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MUSEUM NATIONAL

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CULTURES, MARGINALITY AND MUSEUMS

This edition of *Museum National* is the third in our series on museums and communities and is entitled 'Cultures, Marginality and Museums'. The articles explore how individuals, communities and different cultures relate to museums, and how they are in turn represented by museums.

'Girls' Stuff', our lead article by Julia Clark, looks at the complex issue of gender in interpretation. This article is based on a paper Julia delivered at the 1993 CAMA Conference 'Common Threads; Diverse Patterns', and discusses how museums construct images and ideas about gender.

Gaye Sculthorpe also delivered a paper at the 1993 conference on indigenous museums. Her article looks at the opportunities provided by the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples for museums to re-examine their relationship with indigenous people.

A number of conferences last year related to theme of indigenous cultures: Hema Temara and Karen Mason from the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa spoke at the MEAA/MEANZ conference in Melbourne and an edited version of their joint presentation looks at the application of biculturalism in museum education; Dr Jana Vytrhlik and Emmanuel Kasarherou, participants in the ICOM ASPAC Fifth Regional Assembly, look at museums and cross-cultural understanding.

Finally, Ross Searle looks at the possibilities created by the recent Asia-Pacific Triennial.

Amalgamation

At the 1993 CAMA Conference, CAMA, the Museums Association of Australia, Art Museums Association of Australia, and the Museum Education Association of Australia resolved to amalgamate from 1 January 1994 and form a new association Museums Australia Inc, incorporated in the ACT. Museums Australia Inc will represent all science, history and art museums across Australia, bringing together sixteen of the twenty-two groups within the industry.

Museums Australia will promote and support museums to all levels of government; establish and maintain professional standards through research, policy formulation, publications and training; raise awareness of

the key issues affecting museums; monitor changes in legislation and museum funding; and represent museums at state, national and international levels.

State and territory branches will exist throughout Australia, with a new branch to be formed in the Northern Territory. A number of Special Interest Groups will also exist within Museums Australia.

Members of the amalgamating groups will automatically become members of Museums Australia. Museums Australia welcomes new members either from other existing associations and those yet to join a museums group. A membership form is included with this issue as an insert.

New Office and Staff

Following advertisement in October and a subsequent interview at the CAMA Conference, I have been appointed Executive Director of Museums Australia. The position of Executive Director will be responsible for implementation of amalgamation across the organisation and management of all programs.

From the beginning of February, the office of Museums Australia will be located at 159 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, Victoria 3065, Ph: (03) 416 3975/6, Fax: (03) 419 6842.

The national office staff includes: Simeon Kronenberg (Project Officer — Art), Marianne Wallace-Crabbe (Publications Officer — Art), Linda Richardson (Publications Coordinator — Museum National), Karen Corrie (Membership Coordinator), Anthea Christian (Administrative Officer). The position of Project Officer (Continuing Education) has yet to be advertised.

ICOM General Assembly

Following a meeting of the ICOM (International Council of Museums) Executive Council in Paris in early December, Australia has been awarded the 1998 ICOM General Assembly to be held in Melbourne in October 1998. The General Assembly will bring approximately 2000 museum professionals from around the world to Australia, many for the first time, and generate valuable opportunities for professional collaboration and exchange. Early in 1994 ICOM Australia and Museums Australia will form a new

committee to oversee the development of this strategically important event for Australian museums.

Aboriginal Policy Launched

Another significant step for museums in Australia occurred with the launch of the Policy on Museums and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, Previous Possessions, New Obligations. This policy outlines a number of principles which museums and indigenous people should consider in their relationship and recognises the primary rights of indigenous people concerning their own cultural heritage.

Local Museums and Communities: An equal partnership?

The signs exist that the 90s will offer museums an unparalleled opportunity for involvement in preserving the past and helping to forge our identity into the twenty-first century. Are links between local museums and local communities such that local museums can contribute to our future as well as the past. Is local government engaged in this process? What is and should be the role of local government? Is cultural and eco-tourism of benefit to museums. Are touring exhibitions the answer to sharing our ideas and experiences? What is the role of larger state and national museums in supporting local communities? What access should communities have to collections? Where do we go from here?

Museum National would like to explore these issues in our next edition. Deadline is now! Contact Linda Richardson for details.

Greg Marginson, Editor

ERRATUM

Museum National Volume 2.
NO. 3 — ACCESS, PART 2.

The detail of Bronwyn Oliver's piece, *Labyrinth V*, 1992, from the Queensland Art Gallery's Asia-Pacific Triennial, appeared in our last issue courtesy of the Queensland Art Gallery.

Photos of participants in the roundtable discussion 'Access: commitment or containment' were taken by Carolyn Lewens.



Front cover shows detail from "Eaglehawk and Crow", by Paddy Fordham Wainburranga, 1993, ochre on paper, 152 x 102cm. Winner of the \$15,000 Telecom Australia Prize of the National Aboriginal Art Award. Permanent Collection of the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory.

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- Council of Australian Art Museum Directors (CAAMD)
- Council of Australian Museum Directors (CAMD)
- International Council of Museums (ICOM) Australia
- Museums Association of Australia Inc. (MAA)

- Council of Australian Museums Association (CAMA)
- Museum Education Association of Australia (MEAA)

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GIRL'S STUFF?

Gender in Interpretation

By *Julia Clark*

This is an extract of a paper delivered at the recent CAMA Conference, 'Common Threads; Diverse Patterns' in Hobart

A male museum director recently commented that only women were, or needed to be, concerned about gendered constructions of an Australian social history in museums. I would like to argue against this view. We need to recognise that museums construct images and ideas about gender and we must look at the nature of those representations, the proportion of resources dedicated to representing women, and at who is constructing these representations. We are all involved either as maker or subject of gendered constructions.

MARS AND RHEA SILVIA, BY PETER PAUL RUBENS C.1620, OIL ON CANVAS, 46.3 X 64.5CM. COLLECTION OF THE PRINCE OF LIECHTENSTEIN, VADUZ CASTLE. ('THE CLASSIC STEREOTYPE OF THE GIRL WHO SAYS NO WHEN SHE REALLY MEANS YES?')

Other professions, particularly law and education, are beginning to deal with these issues but I believe the museum profession has been very tardy. A few figures and anecdotes may illustrate some of the problems women face as a result of our profession's failure to address these issues.

In Tasmania, during a two week period in 1992, I collected the following examples of gendered representations of public culture.

1. A survey by the Tasmanian Office of the Status of Women revealed that major exhibitions mounted by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery in 1992 included six exhibitions dealing with men only, five mixed art exhibitions, two exhibitions dealing with non-human subjects, and one dealing with women only.

2. In mid 1992 I completed a photographic exhibition for the Hobart City Council, to celebrate its 150th birthday. The designer (a woman), and the computer



consultant (a man), commented on numerous occasions that 'the girls had really taken over' in the exhibition. So I counted the images of men only and women only: they turned out to be exactly equal. The perception of even well-intentioned people still seems to be that when women get a fair representation they are 'taking over'. It immediately puts women in the position of having to soothe and placate and check they have not got more than their share. This kind of vigilance is appropriate, but only if it is shared. When did we last hear a curator of a military or railway museum worrying about excluding women from their institution or exhibition?

3. During this same period the curator of an exhibition of Aboriginal women's work told me the men in her institution's public programs division had objected strongly because no men were in the show. On the other hand they seemed to have no problem with their new display of firearms, or with the traditional galleries of science and technology in which no women appeared.

4. Disproportionate representation of women and their interests is, of course, much more than a simple numerical problem. An Australian Airlines In-flight magazine which I read during this period featured an article, 'The Art of Being Australian'. The art works illustrated depicted six men and one woman. Of the artists mentioned, five were men and one was a woman who had painted her own portrait. Effectively there were eleven men and one woman represented. The message is clear: women are not germane to Australian art or identity, and their world is inward-looking and domestic.

5. I then counted articles in the major English-speaking journals from the last five years which related to cultural diversity: I found twenty-three papers dealing with ethnicity and ten with gender (for which read 'women'). The papers on ethnicity were written by both men and women and included articles on positive steps towards appropriate representation of minority cultures in major exhibitions, collecting policies, and career paths for ethnic and indigenous museum workers. With one exception, all the articles about gender were written by women and they appealed to the profession to address these same issues for women. They detailed inappropriate representations, collecting policies which fail to address women's culture, and employment patterns which see women museum workers concentrated in lower-paid, non-decision making positions.

The 1990 CAMA Conference endorsed a definition of multiculturalism, or, as was more generally preferred, cultural diversity. This encompassed not just ethnicity, but also class and gender. At the 1991 CAMA Conference, several papers addressed cultural diversity and all dealt with ethnicity. Others opened up debates about access to include class, but no-one mentioned gender. Yet the Women's Section has over 140 members who embrace these issues with vigour in their annual meeting.

Issues of equal representation and access to power are difficult to address publicly in a mainstream culture which is perceived to be increasingly hostile to women's push for equality. Susan Faludi's book, *Backlash: the undeclared war against women*, has chronicled the many ways, subtle and not so subtle, in which this hostility is manifest. The feeling that the pendulum has swung too far, allowing women to 'take over', is one of them. Our situation is exacerbated by tough economic times which favour the resurgence of conservative forces traditionally hostile to women's aspirations. In a profession where older men still control the work culture, many

women fear that being seen as 'rabid feminists' will hurt their careers.

In 1991, *Museum* published a provisional list of nine women's museums from around the world. The Pioneer Women's Hut at Tumbarumba should be added, the only women's museum in Australia. I wonder how many museums of science and technology, ships, cars, planes, militaria and other masculine concerns there are in the world. There are fifty four aviation museums in Australia, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand alone. If that numerical ratio of 54:1 referred to museums of indigenous cultures versus museums of dominant imperialist cultures, I wonder how we would feel and what we would do to redress the grotesque imbalance. To their credit, however, there are one or two examples of Australian museums responding to the challenge.

Since it opened, the Stockman's Hall of Fame has been roundly criticised for its failure to include women and Aboriginal people in its account of European 'pioneering' of Australia. It is now going to build an 'annexe' to pay homage to the white women of Australia's 'pioneering' history, which illustrates the problem of adding women to what is essentially a male exercise: we are still separate, out the back of a splendid edifice dedicated to masculine activity.

The female staff at the National Maritime Museum have included women, wherever possible, in their programs. They try hard to move exhibitions from a traditional homage to technology and 'romance of the sea', to a social history which includes women. Equity has been achieved in the area of immigration where tapes with an equal number of male and female voices relate experiences, and objects relate to both men and women. In most other areas, however, gender equity is simply not possible. The institution is masculine in concept and preoccupation, and with the best will in the world women cannot be made equal.

One of the most persistent barriers to equality concerns funding for masculine endeavours, like maritime museums, but which cannot take a museum of the home seriously. Men give important funding to other men who like the same things they do. The public world, which is generally where men are most prominent and powerful, is seen as the centre where all exciting things happen. The private world, the sphere of activity for most women, has been defined as of peripheral interest and for women only.

Returning to that one article on gender in an English-speaking museum journal which was written by a man. It was by Kenneth Hudson in his peripatetic series in *Museums Journal* 'Letter from. . .', in this case the Danish women's museum in Aarhus. After a facetious, patronising and anti-feminist description of his visit to this museum, he concludes that the exhibition he saw was 'a new slant on social history. I doubt very much that a man would have thought of it or considered it of any great importance.'

His remark is of critical importance in shaping our future strategies and it was echoed in a paper delivered by Dr Ruth Shatford at a recent conference on education in girls' schools. She said that in our push to give girls equal opportunities at school we are treating them like 'surrogate boys', rather than looking at their particular needs. To give girls real equality, 'Changes should be made to every aspect of school life from curriculum to classroom format to school uniforms. . . Boys, too, need to be educated in an environment which is prepared to explore the changing roles of men and women in society.'

Hudson's remarks go to the heart of Dr Shatford's

comments about allowing the particular needs of girls to shape their participation in mainstream culture, and to reshape that mainstream. It's clear from his description that it will not be until women have the freedom to conceive and execute exhibitions of their choice, springing from their own particular perception of what is important, that the profession will be refreshed and enriched. That vision must be facilitated and funded just as men's visions are. It can no longer be compromised by being shaped to fit male visions, or confined to the 'annexe' of our minds and our institutions.

Fundamental shifts must also occur in the dominant masculine culture to mainstream these changes: the total environment must change.

A recent example of the way in which an uncontested and exclusively masculinist world view reinforces and disseminates negative gender stereotypes about women is drawn from the 1992 'Rubens and the Italian Renaissance' exhibition. The picture *Mars and Rhea Silvia* depicts the encounter which produced the twins Romulus and Remus, mythical founders of Rome.

According to the caption Mars is shown 'abruptly descending' on Rhea, 'to leave her pregnant' with the twins. He is described as her 'ravisher', who 'fell in love with her' as he spied on her in the woods, and 'took advantage of her'. This event is described as a 'seduction'. Rhea is shown looking at the 'powerful figure of the god' in 'surprise and apprehension'. Rubens depicts Mars in armour, rather than naked as was the classical convention, so that 'he can illustrate how the war god is to be disarmed, both literally and metaphorically, by love'. According to the curator, David Jaffe, Rhea's 'apprehension seems to be modified by at least a hint of desire'.

