

AUSTRALIA COMES TO THE PARTY

National Gallery of Australia raises more than \$25 million to celebrate its 25th Anniversary.

The National Gallery of Australia today announced that it has exceeded its goal to raise \$25 million as part of its 25th Anniversary celebrations.

Individuals and corporate sponsors from around Australia have contributed \$25.722 million to the 25th Anniversary Gift Program initiated by the National Gallery of Australia Foundation.

National Gallery of Australia Chairman, Rupert Myer AM, said, "This outstanding level of philanthropic support for the National Gallery of Australia in our 25th Anniversary year demonstrates the Gallery's special place in the hearts and minds of many Australians and the value placed on developing the national collection of art for future generations."

Major philanthropic gifts were received from generous Gallery benefactors including the late James Agapitos OAM and Ray Wilson OAM, Rick Amor, Roslynne Bracher AM and the Paspaley family, Anton Bruehl Jnr, John Calvert-Jones AM and Janet Calvert-Jones AO, David and Michelle Coe, Charles Curran AC and Eva Curran, Christopher and Philip Constable, Gordon Darling AC CMG and Marilyn Darling, Ashley Dawson-Damer, Ben Gascoigne AO and the Gascoigne Family, Harold Mitchell AC and Bevelly Mitchell, The Sarah and Baillieu Myer Family Foundation, Rupert Myer AM and Annabel Myer, Margaret Olley AC, Roslyn Packer AO, Kenneth Tyler and Marabeth Cohen-Tyler, and John Wylie AM and Myriam Wylie.

The National Australia Bank, BHP Billiton, ActewAGL, Hindmarsh and R M Williams, the major corporate sponsors of the Gallery's projects and programs in this 25th Anniversary year, were also integral to reaching the \$25 million goal.

Hundreds of people from across Australia also contributed to the 25th Anniversary Gift Program by making a donation to the Masterpieces for the Nation Fund.

Chairman of the Foundation, Charles Curran AC, said, "The Foundation has been delighted with the resounding support we have received from generous benefactors and sponsors from all over Australia for the 25th Anniversary Gift Program. The addition of many important works of art will enable Australians today and future generations to be informed and inspired by the national collection."

As a result of the 25th Anniversary Gift Program the Gallery has acquired major works in each of its collecting areas. These include:

- a sandstone seated Buddha from the Kushan period in India
- a late seventeenth-century marble arcade from India's Mughal dynasty
- pair of Japanese folding screens, *Pine trees by the shore* c.1550, Muromachi period
- a collection of twenty-five Albert Namatjira watercolours
- Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri's *Warlugulong* 1977 (painting)
- Denis Nona's *Ubirikubiri* 2007 (sculpture)
- Frederick McCubbin's *Violet and gold* 1911 (painting)
- Charles Conder's *Hot wind* 1889 (painting)
- the Agapitos/Wilson collection of Australian Surrealist art
- Rosalie Gascoigne's *Earth* 1999 (10 panels)
- Giorgio de Chirico's *La Mort d'un esprit (Death of a spirit)* 1916 (painting)
- Cy Twombly's *Untitled* 1987–2004 (sculpture)
- Max Ernst's *Habakuk* 1934/1970/1984 (sculpture)

To mark the occasion, the Director of the National Gallery of Australia, Ron Radford AM, today launched the National Gallery of Australia's first handbook on the national collection of art, *Collection Highlights: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra*.

Mr Radford, who edited the handbook said: "The National Gallery of Australia holds the nation's largest and most valuable art collection, largely acquired over just three decades. To celebrate this significant achievement and the 25th Anniversary of our opening, we have published *Collection Highlights*, an engaging and beautifully illustrated publication which features some one hundred and forty significant works from all parts of the Gallery's collection."

Over the past 18 months, members of the Gallery Council have also made generous donations to the National Gallery of Australia Council Exhibitions Fund. The Fund has supported recent exhibitions including *Ocean to Outback: Australian Landscape Painting 1850–1950*, the 25th Anniversary exhibition curated by Ron Radford for country and regional Australia, currently in Alice Springs; and *Picture Paradise: Asia–Pacific photography 1840s–1940s* curated by Gael Newton and currently at the National Gallery of Australia.

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