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MUSEUM NATIONAL

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AUGUST 93

ACCESS & MUSEUMS: PART ONE

EDITOR'S DESK

This issue is the first in a series on the theme 'Museums and Communities'. This series has been specifically supported by the Community Cultural Development Board (CCDB) of the Australia Council.

The theme of this issue and the next is 'Access and Museums: Part 1'. This theme will be explored over the next two issues allowing *Museum National* to continue covering news from across Australia and overseas.

In this issue Daniel Thomas has developed a response to the topic based upon his years of experience in art museums and his reading of contemporary papers. To add to this overview I have contributed an article, based on my own practical knowledge gained working in community development, looking at how the theory of access and participation impacts on museums' policies, exhibitions and collections.

Other articles include Fielding the Collections of the Future by Michelle Berry and Annette Welkamp, News, Shorts and our regular Noticeboard of exhibitions and conferences.

For the first time, *Museum National* has also invited reports from each State asking a key local person to give us up-to-date information. However, the information was not forthcoming from some States and *Museum National* is still endeavouring to find a mechanism to gather appropriate information. Contributions are always welcome!

The Victorian State Government recently announced its decision to halt re-development of the Museum of Victoria on the Southbank site and to relocate the project to the Exhibition Building site.

This decision has wide-ranging implications and has aroused much discussion (see Victorian State Report p20). In the next issue, *Museum National* will cover this in detail.

In the next issue of *Museum National*, Access & Museums: Part II, we will present a round table discussion with a number of museum professionals concerning the impact of access in our museums and public galleries. A series of short

articles will develop some of the issues raised during the round table. In addition Madeleine Galbraith has compiled a useful directory of access spaces in museums and public galleries across Australia.

As *Museum National* readers will be aware I have recently undertaken a national tour of ten major cities to talk about the process of becoming a single association. I am pleased to report that although many challenges remain, I was extremely pleased to discover the overwhelming majority of people I talked to supported the general notion of a united body for museums in Australia. I was also struck by the extraordinary dedication of museum workers. While we don't often have the opportunity to get together, museums across Australia would gain from stronger networks across regional and disciplinary boundaries. At the same time we need to ensure that differences can flourish.

Readers should also be aware

that Commonwealth policy and financial support for Australian museums is now of increased significance with the formation by the Cultural Ministers Council of the new Heritage Collections Committee and the imminent establishment of a Commonwealth visual arts and museum touring fund. It is therefore the responsibility of us all to be willing to work on issues and outcomes of national significance to ensure that all museums, large and small, are involved in these activities of national significance.

I remain indebted to the commitment and dedication of our Contributing Editors, Susan Abasa and Marianne Wallace-Crabbe and Publications Coordinator, Linda Richardson. I look forward also to receiving many more contributions to our magazine from museum workers across Australia.

Greg Marginson

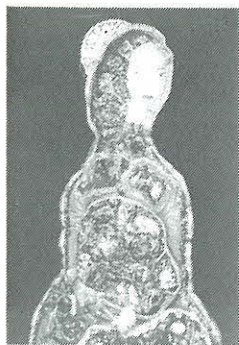
MUSEUM COMPETENCY STANDARDS PROJECT UPDATE

The first draft of the competency standards for the museum sector was completed at the end of May by Annabelle Langdale of Arts Training Australia. The Museum Training Taskforce was responsible for the development of the draft and has requested that the document be circulated to the museum community for comment.

As a result, Arts Training Australia has prepared a funding proposal to the Department of Education, Employment and Training (DEET) to undertake the next stage of development.

The CAMA Board is also concerned that the current draft report be circulated as widely as possible and has invited Tina Jackson, the Executive Officer of Arts Training Australia, to attend its next meeting to discuss an appropriate mechanism for release of the draft standards for comment. It is hoped the draft will be in circulation by early August.

A process of consultation with the museum community will then be conducted to ensure any competencies finally approved have the endorsement of museum workers across Australia. Further information can be obtained from Greg Marginson, Executive Officer, CAMA, PH: (03) 694 6204.



Front cover: Altar installation by Anne Marie Power & Coburge Carers' Collective celebrating the role of women as carers in the home and community. 'From The Hidden Imagination: A Major Exhibition of Recent Community Arts Projects', National Gallery of Victoria Access Gallery, Sept/Oct 1992, Regional tour 1993. Exhibition presented by the Victorian Community Arts Alliance.

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All correspondence to:
The Editor
Museum National
CAMA The Teahouse
28 Clarendon St
South Melbourne VIC 3205

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Production

Editor: Greg Marginson
Publications Coordinator: Linda Richardson
Contributing Editors: Susan Abasa and Marianne Wallace-Crabbe AMAA

Council of Australian Museum Associations Inc. (CAMA)

The Tea House, 28 Clarendon St
South Melbourne VIC 3205
Tel: (03) 694 6204
Fax: (03) 694 6202

Design

Publicity Works
198 Queensberry St
Carlton VIC 3053
Tel: (03) 347 3755
Fax: (03) 347 1349

Original design concepts:
Tony Mammoliti

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ACCESS

The many kinds in many minds

By Daniel Thomas

Politically, it behoves the museum profession to grasp the word 'access'. It's very popular in government and bureaucracy. There, it's almost always coupled with another word to make a compound term 'equity and access', and it occurs most often in policy-making for 'social justice'.

Labor governments since 1983 have adopted formal social justice policies, and it's unlikely a federal Liberal government will abandon the concept, though the terminology might change.

'Equity and access' belong chiefly to discussions of employment policy, so government policy-implementation pressures already scrutinise museum employment practices in regard, say, to women, ethnic minorities and the disabled.

However, within cultural policy it is fully accepted that equity and access apply to availability of cultural product for those who are poor, or who live in remote places. Parliamentarians love the ABC, and know that most Australians love it. It's free and accessible to nearly everyone.

They would like other kinds of cultural product, live Italian opera for example, also to play in their electorates though they usually understand the necessary subsidy might not be found in or for Darwin, or Dandenong, or Dubbo.

Touring exhibitions

Since all parliamentarians want more than the ABC to reach their electorates, touring policies always go down well. Last year, a performing arts touring agency was set up, initiated by the Australia Council for the Arts, at last complementing the National Exhibitions Touring Support (NETS) program. The NETS program has three parts: an intrastate agency in each state, co-funded by the states; a Melbourne-based interstate and international agency called the Australian Exhibitions Touring Agency (AETA); and support for the Art Museums Association of Australia (AMAA) in

developing exhibition practice for contemporary Australian art.

The Visual Arts/Craft Board initiated the NETS program under the Australia Council's Touring and Access program this year, and it was the general belief that sending exhibitions out to the bush was a good thing which produced the Labor election promise to support the touring of what was called 'visual arts and crafts'. The election policy statement did not explain that the NETS program for contemporary-art touring already existed, however, or that the promised touring program was chiefly for exhibitions of Australian social history and of Aboriginal culture.

Touring exhibitions for the bush have also been originated directly from Canberra by the National Gallery of Australia to use the collection in Australia's national interest. However, the gallery's six exhibitions on tour in July 1993 were all in professional, regional or metropolitan galleries, none in improvised bush premises. The National Museum of

Australia in 1993 has prepared a bush tour exhibition about land degradation for the Murray-Darling basin, but has discovered that such a



EXHIBITION DISPLAY CASE USED BY RIKSUTSTÄLLNINGAR, SWEDISH TRAVELLING EXHIBITION, BASED IN STOCKHOLM. PHOTO COURTESY OF NETS WA. PHOTOGRAPHY: INGRID KELLENBACH.

tour 'costs the earth'. The National Library of Australia, with its new Division of Public Programs, has also begun to send its exhibitions on to the big cities, if not to the bush.

I believe Australia should again look at the Swedish model for touring exhibitions.

Sweden has three national touring agencies: one for exhibitions, the second for music, the third for drama. The exhibitions' agency is concerned only with the real 'bush'; it sends nothing to professionally staffed museums or public galleries, which are assumed to be competent at networking between themselves. The Swedish exhibitions are small, not much more than suitcases, easy to receive and set up anywhere.

When we saw an inspiring presentation at the first Council of Australian Museum Associations (CAMA) Conference in 1984, the Swedish exhibitions were 50% social history and topics of current debate, 30% art, and 20% science. The agency always had about twenty exhibitions on the road at one time and its exhibitions did not 'cost the earth' to prepare.

The NETS agencies in Australia differ from state to state. In Western Australia and South Australia there are almost no regional galleries to receive their exhibitions of contemporary art, so Swedish-style expertise has been developed. There, they have learnt how to produce and manage exhibition tours to the bush, at low cost.

Planning for social change

Here we might look at one example of government planning for longer-term social change. Increasing attendance of numbers of disabled people mean that alterations to our nineteenth-century buildings are necessary in order to provide physical access. It is now a matter of social injustice to offer physical access to a 'cultural facility' only by user-unfriendly steps and stairs. Level floors and lifts are needed.

That 1992 federal policy document on demographic change, *Expectations of Life*, also noted that 'participation in cultural activity' by the elderly should be encouraged through volunteer work, and that 'cultural delivery systems' should bear in mind the needs and views of 'older people and the disabled' in regard to *content* of cultural product.

First, let's note an example: the delight with which the elderly encounter Rembrandt's loving depictions of real people in his portraits. There's little such reality in the 'real world' of commercial media. Museums, especially art museums, are wonderful browsing grounds of diversity, of what is missing or rare in mass-media imagery - othernesses of many kinds. Museums, books and some cinema and broadcast drama are sites for sudden rushes of accultura-

tion - of no longer feeling alone and knowing that there are many others like oneself.

And second, let's note which 'cultural facilities' are not cited in that policy document on ageing: libraries, universities, zoos, botanic gardens and national parks.

Here we shift from looking at what 'access' already means in governmental minds and stumble upon dreadful barriers in those minds. They don't know what belongs in the category of 'cultural facility', and hence they can't understand what a museum is. This must concern our museum profession greatly.

Policy positioning

To speak to government, power and money, we must position ourselves properly within policy areas.

So, always remember the extreme territorial attitudes within government. If it's overseen by another department, it disappears from cultural policy-making. And even if it's within the same government department for arts and cultural heritage, a 'cultural facility' can be overlooked if its name signals an existing entrenched policy area.

Yet libraries have been our most powerful resource for cultural development. And universities, especially through their research and teaching in the humanities, are, in McKenzie Wark's words, 'custodians...facilities of cultural memory and interpretation...and also custodians of the future'. Exactly so. But the statement is also exactly so for libraries, zoos, gardens and museums.

One sees that 'museums and art galleries' must have been positioned with 'theatres and concert halls' as 'cultural facilities' because the policy-makers on ageing noticed only one of a museum's end products - its cultural 'entertainment'.

Be prepared for future Liberal governments to include museum policy with entertainment-industry policy.

Before museums produce their end-products, they must fulfill two prior functions. The first is the custodial function of preserving material things and their associated information, as libraries, zoos and gardens also do, but as universities mostly don't. (Except for a few special teaching collections and research collections, universities are custodians of intangible heritage.) The second prior necessity is research into what has been preserved; again, like universities which are research institutions as well as teaching institutions.

Most museum professionals know that libraries are in a sense museums; that libraries, along with zoos and gardens, are specifically defined as museums if they undertake conservation, preservation and exhibition programs. On the whole, zoos and gardens in Australia do feel that, like museums, they are cultural (and natural) heritage institutions. But except for the 'Australiana' and 'Stateiana' collections in the national and State libraries, Australian libraries forcefully insist they are not museums.

They have positioned themselves for an Information Technology (IT) and computer age, not so much as 'libraries', but more as 'information services'.

Most of us have been taught that mere 'information' is not enough, that only 'knowledge' gives power, and that only 'wisdom' should govern our actions.

If 'knowledge' and 'wisdom' are value-added 'information' elaborately transformed by evaluation, research and contextualisation, then libraries have perhaps erred in emphasising easy access to their 'information services'. The phrase implies an off-loading of responsibility to others, outside the library for research or public-education programs.

The Australian library world might be shifting back to a more museum-like attitude. Only one State library in Western Australia, has actually changed its formal name to 'Library and Information Services'. And the National Library of Australia's Division of Public Programs this year changed its name to 'Cultural and Educational Services'.

I like the clear signal that the National Library is providing much more than 'information services'.

