black drawstring bag. The repetition of the slightly off-square rectangle in the bag, the skirt and the frame also demonstrates a calculated geometric formalism. At the same time the work as a whole appears unforced in the way that Staunton’s unique sensibility allows aesthetic experiences to come from objects of the everyday.

Catherine Bennetts
Intern, Australian Painting and Sculpture from the Australian National University

note
Gareth Sansom is one of Australia’s most highly regarded painters. His work engages with issues of personal identity, sexuality and mortality. A resolutely figurative artist, for over five decades the human body has remained the central motif for his musings on the human condition.

Born in Melbourne in 1939, Sansom studied at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology from 1959 to 1964. His early paintings, with their raw imagery and suggestive titles, brought Sansom to prominence as one of Melbourne’s most provocative younger artists. The great democracy 1968 is a major work which encapsulates many of the artist’s concerns and aesthetic strategies of this decade. Sansom’s juxtaposition of imagery and the incorporation of photographs reflect his interest in British pop artists such as RB Kitaj and David Hockney while the distortion of the figures recalls the work of Francis Bacon, an important early influence. Sansom’s paintings from this decade are marked by a sense of anxiety, a restless mix of eclectic images that refuse easy comprehension.

A repeated motif in The great democracy is the human eye, which appears most disturbingly in a photograph of a patient with his eyes covered. Recently speaking about this work, the artist made reference to the terrifying scene of an eye being sliced open in Luis Buñel and Salvador Dali’s Un chien andalou 1928. He also referred to Milton’s tragic poem Samson agonistes in which Samson asks:

… why was the sight  
To such a tender ball as th’ eye confin’d?  
So obvious and so easie to be quench’t

Loss of sight and the emasculation of Samson by Delilah are inextricably bound together in Milton’s verse. While The great democracy was not conceived as an illustration of such themes, the potency of these associations juxtaposed with images of a gravestone, a bomb blast and distorted bodies gives the work a disturbing edge, a sense of the vulnerability of human existence.

The great democracy is one of four works – the other works by Dale Hickey, Domenico de Clario and Heather Ellyard – recently donated to the Gallery by a Melbourne collector who wishes to remain anonymous.

Elena Taylor  
Curator of Australian Painting and Sculpture
Love is a complex concept yet the word flows off the tongue so easily. For Hossein Valamanesh it is a ‘loaded word … beautiful to use … and an inspiration for life’.1

In his quietly contemplative work Practice 2006, Valamanesh has translated the word love into Farsi, his mother tongue, and, using saffron ground in water and salt, has painted the word eshgh in calligraphic script on paper over and over again, like a ritual of meditation, to form an enormous shimmering circle.2 The centre of this circle glows with a deep yellow richness and as the saffron is diluted, the script floats to the rim of the circle almost disappearing into space.

Iranian born, Valamanesh studied at the School of Fine Art in Tehran and continued his art practice in South Australia, where he has lived and worked since his arrival in Australia in 1973. An abiding fascination with the methods and materials of his craft underlies all Valamanesh’s work. He has always preferred to use the materials of nature and, over time, saffron, with its inherent colour and richness, has become a fascinating medium. Valamanesh loves cooking (and eating) and speaks with enthusiasm of the enhancing qualities of saffron in food preparation.

When undertaking a residency at the Aomori Contemporary Art Centre in northern Japan in 2006, Valamanesh reflected on the notion of the ephemeral in life and art and considered the concept of painting a large calligraphic image with saffron on the gallery’s wall. This idea had arisen from a residency earlier that same year, where he experimented with writing the word ‘love’ in saffron on thin lavash bread, which was to be consumed by viewers. In preparing for this installation, he painted with saffron on paper and noticed just how beautifully the saffron absorbed into the paper.

In Japan, the wall painting did not take place because the surface was unsuitable. Sheets of thick white Arches watercolour paper, however, were available so he chose instead to paint over twenty sheets, working four at a time over several months to eventually create Practice.

We do not need to know the meaning of the Farsi script, to appreciate this visually alluring work; however, when it is revealed, we are reminded of the complexity of love and that we must practice to understand its true meaning.

