Welcome to the ninth issue of the Power Institute Alumni and Friends Association e-newsletter.

The Power Institute is a dynamic faculty producing a long list of art and film based professionals working in Australia and internationally. The objectives of the Alumni are to encourage the continued interest of Fine Arts Alumni and Friends in the study of fine arts and art historical scholarship as well as to promote knowledge of the visual arts by means of lectures, seminars discussions and tours.

In this ninth edition of the Power Institute Alumni and Friends Association e-newsletter we keep you in touch with books, catalogues and major articles recently published by Alumni and bring you closer to the Institute where you began your professional life.

We hope you enjoy our fascinating interviews with two high profile cultural leaders - Marah Braye CEO of the Biennale of Sydney and Andrew Sayers, the new Director of the National Museum of Australia. Reflecting on their contrasting roles Marah comments on the challenge of working with a new artistic director every two years, while Andrew talks about bridging the divide in the Australian cultural world between museums and galleries.

An invitation is extended to all Alumni to send us your news for future editions of our newsletter by emailing Andrew Yip (Power Institute Co-ordinator at powerinstitute@sydney.edu.au). You might also like to email this address to other Alumni who may not already be aware of the Alumni Association.

Chair Susan Hunt
Power Institute Alumni and Friends Association

Board Members Pamela Bell, Marah Braye, Dinah Dysart, Deborah Edwards, Christine France, Annette Larkin.

An Interview with Marah Braye, CEO of the Biennale of Sydney
Dinah Dysart

In 1990 Marah Braye graduated from the University of Sydney with Honours in Fine Arts. Today she is Chief Executive Officer of the Biennale of Sydney, with two very successful Biennales to her credit and attendances in 2010 reaching a record 517,000. In September 2010 Dinah Dysart asked Marah about her qualifications for this position and how she has managed the role, including her relationship with a new artistic director every two years.

When I left University there was a recession so it wasn’t easy to get jobs and I worked part time for an auctioneer. Then I got a trainee editor’s position at the Law Book Company. It was good training for finding interest in minutiae – in those days you didn’t expect to get a fantastic job first up. After three years, I went to Prentice Hall, educational publishers, for 11 months – my least
favourite job ever but a good stepping stone because from there I moved to Harper Collins as a development editor and then, when the business was sold, I landed a role in art publishing as Managing Editor at Craftsman House. For the next five years, I worked on monographs on the work of wonderful Australian artists like Imants Tillers and John Wolseley.

In 2001 I went to Sherman Galleries as General Manager where I was responsible for general operations and a staff of nine. My skills meant that the gallery could focus more on publishing and I was also responsible for all the artists’ commissions, which built up to about 10–12% of the overall revenue while I was there.

After five years with Gene Sherman, I applied for the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Biennale of Sydney, reporting to the Board and working with a strategic plan, an exhibition, a public program, publications, marketing, a website, a finance and administration team, and particularly the artistic director. The role actually combines everything that I have done. I had worked one-on-one with artists at Craftsman House and Sherman Galleries and managed public programs, so I knew that I could do that. The Biennale publications were not of a publishing standard and I knew that I could ensure they became icons in the branding and identity of the biennale.

More than 55% of the Biennale’s budget is raised by the organisation, so relationships with our government funders, corporate partners and private supporters are very important. The Biennale also receives the greatest amount of international support of any arts organisation in Australia, so there are relationships with cultural funding bodies, consulates and embassies, which are a very interesting part of my work.

I think one of the reasons I got the job was because, through publishing, I understood long lead times and scheduling. One of the first things I did was to have a timeline meeting, which was the best way of finding out a) what everyone did, b) whether they were talking to one another and c) whether their dates were matching. That timeline is what we work to. We revisited it for 2010 and I’ve just been working on it again to establish the key dates for the 18th Biennale in 2012. You know if you go beyond these dates you are in trouble.

The artistic director reports to me because I have responsibility and sign off on the budget. In reality, the artistic director has complete artist freedom – and this is one of the reasons that I really love the organisation and working there – because it is very rare that you are able to give anyone complete artistic freedom. The artistic director can choose any artist from anywhere in the world. We have longstanding relationships with venues like MCA and AGNSW, but if the artistic director wants to extend this they can. Cockatoo Island was approved as a venue at a board meeting in July 2007 for the 16th Biennale, so there was less than a year to plan how it would be used in 2008.