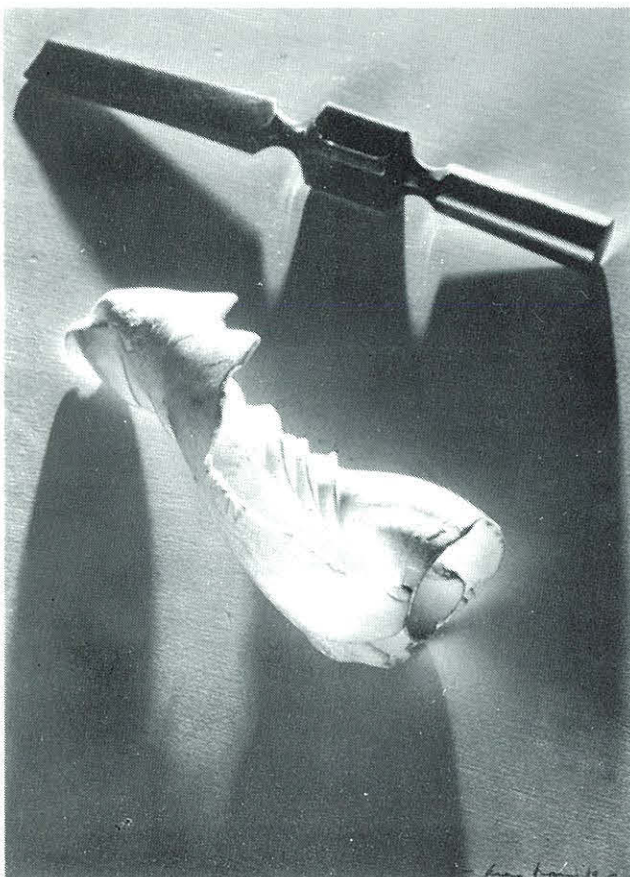
If libraries have their 'information services' act together for the current IT age, and if the National Library of Australia is leading a return to research and public-education programs, the National Gallery of Australia has, this year, also made a significant shift in its terminology. A position which in 1982 was called 'Senior Curator Education' has been renamed 'Manager Public Access'.

Obviously, it's well-intentioned and politically opportunistic in regard to that 'A' word of which parliamentarians are so fond. But on first hearing its name, the position sounds like the manager of the turnstiles at the front door.

The new position does indeed control 'membership and front-of-house services' as well as 'museum education'.

Admission fees

While we're at the front door let's note that governments seldom seem to worry about admission charges to museums; at Neville Wran's accession as NSW Premier he removed an admission charge from the Art Gallery of NSW, but twenty years later governments even encourage such charges, no doubt in the lazy belief that 'exhibitions' are all that museums provide. And while governments do worry about libraries imposing admission charges, the Federal Government doesn't seem to notice the inconsistency of free admission to some museums in Canberra but not to others.



MAX DUPAIN, TWO FORMS, 1939 (COLLECTION NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA)

Nor do governments take much interest in days or hours of opening. Seven-day-a-week free access to libraries is normal, whereas many museums provide much less.

Location

Accessibility of location is not much discussed by governments either. It seems to be taken for granted that in terms of social justice, museums should be at public transport hubs and in places of high visibility.

Surveys of people who do not visit museums have established they

are nevertheless very happy that such institutions exist. Non-visitors, exercising a democratic right not to visit, seem to understand better than governments that they have indirect access to museums through media and education all the time and that visitors to museums are therefore a very small minority of a museum's users.

Access for professionals

We have almost arrived at our profession's current chief concern: 'intellectual access'. And no, this doesn't mean access by intellectuals to a museum's undisplayed collections, or access to its catalogue.

Professionals will battle their way through the systems, justly complaining that museums don't know what they own, can't find what they know they own, or can't make it accessible for inspection even if they know where it is. Why can't museums be more like those well-catalogued library collections? One Australian intellectual, historian Peter Spearritt, declares roundly that all collecting institutions are user-unfriendly.

Access for such passionate users of undisplayed collections is, we all know, entirely inadequate. Good news is this year's formal creation by the Cultural Ministers' Council of a Heritage Collections Committee, a continuation of the Heritage Collections Working Group. There will be a small amount of initial program funding for a database of significant national collections, and for conservation

of collections.

This new 'Heritage Collections' program sounds exactly like one of the programs of the US National Endowment for the Humanities (a US federal agency established in 1965 as a counterpart to the National Endowment for the Arts).

The US Humanities program for 'Preservation and Access' offers grants for, say, transfer of century-old manual card catalogues of collections to computer database catalogues. In the US 'access' means library-style access through catalogues and indices. It is a less

populist use than that of our Australian parliamentarians who want their people to 'access' the experience of cultural product directly, not merely to know that cultural resources exist.

Intellectual access

The National Gallery position of Manager Public Access will help the general public, not the specialist scholar, to gain what current museum jargon calls 'intellectual access' to the meanings and the cultural stimulus available in works of art.

It is common enough for a museum visitor to end up gaining less from the real thing than from a video or a book about the thing, though if curiosity and imagination are aroused from the real thing it will be a more intense experience. It can be not only an 'intellectual' experience; it can also be emotional.

'Intellectual access' is therefore still not quite right to describe this extremely valuable concept. In June, at an 'Ideas for Australia' forum, 'Museums: an argument with their own society', Donald Horne put in a bid for shifting to 'intellectual engagement' or 'cultural engagement'.

That sounds more like the original and best sense of education - to draw forth, to develop potential. I hope the National Gallery rethinks the naming of its Manager Public Access. It might note that the National Library, its sister institution, has given a similar division the name 'Cultural and Educational Services' - a name which has a clearer meaning and loftier symbolism than 'Marketing and Access'.

Liberation from special interests

Whether it is called intellectual access or intellectual engagement, it's our museums' top priority for the rest of the millennium. It means getting out of the cosy situation where tunnel-visioned curators of, say, motor cars, feel good about working themselves into the ground for a special-interest audience of obsessive motor car fanciers, who in turn feel good about the services supplied by the motor museum.

It means liberating those motor cars from such limited use and opening them to a world which might contextualise them among other forms of transport (horses and ships), their associated ephemera (drivers' licences and parking tickets), their results (dead shopping strips, human fatalities, cultural development through mobility). It could also mean suggesting that motor cars might also be works of

art, to be experienced for their own aesthetic coherence and visual power.

Some of these things are already being done, but museums in general are not doing enough to liberate their collections from the over-loving grip of their special-interest audiences. Art museums are quite good at understanding the needs of history, if not science. History and science museums, too, seldom present the aesthetic values, the beauty or the terror of their folk-art furniture or their birds and butterflies.

Natural sciences seldom present their disciplines as culturally conditioned. And it's plainly racist to continue treating black anthropology as a different discipline from white social history.

Interdisciplinary use of collections in public education is a requirement for full cultural engagement of the public.

Of course special interests must continue to be indulged, within financial reason. Those special-interest audiences can contribute valuable information about their beloved collections, and might contribute to the development of those collections.

Access to knowledge

We should not forget the public's moral right to have access to the expert knowledge available in a museum. Is this insect poisonous? Is grandmother's portrait good art, or is it culturally significant in other ways and therefore worth spending money to get it restored? Or even the question museums hate answering - How much money is the object worth?

Access to facilities

Stimulating, interdisciplinary exhibitions might sometimes be best assigned to guest curators rather than over-focused collection curators. A notable example was the Queensland Art Gallery's 'Balance 1990' exhibition, conceived and implemented by local Brisbane artists and a local urban Aboriginal community. The opportunity costs can be very high; the administrative support, the hand-holding needed with inexperienced outsiders, can slow things down. 'Balance 1990' might have cost the Queensland Art Gallery four or five other exhibitions that year but, on balance, it was well worth it. The project exemplified another kind of access - access for freelance cultural workers to the facilities in which cultural product is presented to the public.

Access to self-esteem

The interdisciplinary imperative for cultural stimulus and mental engagement is the only way to fully achieve the great imperative of our time: Australianisation of our culture.

Access to the realisation that Australia is very interesting is what museums must offer now. Highly focused projects on, say, the peculiar Australianness of our scientific discoveries or our political, cultural and artistic achievements. Or broader projects, perhaps, like the National Gallery's international exhibition of surrealist art, which contextualised and interpreted Australian surrealist art.

Another promise made at this year's federal election was designed to help projects which might further Australianise our culture during the lead-up to the centenary of 'Australia' in 2001. It was a promise for a 'Foundation for Cultural Development', to be based in Melbourne. Watch this space for museum involvement and opportunities.

Excessive access?

'Intellectual access' to, or 'cultural engagement' with museum material, through carefully planned and intensely focused programs of education and interpretation, are now the correct attitudes. It's time, therefore, to be prepared for overkill. Can over-interpretation become a limiting constraint instead of a liberating stimulus? Did Susan Sontag once theorise this danger in *Against Interpretation*? (I've never read it; maybe the title is enough.)

When the interpretation is done for us by someone else, it can indeed help, but better still is the euphoria that comes from do-it-yourself discoveries of meanings and relationships. As I have already indicated, this is most likely to happen browsing, not at a special event or in a computer index, but in the open-access bookshelves of a library or a seldom disturbed collection display in a museum or, for the privileged, in a museum storeroom.

There is growing professional literature on intellectual access to museum collections, but I still like the Boston psychiatrist Robert Coles who sometimes took his patients to the city's museums.

His 1975 paper 'The Art Museum and the Pressures of Society' (Sherman Lee, ed. 1975) is mostly about poverty and the constant need to work, leaving families little time or physical energy for excursions.

His final case study was of a young accountant on the treadmill of overwork, 'The first in my family

to graduate from college, I'd like to take my kids to the museum; I mean more than once every five years.

Once on a sudden impulse while driving past the Museum of Fine Arts on a working day, I felt like breaking out of the rat-race for half an hour...by myself...I just moved along from picture to picture. It was like being in another world. I couldn't believe it. All the worries left me. I got some distance on my life. I felt like I was becoming - well, you know, a philosopher'.

Further reading

Coles, R. 1975, 'The Art Museum and the Pressures of Society', *On Understanding Art Museums*, Sherman Lee (ed), Prentice-Hall.

For Australia:

Something for Everyone: Access to Museums, Proceedings of the 1991 CAMA Conference, Tonkin, S. (ed).

Extending Parameters, 1990, Australia Council. (The forum's recommendations were published separately as *Stretching the Edges*.)

Jones, P. 1992, 'From curiosities to the hyper-real: a brief history of the display of Aboriginal culture' and Anderson, C. 'Restricting access to increase it: Aboriginal people in museums', *Artlink*, (Museums...on the EDGE) Vol 12, No 1, 1992. (The latter was also in the 1991 CAMA conference papers.)

Wright, P. 1993, 'The Accessible Museum: Modern Art and the Public', *Museum National*, Vol. 2, No. 1. (An article by Wright is in *The New Museology*, Vergo, P. (ed). London)

Postman, N. September 1990, 'Museum as Dialogue: A Good Museum Conducts an Argument with Society and Directs Attention to What is Difficult to Contemplate', and Weil, S, April 1990, 'Rethinking the Museum: An Emerging New Paradigm of Essential Functions: Preserve, Study and Communicate', *Museum News*.

Horne, D., Painter, A., & Marsden, S. (compilers), 1993 *The Parallel Education System*, National Centre for Australian Studies, Monash University, an 'Ideas for Australia' discussion paper.

A reading list, 'Access and Museums', prepared in 1992 by the AMAA is available from CAMA.

Daniel Thomas retired in 1990 as Emeritus Director of the Art Gallery of South Australia and is, to date, the only Emeritus Director of an art museum in Australia. He is a former President of the AMAA; until 1992 he was a member of the CAMA Board and until 1993 he was a CAMA nominee to the Heritage Collections Working Group of the Cultural Minister's Council.

ACCESS ^{Lead} Can it ^{to} community ? control?

by Greg Marginson

This article attempts to place discussions concerning the strengths, weaknesses, successes and failures of access strategies within museums in a stronger theoretical framework. It examines what forms of access mean to the relationship between museum and communities and how different approaches have clearly different intentions and likely outcomes.

Literature surrounding notions of access to museums seems to be centred around physical access to museums (entrance fees and disabled access), intellectual access to the collections, research or curatorial practices, and access to collections. Access too, can refer to community involvement in policy, collection and exhibition making processes, ie. involvement in the broader decision making process.

When looking at concepts of access to museums we are inevitably examining notions of participation.

Involvement in an exhibition, collection development, or committee membership means a community, group or individual is participating in the life of a museum, its program, its profile. They are, then, contributing to the effective use of community public resources.