I see this picture rather differently. I see a big, strong man in armour looming menacingly over a frightened woman who is defenceless and appears to be terrified. Rape, not love, is on his mind. The image is redolent with fear, imminent violence and the man's sexual excitement, yet the language of the caption is romantic,

chaste and euphemistic. In the 'hint of sexual desire', which the astute eye of the curator/connoisseur has spotted, we have the classic stereotype of the girl who says no when she really means yes. A similar caption can be found under *Susannah and the Elders*.

The curator's reading of these works is a male's view, and the women's response is read exclusively through the red haze of male lust. However, these interpretations of Rhea's and Susannah's responses to their situations are embedded in an otherwise bland and scholarly discussion of the significance, history and technique of the object. This context casts the same veil of expert and authoritative fact over the curator's personal and highly contestable opinions about the nature of the event. His misogyny becomes part of the corpus of received wisdom on Rubens, and gives a classical pedigree to the stereotypic image of Woman as always available for Man's use.

I know there will be some readers who will characterise me as 'a rabid feminist', and think I am biased. They will not, on the other hand, think of David Jaffe as 'a rabid masculinist' whose reading of this work is biased. This kind of bias will be with us for as long as one group in the community has control over the representation of another, and while no view but that of the dominant group is held to be valid and authoritative.

I believe issues of equality in the making of meaning, and of making essential shifts in mainstream culture to accommodate this, are being resolved in the cases of ethnicity and Aboriginality. We are recognising that this process of change is fundamental to our current and future practice, but suggestions that we should make those same changes for women seems to touch some very raw nerves indeed. This hostile reaction does not mean we are wrong, it only means we are getting uncomfortably close to the source of our problems.

Julia Clark,
Head of Exhibition and Design,
Western Australian Museum

Art, Culture and Science Shows for Regional Australia

Visions of Australia is a new touring scheme for exhibitions sponsored by the Federal Government. It provides funds for collections of cultural, scientific, historic and artistic material to travel across Australia, particularly remote and regional areas.

The government has designed Visions of Australia as part of a national campaign to make art and culture more accessible for Australians and is providing \$6 million over four years for the program. It recognises that it is often easier for people living in main cities to see major exhibitions at galleries and museums, and that cultural organisations in regional areas

receive few opportunities to mount and tour exhibitions.

The program will assist exhibitors to tour outside their state or territory, broaden their itineraries, and encourage them to use new venues such as libraries, smaller museums, and science, cultural and civic centres.

Priority will be given to applications with an Australian theme and which demonstrate consultation with host venues and communities. Funding will be limited to exhibitions shown in at least two states or territories, although major collecting institutions are eligible to apply to tour their exhibitions more widely.

Visions of Australia encourages partnerships between large and small organisations and community groups. All grants are made on a 'one-off' basis, and those exhibitions which develop opportunities for women, people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from non-English speaking backgrounds are particularly encouraged.

Applications close on 15 March 1994. Contact the Convenor, ACDO, GPO Box 1920, Canberra, ACT 2601 Ph: (008) 819 461.

Maree Flynn,
Australian Cultural
Development Office

INDIGENOUS MUSEUMS

On the Margins?

By Gaye Sculthorpe

This article is based on a paper presented at the recent CAMA Conference, 'Common Threads; Diverse Patterns', in Hobart.

The International Year for the World's Indigenous People has provided a focus for museums to begin to re-examine their relationship with indigenous people. On a national level, Museums Australia and the Australian Aboriginal Affairs Council are developing relevant policies aimed at increasing indigenous access to, and control of, cultural heritage in museums. Such moves are to be commended. However, much of the discussion about such aims often unwittingly assumes a false dichotomy between museums and indigenous people ('us' and 'them'), which needs to be reassessed. In my view, it has also not adequately addressed the needs of indigenous museums and their potential for linking people, place and collections in a local context.

A dichotomy of interests existed in the past but is not so clear-cut today, a situation which is not unique to Australia. George P. Horsecapture, a leading Native American museum professional, has explained the changed circumstances whereby indigenous people consider a need for museums:

'Traditionally, Indian groups had no need for museums because the culture was self-perpetuating. For untold centuries they lived with their material culture and preserved the knowledge of it by oral tradition. There was no need to save everyday items to remind people of the past because the central change was slow enough for people to adjust and live comfortably within it. Within a brief period, however, the Indian ways were disrupted critically; the land, the religion, the material culture almost disappeared. We are now engaged in a long struggle to regain some of our former glory and riches.'⁽¹⁾

This involves a struggle to regain control of land and also control of cultural heritage, much of which is housed in major museums. In Australia, it has only been about fifteen years since Aboriginal communities began to find out about and push for greater access to their cultural riches stored in museums.

It is true that past collecting and display practices of major museums created a legacy of animosity between Aboriginal people and museums. Initially this was focused on the display and return of human remains and sacred objects. Debates now often centre on questions of ownership and control of cultural objects. Differences over these issues often obfuscate shared concerns regarding appropriate display, preservation, research and education. The field of action is also changing. Major museums are no longer the sole exhibitors of Aboriginal cultural material; specialised Aboriginal museums, cultural centres or heritage institutes are being discussed or established in most states. This trend follows North America where not only are there hundreds of Native American museums, but

also a new National Museum of the American Indian (as part of the Smithsonian Institution), which is staffed largely by Native Americans.

The line between 'us' and 'them' is becoming increasingly blurred. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are being employed in increasing numbers in major museums, and bringing indigenous perspectives to a broad range of programs. Simultaneously, non-indigenous curators are addressing ways to include indigenous voices in museum exhibitions. Consequently, the notion of curator as expert is being replaced with the notion of curator as facilitator. New exhibitions, such as the Museum of Victoria's 'Keeping Culture Strong: Women's Work in Aboriginal Australia', emphasise indigenous voices within the institutional context. This exhibition included the use of first-person quotes in labels, the use of videos produced by Aboriginal women, and Aboriginal songs and oral histories made available through audio stations throughout the exhibition. Collaboration (not just consultation) between museums and indigenous communities is now considered essential in developing programs related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history.

The adoption and implementation of the Museums Australia policies is an essential step in redressing past wrongs and imbalances. It will also help cement the relationships which have developed between institutions and communities. Indigenous people must know what is held in major collections and have better access to it. This has generally not happened because major museums lack adequate resources to collate and distribute such information. Through their audiences and their role as public institutions, major museums can provide a place in which cross-cultural contact and discussion of contemporary issues can occur. Such museums can also provide examples of best practice for other museums with Aboriginal collections and act as a source of specialist museum advice to newly-established indigenous museums. However, there is some danger in indigenous museums looking to major museums for role models of best practice when these may be inadequate due to poor resources, different audiences or outmoded practice.

One of the shortcomings of the policy debate about indigenous people and museums is that it is done from the perspective of major museums. This is perhaps logical because of the large holdings of cultural material held in these institutions, yet the assumptions sometimes fail to accommodate indigenous perspectives and the language used is often abstruse and alienating. Other government agencies involved in policy formulation often mistakenly assume that the sole agreed outcome is the return of materials. This often results simply in a debate about ownership and whether objects from collections should be returned, not about the cultural use and accessibility of objects or information and resources required to help indigenous

institutions. Preservation of cultural heritage then becomes a debate about location of, and title to, objects rather than the preconditions for indigenous communities to control and decide appropriate means of maintaining cultural objects and traditions. Safe keeping of objects in major museums is sometimes appropriate.

While the Museums Australia policy concentrates on increasing access to objects in major museums and the Australian Aboriginal Affairs Council (AAAC) policy puts a major emphasis on the return of significant material from overseas institutions, an important correlate is the independent growth of indigenous institutions. The first public Aboriginal keeping place/museum was that established at Shepparton in 1980 with the support of the Aboriginal Arts Board. Since then, numbers have grown steadily.

The increasing number of Aboriginal museums (or cultural centres or keeping places) is indicative of the desire of many indigenous people to recapture control of objects and ideologies from major museums, and to place them within a more culturally meaningful local context. In my view, the return of objects to local cultural centres provides far more than a physical recognition of ownership rights, or redressing the colonial capturing of the object. Many such institutions are embedded in local traditions: easily accessible, community controlled and locally accountable. They again link people, objects, history and environment in a local context. They offer special opportunities for learning and education for indigenous communities and other audiences in ways that major institutions find difficult to achieve. At Brambuk Living Cultural Centre in Gariwerd National Park (also known as The Grampians), such personal stories and interpretations are provided by Koorie guides and provide a meaningful one-to-one opportunity for cultural exchange and dialogue within a closely-linked natural and cultural environment.

Aboriginal keeping places, cultural centres or museums assume a diversity of form ranging from small rooms used as keeping places for ceremonial objects in remote communities, to major tourist complexes. In Victoria alone cultural centres or keeping places exist at Shepparton, Brambuk in Gariwerd, Echuca, and Bairnsdale with others planned for Sale, Geelong, Healesville and Melbourne. These have developed on an ad hoc basis with varying degrees of support from the Museum of Victoria. Only now, some fifteen years after

the establishment of the first Aboriginal keeping place, are national support mechanisms being developed. This financial year the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) has allocated \$350,000 for extension services to support Aboriginal keeping places, museums and cultural centres. This financial support, which will hopefully continue, is to be channelled largely through state museums.

However, there is more interest in establishing such museums and cultural centres than there are adequate resources to support them. Museums Australia should actively promote the need for such support through government. At the Museum of Victoria, we plan to use ATSIC funds to employ a Koorie curator to work with staff in local centres to advise on exhibition development, storage and preventative conservation, and to maintain a central database of material housed in various institutions around the state.

I believe the objectives of local institutions need to be carefully considered by indigenous communities. There is a danger of them becoming places for object preservation which are isolated from broader community methods of preservation and traditions that occur naturally outside such places through cultural and social activities. They need to be integrated into local community life and include contemporary issues and events, not just displays of how things were in the past. This integration is more likely to occur where such cultural centres are located with other community facilities.

These new indigenous institutions are perhaps the greatest growth area for Australian museums and offer great potential for staff networking, collections and travelling exhibitions. Their development has occurred largely outside traditional channels of museum funding and support. While they are hampered by lack of regular funding, access to professional museological advice and staff training, they offer special experiences for cross-cultural interaction with the public and play an important educational role in indigenous communities. There is also the danger (seemingly apparent with the State Government's idea of an Aboriginal museum in Victoria) that the idea of Aboriginal museums is deemed worthy of support primarily for their commercial tourist potential rather than their value in preserving indigenous values and practices.

While major museums have a role to play in generating awareness and understanding of other cultures, resource limitations and bureaucratic impediments often restrict innovative approaches to public programming in this area. Can such museums provide the resources necessary for the appropriate management and display of their collections? Flexible work practices that see closer links between staff and collections in major museums and local Aboriginal centres would increase the potential for development of important local programs. Collections could also become more accessible, either physically or electronically. In addition, major museums must aspire to best practice so the image presented to indigenous communities and governments is not outmoded. Major museums must also assist indigenous institutions present their own views independently of the state, or risk their own programs being marginalised by subversive replacement.

Reference

- (1) Horsecapture, George, P. 'Some observations on establishing tribal museums', AASLH Technical Leaflet 134. In *History News* 36.

Gaye Sculthorpe,
Senior Curator of Indigenous Studies,
Museum of Victoria

Museums Australia Journal

The theme of the next issue of
Museums Australia Journal is
'Museums and Communities'

Contributions are welcome up to
3,000 words. Abstracts of 300 words
and a brief C.V. must be submitted
by the end of February.

For further information contact:

Linda Richardson
at Museums Australia on
Phone: (03) 416 3795/6

PROJECTING AN IMAGE OR A LIVING REALITY

The Application of Biculturalism to Museum Education

Hema Temara is Māori Education Officer at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and Karen Mason is the Museum's former education officer. As members of the two mainstream cultures of Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori and Pākehā, they delivered a bicultural presentation to the MEAA/MEANZ Biennial Conference in Melbourne last September, which related to biculturalism in the Museum's Education Department. This is an edited version of their paper.

Aotearoa New Zealand and the Treaty of Waitangi

By Hema Temara

Before 1840 the Māori people had their own traditional economies, spirituality and relationship with the environment.

Captain Cook's arrival in 1769 proved to be the most important contact the Māori race was ever to make. The sealers, whalers and traders who followed brought goods such as muskets, machine woven fabrics and alcohol, which modified the every day life of Māori people.

Māori culture was further modified by the arrival of the missionaries in 1814, who urged Māori people to leave aside their traditional beliefs and take on Christianity. As the number of Europeans increased, the Māori people gradually lost control of their land and resources, and their numbers were decimated by disease and musket wars of the early 1800s. Disagreement amongst the new arrivals and between them and the Māori, plus concern at the interest shown in the country by France and the United States, provided the genesis for the signing of the *Treaty of Waitangi*.

Captain William Hobson was sent to New Zealand in 1839 to 'treat with the Māori' and protect their interests. The Treaty was signed on 6 February 1840, but it was developed by people with varied interests and the resulting document created much confusion for the signatories. That confusion still exists today and stems from the fact that there were two treaties: an English version and a Māori version. Accordingly, there were two completely different interpretations.

There are three articles to the Treaty: the first gives the Crown sovereignty over New Zealand; the second, the most far reaching, assures Māori that the Crown will protect (and guarantee) all their cultural and property

rights; the third gives Māori full rights of British citizenship.

It promised a nation based on trust and cooperation, a partnership between the tangata whenua (indigenous people) and the British Government. However, successive governments continued to pass legislation which passed Māori land and other resources into Pākehā control.

The Treaty was not ratified until the Labour Government came to power and passed the *Treaty of Waitangi Act* in 1975. The Act created the Waitangi Tribunal, a legal body with a mandate to advise Government on Māori claims relating to land, fisheries and other cultural resources.

