

Wednesday 2 February 2011

THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA CELEBRATES 150 YEARS



The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) today launched its 150th anniversary year, a major milestone in the history of Australia's first public art gallery.

Victorian Premier and Minister for the Arts, Ted Baillieu, NGV Council President, Allan Myers and NGV Director, Gerard Vaughan announced several major acquisitions, a public online competition and a giant birthday party, all as part of the celebrations!

One of Australia's greatest philanthropists, Loti Smorgon, today donated a further selection of works from her magnificent collection, including a bronze sculpture by Pablo Picasso, and some key examples of Post-War New York School art.

Victorian Premier, Ted Baillieu thanked Loti Smorgon on behalf of the people of Victoria for her magnificent contribution to the arts.

"The NGV's 150th anniversary is the perfect opportunity to pay tribute to those who have played a role in the growth of this state treasure. The Gallery has been providing inspiration and

enjoyment to our community for 150 years. I encourage everyone to join the NGV 150 celebrations this year and come and see these wonderful works of art donated by Loti, which are now a part of the NGV's magnificent collection."

The NGV also revealed today an extraordinary array of acquisitions as part of its Masterpieces for Melbourne campaign which was launched in 2008 seeking to raise \$150 million by the Gallery's 150th anniversary.

Works by contemporary artists Ron Mueck and Sean Scully will now form a part of the NGV Collection along with a wonderful High Renaissance 16th century painting by Francesco Francia and a stunning chandelier by Dale Chihuly.

Dr Gerard Vaughan, Director, NGV said the Gallery has been privileged to have many benefactors and supporters assisting the NGV in acquiring art works, with almost all of the works in the NGV Collection having been donated by the public for everyone to enjoy.

"The NGV will be celebrating its 150th anniversary all year long, and a key moment will be our actual birthday – Tuesday 24 May. We will be holding a very special **NGV 150 pARTy** the following weekend on Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 May and we encourage everyone to come along and enjoy the spirit and vibrancy of our world-renowned gallery."

-continues-

NGV NEWS

ngv
150
YEARS



Dr Vaughan also announced today that from Friday 4 February the public can vote online from the NGV website for their favourite work of art in the NGV Collection. The competition, titled *My Top Ten*, will feature weekly prizes drawn at random as well as a mega prize for the final week. The ten most popular works will form a special NGV 150 self-guided trail which will be available on the NGV 150 pARTy weekend.

“I would like to invite everyone to take part in this fun competition; this is your chance to have your say in what are the most-loved works of art in the NGV Collection. It is also the perfect time to rediscover the NGV Collection, which is always free to explore!”

Other announcements made today include a specially designed postage stamp in association with Australia Post, featuring works from the NGV Collection; and to celebrate the history of the NGV, a new book titled *The NGV Story* will be launched in May.

Dr Vaughan encouraged visitors to experience the NGV’s major exhibitions during 2011, which will showcase the very best of international and Australian art.

“This year we will be bringing major exhibitions to Melbourne: we begin with *Eugene von Guérard: Nature Revealed* in April; in June we present *Vienna: Art & Design* as part of our Melbourne Winter Masterpieces series; and then we conclude the year with *Tjukurrjtjanu: Origins of Western Desert art*, and *The Mad Square: Modernity in German Art 1910–1937*. These shows illustrate the NGV’s commitment to bringing to Melbourne great masterpieces, to complement the ever-growing permanent collection.

Dr Vaughan also highlighted the exciting changes happening in and around the Gallery.

“We are going through a major renewal for our 150th birthday and we have already opened the first group of new and redesigned spaces including our extraordinary new 19th century Salon space at NGV International. In May we will be opening NGV Kids Space, a Gallery designed especially for children aged 0-8. This really is the time to experience your NGV Collection,” said Dr Vaughan.

Founded in 1861 – on Queen Victoria’s birthday – the National Gallery of Victoria will celebrate its 150th birthday on Tuesday 24 May 2011. **NGV 150 pARTy**, a festival celebrating the NGV’s history, will be held on Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 May.

Voting in the *My Top Ten* online competition begins on Friday 4 February and closes on Sunday 17 April. To vote, visit mytop10.ngv.vic.gov.au. Prize winners will be chosen at random.

Entry to the NGV Collection is free.

Media enquiries:

Alison Murray 03 8620 2347 / 0439 348 357 / alison.murray@ngv.vic.gov.au

Image 1: Francesco FRANCIA Italian (c. 1450)–1517 Giacomo FRANCIA Italian (c. 1486)–1557 Giulio FRANCIA Italian 1487–1545 *Virgin and Child with the young Saint John in a garden of roses* (c. 1515) oil on wood panel 115.4 x 93.5 cm Collection of a London Art Dealer

Image 2: Tony Tuckson born Egypt 1921, arrived Australia 1942, died 1973 *Untitled – Yellow* 1970–73 enamel paint on composition board 213.5 x 244.0 cm Private collection, Sydney © Tony Tuckson / Licensed by VISCOPY, Australia