Therefore, for the purpose of this article, access is defined as 'creating opportunities for participation in the policies, programs, exhibitions and other activities of a museum'. It therefore requires a genuineness of intent and outcome. It may also be useful to define the term 'community', which in this context is the awareness among a group of people of the bonds they share. It is their desire to work together on the basis of these common interests, that gives the word meaning. They may

live in the same area, share outlooks or beliefs, politics, religion, age, gender, cultural background and so on.

I will attempt to demonstrate that all these notions are consistent with a model framework of citizen participation which has been part of community development theory for the last twenty-five years. Reference to this model is useful since it allows communities and museums to examine whether access to museums is either genuine in intent or outcome, and if not why not. The model also allows museums to plan better long term strategies for access.

Before we look at this issue in more detail however, it is probably useful to examine some of the reasons why questions of access to museums have become current and how both external and internal pressures have led to real challenges for our museums as they position themselves for the twenty-first century.



Development of the concept of access

Museums and communities have recently begun to develop parallel agendas - an understanding of, and responsibility for, the form and quality of their own immediate existence; their own cultural heritage and their future aspirations.

The development of museums and access to them and the increasing interest in local museums is unquestionably linked to the wider provision of services and support in the local community. Since WW2 the changes in the level and type of provision in education, arts, recreation, welfare, health and police has been part of a gradual shift in the needs, attitudes and values of the community served by government agencies.

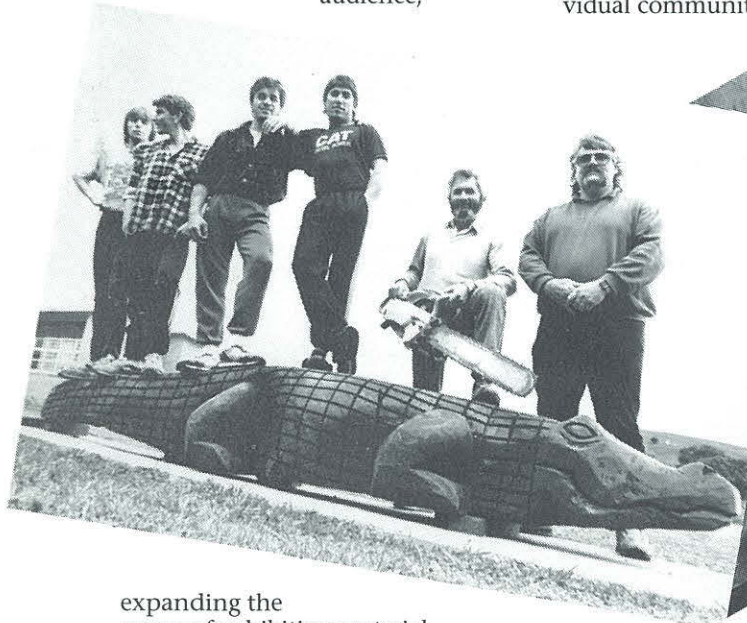
Governments have moved from being patrons of the cultural elite to resourcing and facilitating creativity within the community, restoring cultural processes within the mainstream of the community's daily life.

Museums have contributed to this process by charting these changes from the emergence of the Australian image through our artists writers, poets and historians to the strong emergence of community debate about our contemporary image in more recent times.

The traditional taxonomic role of natural history in museums has also been challenged in more recent times in the wider search for the relationship between human experience, science and the environment.

The sixties were a time of social experimentation and led to the need to become 'a clever country' an issue echoed in our museums and universities. Recently, a stronger focus has emerged in audience development in museums. A focus on corporate management and publicly accountable performance indicators has contributed to this process.

Audience development (an increase in box office) is achieved through creating greater access to our museums, a diversifying audience,



expanding the range of exhibition material utilising under-used spaces (access spaces are often found in 'less favourable' locations within museums.) As a bonus, community access may also help to expand collections with little extra cost, develop collaboration to increase museum knowledge, and also be an effective and logical way to respond to political pressure to appeal to a wider political constituency.

Models of community participation

Forms of participation are focused around creating access to, and involvement with, the museum. This concept implies that community involvement in museum activity goes beyond the community being merely an audience, to the community being part of the creative process of museums themselves.

Levels of involvement will therefore have an affect on the processes used and the outcomes. However, it is going too far to automatically suggest that the greater the access, the greater the success of this involvement. A variety of means will exist to achieve various levels of involvement, although notions of access should imply active not passive participation.

The level of access to, and participation in, museums varies with the degree of commitment by both museums and individual communities.

Formal examination of the participation

in other areas of activity has led to the development of a participation model which measures the effectiveness of participation and potential outcome. The original theoretical model was called 'The Ladder of Citizen Participation in the USA' (by Sherryn Arnstein, *Journal of the Town Planning Institute*, Vol. 57 (4) April 1969, pp176-181).

This model makes a critical analysis of citizen participation as

'citizen power' comparing the empty ritual of participation with the real power needed to control outcomes. Based upon evaluations of the model in Australia as applied to artist job creation schemes by Graeme Brewer and Geoff King (1984/5 *Artist in the Community Research Report*. Unpublished, Victorian Ministry for the Arts, 1985), a model can be developed for access and participation in museums embracing policy formulation, exhibitions and collections/research.

Continued over

IMAGES FROM 'THE HIDDEN IMAGINATION: A MAJOR EXHIBITION OF RECENT COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECTS', NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA ACCESS GALLERY, SEPT/OCT 1992. FROM LEFT: JAMES MOLLISON, DIRECTOR NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA WITH THE BOX HILL COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE PICKET FENCE; CROCODILE SCULPTURE, LANGI KAL KAL YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE. PHOTO BY ALAN MARINI. COURTESY THE COURIER, BALLARAT; THORNHURST ARABIC WOMEN'S ART PROJECTS; THE TAURAPA MAORI CARVING, ST KILDA. PHOTO BY KEVIN WILSON; LARUNDEL PSYCHIATRIC ART PROGRAM; NORTH RICHMOND COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE COURTYARD LANDSCAPE PROJECT. PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAURICE GRANT-DREW UNLESS OTHERWISE ATTRIBUTED.

Access and participation model for museums

This model of participation in museums is an eight stage framework including examinations of community control through to public relations. It is outlined to identify the type of access and participation being undertaken and how this would be manifested in the relationship with communities in terms of policy making, exhibition development, and collection development.

EIGHT STAGE FRAMEWORK	GENERAL POLICY PROCESS	EXHIBITION DEVELOPMENT	COLLECTION MANAGEMENT
Level 1 Community control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power to organise and make decisions with the community. Decisions are binding. Community has power to raise funds and manage resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibition devised, designed and implemented by community without external control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control with community over acquisition and disposal. Collection could be held by individual community.
Level 2 Delegated control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power to organise and make firm decisions delegated to community. Decisions are binding but higher authority has veto which is not exercised without due process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibition programs devised and implemented by community. Higher authority has veto/censorship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection managed by community. Higher authority has veto. Collection likely to be within museum.
Level 3 Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museum and community meet regularly. Decisions formally recorded and mutually binding. Decisions are democratically reached. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibitions are joint undertakings and outcomes are mutually shared. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection jointly owned and managed. Decision concerning acquisition and disposal made democratically. Collection within museum.
Level 4 Share in decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy formulation made without structure, might be unwritten. Decisions are prerogative of key people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibition devised and developed by key people. Wider group as helpers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management by key people. Notion of 'expert' asserted. Collection definitely within museum.
Level 5 Interaction/discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community formally consulted with, joint project development. Suggestions welcomed and may be acted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminars, group interviews, research and collections from within community and implemented by expert. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community is source of collections, key members used to acquire material held within museums.
Level 6 Information collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community source of information to develop policy. Policy clearly 'of the museum' however. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community access to develop content only according to curatorial precepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community accessed for collection material only.
Level 7 Information dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community accessed for promotional purposes and information on museum directions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community networks tapped for exhibition promotion, education programs etc., targeted to groups in community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community made aware of collections for exhibition and promotional purposes • only. Community collectors may be accessed.
Level 8 Public relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No participation by community. Key community leaders accessed only for promotion. May be manipulated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional purposes only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion only.

Clearly this eight level model is structured to simplify notions of access, but it is designed to illustrate where there are significant levels of community access and where efforts are tokenistic, possibly even disempowering.

Particular difficulties exist in the model in examining the difference between administrative and creative decision making, in particular the role of expertise and training in issues of access. For example, can access and participation be equal in

structures, and in museums, where information and knowledge are not?

However, where the model can provide real strength is in evaluating different strategies intended to create access and opportunities for participation by communities.

Increasingly, museums claim to provide community access but few would actively involve communities in actual exhibition development and very few (for example the SA Migration Museum and the Speakers Corner at Old Parliament House,

also in SA) allow communities to have control over exhibition development. Controversies such as censorship and intervention into community exhibitions can also be put into context through examining the model.

Greg Marginson is the Executive Officer of CAMA and has worked for the last ten years in community cultural development. He has a Graduate Diploma in Community Development from Phillip Institute of Technology in Victoria.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Fielding the collections of the future

*Michelle Berry &
Annette Welkamp*

Australians have been involved in archaeological excavations in the Middle East for a long time. In recent years, they have worked on sites in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Turkey, Libya, Israel, Palestine, Oman and Iraq. The work is physically demanding and the conditions are often less than comfortable, but the rewards are many. But perhaps the real reason museum professionals commit themselves to working on such projects in the Middle East is the excitement of being on the spot when new discoveries are made. Of being among the first people to work with material left behind by the ancients millennia ago. Michelle Berry, Conservator at the Museum of Victoria and Annette Welkamp, Collections Registrar at the University of Melbourne Museum of Art, report on life in the field.

As team members on archaeological digs, registrars and conservators bring a basic philosophy which reflects their museum background. It is based on a vision of preservation, documentation, education and access.

In general, they are brought in by the archaeologist to contribute specific skills to a dig. Their challenge is to develop approaches to excavation work which will ensure the concerns of both the archaeologist and the museum professional are met.

The conditions

Excavation work is seasonal and lasts for between six and twelve weeks a year. This restricts what can be achieved on site and means there is pressure on the team to work quickly. There is even greater urgency if the project is one of salvage before permanent destruction of a site. This is the current situation in northern Syria where a

new dam is being constructed on the Euphrates River and will flood many sites.

Field conditions in the Middle East are quite unlike those in the museum. Continuous power and water supplies may not be available and sites are usually located far from major cities. Each season, equipment and materials must be brought in with Australian team members but the unpredictability of excavation work makes it difficult to determine what will be needed.

There are vast quantities of material excavated from a site in one season and it is important that priorities be established early in the project. These are defined by the director and relevant staff and are determined by the excavation's research requirements and significance of material recovered.

While there is always a basic plan for the season's work, day-to-day activities are determined by ongoing

excavation. Conservation and registration work can quickly change direction as new material or structures requiring stabilisation or identification are uncovered. For instance, particularly fragile objects are often removed from the soil before the end of the day's work to prevent damage occurring overnight. This is particularly so for objects made of precious metals. On



DETAIL FROM THE COLLAPSED VAULT OF THE PAINTED SHRINE IN THE TEMPLE AT ISMANT EL KHARAB (EGYPT) • RECONSTRUCTED PLASTER FRAGMENTS, 1ST-2ND CENTURY AD • APPROXIMATELY 20CMX20CM • PHOTOGRAPHER: MICHELLE BERRY

the other hand, objects which have little immediate information value may be set aside for later work and research, although unfortunately, this may never happen.

The team

Composition of the excavation team varies from site to site and the role played by each team member often blurs in the field. Conservators preserve material found on the site, help excavate material which is particularly fragile and prepare it for research. The role of the registrar is less clear because most documentation on the site is undertaken by the director of the excavation. On some sites this may mean the registrar is responsible for little more than cataloguing objects but on others the work may include data collection, handling and storage of recovered material plus data preparation for further research.

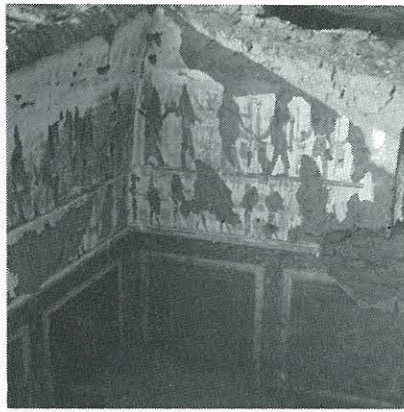
They also become involved in other tasks such as training fellow team members in the safe handling of material. Students and local workers often don't realise the fragility of their finds and because they are often working independently on large sites, it is important that they can evaluate the condition of material before removing it from the ground. Knowing how to remove, store and transport everything back to the dig house at the end of the day is also important - travelling over unsealed roads in the back of an old Land Rover with a fragile object nestled in a jumper on your lap is often the safest way!