Today we have the opportunity to evaluate our society and to consider how the Treaty's principles are applicable to future social policies. In guiding the implementation of bicultural initiatives in 1989, the New Zealand State Services Commission stated, 'The imperatives of the *Treaty of Waitangi* become the ultimate measure of responsiveness, and it is to the "principles of the *Treaty of Waitangi* that we must accordingly go if we are to identify operational dimensions that reflect the concept of (bicultural) responsiveness.'"

Organisations such as the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa have committed themselves to 'the principles of the *Treaty of Waitangi*' as a basis for management action

Biculturalism in Museums

When I was at school during the 1950s and 60s, the Māori language was banned in the school playground. So I opted for a living culture of learning on a marae (tribal meeting space) with my grandfather as my mentor and tutor. He used to say 'Do not lose your individuality altogether; cultivate and tend what we have, our reo Māori (Māori language) with all its beauty and music for it is our history, culture and, more importantly still, our rightful heritage.'

In 1990, while teaching at a secondary school, my students and I became regular visitors to the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. The artefacts gave me spiritual guidance and the Museum became a natural extension of our classroom. Eventually I was asked to come and teach Museum staff and now I have a two year contract as a Māori Education Officer.

Individuals bring uniqueness and diversity to their employment situations and when other cultures are involved, a new range of value judgements and methodologies are presented. When this diversity is valued, the institution can be enhanced. What, then, is the Māori point of view insofar as biculturalism in museums is

concerned? To me, biculturalism in museums means a museum in which I, as a Māori, feel comfortable and at home; it should apply to all New Zealanders and whoever may enter it.

The impetus for change to a bicultural perspective must come from the museum decision makers. We now have a Māori director who is involved in the decision making process. The training for change can begin in the boardroom. Having made this commitment to change, the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa is now playing an important role in unifying and recognising the equal status of the two peoples who signed the Treaty: Māori and Pākeha.

The Beginnings of Bicultural Policies

by Karen Mason

In 1989 our department initiated changes which were based on intuition rather than policy. A clearly defined museum policy relating to the Treaty was non-existent at the time, and the word 'biculturalism' wasn't used much. But in the mid-1980s, directors and senior staff began to recognise that radical institutional change was necessary if the Museum was to fulfil its Treaty obligations. The education initiatives which happened some years later became the Museum's first manifestation of its bicultural identity.

The Te Māori Exhibition

Our starting point was 'Te Māori', a touring exhibition of Māori art which opened with a dawn ceremony at the Metropolitan Museum in New York in 1984. It attracted huge audiences throughout its tour and its return to New Zealand in 1986 had even greater impact.

It was the first time I had experienced the transformation of a physical space into a living cultural entity.

The exhibition's success led to some forceful demands from Māori elders and scholars involved with the exhibition. They related directly to the principles of the *Treaty of Waitangi*: i) that Māori people should determine how their own taonga (cultural treasures) are presented and interpreted; ii) that museums are the 'caretakers' of the taonga, not the 'owners'; iii) that the relevant iwi (tribe/people) should be consulted on all matters regarding their taonga; iv) that Māori taonga, in a museum setting, should be presented as part of a living culture not as a relic of the past; v) that Māori staffing levels in museums should be dramatically increased to enable the appropriate cultural considerations regarding the well-being of the taonga to be put in place; vi) that museums with significant collections of Māori taonga should begin to affect institutional change to enable them to become bicultural institutions in the future.

'Te Māori' was followed by two other significance exhibitions which further shaped Museum policy: 'Taonga Māori', an exhibition of Māori art and history, and 'Kohia ko Taikaka Anake', an exhibition of contemporary Māori art. Our task was to implement an education program which spanned both exhibitions.

The Kaiāwhina Scheme

Our first priority was to hire Māori staff. We established nine kaiāwhina (assistant) positions whose tasks were to run workshops and take guided tours of both exhibitions, drawing relevant links between traditional and contemporary aspects of Māori art and culture.

None had any previous experience of museums or art galleries but they did have a knowledge of their own language, history and cultural traditions. They also had the ability to speak in public and work with children. In preparing for the exhibitions, team members virtually trained themselves. Each researched a specific piece while myself and a colleague, the two Pākehas in the team, advised on techniques of presentation. We had little input into the content of interpretive material and for the first time in a New Zealand museum, paid Māori education staff were working on-the-floor with their own taonga.

Biculturalism in Practice?

In 1991 a group of university Māori studies students selected the Museum as a case study on bicultural policy development. One student challenged the rationale for the education department's intake of Māori staff describing it as 'window dressing'. In his view, the employment of Māori staff in the most visibly public area of the Museum amounted to little more than the projection of a bicultural image rather than a living reality of it.

In reality there was Māori representation on the board and there were positions occupied by Māori at all levels of the Museum and across most departments. They were, however, a minority.

Others (Pākeha this time), suggested our initiatives were simply a form of redress of Treaty breaches of the past. I believe we were trying to do more than that. Bicultural staffing didn't automatically make us a bicultural department, and despite our cultural mix, I don't think we've achieved that even yet. However, I do think we have made a significant contribution to the bicultural goals of our Museum.

Biculturalism and Education

Having achieved a Māori presence in our department, we have now established operational systems and education programs which accommodate and reflect the cultural values and professional concerns of Māori and Pākeha staff.

Our 'front-of-house' programs facilitate interactions for Māori and Pākeha visitors to Māori collections. Our intention is not to negate or replace previous research of Pākeha scholars, but to enrich existing interpretations and classifications with those of another cultural perspective.

This is perhaps a contentious point but we believe a truly bicultural department comprises both Māori and Pākeha staff developing and delivering programs across all collection boundaries.

For specialised groups, staff are allocated accordingly. Obviously it would be inappropriate to assign a Pākeha staff member a group of Māori elders, but staff who have some understanding of the language and protocol, plus accurate knowledge of the collections, do work alongside Māori colleagues to co-present sessions.

The same applies to Māori staff working alongside Pākeha colleagues to present say, a session on sixteenth-century German woodcuts to a group of post-graduate art history students. Sadly, few Māori people have art degrees and most Māori staff have built up their knowledge of this area 'on the job'. However, they are often best placed to provide totally unexpected links between different artistic practices or periods of history.

Participation in formal occasions has further enhanced cultural understandings, particularly for Pākeha. To quote one of the staff, 'For me, working here has been an emotional experience. I cannot describe myself as a spiritual or even a particularly responsive person. I am, in essence, a reserved, middle class Pākeha. Yet why is it that at every welcome, exhibition opening or school waiata (song) presentation I have felt tearful? Being

included in these cultural experiences has had a profound impact on my personal view of what it means to inhabit this land.'

In the Education Department's 'back-of-house', whanaungatanga (sense of family), governs the way we work and socialise. Our morning meetings are the equivalent of a meeting house or marae and provide staff with the opportunity to share information and express views. Trust and respect have developed over time as has a willingness to confront conflict and misunderstandings which, more often than not, arise from negative behaviour rather than cultural differences.

For Pākehā staff a crucial issue is the lack of training in areas of Māori protocol and cultural beliefs. For some Māori in our department, the lack of bilingual staff is an issue; each year Māori language classes are provided for all staff but inevitably seem to 'peter out'.

We are also mindful of more recent immigrant groups who, at this point, are not really part of the bicultural equation. A Samoan woman on our staff expressed it like this, 'As a Samoan and Pacific Island person, I think it is extremely difficult to work in an institution trying to establish the rights of two other cultures. I've found that I've wanted to put aside my own concerns for my people and other Pacific Island nations because Māori concerns are more prevalent, more in need of support. Until staff, both Māori and Pākehā, feel more secure about their positions in a bicultural museum then we can only be bystanders. I sometimes feel like I am a person on the side of the stage waiting to participate in a play, always thinking — it's not time to go on yet.'

Coordinating a collective Māori way of working with a more individualistic Pākehā approach is difficult for all staff. However, we are all required to conform to the systems of a mono-cultural institution which is sometimes unyielding to alternative approaches. When really tested, a mono-cultural solution can all too easily be applied to a so-called 'bicultural problem'. Following the launch of the Museum's new identity, staff were directed to use the English and Māori name when answering the telephone — it was never stated which should be said first, but one would assume that in a bicultural museum it wouldn't really matter. However, following a complaint by a member of the public, staff were informed it was incorrect to say the Māori name first; the official explanation being that we must be consistent. The incident may seem trivial but it underlines the shift that is necessary if we are serious about accommodating alternative cultural preferences. Furthermore, we must accept that there can be no such thing as 'consistency' in a bicultural organisation.

In terms of race, gender, age, qualifications and working style, the education staff are a pretty inconsistent lot. Nevertheless, we are a successful and cohesive group. Through the basic principles of democracy common to both cultures, we've been able to explore the common ground and accept our differences. We are all working to make biculturalism in our Museum a living reality.

**Hema Temara, Māori Education Officer,
Karen Mason, Former Education Officer,
and current Exhibition Concept Developer.
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa**



THE EDUCATION STAFF — (LEFT TO RIGHT) BACK ROW: DAVID CLARKE, JEAN-MARIE O'DONNELL, CAROLYN ROBERTS, ALBERT ANDERSON, KERI ROBERTS, JANE MARTIN, HANIKO TE KURAPA, ANNETTE MEATES, RACHEL BAKER. FRONT ROW: IRIHAPETI WALTERS, HEMA TEMARA, NEIL ANDERSON, KAREN MASON, BETTY REWI.

ASIA-PACIFIC TRIENNIAL

A Landmark Event in the Asia-Pacific Region

By Ross Searle

The Asia-Pacific Triennial, initiated by, and recently shown at the Queensland Art Gallery, was a landmark event in Australian cultural dialogue with the Asia-Pacific region. Certainly, praise must be heaped on the Queensland Art Gallery for undertaking such a brave and difficult project. Exhibitions such as this affirm the role of large institutions in advancing national cultural agendas, and in showing leadership in the presentation of contemporary art by highlighting complex critical discourses.

The scale of the event was enormous with over two hundred works by seventy-six artists from some thirteen countries. Many of the works were site-specific and were inordinately difficult to install, while others were performance-based and involved the coordination of a number of performance elements, including lighting and sound. Nothing of this scale has ever

been attempted in Australia before. Added to this was a three-day forum which presented many eminent cultural commentators from the region. The event generated a great feeling of excitement and optimism.

It was guided by a national committee and a panel of selectors, who acted as the exhibition's curatorium. While no curatorial philosophy was laid down by the national committee, great care was taken to consult with curators, critics and artists in each country. Nevertheless, the event lacked a certain coherence. This was reiterated at the forum where many of the speakers cautioned against any attempt to characterise the Asia-Pacific region in terms of national boundaries. This message goes to the heart of how the exhibition was conceived and structured. In the end, the exhibition advanced a too-narrow reading of contemporary visual culture in the Asia-Pacific

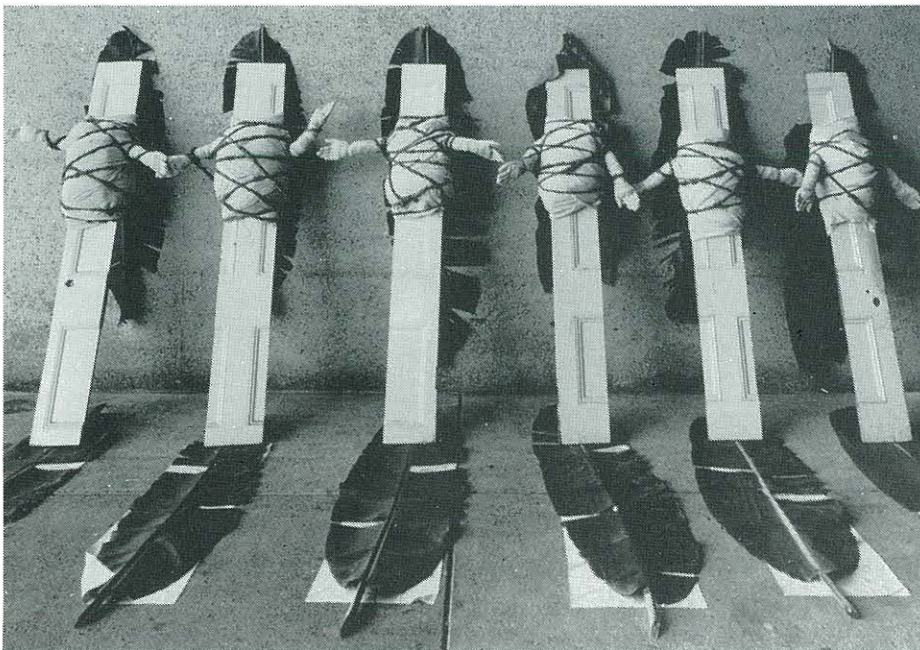
region and did not reinforce other cultural/social/political frameworks which could have posited a more interesting account of the region's art.

One of the most apparent omissions was the disproportionate representation of artists from the Pacific Islands. Of the thirteen countries represented, only three were from the South Pacific region: Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. Inclusion of Pacific Island artists and curators as participants in the exhibition and forum will obviously be a priority for future Triennials.

Ultimately it was this lack of coherence and the sheer size of the event which mitigated against any formal reading of regional differences beyond the fairly simple groupings relating to urban/rural, secular/spiritual, local/dominant visual practices. While this is the first of three triennials to be held this decade, there are great opportunities to adopt other strategies for inclusion which are not based on geography or other imperatives. Although artists' responses to issues such as race, gender, sexuality and class found a voice in the exhibition, there was no formal attempt to address these issues in terms of the placement and grouping of works to reinforce particular comparisons and readings. Most works were grouped by country and region.

