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NGV Director Gerard Vaughan announces retirement

After thirteen years as Director National Gallery of Victoria, Dr Gerard Vaughan today announced he would retire from his role as Director in July 2012. Dr Vaughan was originally appointed Director of the NGV in 1999.

Dr Vaughan said today that he believed the time was right to retire from his role:

“In any field of endeavor knowing when to leave a role is crucial. I believe this is the right time to bow out.

“I am very proud of our achievements over the past 12 years, and am confident the NGV is in good shape for the future. It has been a great privilege and pleasure to serve Victoria in the role of NGV Director.

“In 2011 NGV celebrated its 150th anniversary, a very significant milestone in the life of this great gallery. During this year thousands of Victorians have celebrated with us, with activities for all in the community. It was always my intention to complete this marvellous milestone and then look to my own future.

“In 2008 we launched our Masterpieces for Melbourne campaign, designed to raise \$150 million in cash, bequests and artworks to secure the future of acquisitions for the NGV. I am delighted to say we are more than two thirds of the way to that goal and I hope that by the time I depart in 2012 we may well have reached it.”

Dr Vaughan said he believed his most challenging and satisfying achievements included overseeing the redevelopment of the NGV, including two separate building complexes, The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Federation Square, and NGV International, St Kilda Rd.

Following the re-launch, the NGV under Dr Vaughan’s leadership, has undertaken an ambitious exhibitions schedule, including the highly successful Melbourne Winter Masterpieces series. This series has brought such blockbusters as *The Impressionists: Masterpieces from the Musée d’Orsay*; *Picasso: Love & War 1935-1945*; *Guggenheim Collection: 1940s to Now*; *Art Deco*; *Salvador Dali: Liquid Desire* and in 2011, *Vienna: Art & Design*.

President of the NGV’s Council of Trustees, Mr Allan Myers, said Dr Vaughan had been an outstanding Director of the NGV:

“Under Dr Vaughan’s leadership the Gallery has gone from strength to strength. Dr Vaughan is held in high esteem within the Gallery and the wider community for his scholarship and his dedication to the NGV. His contribution to fundraising has been transforming; a significant part of the redevelopment cost of NGV

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International was raised from non-State Government sources, and the collections have benefitted from the gift and purchase of many exceptional art works ranging from old and modern masters, to Australian and international contemporary art. Dr Vaughan has been the best person to lead the NGV through a period of extraordinary change and growth, culminating in this year's milestone 150th anniversary celebrations."

Dr Vaughan paid tribute to his team: "I have had the support of a very strong team in my time at the NGV, and I thank them for their great work, in particular, Deputy Director Frances Lindsay. I also thank the President of the Council of Trustees and his Trustee colleagues and successive state governments for their support.

"It goes without saying that being Director of the NGV is both a great honour and a very demanding role. I have valued the patience and support of my family, especially my wife Rose and my children Ali and Charlie, for whom the NGV has almost become a second home for much of their lives."

Dr Vaughan said he looked forward to continuing his close association with the Australian art world, to research and writing in the field of art history and to undertaking different roles.

Prior to joining the NGV, Dr Vaughan was Director of the British Museum Development Trust for five years. From 1989-91 he served as Private Secretary to the Vice Chancellor of Oxford University, later becoming Deputy Director of Campaign for Oxford University.

For fifteen years from 1983 he was the London-based adviser to the NGV's Felton Bequests Committee.

Dr Vaughan completed a Master's Thesis at Melbourne University on the French post-impressionist painter Maurice Denis. He then taught art history at Melbourne and Monash Universities before undertaking doctoral research at Oxford University from 1981 on aspects of neo-classical taste and art collecting.

Among his many distinctions, Dr Vaughan is a former Chairman of the Council of Australian Art Museum Directors, a Professorial Fellow of the University of Melbourne, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, a member of the Paris-based Comité Internationale de l'histoire de l'art, and most recently has been elected as National Fellow of the Institute of Public Administration of Australia. In January 2011 he was made a member of the Order of Australia.

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