The registrar might also help standardise the documentation process as a way of overcoming the different approaches undertaken by trench supervisors and multi-lingual teams when documenting their daily digging.

Conservators and registrars work alongside archaeologists, photographers, students, architects, scientists, research specialists and others. Many have taken annual leave to join the excavation and don't stay for the entire season which can present problems when their specialist skills are not on hand. In addition, the impetus for excavations usually comes from universities, not museums, and much of the work undertaken by conservators and registrars remains unrecognised by their employers. This is compounded by the fact that there are few archaeological museums in Australia, and even fewer museums actively involved in excavations in an official sense.

The objects

Conservation and registration



EXCAVATION WORK IN PROGRESS - CORNER OF THE PAINTED SHRINE: SERIES OF CLASSICAL PANELS RUNNING ALONG THE BOTTOM OF THE ROOM WITH VERONIC PAINTINGS OF TRADITIONAL EGYPTIAN GODS ACROSS THE TOP. PHOTO: MICHELLE BERRY

work undertaken on objects during the excavation season is largely determined by long term plans. Material excavated from a site may end up in number of different places at the end of the season.

During the project, excavated material is stored near the site allowing for comparative research to be carried out. Storage facilities are usually built in the local village tradition and are usually sufficient to protect the material from theft or damage. However, it is difficult to control environmental conditions and to deter insects. Conservators and registrars should be responsible for solving these problems and as a consequence, storage procedures used in museums are being introduced to excavations as more museum staff contribute to these programs.

Works of greatest significance stay in the country of origin's national museum or the regional museum relevant to the site. Ideally, the work is presented in a stable condition along with its associated documentation, hopefully retaining the object's true significance and ensuring its survival. Copies of this data need to be kept by the archaeologist for future reference once access to the object is limited.

On some excavations, conservators and registrars establish contacts with local museum staff through the shared appreciation of the needs of the institution and the object. Many local museums are unable to cope with the vast quantities of material excavated by foreign teams each year and professional assistance from museum professionals can be valuable.

International laws governing movement of portable cultural heritage appropriately restrict the removal of excavated objects from their country of origin without

express permission of relevant authorities. Interpretation of these laws varies between Middle East countries but archaeologists are generally aware of their responsibilities and limitations, particularly as it determines the amount and type of material they can take to Australia for research. Countries like Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Turkey don't allow excavated material out of the country, while Syria and Egypt are more accommodating. Jordan occasionally allows the direct export of pots to museums in the hope it will reduce the degree of illicit trafficking abroad.

The country of origin has first selection of objects, but they will occasionally allow some of the remaining portable material to be taken to Australia. For example, last season a selection of pottery sherds from the Tell Ahmar excavation in Syria were brought back to the University of Melbourne for Proton Induced X-ray Emission analysis to research the composition of clay. Where access to such specialised equipment is unavailable in the country of excavation, this type of export is particularly beneficial to archaeological research.

Transporting material over such distances carries obvious risks and the danger of loss or damage is quite high. It is vital that basic information is collected from these items prior to export.

Reburial is another possibility for excavated material. Given the harshness of the environment in the Middle East, excavated material left exposed in the field for any length of time will deteriorate quickly. It is, therefore, common practice to systematically rebury architectural structures and large quantities of pot sherds after analysis and documentation. In this way they are hopefully protected from theft and environmental degradation. This also helps the landscape return to its normal state.

The future

At present, Australian museum professionals are involved in only some Middle Eastern digs. As these professionals recognise the contribution they can make it is to be hoped that more will become involved. The rewards both professionally and personally are many.

Further reading

Pratt, L.V. & O'Keefe P.V. 1988, *Handbook of International Regulations Concerning the Export of Cultural Property*, UNESCO. (For more detailed guidelines on the laws governing the protection of moveable cultural property.)

THE ART OF THE CONSERVATOR

*Edited by Andrew Oddy, 1992.
Published British Museum Press,
(Distributed in Australia by Thames &
Hudson) \$66.00*

Conservators have traditionally been seen as white-coated technicians located in out-of-the-way areas of their institutions. The more prominent role they now play in the operation of a museum and museology has been a gradual process which has not been helped by a general lack of understanding about conservation. Recently, a few attempts have been made to demystify conservation, the most successful being a 1986 Getty Conservation Institute publication, *The Nature of Conservation: A Race Against Time*.

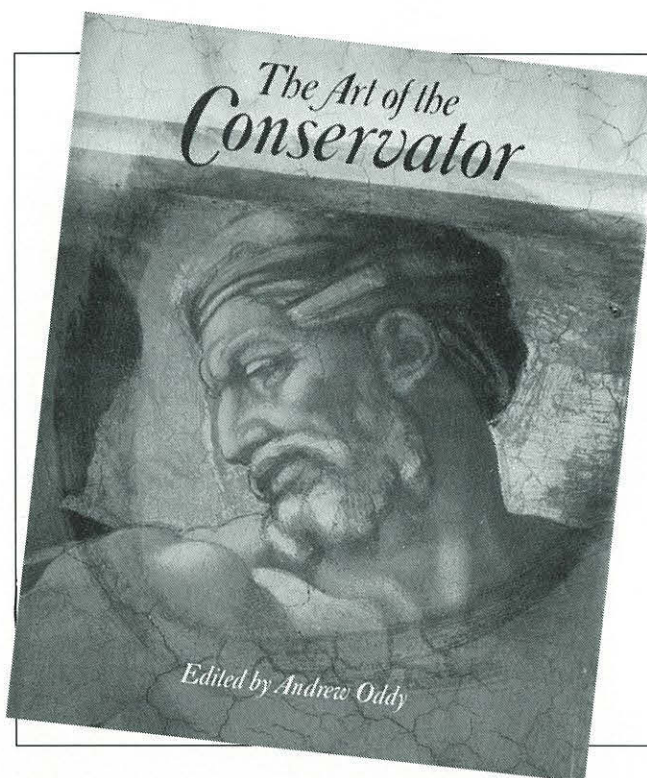
The Art of the Conservator significantly advances the process of interpreting conservation to the lay person. An attractive glossy hardback format with 113 black and white and 58 colour illustrations, it describes eleven major object conservation projects. It is edited by Andrew Oddy, Keeper of Conservation at the British Museum, who has also

written an excellent introduction on the history of conservation and the issues involved in material conservation and the development of the profession. As Oddy points out, the history of conservation is worthy of a major study in its own right. He discusses the major role of scientific processes in conservation, as well as highlighting the importance of traditional craft techniques. The causes of decay and their prevention plus the ethical considerations of conservation are also examined.

These issues are then developed in eleven chapters, each devoted to a single conservation project of a different material: paper, glass, oil painting, iron, fresco, bronze, stone, silver, textile, ceramic and wood.

The idea for the book came from the story of the restoration of Leonardo da Vinci's cartoon, *The Virgin and Child with St Anne and St John the Baptist*. In 1987 an unem-

ployed ex-soldier carried a sawn-off shotgun into the National Gallery, London, and fired it at the Leonardo cartoon. The blast was largely absorbed by the laminated glass in front of it but it still required substantial restoration work. In restoring the cartoon, a range of previous restorations had to be assessed and decisions made on whether to leave, improve or replace them. This remarkable story illustrates the collaborative nature of



major conservation projects involving specialists in areas as diverse as medieval paper manufacture and forensic science.

The most famous conservation project underway in the western world at the moment is probably the cleaning of the Michelangelo frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. Fabrizio Mancinelli, who is in charge of this ten year project, provides a useful summary of what has been learnt about Michelangelo's techniques and the many previous attempts to restore the frescoes.

Disappointingly, Mancinelli discusses the cleaning process only briefly, and makes no mention of the considerable international debate about the rights and wrongs of the approach taken.

Other chapters cover the Portland Vase (glass), smashed by a vandal in 1845 and restored three

times since, the Sutton Hoo Helmut (iron), the Piranesi Vase (stone) and the Hockwold Treasure (silver). *Henry Prince of Wales on Horseback*, a 1610 oil painting by Robert Peake, illustrates the complexities and ethical problems of dealing with previous restorations - in this case there were at least five and during one of them the entire background had been overpainted.

As with any book involving twelve authors, there is an element of repetition, but if anything this serves to emphasise the important elements of conservation. Two points emerge. One is that the conservation process is rarely obvious or simple. All the objects discussed had major previous restorations, all were undocumented and often included unsuitable materials. The second point is the collaboration necessary between curator and conservator.

Various minor criticisms can be made. The projects discussed inevitably concentrate on British Museum objects (almost half) and no mention is made of the major role conservators are playing in the conservation of outdoor sites and monuments. It is also not entirely clear who the book is aimed at. Conservators will have

already read the information in their technical literature and the wider museum profession may find the articles and comments too general (eg. to get rid of rodents, employ a museum cat!), although a small bibliography for further reading is provided at the end of each chapter. And, without further explanation, the general public may be put off by such terms as de-acidification, lux levels and long chain unsaturated fats. They may also be confused by the alternating use of conservation and restoration, which are not defined until late in the book. However, these are minor points and this attractive and informative book is to be welcomed as a major contribution to explaining the art of the conservator.

Julian Bickersteth
AICCM

CARING FOR YOUR COLLECTIONS

Published by The National Committee to Save America's Cultural Collections, Arthur W Schultz, Chairman, Harry N Abrams Inc., New York, 1992. Hardbound, 216 pp. (Distributed in Australia by Thames & Hudson.) \$67.50

Caring for your Collections is a beautifully presented and very readable publication. It is aimed at the serious collector and accommodates a need not yet covered in such a comprehensive manner. The book is based on a thorough survey and provides useful information on keeping and caring for collections including conservation of textiles, works of art on paper, library and archival collections, paintings, photographs, furniture, metals, decorative arts, stone objects, musical instruments and ethnographic material. It outlines their particular problems, the recognition and prevention of damage, storage and display, environmental conditions, good housekeeping, packaging and transport of works of art, security and other relevant topics.

It is divided into chapters, written by eminent authors recognised for their long standing experience and expertise. Each chapter is easy to read and the material has not been over simplified or unnecessarily complicated.

The emphasis of *Caring for your Collections* is on prevention of damage rather than cure. Useful hints on handling minor treatments are provided but the book also outlines the dangers of the 'do it yourself' approach. Most importantly, however, it stresses the point that most treatments of works of art should be carried out by a professional conservator. It further advises on how to find such specialists and points to observe when seeking such treatment.

However, the overall usefulness of this book doesn't conceal a few areas of doubt.

There is little mention of rot in the section on furniture and ethnographic materials, nor the importance of its recognition. Although composites are described as being particularly problematic, little attention is given to their complex nature or how to deal with the often differing treatments, and the storage/display conditions required. Nor is there enough warning for the lay person on the dangers of removing tarnish from silver should an artefact also contain organic material such as ivory or wood. The difficulty involved in treating outdoor stone sculpture is not sufficiently discussed either.

The book is profusely illustrated with photographs that are useful in explaining some of the treatments

and recommendations discussed. Some of these illustrations require comment, however.

The photograph on page 34 demonstrates the correct method of carrying a painting, but it should be noted that watches should never be worn while doing so. On page 36 a picture captions the method of stacking paintings but the angle shown is too steep and the largest picture at the front should, in fact, be placed at the back.

The section on textiles advises on how to roll oversize flat textiles on an archival rolling tube. It must be pointed out that the diameter of the pictured tube is far too small for a textile of such size.

Despite these minor criticisms *Caring for your Collections* is a well produced publication, clear in its representations and easily read and understood. Even though it is aimed at the American market, it is nevertheless a very useful guide for the Australian collector and can also be recommended for small museums. It is perhaps regrettable, however, that the high retail price may keep out of reach of the average collector and potential customer.

Ulli Broeze-Hoernemann
Conservator, WA Maritime
Museum, in conjunction with
other staff from the Department
of Materials Conservation.

Excellence and equity in US

In 1992 the American Association of Museums (AAM) published the policy report *Excellence & Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums*. The report states that education and public service are inextricably linked, and that they are the responsibilities of the entire museum - from trustees to security, from public relations staff to guides and from curators to educators.

Since then, 15,000 copies of the report have been sent to cultural institutions, policy makers, educators and funders.