Anne McDonald
Curator, Australian Prints and Drawings

notes
1 This article is based on a floor talk given by Hossein Valamanesh at the National Gallery of Australia, 14 October, 2007, to coincide with the Gallery’s 25th anniversary celebrations.
2 Saffron is derived from the dried stamens of the crocus flower (Crocus sativus).
Noted for his meticulous observation and technique, German-born painter and printmaker Jörg Schmeisser translated the memories of his voyage to Antarctica into a series of poetic works on paper.

Schmeisser's early career as an archaeological draftsman had taken him to Greece and Israel. After immigrating to Australia in 1976, his later travels included Cambodia, the United States, Israel and Japan, where he now teaches. In the summer of 1997–98 this wanderlust found him sailing to Antarctica on the *Aurora Australis* as artist-in-residence. As the huge icebreaker carved its way south on its annual resupply trip to Mawson and Davis stations, Schmeisser filled sketchbooks with drawings of the immense icebergs that appeared as the ocean grew colder and darker. These austere monuments and the vastness of the terrain around the Antarctic bases were captured in his precise drawings, which he used to create a series of paintings and prints about this strange frozen dreamscape.

*My first little book from the voyage to the ice on the Aurora Australis* 1999 contains engravings, and watercolour and gouache paintings about his journey. The long and narrow format gives a sense of a narrative unfurling through the rhythmic rise and fall of the accordion-folded pages. This format echoes the undulations of rolling waves, and indeed many of the pages are stained with blue as though the sea and sky had seeped into the paper itself. Drifting through this are towering mountains of ice, sculpted by the wind into floating cathedrals and crystalline sails. Their crumpled contours are painted in blue and ochre tones or imprinted in broken lines from the staccato stutter of an electric engraver. These swirls of dots and dashes continue into the sky above to form dense arcs of rain and mist. There is a sense of the experience being distilled down to the basic elements of air and water, with Schmeisser's drawings containing an almost incandescent clarity of vision.

Sarina Noordhuis-Fairfax
Gordon Darling Graduate Intern

Jörg Schmeisser  My first little book from the voyage to the ice on the Aurora Australis 1999 (detail) engraving; watercolour, gouache and pencil on paper  book (closed) 12.0 x 57.6 x 1.6 cm National Gallery of Australia, Canberra  Gordon Darling Australia Pacific Print Fund 2007
George Lambert  Michelago landscape

George Lambert (1873–1930) was one of Australia’s most brilliant, witty and fascinating artists, acclaimed for his versatility in different media. His paintings are arresting, with an inner tension and sculptural quality. He made his mark as a portrait painter, draughtsman, war artist, landscape painter and sculptor. He gained an international reputation and is the only Australian painter to be elected an Associate of the Royal Academy.

Michelago landscape shows one of Lambert’s favourite places, where he painted several landscapes, including the National Gallery of Australia’s iconic painting The squatter’s daughter 1923–24. He probably painted this work outdoors. The cloudy sky suggests impending rain.

Lambert met Major General Sir Granville Ryrie in 1918, while serving as an official war artist in Palestine during the First World War. Following his return to Australia in 1921 he first visited the Ryrie property, Micalago, at Michelago on the outskirts of Canberra in 1923 and became a regular visitor over the following years.

In this landscape Lambert depicted the gentle undulating country and the crisp, clear light of the area. He focused on form and pattern, emphasising the rhythmical sweep of the rolling hills and valleys and the pattern of the vegetation dotting the middle distance. He described the Michelago landscape in a poem.

The sun is down and ‘Micalago’ is at rest
Like Chinese silk of faded gold, the grass and all the hills
like breasts of turtle-doves …
my soul could find a home ‘midst blades of grass
And get its music from the whispering trees …
These pleasant little hills that lure us on
To ride and ride until we reach beyond.

We are grateful to Philip Bacon for giving this work to the Gallery. It is a fine companion piece to the The squatter’s daughter, and a serene image of the Canberra region.