One of my roles is to help artistic directors plan for what they want to achieve. The artistic director needs to work to the budget, but it doesn’t stop them going for really ambitious projects. David Elliott initially wanted to bring out a Richard Serra sculpture so we actively pursued this rather dramatic idea for Cockatoo Island. Sadly, in the end it was just too expensive – it would have absorbed the exhibition budget and the organisational budget too.

To date, I have worked with two directors, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev and David Elliott, with very different styles. To have a different artistic director each time creates pressure for the organisation because it literally means that you get a new colleague every two years who comes in at a level where they have the
authority to instruct staff and everybody is working to their vision. But it also revitalises the organisation and, of course, this is what makes the exhibitions really different, which is what you want. You have to work out how the artistic director would like to work, what their temperament is like and what they need to be able to do their job properly. The Biennale is a festival and a festival has a particular work dynamic. There is an incredible scale up and then the frenzy of the event itself, followed by the post-exhibition deinstallation phase, which is marked by the need to do funding acquittals and, for an organisation that raises 55% of its funding, there is a lot of reporting to do. Most people assume we are not very busy after the exhibition but actually it just goes back to being a normal job. Then, we are all on to the next one before we know where we are.

Events like the Biennale can only happen in a really structured environment. An event can be chaotic and full of surprises but you don’t want the office environment to be like that. The more organised the office environment is, the more it can deal with last-minute things, which is also in the nature of working with artists. You have to understand how artists work – how an artist wants to work. And, in a way, you do the same thing with the artistic director. To be an arts administrator you need to be very organised so that you can manage chaos when it happens.

The Indian Empire: multiple realities
Jim Masselos

Currently on show at the Art Gallery of NSW, The Indian Empire: multiple realities brings together a range of ways of looking at India over the past couple of centuries. There is first an imagined India constructed visually through written accounts of travellers in times when travel to India was a rare event. Later, from the late 1700s as the British rapidly extended their control over the subcontinent, are paintings commissioned by British officials of the East India Company recording the new experience of life in India and the people, religions and customs they encountered. An early example of the trans-global, these ‘Company’ paintings exemplify the creative input of Indian and western artistic styles.

In the next section are aquatints and lithographs based on work by professional British artists who travelled out to India to record the country’s landscapes and monuments. In doing so, artists operated within the idiom favoured by the dominant English aesthetic of the day, the picturesque.

The picturesque way of seeing nature in terms of side-on perspective, decaying ruins, graded shadings of trees, meandering streams, distant mountains and the like suited what the artists encountered when they came out to India. The results are evident in the colourful and glorious prints created by the Daniells and James Fraser and the subtle and delicate aquatints brought together by Captain Grindlay. The next part of the exhibition moves to a different universe, the village, with a rich and lush selection of textiles, a reminder that while new rulers were taking over the subcontinent, there remained a village world that retained its integrity and separateness. It is a reminder too that this world had a creativity as compelling as any being crafted for British patrons or by British artists.

The arrival of photography enabled other approaches to seeing India. The onset of realism did not however replace the picturesque. Photographs still reflected its ideals as in the shimmering landscapes from Samuel Bourne and others from the 1860s. Less alluring and more disturbing is the reportage by one of the world’s first photo-journalists, Felice Beato, of the aftermath of the 1857 Mutiny.
or the Sepoy Rebellion and Civil Uprising. His tour de force is a large panorama of old Delhi, Shahjahanabad, taken before the victorious British razed part of it. Elsewhere photos display all those subjects photographs usually record: people at work and play, portraits of princes and British officials, tea parties and picnics. The exhibition concludes with Australian printmakers and photographers who suggest an antipodeans view of India. A set of photographs recently acquired by the Art Gallery in the final section is from a contemporary Indian artist, Pushpamala N. Her images play with past religious depictions and with the calendar art of the end of the 19th century that popularised new ways of conceiving gods and heroic figures and which are now part of the collective imagery in the present everyday of the Indian nation.

Before I finish this note, I should add that the exhibition uses material I have collected over the years. Much of it was gathered in research for various projects I undertook when I was in the History Department as a means to information I could not get otherwise— and I had the bonus of working with such pleasing creations. The paintings, prints, textiles, posters and photographs are all sources giving access to worlds otherwise difficult to enter. The textiles, for instance, created by the very people who would use them, enabled a foray into exploring how villagers viewed the world around them. The women artists inevitably featured objects and designs significant to them in their embroideries. Cumulatively the overall patterns, and their repetition, represent a life view, a sum of aspirations, and beliefs. They provide an idea of what the women considered beautiful and pleasing, and so display their makers’ aesthetic sensibilities as much as they sum up their belief systems and ideas of the auspicious.