The report challenges museums to effect lasting changes which will ensure their role as educational institutions is fulfilled. In response to requests for assistance in implementing the recom-

mendations outlined in *Excellence and Equity*, a National Research-Demonstration Project has been developed. This project studies the activities of 20 museum sites as they develop and implement site-specific goals contained in the report. Demonstration sites will explore how they can better link public services to other aspects of their programs and operations.

The theme of the AAM conference in Texas in May, 'Partnerships: Museums and Communities', explored the mutual relationships, rights and responsibilities of the museum and the community. The conference sought answers to some of the following questions: How can museums better involve their communities? How can communities work with museums to meet social, economic and educational

needs? How can museums achieve successful collaborative projects with the communities they serve? Many sessions explored strategies for implementing goals outlined in the report.

It's time these issues were addressed in the Australian context. The MEAA Conference, 'Pathways to Partnerships', to be held in Melbourne in September will investigate some of these issues. The proposed Standing Committee for Education and Training in the new united museums association for Australia must take up the agenda. How do museums and the community establish and maintain relationships for working together toward mutual goals?

Ian Watts

Professional development for art museums

When performance artist Rhana Devenport went to the USA and the UK on her Art Museums Association of Australia's (AMAA) Professional Development Grant last year, she was struck by two things: the general excitement her program generated and the surprise expressed by colleagues in both countries that such a funded program existed at all.

Through the AMAA program, (funded by the VA/CB), art museum professionals in Australia are funded to participate in programs and institutions overseas.

In the UK and the USA institutions are expected to provide for the professional development of their staff. There, the AMAA program is seen as unique because of its particular focus on contemporary visual arts and on mid-career professional development.

The grant awarded to Rhana allowed her to study performance art, design and education in major institutions in the USA and the UK. She developed a clear perception of the possibilities for audience development and education.

Another project included Judy Kean, Director 24 Hour Art, Darwin, who received a grant for two internships: one with ARX in Western Australia where she coordinated an international exchange project with artists from South-East Asia, and the other with the Asia Pacific Triennial at the Queensland Art Gallery. Both situations offered experience in cross-cultural art practices.

Later this year, Kevin Wilson, Director, Linden - St Kilda Arts Centre in Melbourne, will visit the USA, Canada, and the UK where he will research models of gallery/community interaction and gallery/artist marketing. This is not a project that could have been undertaken in Australia but it will have positive repercussions for contemporary art spaces in Australia.

It is not always necessary to travel overseas, however, and the Professional Development Program was recently adapted to encourage the exploration of innovative Australian-based projects. A new Consultant's Program has been created to fit creative individuals with institutions in need of support. For example, a small regional gallery may wish for professional input into programming and collection development so the ongoing needs of the local community are met.

The AMAA program allows individuals and institutions in the visual arts to acquire funded access to innovations in terms of practice and conceptual development. The personal development which results from the program is important as are the benefits gained by the host institution. The program is targeted towards practitioners working in art museums, university galleries, crafts councils, regional and state galleries and contemporary art spaces. Freelance curators are also eligible.

Three kinds of grants are available: a Self-Directed Program - \$7500, a Senior Fellowship - \$15,000 and a Consultant's Program - \$5000.

The AMAA acts as an information resource and applicants are advised to contact the AMAA's Project Officer when developing their applications.

Applications for 1994 close on 16 August, 1993.

Simeon Kronenberg
AMAA Project Officer
Tel: (03) 416 3795

Innovation at 200

Although Australia now has a wide range of post-graduate courses covering curatorship and museum management, the transition from course work to employment in a gallery or museum can still be difficult, especially as most institutions are not sufficiently resourced to provide comprehensive on-the-job training.

Last year, 200 Gertrude Street, an established contemporary art space in Melbourne, initiated 'Raw Material' to assist aspiring curators.

The program was devised by the Director of 200 Gertrude St, Rose Lang, and this year it is being funded by the Visual Arts/Craft Board of the Australia Council, with financial support from Melbourne University and the Museum Studies course at Deakin University.

Through the scheme, four people are given the opportunity to curate an exhibition for the first time with backup from Peter Timms, a Melbourne-based freelance curator.

The four chosen for 1993 were Jennifer Colbert, Philip Holliday, Jane Keech and Jason Smith. While each applicant had to demonstrate real commitment to curatorial work, lack of experience was an overriding factor in their selection - an ironic twist to the usual job interview situation!

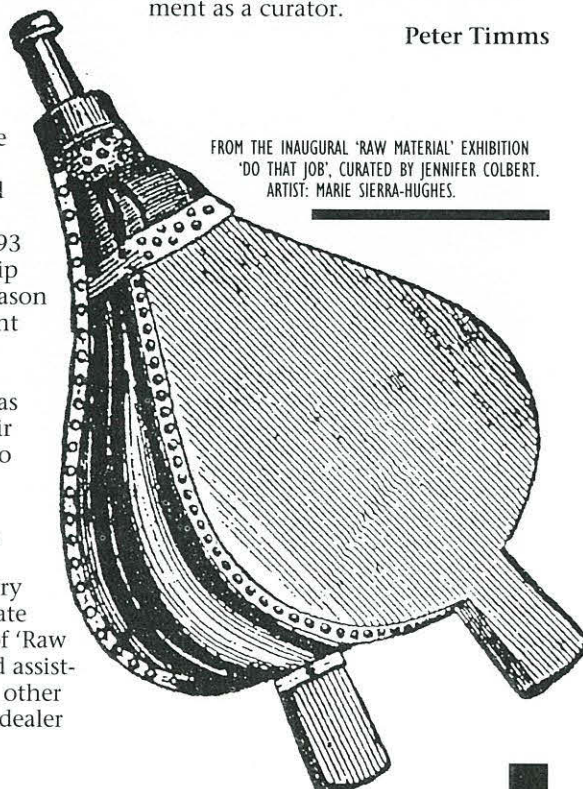
Two of this year's team will curate exhibitions for Gertrude Street's own gallery spaces and two will negotiate outside venues. A feature of 'Raw Material' is the interest and assistance it has generated from other organisations, particularly dealer

galleries in Melbourne.

Curators are encouraged not to begin with a developed proposal. The exhibition has to be defined in response to a number of factors including budget, needs of the venue and expectations of the potential audience. Each curator is led through the administrative procedures for preparing agreements and contracts, budgets and timelines for organising invitations, catalogues, publicity and transport. They are then given the opportunity to install the show.

The scheme represents an invaluable learning experience for the individuals concerned, and the curating of an exhibition for a public institution is a significant help in finding permanent employment as a curator.

Peter Timms



FROM THE INAUGURAL 'RAW MATERIAL' EXHIBITION
'DO THAT JOB', CURATED BY JENNIFER COLBERT.
ARTIST: MARIE SIERRA-HUGHES.

Acknowledging indigenous ownership

A major policy statement relating to museums and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ATSIP) was released in May by CAMA President, Dr Des Griffin.

In launching the policy, Dr Griffin noted that museums must respond to contemporary issues, one of the most important being the ownership of material cultural heritage of indigenous peoples.

The statement recognises the primary rights of ATSIP in respect of their cultural heritage and calls on museums to acknowledge the totality of indigenous culture in the care and interpretation of their collections.

It also acknowledges that museums play an important role in encouraging the cultural aspirations of Australia's indigenous peoples and that indigenous peoples can, in turn, make a contribution to the wider understanding of heritage and culture through their traditional knowledge of the country and its environment.

CAMA accepted responsibility for the development of policies relating to ATSIP in 1991 and has sought to involve ATSIP representatives in the ongoing consultation process since then. The obligations placed on museums to consult forms an integral part of the policy statement. It stresses that museums are no longer just custodians of artefacts but are also concerned with providing access to the multiple meanings of those items.

Its principles cover the full range of museum activities from the

responsibility to return human remains, the involvement of indigenous people in collection management and cultural presentations, plus employment and governance. They are intended to guide museums in framing their own policies to deal with these issues and will be subject to review and change as cultural and social conditions evolve. The current statement outlines those principles currently

considered the most pertinent and urgent and will underpin further discussions throughout the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples. More detailed policies will be adopted by CAMA at the end of the year.

For copies of the full policy statement contact CAMA, The Tea House, 28 Clarendon St, South Melbourne VIC 3205. PH: (03) 694 6204, FAX: (03) 694 6202.

Heritage Collections Committee formed

The Cultural Ministers Council met in Brisbane in early June. One of the Ministers' major concerns was the future of Australia's moveable cultural heritage and the notion of a Distributed National Collection - the totality of cultural heritage items in the possession of State and federal collections, museums and institutions as well as individuals.

The urgent need to identify, preserve and facilitate access to the Distributed National Collection was accepted by Ministers who agreed to the appointment of a Heritage Collections Committee representing Federal, State and Territory governments and the museum community. The committee will undertake an extensive program of research and activity in the field. A three-year \$1.5 million budget was approved.

Ministers agreed the initiative was one of the most important and far-reaching undertaken by the Council since its inception, and it is the first time in recent Commonwealth cultural development that the museum sector has received money to carry out a significant program of benefit to all museums.

The outcome also marks a particular achievement for CAMA as it was principally through the work of CAMA Board members Des Griffin, Andrew Reeves, Daniel Thomas and Margaret Anderson that the Heritage Collections Committee was formed. Its three year agenda includes projects in three major areas: documentation of museum collections; travelling exhibitions, and a national conservation strategy. Once formed, the committee is expected to establish working parties in each program area to develop strategies for action.

NAVA establishing copyright agency

The National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) is an independent lobby group which works with government, federal and state agencies, plus business and community groups to promote the Australian visual arts industry.

It compiles, analyses and distributes visual arts industry statistics, legislative news and issues of professional interest in its quarterly *Visual Arts Newsletter*. Other projects include:

The Who's Who of Australian Visual Artists second edition is due

for publication in early 1994.

Anyone interested in registering for this edition should contact NAVA.

NAVA is also wanting to contact artists from a non-English speaking background (NESB) for registration on its database.

NAVA is currently establishing a Copyright Agency for Visual Artists (Australia), (CAVAA). It will assist artists, photographers, painters, sculptors, illustrators, designers and craftspeople and will: work to make the payment of copyright fees more convenient and feasible for users; provide copyright services to visual

artists and those who wish to reproduce their work; publish standard fee schedules and provide a 'one-stop' contact point for publishers and other users of artwork needing copyright permission. Artists must join CAVAA to be included on a membership list to be sent to all major reproducers.

The Visual Arts Database (VADB) is administered by NAVA and is central to these projects. Artists who have not registered are advised to contact NAVA, PO Box 60, Potts Point 2011, PH: (02) 368 1900, FAX: (02) 358 6909.

Cleaning up the jelly

Cultural and artistic works are notoriously vulnerable. Public exhibitions leave them prey to vandalism, theft and accidental damage. The high market value of many exhibits means property and contents insurance is a major priority for any museum.

But what happens if a person visiting a museum is injured?

Museums are often crowded and cavernous and make ideal sites for accidents.

Under contract and/or tort law, a museum, as occupier of premises, owes visitors a duty of care to keep and maintain their premises as safe as reasonable care and skill can make them.

An 'occupier' in these circumstances is the person or organisation in actual possession of the premises, whether an owner or not.

The occupier is the one who has the immediate supervision and control of the premises. This applies not only to museum buildings but could also extend to external artist-in-residency studios or museum-without-walls programs where the museum has leased or licensed the space.

A museum administrator should ask three questions when assessing the safety of a premises: (i) Does the condition of the premises involve a risk of injury to a visitor or entrant? (ii) May that risk be ignored because it is far-fetched or fanciful? (iii) What reasonable precautions can be taken to avoid injury?

The Courts expect occupiers to pay positive attention to accident prevention. For example, in slipping cases, unless the occupier can establish that they had an efficient cleaning system in operation, a court is likely to find the occupier liable. In one case, *Brady v Girvan Bros*, the plaintiff slipped on a jelly in a shopping mall which was in 'an advanced state of melting'. The Court, finding for the plaintiff, held that the jelly had been present for several minutes before the plaintiff fell and 'therefore a proper system of

inspection and cleaning would have removed the spilt jelly before it caused the plaintiff's accident'.

Personal injury claims can be very large. Further, an action may be taken against a number of defendants to ensure that any damages awarded are recoverable from a number of sources. For example, a public exhibit on museum premises that is negligently built by the sculptor and causes injury, may see the sculptor primarily liable but the museum, being 'secondarily liable', foot the bill as the sculptor has few assets to pay the damages verdict.