Anne Gray
Head of Australian Art
American sculptor Charles Ginnever’s *Green mountain blue II* sits atop a small windswept hill in an open valley along the Monaro Highway – approximately seventeen kilometres north of Cooma in New South Wales.

John Kahlbetzer, then owner of the property on which the sculpture sits, commissioned the work in 1978. Ginnever flew to Australia and, with Kahlbetzer’s boat-building crew under his direction, had the work completed and installed later that year. It was donated to the National Gallery of Australia in 1981.

Situated in a paddock often used by grazing sheep, *Green mountain blue II* has been exposed to the elements for over thirty years. The wind, rain and sun over such a long period severely damaged the paint layer, causing visible corrosion over most of the surface. Graffiti, livestock and birds also contributed to its deterioration.

*Green mountain blue II* was originally intended for the Gallery’s Sculpture Garden and was to be relocated once the trees in the garden had grown sufficiently. This never occurred, however, and the sculpture has since become a local artistic landmark despite initial rumours that it had more sinister purposes: ‘I soon heard a rumour that the local people assumed my sculpture to be a CIA tracking station, knowing it was made by an American’.

Easily accessible to passers by (as evidenced by the amount of graffiti on the sculpture), the work was inspected by the Gallery’s conservation staff in February 2007, who assessed the necessary amount of restoration work required to rejuvenate it.

In August 2007, *Green mountain blue II* was disassembled and transported to Queanbeyan for conservation work under the management of the National Gallery of Australia’s objects conservators and subcontractor Conservation Works. The entire surface of the object was sandblasted to remove the degraded paint layer and surface corrosion, then primed and repainted.

A sample of the original blue paint was taken for future reference before applying the new colour, ‘Harbour Blue’, chosen in consultation with the artist and curatorial and conservation staff.

The sculpture is made from four steel I-beams. Three of the beams are bolted to a concrete footing and the fourth beam is cantilevered at one end, balanced with an opposing beam via a high-tension cable – before reinstalling the work, an engineer examined the condition of the high-tension cable and other fittings. The conservation treatment was a great success and *Green mountain blue II* was reinstalled in its original picturesque location in October 2007.

Catherine Collins
Objects Conservator
Rural visitors to the National Gallery of Australia

Canberra was blessed with a beautiful spring day on 27 September 2007 when a group of rural visitors from the West Wyalong and Temora regions of New South Wales came to the National Gallery of Australia. The Gallery’s voluntary guides invited them for a day of hospitality and friendship. This was the second rural visit to be organised by the guides. The first, in 2005, was inspired when reflecting on the Gallery’s iconic painting The drover’s wife, painted in 1945 by Russell Drysdale during a period of protracted drought. The guides recognised that the Drysdale painting still had relevance today, as many areas of rural Australia struggle to cope with inadequate rainfall.

In August 2007, two rural community nurses, Sarah Heinjus and Libby Hanlon, approached the Gallery guides after hearing about the success of the first rural visit. As the West Wyalong region continued to experience ongoing drought difficulties, it was anticipated that a day in Canberra would provide a much-needed emotional boost for rural residents.

The visit included tours of the Gallery and a ferry trip to Floriade, and the guides generously catered morning tea, afternoon tea and lunch for their guests. The relationship initiated in 2005 between the Gallery guides and the rural community of the West Wyalong region prospered with the 2007 visit. The rural visitors and guides farewelled each other having forged new friendships through shared experiences of a wonderful day spent together.

In the words of one participant, ‘We came away with more than a wonderful gift bag and a new found interest in art. We came away with lighter hearts, bigger smiles and the most wonderful memories of an amazing group of people who really care. Thank you all so very much for making a difference’.

Thank you to our visitors too. The guides had a most memorable day in their company and have a greater understanding of the many challenges of life on the land. We hope that we can meet again some time in 2008.

Frances Wild
Education Officer
Art and Alzheimer’s

An Art and Alzheimer’s pilot program was conducted at the National Gallery of Australia during winter 2007. The pilot involved fifteen visitors, seven who still live at home and eight who live in nursing homes. The visitors participated in guided tours of works of art in the national collection. Doctor Mike Bird, a clinical psychologist, was employed through Alzheimer’s Australia NSW to carry out an evaluation of the trial and was enthusiastic about the impact of the program on the participants.