In much the same kind of way, the works on paper and the photographs provide not only detailed information about specific appearance at a particular time – for instance how street life and street people looked in the 1820s – but also attitudes about places, peoples, religions and so on. The display as it is organised at the Gallery suggests the prevailing attitudes of those who wanted, created or commissioned these depictions. Many images are also prime examples of the artist’s craft, creative imagination working in different media to achieve effects, often unintended, that are rich in their reverberations long after they were created. They still have life and talk to us about an India long past but one still present through the power of their achievement, imagery that is fine art in its own right.

Dr Jim Masselos is Honorary Reader in History at the University of Sydney.

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**An Interview with Andrew Sayers, Director of the National Museum of Australia**

**Andrew Yip**

*After twelve highly-successful years at the helm of the National Portrait Gallery and a long career in fine art galleries including the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Newcastle Region Art Gallery and the National Gallery of Australia, Andrew Sayers (BA (Hons) 1980) took up a new position as Director of the National Museum of Australia in June 2010. Andrew Yip caught up with him to talk about his dramatic change and his vision for the NMA.*

Your background has so far been in fine art institutions and you were quoted earlier this year as saying that “there is a divide in the Australian cultural world between museums and galleries”. What did you mean by
this, and will you try to bridge this divide at the National Museum of Australia?

I think I am trying to bridge the divide. What I was reacting to [in the quote] was a sense I picked up that people thought I was leaving galleries to go to the 'strange world' of museums. Museums, in many peoples' minds, have tended to be associated with natural history and ethnography – two very nineteenth-century ideas of museums.

I think this has created a certain professional divide in the sense that the core professional staff of natural history museums are research scientists. They have certain things in common with curators – they develop collections, do fieldwork and research – but the world in which they work is very different from the world of the art museum curator.

All of the state museums tend to be a kind of mixture: some natural history, some social history, some ethnography and some technology, so you get an experience that jumps around from trains and cars to dinosaurs, rocks, mounted animals and historical displays. To each one of these things you have to bring a different perspective.

Art museums are much more coherent in their expectations of the visitor, but there is always criticism that they don’t show the works in their particular context. For example, take all of the things that used to be called ‘tribal art’. Museums would see as an important element in the display of such material the giving of as much context as possible. Art museums usually privilege the aesthetic experience rather than the context of the object.

If we look at the natural history museum or the social history museum, there are different ways in which the viewer is invited to look at objects. Some of the objects are collected and displayed for their role in social history, others because they have a collecting history, and often that history is regarded as the object’s most significant history. Museums tend to want to tell the object’s story fully in an attempt to recover context.

Autobiographically, two things I did before the National Museum of Australia [NMA] point to breaking down of this polarity in my own work. One was a 1994 book, Aboriginal Artists of the Nineteenth Century, which originated in my work as curator of drawing, but ended up being a biographical examination of visual culture within particular circumstances – it is an exploration of the lives of people across the nineteenth century and their experience of cultural dislocation. In a way that book started from the study of objects but ended up dealing with history, in particular the history of individuals, rather than aesthetic concerns.

Secondly, I ran the National Portrait Gallery [NPG] for twelve years. I used to say that although the institution has “gallery” in its title, a portrait gallery has, in effect, more in common with a museum than a gallery. Particular artefacts are collected in order to illuminate lives – not looked at principally from an aesthetic point of view. In a portrait gallery, works of art fulfill a function not dissimilar to paintings or sculptures in a war memorial – to cast light on particular set of historical circumstances.

The NMA has been criticized in the past for its representation of Australia’s colonial history. How will these issues be approached under your leadership and what do you think the role of a museum should be in encouraging historical debate?
To take the second part of the question first, the fundamental role of a museum is to connect the contemporary world with the past and to ask: ‘How did we get here?’

A museum has a role in talking about things that people are concerned about in contemporary society. The National Museum in its early days had some real difficulties with issues around historical balance. There was a whole range of viewpoints and ultimately the question came down to the limits of the historical record. That was at the heart of the ‘history wars’ debate.