Public liability insurance covers a museum for the risk of accidents occurring on their premises. It protects against personal injury or, to a lesser extent, property damage claims

caused as a result of the state of the building or its surrounds, or due to the actions (or inaction) of employees or volunteer workers. Museums in New South Wales that are incorporated associations are required by law to take out public liability insurance for a minimum cover of \$2 million.

A contract of insurance is a transfer of risk whereby the insurer 'steps into the shoes' of the insured when a public liability claim arises. Although a transfer of risk, there is still a primary obligation on the museum to ensure their premises are safe. Media exposure surrounding a personal injury claim can tarnish a museum's reputation. And from a purely pecuniary point of view - it keeps the premiums down!

Ian Collie

Arts Law Centre of Australia

(The Arts Law Centre of Australia's recent publication, *The Arts Insurance Handbook: A Practical Guide for Artists and Arts Organisations* provides more detail on the issues raised above and contains a list of specialist insurance brokers for cultural organisations. For details phone (02) 356 2566 or toll free (008) 22 1457.

Melbourne in ICOM bid

Bernice Murphy, President of the International Council of Museums Australian National Committee and Chief Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, recently attended meetings of ICOM's Executive Council and Advisory Committee in Paris to present Australia's bid to host the 1998 General Assembly and Conference in Melbourne.

ICOM was founded in 1946 and operates under the aegis of UNESCO with 35 international specialist committees.

ICOM's General Assembly is held every three years but has never been held in the Asia-Pacific region. The Australian bid has had strong support from the Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly as well as from Canada, the USA and the UK.

Cuba has also put in a bid to host the 1998 Assembly.

Planning is underway to provide study tours throughout Australia to museums and cultural facilities if the bid for the eight day assembly is successful.

There are cultural, professional and economic benefits involved for the host country - the economic benefit to Melbourne alone is estimated to be in the order of \$7.3 million.

Long term benefits include exhibition exchanges, staff training and professional development with opportunities to examine world's best practice.

Australia is represented on ICOM's Executive Council by Dr Don McMichael. Other Australians who participate in ICOM's specialist international committees are Jan Meek (Public Relations), Leon Paroissien (Modern Art) Tony Preston (Education and Cultural Action) and Des Griffin (Museum Management).

ICOM's decision will be advised in late November with a formal announcement expected during the CAMA Conference in Hobart.

Membership of ICOM Australia: Tony Martin, Hon Secretary, c/- GPO Box 787, Canberra ACT 2601.

ACT

Museums are much on the public agenda in the ACT in 1993. The ACT government confirmed the casino premium of \$19 million will be subdivided to offer \$2.5 million for an Aboriginal keeping place and \$7 million for a 'cultural and heritage centre'.

Labor's win in the federal election boosted the confidence of the National Museum with its commitment of \$26 million to open buildings on the Yarramundi site over four years. The figure is intended to be doubled by contributions from the private sector.

The National Exhibitions Touring Support (NETS) took one more step to becoming a truly national service early this year with the establishment of a NETS agency in the ACT. Supported by funds from the Australia Council and the

ACT Arts and Heritage Branch, NETS will strive to develop exhibitions of contemporary ACT artists for tour to other states.

The National Gallery of Australia shows the nation's first individual exhibition of an Aboriginal artist's work: 'George Milpurrurru' runs until August. 'Surrealism' drew an enthusiastic 95,000 visitors, including 9500 students during its Canberra premiere. In April the gallery shop was taking between \$12,000 and \$17,000 a day from merchandise inspired by the exhibition. The 2000 or so daily visitors were spending up to \$7.50 a head. 'Rubens and the Italian Renaissance' netted an estimated \$25 million for Canberra.

The Australian War Memorial contributes 'Too Dark for the Light Horse', an account of Aboriginal

people's participation in the Australian defence forces. It has also announced plans to install a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the Hall of Remembrance to mark this year's 75th anniversary of the WWI armistice. A major evaluation of visitor services is underway and a report is due soon.

Staff at the National Gallery of Australia have been reorganised into three programs: *Michael Lloyd* now heads Collections; *Alan Froud* holds Administration; *Kevin Munn* develops Marketing and Public Access. New appointments from around the country have enlarged the National Museum team: *Erica Persak* is now Registrar; *Vicky Northey* is now Exhibitions Coordinator; *Susan Tonkin* now manages Old Parliament House in Canberra.

New South Wales

The Minister for the Arts, the Hon. Peter Collins, announced the appointment of a Museums Advisory Council of the Ministry for the Arts in May.

The Council will be chaired by Gavin Fry and the committee will include representatives from small and regional museums: Mr Ray Stubbs, Mr Patrick Filmer-Sankey, Dr Des Griffin AM, Mr Robert Power, Ms Ann Rowland-Campbell, Ms Jacqueline McNaughtan, Mr Richard Mulvaney, Ms Meredith Walker and Mr Alan Coutts. It will make recommendations to the Minister on the formulation of policy for the development of museums in NSW.

The Visual Arts and Crafts Committee of the Arts Advisory Council has new members: Assoc. Professor Michael Keighery (Chair), Ms Sioux Garside, Ms Bronwyn Bancroft, Professor David Throsby, Mr Joseph Eisenberg and Mr Richard Goodwin.

In July, The Art Gallery of NSW celebrated the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples and the National Celebration of Aboriginal Society and Culture, NAIDOC week. The gallery, in association with SBS Aboriginal Television Unit, Blackfella Films, and the Australian Film Commission, launched 'Spirit to Spirit', a new series of documentaries from four indigenous nations around the world.

The exhibition 'Mum Stayed Home' opened in Albury in June and will tour to the Powerhouse

Museum, Wagga Wagga and Newcastle later in the year. It is a collaborative exhibition developed by the Pioneer Women's Hut, the Albury Regional Museum and the Albury Regional Art Centre.

International Museums Day was marked by the launch of the CAMA policy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and museums. Guest speaker at the opening function was Margaret Coaldrake, director of the National Museum of Australia, who spoke about 'museum users' and how to encourage the public to visit museums and to use them for their own individual benefits.

The 1993 IBM Arts Management Initiative was launched in April. The project is jointly sponsored by the Ministry for the Arts and IBM Australia and is designed to enhance

management skills of art organisations.

A new degree in cultural heritage studies is being developed in NSW through the Charles Sturt University (Albury Campus). The course will be offered as a three year degree from next year and post graduate courses will also be offered.

Another new program to be offered in 1994 is aimed specifically at regional arts workers. The Management Training Program is being developed by the School of Art Theory at UNSW, the Regional Galleries Association, the MAA and other arts organisations.

Staff changes in NSW include: *Jim Logan* who is now Curator, Australian Childhood Collection at the National Trust of Australia, *Louise Pether* has taken over as Director, Artspace.

Northern Territory

A review of the Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Sciences' scientific and academic activities is currently being conducted by Des Griffin and Hal Cogger of the Australian Museum.

The Larrakia display, a photographic tribute to the ancestors of the Larrakia people of Darwin, was opened recently. The exhibition is the museum's first public display dedicated to the indigenous inhabitants of the Darwin area.

Two staff members from the Sabah Museum, East Malaysia, recently visited the NT Museums of Arts and Sciences as part of the museum's Program of Partnership with South-East Asian Museums. The NT Museum of Arts and Sciences is also engaged in partnerships with other institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia.

The Museum and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory runs a successful Regional Museums

Program servicing some 38 museums. Current programs include the rebuilding and refurbishment of the Patakijiyali Museum on Bathurst Island, which was officially opened in June.

The new display features three galleries depicting Tisi heritage and culture, plus missionary history since 1911. Funding for the upgrade and new exhibitions was provided through the NT Government's Heritage Grant in Aid Program.

The NT Museum of Arts and Sciences recently held a successful exhibition of 150 contemporary textiles from Biboki, West Timor. The exhibition was the product of a three year joint venture between the Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Sciences and a women's weaving cooperative from the Biboki region. It promotes traditional weaving skills from the region and provides direct economic benefits

through exhibition sales.

The museum also runs a Trainee Scheme which provides training for twelve undergraduate university students.

A report on the feasibility of establishing a National Exhibitions Touring Support Program (NETS) in the Northern Territory has recently been prepared.

The third 'Central Australian Aboriginal Art and Craft Exhibition', organised by the Araluen Centre, Alice Springs, was held recently. It provides emerging artists and community arts organisations with the opportunity to exhibit their work alongside more established groups.

Kimberley Beck, a fine arts graduate from Brandeis University, Massachusetts, was a recent artist-in-residence at the NT Museum of Arts and Sciences. The Araluen Centre is currently hosting Ginger Riley

Munduwalawala, winner of the 1992 Alice Prize, as artist-in-residence.

The Director of the NT Museum of Arts and Sciences, *Dr Colin Jack-Hinton*, retired earlier this year; *Dr Peter Murray* is Acting Director; *Dr Val Hawkes* was recently appointed Director of Public Programs; *David Whiteney* is Director of the Araluen Centre for Arts and Entertainment, Alice Springs.

Note: the Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Science's new phone number is (089) 89 8211, FAX: (089) 89 8289.

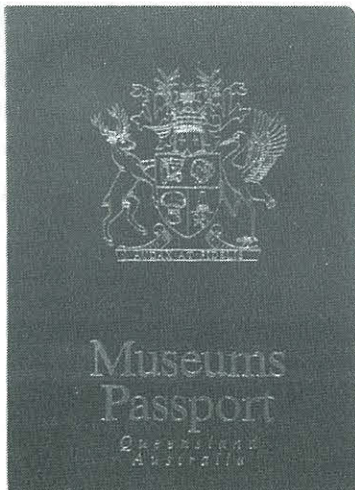
Queensland

Two Queensland painters have been awarded a three month studio residency at the Queensland Art Gallery as winners of the 1993 Melville Haysom Scholarship. The annual scholarship assists young emerging Queensland artists.

The James Cook University is formulating a proposal for a Graduate Certificate in University Museum Management. It will be part of the university's off-campus program and will entail one year of part-time study with on-campus attendance during university vacation periods.

The Museums Passport is a recent initiative of the Queensland Museum and is intended to encourage children to visit the State's museums. The passport is stamped at museums visited in Queensland and provides space for a record of the museum visit, thereby creating a history of museum visits.

NETS Qld is currently involved in touring 'Lie of the Land' to eight venues in Queensland and NSW.



The exhibition is a collaborative project involving curators from the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney and staff from the Centre of Australian Studies at Monash University. It explores the use and abuse of the Australian landscape in advertising and popular culture.

The organisation is moving out of the strict visual arts format and is now working with a number of museums. Three exhibitions curated by the Queensland Museum are listed in the NETS register of touring exhibitions and NETS staff are keen to work with museum curators on those exhibitions picked up by other venues.

Staff changes in Queensland include *Kirsty Grant*, who has taken over as Associate Curator of Prints, Drawings and Photographs at the Queensland Art Gallery, *Timothy Morrell* is Curator of Contemporary Art and *Candice Bruce* is Curator of Australian Art; *Pamela Whitlock* is Director of the Gladstone Regional Gallery and Museum.



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LECTURER Museum Studies

Applications are invited for a Lectureship position in Museum Studies. Although this will be initially in the form of a two-year contract, anticipated developments of the programme should allow the University to offer renewal as a tenure-track position. The Museum Studies programme was established in 1989 and offers an MA and post graduate Diploma. An undergraduate programme in Cultural Heritage Studies is being developed.

The appointee will be expected to contribute to existing internal and distance teaching programmes, undertake graduate research supervision and develop an active research programme in the area of her or his speciality.

Applicants should possess at least an MA in either Art History, Anthropology, Maori Studies, History or a natural science discipline and have at least completed five years full-time museum employment. Candidates with a post-graduate qualification in Museum Studies and/or Art Museum experience are particularly encouraged to apply.

Information of an academic nature can be obtained from David Butts, Director of Museum Studies, telephone (64) 6 356-9099; facsimile (64) 6 350-5627; E-mail D.Butts@massey.ac.nz. Reference number MusN 43/93 must be quoted.

Closing date: 20 August 1993.

An information package including Conditions of Appointment is obtainable by telephoning (64) 6 356-9099 extension 7318.

Applications, including a full curriculum vitae and the names, addresses and fax numbers of three referees should be sent to Mrs V B Bretherton, Personnel Section before the closing date specified.

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South Australia

The State History Centre was opened in March.

The centre is an amalgamation of the History Trust of South Australia's Old Parliament House and Community History Unit and will strengthen the History Trust's outreach work with community museums and historical societies. The present name of the museum, 'Old Parliament House', will be retained, with a subtitle of the 'State History Centre'.