While art museums are becoming more accustomed to the risks of presenting contemporary art and in advocating innovative critical discourses — evidence the recent 'Perspecta' exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the exhibition program at the Museum of Contemporary Art — there is a recurring assumption that art museums cannot easily alter their own institutional practices. It is contended that the art museum environment privileges certain kinds of cultural milieus but excludes

FX HARSANO — INDONESIA BORN 1949. *JUST THE RIGHTS* 1993. INSTALLATION COMPRISING WOOD, CLOTH, FOAM RUBBER, ROPE, ORGANIC MATERIALS. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY.



others, which in turn makes it difficult to engage certain sections of the community. These issues are becoming increasingly prevalent in the United States where new attitudes to museum practice are helping to reshape ideas of community, and form new strategies for making art museums more relevant to their constituencies.

The new museology stresses collaborative approaches in exhibition development through team structures made up of curators, artists, educators, public advocates etc. It promotes the view that cultural property is not the sole domain of experts, but operates in a sphere that must be publicly negotiated. The museum sector is now taking some of these issues into account through the formation of advisory bodies and through soliciting community views for the purpose of responding more actively to their communities' aspirations. An example of this can be found at the Auckland City Art Gallery, New Zealand, where the director has established a reference group of broadly-based community representatives to develop policy frameworks for a range of issues relating to the Gallery's mission and future development.

Also within our wider region is the example of the planned Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, which is acknowledged as one of the first major bi-cultural museums in the world. Although still in the planning stage, various prototype exhibition displays have been developed and are breaking new ground in their multi-disciplinary approach to exhibiting and interpreting both art and non-art collections. Instead of presenting an 'authoritative' narrative of Māori culture through Pākehā eyes, it attempts to grant equal status to both cultures.

'Headlands', the recent exhibition of contemporary New Zealand art, provides parallel concerns to the Asia-Pacific Triennial in terms of offering a collision of voices, perspectives and values. While 'Headlands' was concerned with 'how cultural traditions of Pākehā and Māori have interacted and evolved new forms, exceeding the earlier repertoires of each'(1), the Asia-Pacific Triennial offers opportunities for future interactions.

It seems the one outcome we can wish for most from an event like the Asia-Pacific Triennial is the opportunity for development of innovative models for the recognition and negotiation of cultural difference. While there have been numerous exchanges between Australia and

Asia, too few have challenged the accepted notions of cultural exchange. Although the Asia-Pacific Triennial Artist Visitors' Program saw representatives from every visiting country take part in exchanges around Australia, few of the artists were placed with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisations or communities.

While the Asia-Pacific Triennial was largely successful in negotiating certain sensitive cultural issues in the selection of the Asian works, it did not adequately engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and curators in the initial development of the project. Issues such as this cannot be ignored by the museum sector in the future. The priority for Australian museums is to find ways of involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in cultural planning processes.

Compared to New Zealand, Australia still has much progress to make in this area. This was one of the main disappointments in the organisation of the Asia-Pacific Triennial. Given the progress that has already been made by the Museums Australia Committee in drafting a policy for museums in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, it is unfortunate that many of these principles have not been more widely adopted.

It is interesting to speculate how this exhibition might have been approached by an Asian curator for an Asian audience. Certainly it would not have solved all of the problems of contextualisation, but it may have given a different account

of contemporary visual culture — one equally contentious, no doubt. The exhibition clearly demonstrated how contemporary art shares certain visual traditions, and that the content of individual bodies of work is specific to both time and culture and is developed from particular frames of reference. The trick is to know how to account for these



DANG CHRISTIANO — INDONESIA BORN 1957. FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN KILLED 1993. INSTALLATION COMPRISING BAMBOO AND METAL SUPPORTS. THE ARTIST'S PERFORMANCE. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY.

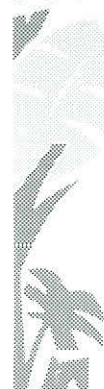
differences. The Asia-Pacific Triennial will prove to be a significant vehicle for generating debate and critical discourse between Australia and its neighbours.

Ross Searle, Director,
Perc Tucker Regional Gallery

References:

- (1) Murphy, Bernice 1992, 'Figuring Culture: Introduction to Headlands', in *HEADLANDS: Thinking Through New Zealand Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, p.12.

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OF NORTH QUEENSLAND

CROSS-CULTURALISM

Museums and Cross-cultural Understanding

The following are extracts of two papers presented at the ICOM ASPAC Fifth Regional Assembly, 'Museums and Cross-Cultural Understanding', held in Sydney last September.

Is Cultural Diversity our Content or our Target?

By Dr Jana Vytrhlik

Cultural diversity is an incredibly complex issue affecting all aspects of people's lives. It is hard to find two people with identical views and opinions on the subject because we are dealing with people's personal experiences, traditions, perceptions and attitudes.

The question that has troubled me most during the seven years I have been developing multicultural programs at the Powerhouse Museum is, 'Is cultural diversity about the specific content of our programs or about the particular audience we are targeting? Or both?' In looking for answers I'd like to discuss three points which relate to cultural diversity in museums.

Cultural diversity and government policy

The Australian government recognises, in principle, that a significant part of the Australian population is made up of people who were born in non-English speaking countries. In NSW this recognition is formulated in the Ethnic Affairs Policy Statement (EAPS). Every government organisation, like the Powerhouse, has to have such a policy. Interpretation and implementation, however, rests with each individual organisation.

The Powerhouse EAPS document confirms the Museum's commitment to offering exhibitions, services and public programs that are accessible to the widest possible audience. It is manifested in the following statement: 'The Museum recognises that Australia is a multicultural society and, in all of its operations, it aims to take account of and reflect this cultural diversity so that people from ethnic communities are interested in supporting and using the Museum.'

All Powerhouse staff are involved in implementing a strategic plan to achieve this principal goal. It starts with creating a working environment which encourages sensitive and non-discriminatory attitudes towards all museum visitors and towards one another. In 1994, the Powerhouse is planning a major visitor study to identify the needs and preferences of people from Aboriginal and ethnic communities. The findings will guide Museum staff in providing programs that are culturally sensitive, appropriate and accessible to all people regardless of their language or background.

Programs, services and exhibitions which reflect the

rich cultural diversity of Australian society cannot stand on their own in museum planning and development, however. Nor can commitment to the concept of cultural diversity be implemented into our work procedures in the form of directives or government requirements.

In my opinion, understanding of cultural diversity must start with each individual. It is up to all of us to search for positive attitudes and to reflect these in the way we think and behave, regardless of our position in the workplace.

Cultural diversity and marketing

Marketing is the buzz word of the decade. There is no sense in having the best programs and exhibitions if people don't know about them.

What is the most appropriate and effective way of marketing museums to multicultural Australia? Next to the mainstream English language media there is a vast network of community language media to which we generally have only limited access. While it takes time to establish good personal contacts with editors and journalists, I do think it is the best way to go. If they trust that museum staff have the appropriate attitude and that the museum can offer relevant services, such as interpretation, then there is a fair chance they will be interested in promoting it. The ethnic media, and press in particular, are very powerful in getting the message across to their target audience.

Museum language and cultural diversity

Language is one of the most obvious barriers for new migrants to Australia. In the 1991-92 financial year more than 100,000 people from more than 160 countries settled in Australia. Taking away English speaking countries, there are still some 150 languages spoken in Australia. What does this mean for museums? Obviously we cannot use all of them and my opinion is: don't use any!

The overall information system within the Powerhouse Museum uses English only. There are exceptions, however. In our 'Community Focus' exhibitions, which convey migrant stories and experiences, we translate labels into the community language of the portrayed migrant. It is a very powerful message for the ethno-specific community to say, 'Yes, we made the effort, it is our welcoming gesture to you so that you can read and understand this label, and that you can bring your children and show them your native language.'

During my seven years at the Powerhouse Museum I have met and worked closely with many people representing many of Australia's ethnic communities. Every community is unique and has a special place in my heart. The Powerhouse has been a venue for people from Argentina, Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador, Japan, Greece, Italy, Portugal, France, Armenia, China, Hungary, the Philippines, Iran, Israel, Indonesia, India, Turkey, Mauritius, Vietnam, Poland, Mexico, Laos, Estonia,

Spain, Czechoslovakia, Africa, Malaysia, Pakistan and Holland. My personal discovery has been the South Pacific community.

Meeting women, men and children from South Pacific countries has introduced me to a lifestyle where family (and I mean a huge family) is the most important of life's commitments. I realised how much there is to learn from them, and I look forward to seeing members of the South Pacific community in the Museum and to working with them on programs fostering cultural diversity in the Museum.

Dr Jana Vytrhlik,
Education Officer,
Powerhouse Museum

The Role of the Museum in Culturally Diverse New Caledonia

By *Emmanuel Kasarhérou*

Museums were once primarily concerned with the collection and preservation of objects. People were only slightly interested in the ethnography of the cultures represented, but in the last century there has been a widening view of the museum's work to include the presentation of cultures in addition to their objects.

Perhaps museums are now moving to another level of responsibility. The world is becoming smaller and people of varied cultures are obliged to live and work together; museums can play an important role in helping these different cultures understand each other.

Cultural diversity in New Caledonia

New Caledonia is a culturally diverse country. It is a French overseas territory with a total population of 164,173: the Kanaks (the indigenous Melanesian people) represent 42% of the population, the rest consisting of people of European descent (33.6%), Polynesians from Wallis and Futuna Islands (8.6%), and other ethnic groups (15.8%), (1989 census). Approximately 60% of the population live in the capital city of Noumea.

New Caledonia's museums

There is one major museum in New Caledonia, the Musée Territorial in Nouméa. Its collection consists primarily of Kanak pieces but does include a small section on other Pacific countries. There is a small museum in Bouraél (the country's second largest city) which focuses on the history of the local area, and there are two small Kanak cultural centres in other parts of the country.

Several small museums are currently being planned and represent a growing interest in (and identification with) the European community's colonial history. But for the moment however, we seem to be representing our cultural diversity in separate museums: one for each culture.

When the Musée Territorial was founded in 1863 it dealt with natural history and the ethnography of Kanak culture. But in the early 1980s there was a change of attitude in France and ideas about the recognition of indigenous cultures began to emerge. Even though the Museum is funded by the Territorial Government, France provided funding in 1983 and the Museum was given the task of affirming the cultural identity of the Kanak people.

The Museum was renovated and a second floor

exhibition space was built. The displays were changed and today the Museum shows only Kanak and Melanesian objects. Most are presented in a fine arts context and even though there are utilitarian and everyday objects, these are not presented in an ethnographic manner. These changes have resulted in a much more positive presentation of Kanak culture.

In 1985, the first Melanesian director was appointed and the Museum began to present Kanak culture to both the European and Kanak communities. It was hoped that Kanaks would find a community identity they could be proud of, and that the Europeans would discover a Kanak culture they could respect and identify with.

'De Jade et de Nacre'

High quality temporary exhibitions also help to affirm Kanak culture. The first and most important of these was 'De Jade et de Nacre', organised by the Museum for African and Oceanic Art in France in conjunction with the Musée Territorial. The most comprehensive display of early Kanak fine art pieces ever shown, 'De Jade et de Nacre' was displayed in Nouméa during 1990 and then in Paris.

It was partly a result of 'Accords de Matignon', a series of agreements between the French Government, the Kanak separatists and others wanting New Caledonia to remain a French territory.

It was not the first exhibition of Kanak art but it was important because it presented Kanak objects as fine art. Presenting pieces of indisputable artistic worth in this positive context helped people in New Caledonia (and overseas) change their ideas about the culture as a whole. Even the title (which means 'Of Jade and Mother of Pearl') was chosen to convey the idea of things of great value. The exhibition traced the evolution of Kanak art beginning with pieces collected by Captain Cook through to the beginning of this century.

Presenting Kanak culture to Kanaks

The Kanak community in New Caledonia is very diverse — there are almost 30 different Kanak languages and as many cultural identities. The exhibition aimed to present the culture as a single entity.

In traditional Kanak culture, each village and area views itself as a separate group quite distinct from (and often in conflict with) its neighbours. In this exhibition, pieces from all regions were put together in a single display to help Kanaks throughout the country realise they had a common cultural heritage. It also helped Kanak people discover the richness and beauty of their own cultural heritage.

The exhibition also provided an unusual opportunity for the Museum to develop a better relationship with the Kanak community. Most had viewed the Museum as a European institution which had very little to do with them, despite the fact it was filled with their cultural artefacts.

The idea of a museum is a western concept which doesn't appear in traditional Kanak culture: 'objects of art', 'collections', 'preservation' and 'presentation to the public' have no counterpart in their culture. Consequently, the goals and objectives of a museum had to be explained before this exhibition could be understood.

Despite the rapid changes in Kanak society, there are still many people who are uneasy when viewing traditional objects with supposed magical powers. With these ways of looking at traditional objects, the purpose of a museum is hard to understand.

In the months before the exhibition, meetings between Museum staff and traditional Kanak cultural authorities were held in each of the eight cultural areas in New Caledonia to explain the purpose of the Museum

and the exhibition. This was also an occasion to talk about Kanak cultural heritage and to present the idea of a Kanak identity.