The Museum took a view that the nature of power-relations being what they are, not every voice in history is equal and therefore the historical record is inevitably skewed. One of the Museum’s roles is to look beyond that – to uncover the realities of people’s lives. You can’t just look at the written record to create history or to create a particular sort of display; it’s naive to think that you can.

I think that the role of the Museum is to propose alternative views of history and it has a duty to do that. There will inevitably be discussion and disagreement and debate and that’s all fine - the Museum should never shy away from that. There’s an obligation for us to be as accurate as possible in terms of the material that is presented, but we know that history can never be recovered in all of its complexity, so therefore we must always understand the limitations of what we’re dealing with.

In terms of the Museum’s early difficulties with these issues, at least in part it was due to the fact that the governance – the Museum Council was internally divided about these things and with the professional staff and that became public. So it wasn’t just about subject matter, but about a range of dissatisfaction or disappointments with the Museum. In that context public debates can become very corrosive.

I’m confident that now we have a very good Council, and it’s one that’s happy and prepared for the Museum to have a much higher profile in people’s consciousness, [for it to be a place] which captures national imagination; a place where interesting things are said and done. These might be controversial from time to time. Art galleries are different sort of spaces – there is a neutrality of voice, a kind of authoritative whisper heard in the ‘white cube’.

To return to the the NPG. There I started with the question: “if you think about a National Portrait Gallery, what immediately springs to mind”? The answer was “a rather dull parade of portraits – chocolate and honey coloured – of blokes in gilt frames”. So it was important I think to give the Gallery a very contemporary flavour. We were able to use the one unique characteristic of portrait galleries (shared by the Australian War Memorial) – their tradition of commissioning works for the collection. Most galleries would say that it is not their role to create new works of art, but portrait galleries have traditionally commissioned new works. In the time I was at the NPG we commissioned 40 artists to create works that captured peoples’ imaginations and we were able to get works by leading contemporary artists who weren’t portrait painters.

I think there’s such a thing as a ‘portrait culture’ – prizes, portrait artists’ societies, commissions undertaken for universities, medical schools etc. I wanted to step outside this portrait culture and look at what portraiture can do in terms of its representation of identity. For example, there is a lot of contemporary art that is aligned with portraiture but not aligned with that semi-official portrait world. There’s no reason why portraiture can’t be contemporary.

In terms of the NMA, we’re not starting from a particular preconception. What
we’re starting from is a certain vagueness of definition of what a museum is or
does and what people’s expectations of us are. So I would like to start from a
solid understanding of what are we here for. Once we agree on that and define
that – and it’s to do with our capacity to tell stories – then we’ll start to get a
much more coherent face on the Museum that we present to the world. A lot of
people at present scratch their heads and say “what is a national museum all
about?” That’s one thing I want to change.

Grace Crowley’s Contribution to Australian Modernism and Geometric
Abstraction
Dianne Ottley

Dianne Ottley (MPhil 2007) discuss her 2010 book Grace Crowley’s Contribu-
tion to Australian Modernism and Geometric Abstraction (Cambridge Scholars
Publishing) and the process that led to its production.

1995 was the year of publication of Joan Kerr’s HERitage: The National
Women’s Art Book: 500 works by 500 women artists from colonial times to
1955, and the year I trained as a Volunteer Guide at the Art Gallery of New
South Wales. I completed a qualifying course through the Continuing Educa-
tion Program at Sydney University in 1997 and enrolled as a part-time student
in 1998.

During the first course on Australian Women’s Art taught in 2000, based on
Kerr’s book, we were invited to research in the Archives of the Art Gallery and
write an essay on one of the women artists, which is when I discovered a
number of boxes full of hand-written notes and reproductions of famous paint-
ings with penciled geometric shapes drawn on them. I found an old graph book
with handwritten notes about Geometric Progression: the divine
proportion…the mean proportion…the whirling square. The boxes were a
treasure trove of insights into the life of a woman who was clearly much more
interesting than anything I could find written about her.

By 2002 I was doing Honours when I read an article in the AGNSW LOOK
magazine by Dr. Bernard Rigby, D.Sc, (former physicist with the CSIRO and a
fellow Volunteer Guide) on The Golden Section – the mysterious number that
does something to our brain. He outlined its use by artists throughout history –
Poussin, John Glover, Piero della Francesca, and his admirer, Jeffrey Smart.
Recalling Crowley’s Archives, I recognized the golden section in her notes, and
chose her as the subject of an essay for which I received a High Distinction and
encouragement to continue my research on Crowley at post-graduate level.