The National Museum of Australia is moving into South Australian waters with its travelling exhibi-

tion on the Murray-Darling Basin, 'A Changing People, a Changing Land', which tells the story of the Basin from environmental and historical points of view.

The State Government has allocated \$2.5 million for Stage One of the extensions to the Art Gallery of South Australia.

The total project cost is \$15 million with completion scheduled to coincide with the 1996 Adelaide Festival. The extensions will provide space for temporary exhibitions, administration, bookshop and merchandise areas plus meeting

rooms for the Friends. Access for the disabled will be incorporated into the new and old wings for the first time.

The South Australian Country Arts Trust (SACAT) is providing a 'home' for the South Australian Touring Exhibitions Program in its offices in South Terrace.

In March this year, *Susan Tonkin* left South Australia to take up a new appointment at Old Parliament House in Canberra. *Yvonne Routledge* has taken over as the new President of the MAA SA branch.

Tasmania

The Devonport City Council has established a committee to investigate a museum/gallery complex and a cultural policy for the city.

It will address the implications surrounding the Council's acquisition of social history collections and access to them.

The Devonport Gallery and Arts Centre has initiated an artist-in-residence program with Launceston artist, Robyn McKinnon, as the inaugural artist-in-residence.

Victoria Hammond has taken over as Executive Director at the Contemporary Art Space Tasmania (CAST) and is now in the process of selecting a Project Officer.

The Strahan Visitor Centre opened last November at a cost of \$1.3 million. It was primarily funded by a federal grant and involved the Strahan community, the Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage, the Forestry Commission and the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation. It deals with aspects of the West Coast's history including Aborigines, convicts, mining, tourism, hydro-electricity and political decisions affecting the West Coast and the World Heritage region.

A major concern for Tasmanian museums has been the management of historic objects in situ. This issue has received considerable public attention following the approval by the Minister for Mines and Energy for the relocation of the Chintock or Kent Battery from the mine site in north-eastern Tasmania to a museum at Beaconsfield. The movement of the battery occurred despite strong opposition from the local community, the local government authority and the local museum.

As a result the Department for Mines and Energy has developed a policy on mining heritage management. This policy was launched by the Premier, Ray Groom, at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in February.

As part of this policy a committee involving both heritage and land management authorities as well as museums has been established to consider the future of other historic mining objects remaining in situ.

Victoria

Many will be aware of the Victorian State Government's decision to halt the redevelopment of the Museum of Victoria on the Southbank site and relocate the project to the Exhibition Building site.

The MAA Victorian Branch is appalled at the continued delays to the project which it believes jeopardises the preservation of the magnificent collections held by the museum. Museums are a vital component of our cultural lives and are a key part of our rapidly expanding tourism industry. The Southbank site was geographically ideal for the relocation of the Museum of Victoria as the crowds already attracted to the Arts Centre, National Gallery of Victoria and Southgate have shown. We must ensure that the unsurpassed collections of the Museum of Victoria are housed in a world class purpose-built facility without further delay. Members of relevant professional bodies have lobbied the State Government on its decision.

The branch is pleased, however, that the State Government is committed to redeveloping this major state institution.

The recently published *1992 Victorian Museum Survey Report*

identifies 600 museums in Victoria, most of them in regional areas.

Other findings in the report include:

- 79% of current museums were established in the boom decades of the 1960s, 70s and 80s.
- The number of people visiting Victorian museums rose by 13% in the period 1989-1991. More than six million people visited Victorian museums in 1991.
- More than one million hours of voluntary labour were contributed to the Victorian museum industry in just one year.
- More than half of those museums surveyed have operating budgets of less than \$5000 per year.
- Each museum surveyed collects an average of 140 objects a year.

The 1992 Museum Professional of the Year award was won by Joan Jack of the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo; the 1992 Branch Essay Prize, awarded to a student of the Graduate Diploma in Museum Studies at Deakin University, was won by Melissa Kellam for her paper 'Museums and Moral Rights for Artists'; the Roslyn Lawry Award for Excellence in Museum Studies was awarded to Neville Quick for his research into the use of image capture systems.

Staff changes in Victoria include *Linda Lucas*, who takes over as Director of the Swan Hill Regional Gallery of Contemporary Art; *Kim Sajet* is the new Director, Waverley City Gallery; *Judy Miles* is now Director of Sale Regional Gallery;

Gwen Webb, former Director at Sale was honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours list; *Clare Williamson* is now Curator at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA); *Brian Allison* has taken over as Director at the Horsham Art

Gallery; *Andrew Abbot* is Project Officer at AETA. The AMAA now has a full complement of staff: *Simeon Kronenberg* is Project Officer; *Marianne Wallace-Crabbe* is Publications Officer.

Western Australia

The biennial R&I Bank of WA Museum Education Awards were launched in May.

The awards are conducted by the Western Australian branches of the MAA and the Museum Education Association of Australia (MEAA).

A subcommittee of the MAA WA is looking at various issues such as employment conditions in museums, local government support for museums and how to increase the involvement of those working in the natural sciences in the MAA. One of its main roles has been assisting in the development of the Edith Cowan University Museum Studies Course which commenced in July.

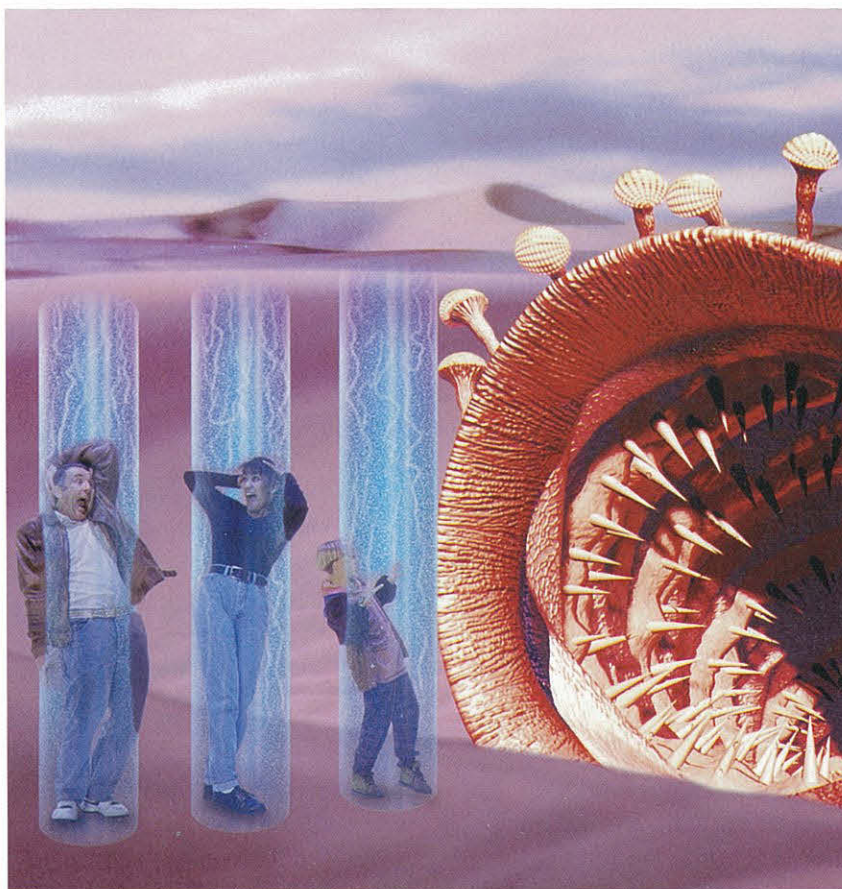
The Art Gallery of WA recently opened the five refurbished galleries on the upper level. Exhibitions drawn from the collection have been hung in a chronological review of art from the sixteenth century through to the present day. The display incorporates paintings, works on paper, sculpture, craft and decorative arts, which are exhibited together in defined areas to illustrate the evolution of different styles and movements. Didactic panels introduce each section.

Paola Anselmi has been awarded a three month scholarship by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to undertake specialised studies in Italy in the field of art and museology.

Cassandra Zervos, former Public Programs Coordinator at the Bunbury Art Galleries, was awarded an AMAA Professional Development Grant in late 1992 to examine the development, implementation and evaluation of education and Friends' programs in NSW. She has since accepted a post-graduate scholarship for a doctorate at the University of Canberra on access and interpretation in museums, especially for young children.

NETS WA has published two handbooks to develop professional standards for curating exhibitions and preparing condition reports. (See publications listing in Noticeboard for details).

In March the BHP Community Trust donated of \$350,000 to the Art



BEAM YOURSELF TO PLANET ZYBOTROX AS PART OF THE \$1.4MILLION EXHIBITION 'SPECIAL EFFECTS: SECRETS BEHIND THE SCREEN' CONCEIVED BY, AND RECENTLY OPENED AT, SCITECH PERTH. THE EXHIBITION WAS TWO YEARS IN THE MAKING AND IS LIKELY TO TOUR THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA AND HONG KONG. FURTHER INFORMATION: ISADORA NOBLE, (09) 481 6295.

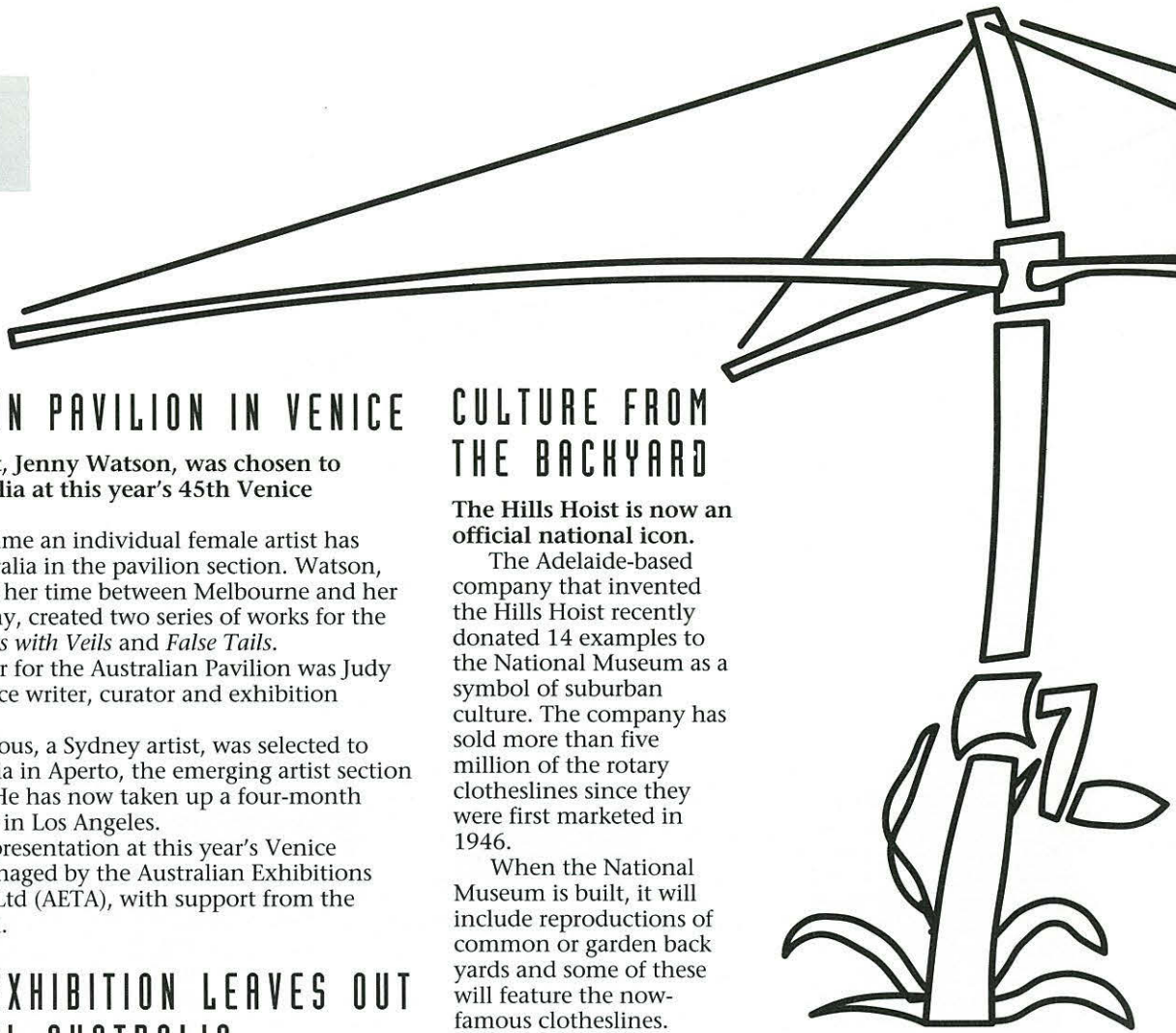
Gallery of WA Foundation to encourage the growth of the gallery's Aboriginal collection and exhibition of Aboriginal art outside the gallery. Special education programs are being developed to increase access to the collection of Aboriginal art and the gallery will be working closely with the BHP Community Trust in touring Aboriginal art in the regions. This will include local displays within the communities from which the art originated.