Results of the exhibition

As a result of the exhibition, many non-Kanaks began to appreciate and identify Kanak culture with the New Caledonia of today. People of all races began to wear t-shirts bearing Kanak designs and images, a use of local design which had been seldom seen.

Kanak culture was once little known in Europe and was properly appreciated by only a few. Following the Paris exhibition and the associated book, many people in France were introduced to Kanak art and culture and gained a new respect for it. Prices for Kanak artefacts increased dramatically.

In addition to an improved relationship between Kanaks the Museum, the exhibition was also important in establishing a better respect for the Museum among the European community.

In retrospect, it is safe to say it was successful. Almost 10% of the population attended, and the publicity and general interest which surrounded it touched almost everyone.

Today, attitudes in New Caledonia have changed and I believe our exhibition played an important role in the new way in which Kanaks and Europeans view Kanak culture. This new respect and better understanding of Kanak cultural heritage has helped the diverse communi-

ties in New Caledonia better respect and communicate with each other.

Future prospects

A museum is only one vehicle for carrying out a country's cultural policy and it cannot be expected to do everything. The Musée Territorial focuses primarily on Kanak culture but in the future we hope to increase the size of our displays on other Melanesian cultures. While it is not appropriate for us to try to represent all the ethnic communities of New Caledonia with permanent exhibitions, we do plan to present these cultures in temporary exhibitions.

The Museum will continue to focus on Kanak cultural heritage and the exciting new cultural centre, 'Centre Culturel Jean-Marie Tjibaou', will use Kanak origins as a base from which to develop a new, evolving culture which will include the country's whole population.

This is an example of a cultural institution which will go way beyond the traditional limits to serve the needs of a culturally diverse community. It will be very interesting to watch what happens in Nouméa in the next few years.

Emmanuel Kasarhérou,
Director,

Musée Territorial de Nouvelle Calédonie

(The complete title of the exhibition was 'De Jade et de Nacre. Patrimoine Artistique Kanak', 'Of Mother of Pearl and Jade. Kanak Artistic Cultural Heritage')



The Brides, a multi-media installation by Srebrenka Kunek (Melbourne, 1993).

A plate from the exhibition entitled:
A candidate selected for the ICEM
Women's Training Programme,
Epiros, Greece, 1962

Digital electro photography, black and white

The Brides

A contemporary multi-media installation which documents Australia's post-World War II female migration history.

NETS tour dates:

Ballarat Fine Art Gallery
10 June - 24 July 1994

Benalla Art Gallery (on the Lake)
5 August - 28 August 1994

The Exhibitions Gallery
Wangaratta
2 - 25 September 1994

Mildura Arts Centre
October 1994

Sale Regional Art Gallery
Outreach Program
November - December 1994

The Brides will also be shown in New York, Europe and Geelong in 1995.

WHO DO YOU TAKE ME FOR?

'As an immigrant I am always reminded to remember my foreignness and at the same time to wipe my cultural identity away in order to fit in and not to threaten the British way of life. Starting from my own experience . . . I am trying to develop a visual and textual language that reflects my existence in this society.'(1)

'Who do you take me for?', an exhibition curated by Clare Williamson, showed at the Canberra School of Art Gallery last year as part of a national tour organised by the Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane. Videos and photo-based works by fifteen Australian and British artists, predominantly from non-Anglo backgrounds, explored issues of identity and a sense of 'living in two or more cultures at the same time, or of belonging to neither.'(2)

In demonstrating the heterogeneity of the Australian community, artists of non-dominant cultural groups have usually either been represented exclusively and simplistically by their ethnicity, or automatically perceived as representatives for a whole social or cultural group. Individual identity, which is complex and perhaps impossible to articulate entirely, is acknowledged through different forms of marginalisation that cannot be addressed in isolation. The ideological identity claimed by each artist was defined here not solely by their ethnicity, but also by their gender, sexuality and socio-economic position.

British artist Rhonda Wilson's series, *A sense of place: women and homelessness* (1988-89) used the 'image with a message' form of political posters. Her subjects are homeless women, a phenomenon she sees as underrated and related to other issues such as low-paid 'women's work'. Her combination of text and photographs reflected how images are commonly presented in magazines, newspapers, television and advertising. In addition, Wilson included portraits and quotes of tenants who are implicated in the subject and collaborated with them during production of the works.

Australian artist, Peter Lyssiotis' *Industrial Woman* (1979-91), part of a larger series which toured Australia in 1983-84, presented a cross-section of experiences of working women in

Australia. His photomontages introduced issues such as shift work, childcare and workers' compensation. The potency of photomontage comes from the disordering of existing structures which remain seamless and unquestioned in straight photographs. In his larger project, Lyssiotis' photomontages were contrasted with photographs of women at work, and, when removed from that context as they were here, their power was diminished.

Several artists used family legacies, self portraiture and personal memories to explore individual identity. Their works hovered between public and private. *Synapse* (1990-91), by British artist Sutapa Biswas, is a medical term for the junction between nerve cells. Here it designated a feeling of juncture — the artist's own experience of migration and separation, as well as 'notions of ambivalence and displacement relating to her exploration of cultural territory and personal identity.'(3) Joy Gregory's physical appearance emerged slowly in the nine self-portraits making up *Autoportrait II* (1990); they resembled failed passport photographs snatched in an instant-photo-booth. The family album was also significant in the work of Australian artist Milan Milojevic. Photographs taken by his father 'record home and family life and reflect the shared experience endured by the first influx of foreign migrants.'(4)

The themes of this exhibition were challenging and confrontational. Indeed, some artists chose not to be included. In correspondence, a particularly interesting aspect of the show, Australian Tracey Moffatt explained to Clare Williamson her determination not to allow herself 'to be ghettoised as a Black Artist.'(5) Her position confirmed Stuart Hall's assertion that 'We have come out of the age of innocence. . . which says it is good if it's there. Provided some image of black people which they can recognise is available, it's alright. . . The next phase is when we actually begin to recognise the extraordinary complexity of ethnic difference and



PETER LYSSIOTIS — IF LIFE IS SOMETHING, THEN IT MUST BE IN SOMETHING. (FROM 'INDUSTRIAL WOMEN' SERIES), 1979-91, TYPE-C PHOTOGRAPH OF PHOTOMONTAGE

cultural difference.'(6) 'Identities are never fixed, are complex, differentiated and are constantly repositioned.'(7)

— Only when we acknowledge these differences will those who are currently marginalised be able to move in from the periphery.

Kate Davidson, Curator of International Photography, National Gallery of Australia

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- (1) Pecoraro, Mariagrazia quoted in Parma, Pratibha, 1988, *Spectrum Women's Photography Festival Catalogue* supplement in *Ten-8*, No. 30, p.10.
- (2) Williamson, Clare, 1992, *Who do you take me for?*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, unpaginated.
- (3) Tawadros, Gilane, 1992, *Sutapa Biswas. Synapse*, The Photographers Gallery, London, p.4.
- (4) Milojevic, Milan, 'Milan Milojevic', *Artlink*, Vol. 11, No. 1&2, p.71.
- (5) Williamson, Clare, op. cit.
- (6) Parma, Pratibha, 'Transitory Moments', *Ten 8*, Vol. 2, No. 3, p.60.
- (7) *Ibid*, p.59.

MUM STAYED HOME: WOMEN IN THE 50s

'Mum Stayed Home: Women in the 50s' was recently displayed at Sydney's Powerhouse Museum. It can be viewed as a cognisant example of professionals from regional and urban cultural institutions collaborating to interpret and present 'marginal' stories in a museum context.(1)

'Mum Stayed Home' is 'about ordinary Mums in the fifties', the decade when 'good Mums stayed home and Mums who went out to work were frowned on'.(2) It explores this subject through the lives of four women, all of whom have similar, yet different, experiences of domestic work during the period.

relative affluence that frequently characterise assessments of the fifties are partly counteracted through these stories. This exhibition also helps provide the 'marginal' (as represented by women of 'difference') with a voice within a mainstream cultural institution.

A discussion of marginalisation raises difficult questions, however. It is a 'complex process by means of which certain people and ideas are privileged over others at any given time'.(3) 'Mum Stayed Home' does not escape this charge. In choosing to represent Mums through a series of discrete voices, and given that each of these voices carries a somewhat different weight, their combination describes and reinforces a familiar status. The exhibition

fifties when she and her family arrived from Holland at the Bonegilla Migrant Reception Centre provides an 'outsider's' account of adjustment to Australian culture. She comments 'I don't know if you can understand when you come to a strange country and you don't know the language, don't know the customs, don't know anything'.(4) Her dialogue is an 'outsider's'; she defines herself against other people's patterns — the 'insiders' — and emerges as a counter-narrative.

When 'outsiders' try to tell their own stories they appear out of place in the 'mainstream' discourse until they are eventually absorbed by it. Els' dialogue is a discourse of 'difference' which is typical of the 'mainstream's' representation of 'others'; it does not make its power obvious when it mediates the experiences of 'others'. The qualities of the dominant culture are assumed to be the norm around which 'others', such as Els Jacobs, must explain their cultural difference.

Euphemia Mullett's story is also from the 'margins'. A mother of twelve, Euphemia lived with her family in remote bush camps during the fifties. Despite difficult conditions, her children all finished high school and many went on to further education.(5)

On one level, the exhibition celebrates her 'difference'. Her ability to manage with rudimentary domestic aids is emphasised, yet her 'difference' is discussed within 'mainstream' standards of domesticity.

The contrast between her situation and the domestic lives of the other three women is considerable. Domestic consumption constitutes a major part of the other women's lives and the exhibition generally. In comparison, the interpretation of Euphemia Mullett's domestic life and work remains 'marginal' because she is 'outside' the culture of consumption.

Euphemia's abilities are established, assessed and interpreted in terms of the dominant culture's assumptions about education, cleanliness and motherhood. She represents a domestic extreme, notable because she is able to achieve prescribed domestic standards within an environment considered 'primitive' by the mainstream. It reinforces rather than challenges the superiority of the dominant culture.



EUPHEMIA MULLETT. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF VICTORIA COUNCIL

Their diverse experiences vary according to race, nationality and class, and are significant because they provide a range of discrete stories within a specific period. The dominant homogenising rhetorics of consumption, modernity and

describes the often tacit standards from which specific 'others' are said to deviate, and while that myth is perpetuated by those whose interests it serves, it can also be internalised by those who are oppressed by it.

Els Jacobs' recollections of the

As a white Australian my reaction is tentative. I am not in a position to speak on behalf of Euphemia Mullett, who may view her connection with the exhibition as part of a 'genuine dialogue' with 'insiders'. My interpretation is more a kind of caution to museum professionals to remember the power they exercise when representing others. They must ask themselves who is benefiting and allow for juxtapositions that will challenge the 'centre's' construction of the margins and the marginalised, and provide the visitor with the means to find their own meanings.

Sharon Veale,
Freelance curator

References

- (1) 'Mum Stayed Home: Women in the 50s' was developed by Wendy Hucker, Pioneer Womens' Hut, Tumberumba; Vicki Northey, formerly from the Albury Regional Museum; Audray Banfield, Albury Regional Arts Centre; Kylie Winkworth, consultant curator, and Julie O'Dear, exhibition designer.
- (2) Hucker, Wendy, Banfield, Audray, and Northey, Vicki 1993, *Mum Stayed Home: Women in the 50s, A joint exhibition toured by the Albury Regional Art Centre, the Albury Regional Museum and the Pioneer Women's Hut, Tumberumba 1993*, published Albury City Council.
- (3) Tucker, Marcia, 1992, 'Foreword' to *Out There: Marginalisation and Contemporary Cultures*, Ferguson, Russell, Gever, Martha, Trinh, T. Minh-ha and West, Cornel (eds), MIT Press, pp 7,8.
- (4) Jacobs, Els, op.cit.
- (5) From the exhibition text.

'ARATJARA: ART OF THE FIRST AUSTRALIANS'

'Aratjara: Art of the First Australians' is the most exceptional and comprehensive exhibition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art ever mounted. Alongside the remarkable 'Dreamings' exhibition (Asia Society Galleries, New York, and South Australian Museum [1988]), this has given Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art an extraordinary amplification overseas.

Impressive exhibitions of Aboriginal art have been mounted

over the years, for both Australian and international experience, though I cannot recall any as large as the present Aratjara, nor as comprehensive. However, what sets it apart from its predecessors are the circumstances of its development: it has been intimately driven by the perspectives of indigenous people, with museum people and other western-based specialists lending support along the way. Historically, the pattern has been in reverse: Aboriginal art mounted by museums — anthropology driven, art-steered in conception and presentation — with Aboriginal people perhaps consulted along the way, or else ignored entirely.

I managed to catch Aratjara at the Düsseldorf State Art Gallery earlier last year. The Gallery had taken the initiative in agreeing to develop and hold the exhibition for its European showing. Years ago the Power Gallery at Sydney University (now the MCA) provided a home base for the project's early development with Bernhard Luthi, the exhibition's artist-curator, and Aboriginal photographer Peter McKenzie developing early strategies with MCA staff.

An Aboriginal advisory committee for the project was then established (Gary Foley, Lin Onus, Jim Everett, Djon Mundine, Fiona Foley, Michael Riley and others) with myself and other colleagues participating in some of the committee's stimulating meetings in the founding stages. This process of ensuring Aboriginal steerage and dialectics from the very beginning was, I believe, fundamentally important to the project's subsequent evolution.

The exhibition needed a respected European institution to act as a coordinating museum for its staging abroad — the newly housed Kunstammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen in Düsseldorf took on that commitment. It also needed a strong and well-resourced art museum to provide support from Australia — the Power Gallery took on that initial commitment but because it was still in its early stages (not yet the MCA), the National Gallery of Victoria (through James Mollison) adopted the role.