A group of Gallery educators were given special training to enable them to facilitate the tours. Active listening and comments chosen to elicit memories and discussion encouraged visitors to relax into the enjoyment of the Gallery environment and, week by week, become more engaged and animated. For visitors there was the stimulation of the outing to a national institution, pleasure in a new social network, enjoyment in learning about art, and the enhanced sense of identity that comes from sharing memories and having your opinions listened to with respect.

Russell Drysdale’s The drover’s wife c. 1945, in particular, elicited rich commentary; maybe because of the implied sense of narrative, the secondary figures in the background and the drought-devastated landscape.

The Gallery aims to train additional guides, assist other state and regional galleries wishing to implement an outreach program and pursue funding sources to expand the program. This program for people living with dementia is in an area of apparent need and increasing demand. It forms an important part of a suite of special access programs for people with disabilities.

The Gallery continues to develop innovative programs and is seeking to strengthen the partnership with Alzheimer’s Australia, as well as the relationship with the country’s rural population, to make the national collection accessible to more Australians.

Tess Horwitz
Gallery Educator
War: the prints of Otto Dix

Otto Dix’s Der Krieg cycle, a collection of 51 etchings, is regarded as one of the great masterpieces of the twentieth century. Modeled on Goya’s equally famous and equally devastating Los Desastres de la Guerra [The disasters of war], the portfolio captures Dix’s horror of and fascination with, the experience of war.

ngau.gov.au/Dix


Michael Riley: sights unseen

Supported by Visions of Australia, an Australian Government program supporting touring exhibitions by providing funding assistance for the development and touring of cultural material across Australia, Michael Riley Foundation, and the National Gallery of Australia Council Exhibitions Fund.

Michael Riley (1960–2004) was one of the most important contemporary Indigenous visual artists of the past two decades. His contribution to the contemporary Indigenous and broader Australian visual arts industry was substantial and his film and video work challenged non-Indigenous perceptions of Indigenous experience, particularly among the most disenfranchised communities in the eastern region of Australia.

nga.gov.au/Riley

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW, 22 February – 27 April 2008

Imagining Papua New Guinea: prints from the national collection

Imagining Papua New Guinea is an exhibition of prints from the national collection that celebrates Papua New Guinea’s independence and surveys its rich history of printmaking. Artists whose works are in the exhibition include Timothy Aks, Mathias Kaauage, David Lasisi, John Man and Martin Morububuna.

nga.gov.au/Imagining

Grafton Regional Gallery, Grafton, NSW, 12 March – 20 April 2008

Tamworth Regional Gallery, Tamworth, NSW, 17 May – 29 June 2008

Grace Crowley: being modern

One of the leading figures in the development of modernism in Australia, Grace Crowley’s life and art intersected with some of the major movements of twentieth-century art. This is the first exhibition of Grace Crowley’s work since 1975 and includes important works from public and private collections. Spanning the 1920s through to the 1960s, the exhibition traces her remarkable artistic journey from painter of atmospheric Australian landscapes to her extraordinary late abstracts.

nga.gov.au/Crowley

Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Mornington, Vic., 19 March – 18 May 2008

Exhibition venues and dates may be subject to change. Please contact the Gallery or venue before your visit. For more information on travelling exhibitions, telephone (02) 6240 6525 or send an email to travex@nga.gov.au.

Ocean to Outback: Australian landscape painting 1850–1950

The National Gallery of Australia’s 25th Anniversary Travelling Exhibition

Supported by Visions of Australia, an Australian Government Program supporting touring exhibitions by providing funding assistance for the development and touring of Australian cultural material across Australia. The exhibition is also proudly sponsored by R.M. Williams The Bush Outfitter and the National Gallery of Australia Council Exhibitions Fund.