A restructure at the Art Gallery of WA has resulted in the expansion of public relations in a new section, Development and Public Programs, headed by *Seva Frangos*. Appointments in this section are *Anthony Joy*

as Marketing Manager and *Robin Binder* as Media Consultant.

Bev Cox, Director of the Geraldton Art Gallery, retired in mid July. Staff changes at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts are *Natasha Vukelja* - Senior Administrator, *Sophia Hall* - Youth Program Coordinator and *Michelle Milton* - Publicity. The institute is in the process of selecting a new director.

Special thanks to the following for providing information for State Reports: *Linda Young* - ACT, *Brenda Factor* - NSW, *Natasha Stacey* - NT, *Julia O'Malley* - QLD, *Geoff Spiers* and *Yvonne Routledge* - SA, *Kay Dimmack* and *Bridget Sullivan* - TAS, *Peta Gjedsted* and *Paula Latos-Valier* - WA, *Andrew Moritz* - VIC, *Susan Abasa* for additional material



AUSTRALIAN PAVILION IN VENICE

Melbourne artist, Jenny Watson, was chosen to represent Australia at this year's 45th Venice Biennale.

It is the first time an individual female artist has represented Australia in the pavilion section. Watson, who now divides her time between Melbourne and her studio in Germany, created two series of works for the pavilion, *Paintings with Veils* and *False Tails*.

Commissioner for the Australian Pavilion was Judy Annear, a freelance writer, curator and exhibition manager.

Hany Armanious, a Sydney artist, was selected to represent Australia in Aperto, the emerging artist section of the biennale. He has now taken up a four-month Studio Residency in Los Angeles.

Australia's representation at this year's Venice Biennale was managed by the Australian Exhibitions Touring Agency Ltd (AETA), with support from the Australia Council.

CHICAGO EXHIBITION LEAVES OUT ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA

The Field Museum in Chicago has spent \$US2.4 million on new exhibition halls devoted to the Pacific, but which make only passing reference to Aboriginal Australia.

In a recent article in the *Financial Review*, the museum's chief exhibitions curator, Phyllis Rabineau, said the new exhibition areas had been devised to tell a story, 'Travel the Pacific', but that Australia was a complete 'other story'. There is the possibility of including some Aboriginal material in an area behind the two exhibition halls but no dates have been established.

The museum's curator of oceanic anthropology, Dr John Terrell, has said the museum is keen to work with Australian Aborigines in devising ways of presenting relevant parts of the museum's collection of Aboriginal art objects, many of which are believed to be exceptionally early and rare.

CLINTON PROPOSES \$3 MILLION REPATRIATION FUND

Under a budget proposed by President Clinton, the National Park Service (NPS) will have \$US3 million to assist the inventory summary and possible return of certain qualifying Native American objects currently in the care of museums.

For details contact the AAM, 1224 Eye St, NW, Suite 200, Washington DC 20005.



CULTURE FROM THE BACKYARD

The Hills Hoist is now an official national icon.

The Adelaide-based company that invented the Hills Hoist recently donated 14 examples to the National Museum as a symbol of suburban culture. The company has sold more than five million of the rotary clotheslines since they were first marketed in 1946.

When the National Museum is built, it will include reproductions of common or garden backyards and some of these will feature the now-famous clotheslines.

VOLUNTEERS REVAMP TASMANIAN MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery has launched an employee volunteering program to assess and develop its corporate profile.

The project is supported by three leading Tasmanian private sector companies: The ANZ Bank, Ogilvy, Mather & Mazengarb, and The Mercury. It forms a key part of the TMAG's Strategic Value Management Plan.

The three companies have each nominated an employee to work with TMAG management to investigate areas such as market supply and demand for the museum's program and services,

revenue-raising services and corporate identity.

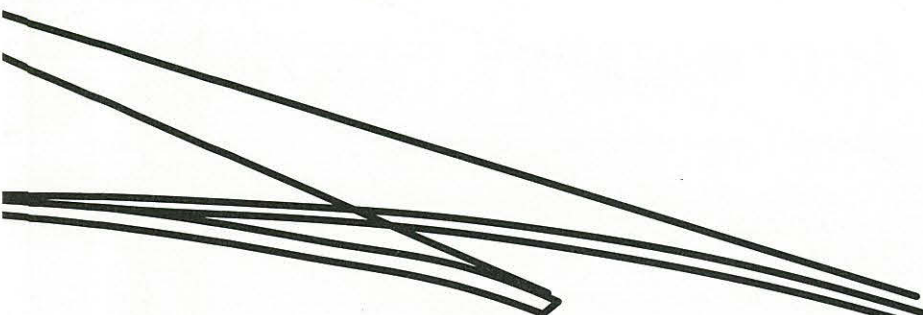
The three employees working with the TMAG have skills in public relations and promotions, finance and business, and social services.

The group's first task has been to initiate market research to assess how the Tasmanian public perceive the museum. For information contact Pat Sabine at The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, GPO Box 1164M, Hobart TAS 7250. PH: (002) 23 1422, FAX: (002) 34 7139.

FOSSIL LOOPHOLE CLOSED

The Federal Government recently closed a legal loophole which allowed the export of fossil artefacts valued at less than \$1000 without a permit.

The move to close the



loophole followed alarm among scientists that items of scientific and cultural significance were being lost to Australia because their market value was not considered to be above the \$1000 threshold.

The Protection of Moveable Cultural Heritage Act 1986 requires an export permit from the National Cultural Heritage Committee in Canberra only when fossil value exceeds \$1000. The new regulations will prohibit all fossil exports without a permit. For information contact the Department of Arts and Administrative Services, PO Box 787, Canberra ACT 2601. PH: (06) 274 1111.

THESAURUSES IS THE WAY

A recent conference on museum documentation at the Powerhouse Museum focused on the need for a national thesaurus of object names as a basic tool to support documentation and information retrieval.

Keynote speaker David Bearman, told the conference that thesauruses not classification schemes are more productive in computerised systems. A survey of documentation standards in use in Australian museums has revealed a widespread lack of appreciation of the difference between classification schemes and thesauruses. Participants at the conference felt this was an area which could be taken up in museum studies courses in Australia.

The experience of the library community in

developing national standards highlighted the necessity of formal structures and organisations to define, promulgate and support such standards.

In the UK, Canada, and the USA, funded, cooperative structures were put in place to develop standards. The Heritage Collections Committee could well provide such a structure in Australia.

The recent development of the Computerised Interchange of Museums Information (CIMI) standard by the Museum Computer Network was seen as an important development.

For information contact Des Beechey, Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris St, Ultimo NSW. PH: (02) 217 0111, FAX: (02) 211 0932.

MAJOR EXHIBITIONS ANNOUNCED

The NGA will host a major exhibition of Impressionist works from the Musée d'Orsay in 1997. The gallery has confirmed the exhibition will take place and key works are being reserved.

'Gauguin in the Pacific' will open in 1995.

The National Gallery of Victoria will open 'Van Gogh: His sources, genius and influence' in November this year. James Mollison, Director of the NGV, will curate the show which includes 22 works by Van Gogh and at least 40 other paintings and drawings by artists influenced by Van Gogh.

UNESCO TO AID HERMITAGE

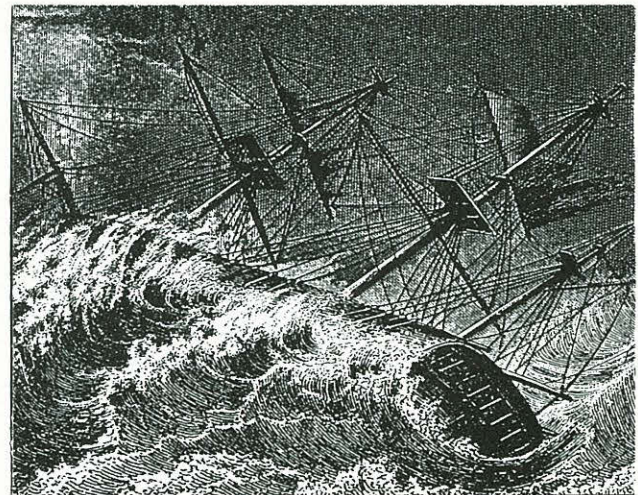
UNESCO is to aid the restoration of the Hermitage Museum by mounting a fundraising campaign and setting up an international Friends of the Hermitage organisation.

Revenue will be used to reconstruct the buildings with the aim of expanding exhibition space. Coca Cola has donated \$US320,000 to the Hermitage for fitting out a laboratory for the conservation of tempera paintings.

ARX PROJECTS

The Artists' Regional Exchange was the first Australian international event to focus on regional contemporary visual arts practice.

It brings together artists from Australia, South-East Asia and New Zealand to encourage cross-cultural dialogue. The new ARX committee includes Rosy Kerr (Chair), and Jo Darbyshire (Coordinator). ARX is currently compiling a national survey of activities involving cultural interaction between Australia, Asia and the Pacific. For information contact ARX at PO Box 999, Fremantle, WA 6160.



HISTORIC SHIPWRECKS

In April the Federal Government announced an amnesty under the *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976*, which protects all shipwrecks over 75 years old in Australian waters. The amnesty, which lasts through to 30 October 1993, is intended to help gather information about Australia's shipwreck heritage.

The amnesty applies to anyone who has discovered the location of a shipwreck in Australian waters, OR gained possession of a relic prior to April 1993 and hasn't yet reported the discovery to the Minister for the Arts and Administrative Services.

For information contact Wayne Cassidy, Department of the Arts and Administrative Services on (06) 274 1315.

AUSTRALIA CHINA HONGKONG INDONESIA JAPAN KOREA MALAYSIA NEW ZEALAND

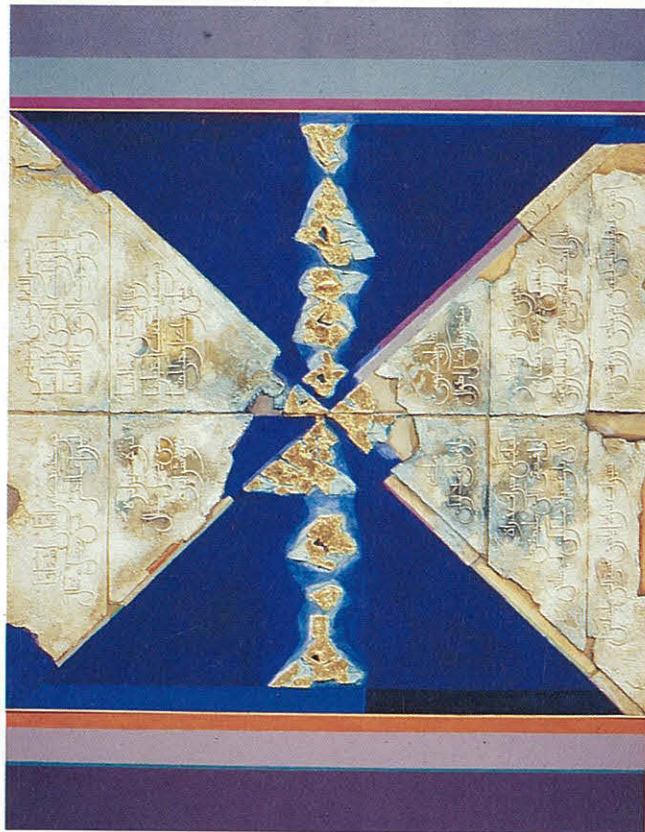
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'Tradition and Change: Contemporary Art in Asia and the Pacific', published by University of Queensland Press \$A 29.95 plus postage. Book and catalogue orders telephone 07 840 7149 or fax 07 844 8865.

CONFERENCE

Identity, Tradition and Change: Contemporary Art of the Asia-Pacific Region', featuring thirty international speakers, will be held from September 17-20. For registration material telephone Julie Lloyd 07 840 7268.



INSTALLATION MIXED MEDIA SCULPTURE

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