Years on, the resulting exhibition recently staged at the Hayward Gallery, London (where the catalogue's first edition sold out), is the most important

exhibition to assert Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural history, values and achievement. It is also, in purely aesthetic encounter (which is wrongly speculated as perhaps conflicting with Aboriginal political objectives), an exhibition which projects symbolic languages of a visual culture to levels of variety, delicacy and density rarely experienced in a unified context.

Covering more than a century of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander achievement, beginning with early barks and Torres Strait Islander masks (one a Murray Island mask from the 1890s, which is a potent symbol of Daniel Mabo's cultural traditions), the exhibition covers an enormous range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander works through a beautiful selection of central desert and Kimberley paintings on canvas, up to the sharply contemporary work of Gordon Bennet, Lin Onus, Fiona Foley and others.

Political posters and land rights images are there asserting the political claims of continuity behind the decades of unfolding cultural continuity and aesthetic adaptation, which is articulated through decades of diverse development. There are the sharp transitions of recent works as many new forms of rural and urban-conditioned Aboriginal art have effloresced. And of course there are also examples of the great religious bark paintings of Arnhem Land, through which Aboriginal art has, until recently, been better known to the world. Some works come from European sources (the early masks are from the anthropology museum in Cambridge); most are from Australia.

This exhibition provides a landmark achievement not only in its direct encounter, but also in the circumstances of its origin and guidance. Artists and spokespeople have been present at all venues. Djon Mundine (accompanied by Bernhard Luthi at various times) is providing on-the-spot education and cultural explanation throughout the European showings. Most importantly, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are in the saddle now as guides and partners in the re-presentation of their arts and social values, and accordingly, in the self-imaging of cultural achievement for all Australians to share. Culturally we are at last crossing an exciting new threshold which

should influence the practices and spirit of our museum life in new ways.

Bernice Murphy,
Senior Curator,
Museum of Contemporary Art

'Aratjara: Art of the First Australians' will return to Australia for showings at the Museum of Contemporary Art and the National Gallery of Victoria.

INDEX TO CRAFT JOURNALS

Index to Craft Journals 1989-1990,
Beth Hatton (ed), published Crafts
Council of Australia, 1992.
Paperback, \$110.

The *Index to Craft Journals 1989-1990* is the third in a series produced by the Crafts Council of Australia. The first issue (covering 1979-1983) was published in 1984 and the second (covering 1984-1988) in 1990.

The *Index* claims to be a comprehensive guide to craft periodicals published in Europe, North America and Australia and provides craft-based information on practitioners, education, conferences, competitions, law and tax, marketing, galleries, health and safety, plus the history, conservation and technical development of crafts. The journals indexed are major craft journals and, as nearly half are from Australia or New Zealand, it has a distinctly Australian bias.

Articles can be identified by author, craftsman, craft firm/studio and subject. The subject headings are fairly complex — consisting of product, material, technique, concept and geographic location — and a list of headings used would make subject searching easier. I generally use the index to locate articles about particular craftspeople, but there is a wealth of related information to be obtained from this publication. Citations are usually accurate (not always the case with indexes), but it is a pity that recent information is not available in this publication.

There are few other indexes covering craft journals, and none from Australia: *Art Index* (US), and *Design and Applied Arts Index* (UK), cover a wider field, are more expensive, and don't offer as complete a coverage of crafts as does *Index to Craft Journals*.

Layout has improved with each

successive issue, however, more white space on the page would be easier on the eye. The soft cover could also be a problem for libraries where the index could expect to be used regularly for many years. Presumably this is to keep the cost down.

A plea to the publishers, however: how about making the next issue available in electronic format, perhaps on CD-ROM, to allow for regular updates? This *Index* saves hours of work and is too good to waste!

Margaret Rafferty
Senior Librarian, Museum of
Applied Arts and Sciences

METAL PLATING AND PATINATION — CONFERENCE PAPERS

Metal Plating and Patination — Cultural, Technical and Historical Developments, Susan La Niece and Paul Craddock (editors), published Butterworth-Heinemann, 1993, 305pp, Hardcover, \$169.

'Our whole perception of the material world, from topography of the surface mantle of our planet to the man-made metal artefacts. . . is based upon surface appearance.'

The twenty-four papers collected in this book, edited by Susan La Niece and Paul Craddock, are the proceedings of 'Surface Colouring and Plating of Metals', a conference held at the British Museum in 1990.

The conference organisers aimed to stimulate discussion and to coordinate information and approaches on the subject that were scattered through the scientific, conservation and art historical literature. The proceedings have drawn together a wide range of subjects from the surfaces of ancient Chinese bronze mirrors to electroplating and electro-finishing — a vast range of topics to cover in one book. It is wonderful to see the authors using a range of sources, objects, scientific study and literature. Many people working in Australian collecting institutions could learn from this multi-disciplinary approach to collection interpretation.

However, it is not, as its publishers claim, 'a comprehensive survey of surface treatments', or, 'the most important reference work to be published on the subject'. The works

of Gabe, Gailer and Vaughan, Fishlock, W. Canning and Co. Ltd. and others in the metal finishing industry certainly need to be consulted to give a more comprehensive picture of surface treatments to the present.

Over one third of the chapters are written by authors associated with the British Museum, so the slant towards the study of the surfaces of objects from antiquity and the Orient is not surprising. Modern finishes are restricted to electrolytic, electroplating, tinning, bower-barffing and non-ferrous instrument finishes, while economically and culturally significant finishes such as blueing and conversion coating are either not mentioned in any depth, or are totally missing. This book is of limited use for those interested purely in historical objects or modern art.

Hughes sets the stage with a chapter on artificial patination stressing the environmental effects on objects and the inherent instability of artificial patination.

Born, Craddock, Giumlia-Mair, Orgen Shoukang, Tangkun and Meeks debate the form of the object's surface, its original patination and survival to the present. It is surprising that more emphasis is not given to the corrosion process and how this changes the artefact.

Martha Goodway investigates bower-barffing, the nineteenth-century process which creates a velvet-black magnetite surface on iron, and relates its use in the construction of the War Department Library in Washington DC. She also discusses hydrogen reduction, used in the late 1880s to stabilise archaeological objects, and its effect on an object's metallurgical structure.

Raub and Child both discuss the history and process of electrochemical finishing of metals. This book is well illustrated with clear text and a useable index. It will focus discussion on surface finish of metals in museums and is a valuable source for art historians, artists, curators, scientists and conservators interested in the surface finish of some historical metals. It is a worthwhile addition to the literature on surface finishing and will be the 'standard text' on the subject in museums for some time.

David Hallam,
Senior Conservator of Objects,
Australian War Memorial

National Portrait Gallery for Canberra

The Australian Government has invited the National Library of Australia to develop and manage a National Portrait Gallery in Old Parliament House, Canberra. The initiative, announced in last year's Federal Budget, comes after some energetic advocacy.

The National Library has collected portraits of Australians for many years. These collections reflect Australian life and experience and exist in a number of formats including printed books, manuscripts, paintings, drawings, photographs and oral history material. They have a strong national focus but while they emphasise national eminence and achievement, they also reflect a wider Australian experience, particularly through the Library's Oral History Program.

The National Portrait Gallery will initially exhibit works from existing private and public collections, particularly the National Library, the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria and the Australian War Memorial. The National Library will continue to acquire portraits in a range of media as part



ARTIST: ADELAIDE PERRY, 1891-1973. PORTRAIT OF DAME MARY GILMORE. OIL ON PLYWOOD PANEL ON COMPOSITION BOARD; 45.3 X 35.5CM. REPRODUCED WITH THE KIND PERMISSION OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

of its ongoing collecting activities.

The National Portrait Gallery will be staffed by a curatorial manager, a registrar, an education officer, and

an administrative support position. Staff will be an integral part of the National Library's Cultural and Educational Services Division, headed by Ian Templeman, AM.

The new gallery will initially be housed in a temporary space and reviewed as plans are developed for the overall use of the building. The National Library will work with the National Museum of Australia and Australian Archives, who will also present exhibitions in the old Parliament building. The exhibition program will encourage innovative and imaginative ways of looking at portraiture and will include photography, cartoons, drawings and relevant documentary support material such as letters and diaries. National Portrait Gallery exhibitions will be offered as part of the National Library's travelling exhibitions program.

For information contact John Thompson (06) 262 1303, or the National Library's Exhibitions Manager, David Ellis (06) 262 1444.

John Thompson,
Director,
Australian Collection Promotion

Images of Women: Representing Women in Australia's Museums

Where is the history of Australia which thrills me with recognition?' asked Robyn Archer, writer, performer and chair of the Australia Council's Community Cultural Development Board. For Archer, this glow of recognition happens only occasionally, a view shared by many of the 130 or so participants at the recent 'Images of Women' conference in Canberra.

Much ground was covered in the two day conference. Participants grappled with issues of identity and how museums reflect women's diverse cultural backgrounds, experiences and lifestyles. Formal addresses by Senator Rosemary Crowley, Jackie Huggins, Robyn Archer, Michael Lavarche, Jocelynn Scutt, Marilyn Opperman and Cathy Freeman were interspersed with workshops.

Perhaps, however, the conference attempted to do too much in two days and, as a result, it sometimes seemed to lack focus. A minor point really, for the power of so many different women having the opportunity to say how they wanted to be represented was energising. Some hoped for a separate museum space which represented women's lives and experiences, perhaps even in the new National Museum of Australia. However, women's 'damned patience', described by Senator Rosemary Crowley in her opening address, also shone through. Rather than wanting to storm the museum, many wanted an equal share of the exhibition space, equal representation in senior management, boards and collections. They wanted to see their faces alongside those of men of history,

science, technology and the arts rather than in the background.

The National Museum of Australia organised and hosted the conference, and will, I understand, produce the papers. It was a bold and significant step and I know many of the participants are eagerly awaiting 'Images of Women II' (Daughter of Images of Women, perhaps), so we can congratulate each other on finally being given — or even having taken — our rightful place in Australia's cultural institutions.

Brenda Factor,
Director MA (NSW)
(A comprehensive list of recommendations put forward by conference participants is available from Glen Dimond, National Museum of Australia (06) 242 2122. Conference proceedings will be published soon.)

Eighth Chicago International New Art Forms Exposition (CINAFE)

Australian galleries exhibiting at CINAFE in October made immediate sales of around \$180,000 and placed over \$60,000 of work in US galleries during the three day show.

The big surprise in the Australian section was the inclusion of Aboriginal art: the work of Warlukurlangu artists of Yuendumu, Ernabella Arts, Maruku Arts and Crafts plus other Aboriginal artists represented by the Austral Gallery. The interest shown in Aboriginal art translated to good sales and media coverage.

Exhibiting artists included: Tanija Carr, showing leather bowls and sculptures; Bruce Howard showing corrugated iron furniture; Stuart Montague, Peter Kovacsy and Wayne Hudson showing wooden furniture and sculptures; Pippin Drysdale, David Oswald, Jenny Orchard, Bela Kotai and Diogenes Farri showing

ceramics; Brenda Ridgewell and Robin Wells showing jewellery; Julio Santos, Chris Pantano, Brian Hirst, Richard Morrell, Rob Knottenbelt and Judi Elliott showing glass; and Margaret Ainscow showing textiles.

The three journals presented were *Ceramics Art and Perception*, *Oz Arts*, and *Craft Arts International*.

The Australian exhibition was coordinated by the Crafts Council of Australia. Participation in the international art fair was part of the Joint Visual Arts Export strategy of the Visual Arts/Craft Board of the Australia Council and AUSTRADE, in cooperation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission.

Jane Burns,
Visual Arts/Craft Board

National Aboriginal Art Award 1994

Ten years ago, the National Aboriginal Art Award (NAAA) opened at the Museums and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory with a relatively small body of works and much local enthusiasm. The policy was to promote understanding and appreciation of the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art.

This ten year period has witnessed many changes, most significantly the doubling of entrants over the past

five years and the recent recognition of the NAAA as a major showcase exhibition of Aboriginal art in Australia. Changes in artistic practice and the emergence of new artists have dramatically realigned media categories, which were originally selected as a relatively value-free way of dividing the varied entries for smaller prizes. Bark paintings have been replaced by works on canvas and paper as a medium in the tropical north; western desert canvasses no longer dominate the European media category; and innovative works from other regions are examples of the ever-growing body of new works by both established and emerging artists.

This year's judges Fiona Foley and Gary Lee awarded the Telecom Australia Prize of \$15,000 to well known Beswick artist, Paddy Fordham Wainburranga, for his first ochre painting on paper. A sculptor, bark painter and more recently a printmaker, Fordham's work is represented in many state gallery collections and include a number of the hollow-log bone-coffins in the Aboriginal Memorial Installation at the National Gallery of Australia.

Winners of the three media awards were younger emerging artists: Nina Puruntatameri (19) from Melville Island won the Wandjuk Marika Memorial Award sponsored by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Committee of the Australia Council; Samuel Namundja (23) from Oenpelli won the Rothmans Foundation Award for the best bark painting; and Amy Johnson (28) from Ngukurr, won the Museums and Art Galleries Award for the best work in the European media category.

Fordham's work will now tour Australian state galleries. With the restructuring of the NAAA under the new directorship of the Museums and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory, it is proposed the award exhibition will be touring nationally by 1995.