To mark the 25th anniversary of the National Gallery of Australia, Director Ron Radford, AM, curated this national touring exhibition of treasured works from the national collection. Every Australian state and territory is represented through the works of iconic artists such as Clarice Beckett, Arthur Boyd, Grace Cossington Smith, Russell Drysdale, Hans Heysen, Max Meldrum, Sidney Nolan, Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton and Eugene von Guérard.

nga.gov.au/OceanOutback

Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Ballarat, Vic., 2 February – 30 March 2008

Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, Perth, WA, 13 April – 1 June 2008

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For further details and bookings telephone (02) 6240 6432 or email travex@nga.gov.au. nga.gov.au/Wolfensohn

Red case: myths and rituals

Yellow case: form, space and design

Blue case: technology

Isis District State High School, Childers, Qld, 6 March – 3 April 2008

Riddoch Art Gallery, Mount Gambier, SA, 7 April – 1 May 2008

South West Arts, Hay, NSW, 5 May – 26 June 2008

The Australian Prospector and Miners Hall of Fame, Kalgoorlie, WA, 10–28 April 2008

Cooinda Shire Public Gallery, Gymie, Qld, 2–30 May 2008

The National Gallery of Australia Travelling Exhibitions Program is generously supported by Australian airExpress.
1. Eddie Davenport, President of the Voluntary Guides, Joan Purkis and Rupert Myer, AM, at the voluntary guides’ Christmas celebrations

2. Simon Elliott and Harriet Fulbright at the Fulbright reception held at the Gallery in December 2007

3/4. Gary France, percussionist, and guitar–flute duo Tico Tico, performing at the celebrations for the Gallery’s twenty-fifth anniversary

5. Rupert Myer, AM, presenting Uschi Isaks her certificate at the voluntary guides’ graduation

6. Participants at the ‘Building confident teachers’ program in the Gallery’s Sculpture Garden

7. Jean Baptiste Apuatimi in front of her work in Culture Warriors: National Indigenous Art Triennial

8. Summer Art Scholarship participants with paper conservator James Ward

9. Dr Chiaki Ajioka Rengetsu discusses the poetry of artist Otagaki Rengetsu


12. Brenda L Croft, Senior Curator, A&TSI Art, National Gallery of Australia, Philippe Peltier, Curator, Musée du Quai Branly, Professor Howard Morphy, Australian National University, and Wally Caruana, A&TSI art specialist

13. Summer Art Scholarship students in Destiny Deacon and Virginia Fraser’s installation Colour blinded

14. Ron Ramsay, then Assistant Director (Development Marketing and Commercial Operations), National Gallery of Australia, with artist Richard Bell at the media launch of Culture Warriors
Visit the National Gallery of Australia’s most comprehensive survey of 19th century landscape paintings ever assembled in Australia. In Canberra, the TURNER to MONET exhibition features Turner, Constable, Streeton, Roberts, Cézanne, Van Gogh to Monet from 14 March to 9 June ’08. To celebrate this superb exhibition, Forrest Hotel and Apartments offer a fabulous inclusive gallery encounter package:

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OCEAN to OUTBACK
Australian landscape painting 1850–1950

The National Gallery of Australia’s 25th Anniversary Travelling Exhibition

Russell Drysdale  Emus in landscape  1950 (detail)  oil on canvas  National Gallery of Australia, Canberra © Estate of Russell Drysdale
AUSTRALIAN SURREALISM
the Agapitos/Wilson collection
16 February – 11 May 2008 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

The National Gallery of Australia is an Australian Government Agency

The attitude of lightning towards a lady-mountain
1939 oil on canvas Purchased with the assistance of James Agapitos OAM and Ray Wilson OAM, 2007

James GLEESON

WAR The Prints of Otto Dix
A National Gallery of Australia Travelling Exhibition

Otto Dix
Lens wird mit Bomben belegt [Lens being bombed] etching, drypoint National Gallery of Australia, Canberra © Otto Dix, licensed by VISCOPY, Australia 2008
The Triumph of Landscape Painting

Australian Surrealism

Issue No. 53 Autumn 2008

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Caspar David Friedrich

Two men observing the moon

1830s (detail) oil on canvas 35.0 x 44.5 cm

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Caspar David Friedrich

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1830s (detail) oil on canvas 35.0 x 44.5 cm

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