Margie West, Curator of Aboriginal Art,
Museums and Art Galleries of the NT



PADDY FORDHAM WAINBURRANGA WITH HIS ENTRY *EAGLEHAWK AND CROW*, WINNER OF THE \$15,000 TELECOM AUSTRALIA PRIZE OF THE NATIONAL ABORIGINAL ART AWARD.

1993 MUSEUM PUBLICATION AWARDS

The 1993 CAMA Museum Publication Awards acknowledged publishing efforts in museums and affiliated organisations. They focused on excellence in the graphic design of museum publications and the way in which design concepts express a museum and its programs.

Judges shortlisted thirty-eight publications from twenty Australian museums for this first award, presented at the 1993 CAMA Conference in December.

In the section for national and state museums:

Exhibition catalogues — First: *Asia-Pacific Triennial*, Queensland Art Gallery, Designer — Elliott Murray; Second: *Wit's End*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Designer — Leuver, Leuver, Leuver & Leuver, Publisher — Barbarism and MCA; Third: *Tom Risley*, Queensland Art Gallery, Designer — Elliott Murray; Honourable Mention: *Sites of Imagination, Contemporary Photographers View Melbourne and its People*, National Gallery of Victoria, Designer — Kathy Richards; *Humpty Dumpty's Kaleidoscope*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Designer — Ritchie Thornburn Design.

Posters — First: *A Changing People — A Changing Land*, National Museum of Australia, Designer — Spatchurst Design Associates; Second: *Education Services*, Australian Museum, Designer — Jesse Mastrogianidis; Third: *Yarramundi — Museum in the Making*, National Museum of Australia, Designer — Spatchurst Design Associates.

Books — First: *The Australian Dream — Design of the Fifties*, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Designer — Colin Rowan; Second: *Expressing Australia, Art in Parliament House*, Parliament House Art Collection, Designer — Brian Sadgrove and Associates; Third: *A Manual for Small Museums and Keeping Places*, Queensland Museum, Designer — Janice Watson.

Magazines — First: *MUSE*, Australian Museum, Designer — Russ Weakley; Second: *Powerline* Quarterly Magazine for Powerhouse Members, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Designer — Allison Ward and Lucy Culliton; Third: *Scitalk* Quarterly Newsletter, Scitech Discovery Centre, Designer — Karin Godecke.

Supplementary materials — First: *A Guide to the Australian National Botanic Gardens*, Australian National Botanic Gardens, Designer — Rod Harvey; Second: *Schools Promotion for Museum in a Box*, Australian Museum, Designer — Australian Museum Design Unit; Third: *Sciencecentre Open Your Mind* flyer, Queensland Museum, Designer — Paul Ramsden; Honourable Mention: *Business Services* Folder, Australian Museum, Designer — Angela Brown; *Museums Passport*, Queensland Museum, Designer — Paul Ramsden; *Sport Bag*, State Library of New South Wales, Designer — Margaret Hamill; *Susannah Place Guide*, Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, Designer — Bruce Smythe.

Education kits — First: *Understanding Design from the Powerhouse Museum*, Museum of Applied Arts

and Sciences, Designers — Lucy Culliton and Ric Aqua; Second: *Exciter Pak Balloons*, Questacon The National Science and Technology Centre, Designer — Education Programs of Questacon; Third: *Archaeology Underfoot Teachers Resource Book*, Historic Houses Trust of NSW, Designer — Alison Hastie.

Invitations and press kits — First: *The Dunera Boys* invitation, Australian National Maritime Museum, Designer — Peter Tonkin; *Powerhouse Press Kits*, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Designers — Lucy Culliton and Colin Rowan; Honourable Mention: *Sport exhibition* invitation, State Library of NSW, Designer — Margaret Hamill.

In the section for regional and local museums:

Exhibition catalogues — First: *Peter Cripps, Projects for Two Museums*, University of SA Art Museum and Museum of Economic Botany, Designer — John Barrett-Lennard, Publisher — University of SA Art Museum; Second: *Normana Wight, The Balancing Act*, Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Designer — Kylie Wiemers with Normana Wight and Liveworm Studio; Third: *Elevations, Philip Wolfhagen Paintings 1993*, Devonport Gallery and Arts Centre, Designer — Stephen Goddard.

Posters — First: *Eureka*, Sovereign Hill Goldmining Township, Designer — Miles Pigdon; Second: *Blood on the Southern Cross*, Sovereign Hill Goldmining Township, Designer — Glenn Bishop and John Zulic.

Books — First: *Koorie Plants — Koorie People*, Koorie Heritage Trust, Designer — Linda Patullo.

Magazines — no award.

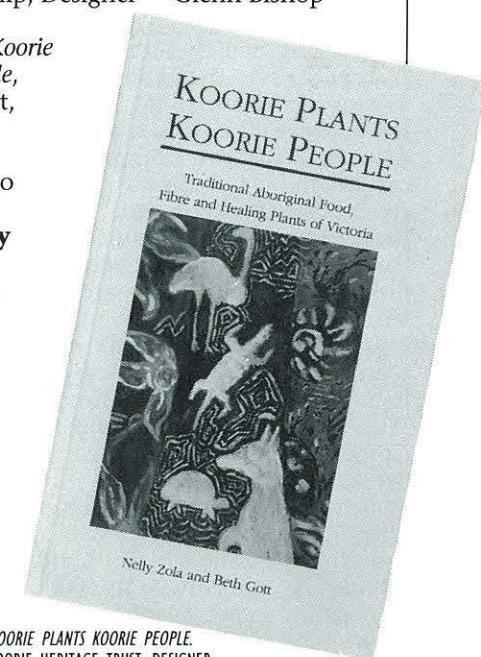
Supplementary materials — First: Sovereign Hill Goldmining Township.

Education kits — no award.

Invitations and press kits

— First: Rachel Apelt, *the golden carp the golden goose* invitation, Ipswich Regional Gallery, Designer — Rachel Apelt; Second: *From Bunny to Brack* invitation, Rockhampton City Art Gallery,

Designer — Anagrafix; Third: *James Gleeson, Signals from the Perimeter* invitation, Ipswich Regional Gallery, Designer — Liveworm Studio.



KOORIE PLANTS KOORIE PEOPLE. KOORIE HERITAGE TRUST, DESIGNER — LINDA PATULLO. WINNER OF THE BOOK DESIGN AWARD IN THE REGIONAL AND LOCAL MUSEUM CATEGORY, 1993 CAMA PUBLICATION AWARDS

Ian Watts, Museums Australia

ACT

Questacon celebrated its fifth birthday in November. In association with the Technology Education Federation of Australia (TEFA), Questacon has just awarded an inaugural fellowship which allows the winner an opportunity to develop technology education programs for incorporation in their regular programs. The winner, Kym Nedebaum from South Australia, is developing a hypercard program for a new computer exhibit in 'SportsWorks', the Centre's latest exhibition.

The National Film and Sound Archive has announced Twentieth Century Fox as a new sponsor. Fox will give the Archive special preview events of their major releases to help raise funds. The Archive's current programs concentrate on access, with the number of staff in this area being increased. Following the Collection Management Project, material is now better documented and more accessible. The Archive is also planning product developments, exhibitions and an enlarged education program to enable public enjoyment of the collection.

The National Museum of Australia sees its exhibition program as assisting in developing knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. In helping the reconciliation process and preservation of indigenous cultures, the Museum organised a telephone link-up between the Yarramundi Visitor Centre and the Cherokee Nation Principal, Chief Wilma Mankiller, last July. The discussion included Robyne Bancroft, Arnold Williams, Lori Richardson and Gordon Briscoe and provided valuable feedback on the preservation of indigenous cultures. The seminar was jointly coordinated by the US Information Service, the ACT History Teacher Association and the National Museum of Australia.

The Canberra School of Art recently hosted a delegation of sixteen academics from the Faculty of Art and Design at the Jakarta Arts Institute. Their visit was timed to coincide with the opening of the Asia Pacific Triennial at the QAG. The delegation visited tertiary institutions, museums and galleries

to help develop an understanding of tertiary education and contemporary visual arts in Australia, and to support growing cultural links between Indonesia and Australia.

Recent appointments: Dr Sue Anne Wallace, Manager, Public Access, National Gallery of Australia; Richard Baker, Geography Department, Australian National University; Roger Garland, Manager Public Programs, National Museum of Australia.

Northern Territory

'Ngingawula Tiwi Jilamaral' (All Our Tiwi Designs), opened at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory recently, marking the first joint display of Tiwi designs, Tiwi Pottery, Jilamara and Munudi artists shown in Australia.

Staff at the NT Museum recently participated in a Museums Focus Group conducted by Arts Training Australia (ATA). The meeting was part of a wider Industry Training Plan (ITP) currently being prepared for DEET, which will identify the industry's preferred structure for vocational education and training and potential areas for implementing the Australian Vocational Certificate training system.

Marianne Gaerners, the second recipient of the Museums and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory Vacation Scholarships, recently completed her residency at the Museum. Established in 1990 with two scholarships per year offered by the NT Museum to Graduate Diploma students of the Material Culture Unit of James Cook University, it enables graduates to carry out internships at the Museum to work on a specific project and to acquire work experience. Marianne worked in the Aboriginal Art and Material Culture Department on a proposal for an exhibition of top-end fibre craft.

Recent appointments: Jacky Healy, Managing Director of the Museums & Art Galleries of the Northern Territory; Judy Kean, Temporary Curator of Contemporary Australian Craft at the NT Museum; Dr Max King has retired as Curator of Terrestrial Vertebrates at the NT Museum.

New South Wales

'What is Professionalism', the Regional Galleries Association of NSW's October conference, looked at negotiation skills, marketing and promotion, sponsorship, grant applications, touring exhibitions, working with freelance curators, writers and artists, plus moral and legal rights for artists. The conference coincided with the Local Government Association of NSW's AGM to help develop the common interests of local government and regional galleries.

It included practical workshop sessions during which the difficulties and pitfalls of grant applications were highlighted through role reversals. Shane Simpson, the Association's honorary solicitor, posed a hypothetical situation which forced participants to consider the ethical questions involved in acquisitions policies, while artists Fiona Foley and Michael Keighery approached professionalism from the artist's point of view. Funding came from the AMAA's Professional Development Program and was supported by Newcastle City Gallery, the Newcastle Tourism Information Centre and the Newcastle Regional Art Gallery.

The Historic Houses Trust of NSW has established a temporary house museum in an important Walter Burley Griffin house in Castlecrag. The property, which was threatened by redevelopment, was purchased by the Trust in early 1993 with the specific intention of selling it back into private ownership within two years. Conservation and extension of this important, but technically difficult, historic building shows the process can be achieved without long term public ownership or continued public expense.

The Trust's conservation of the property is forming part of a range of community education opportunities and open days. The Trust will apply for a Permanent Conservation Order under the Heritage Act before permanent sale, and covenants will be attached to its title ensuring appropriate conservation by future owners.

The project is changing perceptions about the role of the Historic Houses Trust and about the perma-

nency of house museums. If successful, this type of temporary curatorship may become a mainstream activity for the Trust.

The Australian National Maritime Museum recently initiated a major new tourism initiative, the Essential Sydney Ticket, which links five major Sydney tourist attractions (including the National Maritime Museum). The ticket is now selling in New Zealand as well as through in-bound tour operators and Sydney outlets.

The Lismore Regional Art Gallery recently reopened its newly renovated and extended premises following a grant from the Federal Government's Local Capital Works program. However, major celebrations are centred on the 40th anniversary of the collection, which was established in 1953 through the Gallery's first annual acquisitive exhibition.

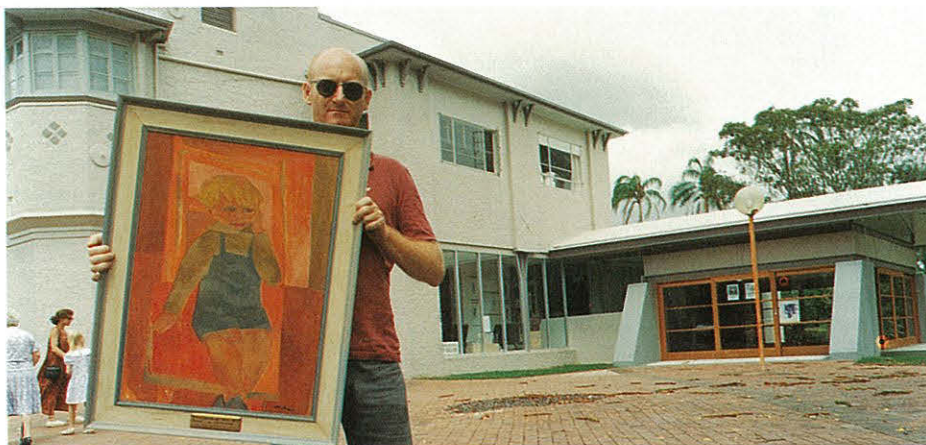
Recent appointments: John Smith, Chief Executive Officer of Sydney Maritime Museum; Director of the Australian National Maritime Museum, Dr Kevin Fewster, recently elected Vice President of the International Congress of Maritime Museums; Max Dingle, Assistant Director for Sponsorship, Marketing, Advertising and PR at the ANMM; Barbara Reeve, Manager of the Conservation Section, ANMM; Richard Perram, Executive Officer, Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras; Alison Broinowski, Director of Advocacy and Planning, Australia Council; Julian Holland, Scientific Instrument Society's first Foreign Representative in Australia

Queensland

The MAA (Qld) held its third Annual State Conference in October at the Queensland Maritime Museum. 'Serving the Whole Community' concentrated on museums and the needs of the aged, people with disabilities, education and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Museums Passport, an initiative of MA (Qld) and the Queensland Museum is proving successful. Passports are sold through the Museum and MA (Qld) is looking to extend its promotion above and beyond school children.

Work is continuing on the development of the new Bond Store



LISMORE REGIONAL ART DIRECTOR, RICHARD MAUDE, IN FRONT OF THE NEWLY RENOVATED BUILDING, HOLDS THE 1955 PURCHASE *CHILD* BY JON MOLVIG. THIS PAINTING CAUSED A GREAT CONTROVERSY IN THE COMMUNITY — MODERNISM HAD ARRIVED IN FAR NORTH EASTERN N.S.W. PHOTO: NICHOLAS ROBERTS

Port of Maryborough Heritage Museum. Four new displays are being developed featuring history of the port of Maryborough, immigration, Queensland House and the history of the Bond Store. Exhibitions will open to the public in March.

The conference preceding the Queensland Art Gallery's recent Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art attracted 400 delegates from around Australia and the region, and the exhibition's opening around 1200 people. At the exhibition's opening, the Myer Foundation announced a gift of \$300,000 to the Gallery to help establish a contemporary Asian art collection in memory of Australian businessman Kenneth Myer and his wife Yasuko, who were killed in a plane crash last year.

News from regional Queensland: The Perc Tucker Regional Gallery is planning a major exhibition of Melanesian art in 1995 which will include work from the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea. It will tour Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific region and possibly Europe; Ipswich Regional Art Gallery recently held an unusual exhibition 'Ippy Drops in and Rips: an exploration of urban surf culture 100km from the ocean', which included photographs by Doug Spouwat and a video by Katrina Versace; the Gallery of Fine Art Cairns and District has launched a regular publication, The RAG, and is seeking financial support for converting a building for their use; Noosa Regional Gallery recently held a conference 'Borders of the Mind' in conjunction with Griffith University. Speakers included photographer Marian Drew and Gael Newman and

coincided with the opening of 'Borders of the Mind', an exhibition of documentary photography from Somalia, Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Vietnam and Afghanistan.

'Drawing a Crowd', the Regional Galleries Association of Queensland's (RGAQ) recent annual conference explored ways of attracting gallery audiences. Participants discussed the use of technology to enhance exhibition experiences, children's programs, reflecting multicultural Australia, involving Aboriginal communities, working outside the gallery to affect the community, and the role of artists in engaging audiences. Case studies included public art and local government, gallery education programs, cultural tourism, community outreach programs, and innovative exhibitions linking black and white artists. The role of the art critic was also discussed.

The Conference passed a resolution urging the RGAQ and the Queensland Art Gallery to work in partnership to research the feasibility of standardised cataloguing for regional art collections, and a subsequent collections data base accessible via computer networks to subscribers. The RGAQ and QAG have already released the first questionnaire amongst the network of RGAQ members and associate members.

The Queensland Arts Council has moved to 242 Gladstone Rd, Dutton Park, QLD 4102, Ph: (07) 846 7500, Fax: (07) 846 7744. The mailing address remains the same. The Queensland Artworkers Alliance and Eyeline Magazine have also moved to 497 Adelaide St, Brisbane.

Recent appointments: Fiona

Barbagello, Operations Coordinator, Queensland Museum Science Centre.

South Australia

'Aboriginal Achievers', an exhibition celebrating the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples recently opened at the South Australian Museum. Aboriginal communities from the state nominated individuals considered to have made significant achievements to the life and well-being of their communities. At the Pacific Arts Association Symposium last year, the Museum received an elaborately carved mask from the people of New Ireland Province, off the coast of Papua New Guinea. The mask was donated by the Cultural Officer for New Ireland Province on behalf of the leader of the Kuk clan as an expression of cooperation and good relationships between the people of New Ireland and the Museum.

The recently renovated Institute Building now houses The Royal South Australian Society of Arts, the History Trust of SA, the Community Information Support Service and the Women's Information Switchboard. Restoration of the building's fabric was completed in July 1992, with funding from the Libraries Board helping with restoration of the interior. The Libraries Board is keen to see the building used for a variety of activities which will reflect its history and current role in complementing contemporary cultural and information services provided by the adjoining State Library of SA.

The new State Government (as MN goes to print) has yet to announce details of its Arts and Cultural Heritage Policy. Based on its election platform, however, the Government will be committed to developing North Terrace cultural institutions and to the staged development of the South Australian Museum to world standard. More details will be included in our next issue. Following the election the South Australian Department for Arts and Cultural Heritage will be renamed the South Australian Department for Arts and Cultural Development.

Recent appointments: Dr Chris Anderson, Director, South Australian Museum.

Victoria

Scienceworks hosted the ASTEN (Australasian Science and Technology Exhibitors' Network) IBM Asia Pacific Conference for Science Centres in early November. Over forty delegates from Japan, Korea, Malaysia, The Philippines, India, New Zealand and Australia attended. It is likely ASTEN will expand during 1994 to include the greater Asian region.

Museums Australia (Victoria), Arts Victoria and the Museums Advisory Board recently announced the first nine museums to successfully attain registration under the Museum Accreditation Program (MAP).

The following organisations fulfill the standards set by the program's first stage, which demands a high level of policy documentation and program activity: Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society, Castlemaine and Maldon Railway Preservation Society, Cohuna Historical Society Museum, Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum, Heritage Hill (Dandenong), Lillydale Museum, Melton and District Historical Society, Queenscliffe Maritime Centre and Museum, and the Victorian Scout Heritage Centre.

Following the three registration rounds planned for 1994, it is envisaged the state will have over fifty registered museums by the end of the year. They will then begin working on accreditation.

Arts Victoria has introduced triennial funding for arts and cultural activities and facilities in Victoria. This form of funding is to be phased in during 1994 and 1995.

Cultural Activities grants for 1994 include support for the preservation and presentation of cultural heritage collections outside the main state institutions. Four regional galleries (Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and Latrobe) received grants to undertake conservation works while galleries in north west Victoria were funded to complete an audience development project.

The Arts Victoria Annual Museum Grants amounted to \$862,500 and were distributed to sixty-one institutions and projects throughout the state. The Maritime Museum of

Victoria and the Central Highlands Historical Association received grants for regional curators to develop programs, and \$60,000 was divided between three organisations for minor capital works programs.

Recent appointments: Fiona McFarlane leaves the MA (Vic branch) as Publication/Public Programs Officer to move to Shepparton; Roger Trudgeon, Manager/Curator, Gold Museum, Ballarat Historical Park Association (Sovereign Hill).

Western Australia

Fifty three applicants competed for grants in last year's Specific Purpose Grants, which is administered by MA (WA) with money from the Lotteries Commission. The three year funding promotes professionalism in museums in terms of education, culture, aesthetics, science, archival and research value of museums in the community.

Art on the Move is the new name for the touring management role undertaken by the National Exhibitions Touring Structure for Western Australia Inc. The name replaces the acronym NETS WA.

During 1993 NETS WA's thirteen crated art and craft exhibitions moved between sixty three permanent and temporary galleries across Western Australia and interstate. Crate News, Art on the Move's quarterly newsletter, contains information of exhibitions currently touring, and news of those in preparation.

Recent visitors to Western Australia include June Swan, a shoe historian from London and Peter Jenkinson, Director of the Walsall Museum. Both gave lectures and workshops.

Recent appointments: Geologist Julie Shepherd is creating a new exhibition for Scitech Discovery Centre on the technology behind the Australian mining industry; Nicky Hurst — Administrative Officer, MA(WA).

Special thanks to the following for providing information: Natasha Stacey — Northern Territory, Katrina Bowman, Barbara Brinton — ACT; Libby Quinn and Robert Heather — Queensland; Kirsten Freeman — Victoria; Nicky Hurst — WA

INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM FOR AUSTRALIAN AUTHOR

The 1993 Mitchell Prize for Twentieth-Century Art History was won by Professor Virginia Spate for her work *The Colour of Time: Claude Monet*, the first time an Australian has won the award.

Professor Spate, head of the Power Institute of Fine Arts at the University of Sydney, flew to New York to receive the \$15,000 prize in November. *The Colour of Time: Claude Monet* is published by Thames & Hudson.

INTERNATIONAL VISITORS AND ABORIGINAL ART

The Australia Council's second survey of international visitors and their interest in Aboriginal arts and culture concludes:

- 48% of international visitors to Australia are interested in seeing and learning about such culture;
- over one third of visitors to Australia undertake an activity related to such culture;
- the value of purchases of Aboriginal arts and souvenirs by international visitors is estimated at \$46 million a year;
- visitors from the USA and Canada are the most interested in Aboriginal arts;
- younger visitors are more interested in seeing and learning about Aboriginal arts and culture than older visitors.

MACGREGOR COLLECTION RETURNED TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA

On 29 October, the Minister for Arts and Administrative Services, Senator Bob McMullen, spoke at the Queensland Museum at a ceremony marking the return of the MacGregor Collection to Papua New Guinea. Also present

at the ceremony were The Hon. Bernard Narakobi (on behalf of PNG), Mr Soroi Marepo Eoe (Director, PNG National Museum and Art Gallery), and Mr Tom Polume (PNG Consul in Brisbane).

The return of the collection is the culmination of thirteen years of negotiations between individuals, and state and federal governments. In making the presentation, Senator McMullen congratulated the Queensland Museum for its pioneering efforts in the return of cultural property to its rightful owners. (Details of the return of this collection will be carried in the next issue of *Museum National*).



WORKING GROUP IN CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES

The Advisory Committee of ICOM has established a working group to address cross-cultural issues impacting on museums. Its three-year mandate contains the following primary terms of reference:

- to examine and report on the ways museums throughout the world are addressing the wide range of issues with cross-cultural dimensions, and to propose guidelines for adoption by ICOM on the way that museums should endeavour to deal with cultural diversity in general, and indigenous and multicultural issues in particular; and

- to make recommendations concerning the ways that cross-cultural perspectives should be reflected in the work of ICOM and its committees.

The Working Group's coordinator is Dr Amar Galla, Cultural Heritage Management, University of Canberra, PO Box -1, Belconnen, ACT 2616, Australia. Fax: (61 6) 201 5999.

FUNDING ASSISTANCE FOR TOURING EXHIBITIONS



The Commonwealth Government has established a new program called *Visions of Australia*. The program provides assistance to tour exhibitions of cultural, scientific, historic and artistic material across State/Territory boundaries where this is currently not commercially viable and there is a demonstrated need.

Assistance may be available for:

- Commonwealth, State and local government-funded cultural organisations, including museums, art galleries, science centres, art/cultural centres
- Community cultural organisations such as museums, heritage trusts, cultural centres and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural centres
- Organisations specialising in curating or managing touring exhibitions
- Professional and voluntary associations in fields such as the arts, history, and science.

Expressions of interest are sought from organisations wishing to apply for further assistance in 1993-94 and 1994-95.

Further information on *Visions of Australia* can be obtained by writing to:



The Director
Cultural Access Section
Arts Branch
Australian Cultural
Development Office
GPO Box 1920
Canberra ACT 2601
or by telephoning
008 819 461.

Department of the Arts and Administrative Services

Previous Possessions, New Obligations

Policies for Museums in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Museums in Australia (and overseas) have collected the cultural heritage of Australia's indigenous peoples since the earliest contact between Europeans and indigenous peoples. Over the last twenty years, however, many museums have emerged as collaborators or partners with indigenous peoples (rather than as portrayals of those people and their cultures as the other, as primitive and on the road to extinction.) In moving to new attitudes and behaviours, museums initially focused on the return of human remains. Now museums focus on the people and their cultural heritage, on their relationship with the land, on the totality of the many peoples and societies.

At the end of 1993, the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples, the Council of Australian Museum Associations (now Museums Australia) launched a policy document to help guide the further expansion of these relationships. Its purpose is to help forge new partnerships in Australia between museums and the first peoples of Australia, and to guide museums in framing their own procedures for dealing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their cultural heritage.

The major principles of the policy statement confirms that museums recognise and support:

Self-determination — the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to self-determination in respect of cultural heritage matters.

Management and collections — Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement in management of collections and information and their use in the public programs and communication of museums; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander objects and cultural property held by museums, and information relevant to them, are of equal importance; the special needs and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women must be recognised by museums.

Access to collections and information — museums must provide accessible information to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as to what is in their collections; that the information must be appropriate as determined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities — museums have a responsibility to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the management of cultural property and in providing relevant training to those communities; museums must assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups in the appropriate care and preservation of objects, particularly in respect of secret/sacred items; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities can obtain funds for special projects — if they then approach a museum to be involved in the project, the major decisions as to what is important remains in the hands of the community.

Employment and training — employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in museums must be dealt with by application of anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity legislation relevant to the jurisdiction. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be encouraged to apply for employment; training and employment in and by museums must start at as high a level as possible and lead to actual employment in meaningful jobs.

Policy formulation — there must be meaningful participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the highest policy levels of museums; all museums should strive to obtain adequate resources to fulfil their role in respect of collections and programs, and should assist in obtaining adequate resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to fulfil their aspirations in respect of their material cultural heritage.

The seven detailed policies cover issues of human remains, secret/sacred material, collections in general, public and other programs, staffing, training and financial support, governance and management, and cooperation.

Copies of the full policy document are available from:

Museums Australia Inc.,
159 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, VIC 3065.
Ph: (03) 416 3795/6, Fax: (03) 419 6842.
Cost: \$5 incl. p&p.