My research uncovered her vital role in the development of geometric abstrac-
tion in Australia, firstly through her teaching at the Crowley-Fizelle Art School in
Sydney during the 1930s and then her subsequent artistic partnership with
fellow-artist, Ralph Balson. During the 1940s and 1950s they developed their
own style of geometric abstraction, which reflected the spiritual dimensions of
Kandinsky and Mondrian. Crowley’s abstract Painting 1950, (National Gallery
of Victoria), sparked special interest and a mathematical and geometric analy-
sis of the painting revealed multiple golden ratios, proving her to be a master
of geometry as applied to artistic composition and making her one of the most
important Australian women artists and teachers of her generation and an
innovator of geometric abstraction in Australia.

The work of Crowley, Balson, Frank and Margel Hinder, Eleanore Lange and
others is now seen as providing a history of geometric abstraction in this
country which has influenced the development of many contemporary artists. In 2007, I was awarded an M.Phil in Art History and Theory. As well as the thesis being deposited in Fisher Library, the staff offered to publish my writing as an e-thesis. I simply gave them a disk containing the thesis and they loaded it onto the Library database, where it was subsequently found by three academic publishers, who approached me by email – firstly, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, then two German companies. CSP was set up some years ago by Ph.D. scholars from Cambridge who had been unable to find a publisher for their thesis. I was invited to submit a proposal, guidelines for which can be found on the company website – c-s-p.org. Once the proposal was accepted, I was offered a contract and a date for publication was agreed. This type of publication requires the author to fully prepare the manuscript, including gaining permission and paying for copyright of any illustrations used, preferably in black and white to keep down the cost of publication. One Appendix did need to be in colour and that was no problem. All material is transmitted electronically and that keeps the process flowing smoothly. The publisher does provide design expertise, circulation of information, posters and flyers and offers to help with book signings and promotions. I found the book binding and cover design very good and the staff of CSP very helpful and efficient. The initial print run is 500 which makes the book price relatively high. Authors and co-authors get a 40% discount but pay 6 pounds sterling postage for each copy sent. The book is listed on Amazon and other sites and CSP circulate libraries, and publications worldwide plus a list of local publications and institutions provided by the author. My book was published in May 2010.

Primavera 2010: an interview with Emma White
Andrew Yip

What many people don’t know is that the Power Institute is home to one of Australia’s most exciting young artists. This year Emma White, Power Publications Officer, has been selected for Primavera 2010, showing at the Museum of Contemporary Art, 140 George Street Sydney, until November 21. Andrew Yip talked to with Emma recently about her exhibited works.

Andrew: Emma congratulations on Primavera 2010. Your works in the exhibition play with the idea of what is real and what is fake, what is the original and what’s an imitation. Is authenticity a major theme in your practice?

Emma: It seems to be one of the major themes that is emerging from the kind of work that I’m doing at the moment with ‘the object’ – I just don’t seem to be capable of abstraction! I think of my works more as revoluing around a narrative. You can have a single object and that says one thing, but when you put something else next to it, it forms a dialectic. It’s almost like fictionalising a situation – the objects suggest something else has been around. Copying and representation aren’t things that I think about that much conceptually, but they seem to be really inherent in whatever I do. I think it has something to do with having a photographic training as well so that my practice in a sense is a way of looking at the real world. Inevitably I’m reproducing parts of that real world rather than dealing with aesthetics on their own, which I guess is what abstraction is – I don’t know if that’s what abstraction is.

A: So when you see an object you think about the narrative that happened around it for it to have arrived in that state? For instance, thinking about the work in which the pencil is being sharpened – oh no sorry the sharpener! You don’t see the pencil…
E: Yes but you thought about it in your brain.

A: Exactly, I thought of it and I thought of the action of doing it, which is what you’re trying to do.

E: A lot of the time I’m thinking about things that are tools and what you would normally do with that object, so there’s this tension in the objects because you can’t do the thing with the object that it represents doing, but it makes you think about it. I’m interested in tools that are about making things and marks. Things that are about production.

A: So you’ve got that camera that can’t actually take photos, but it’s so convincing that it’s almost a carbon copy of an artistic tool, but one that doesn’t actually work. You can’t make art with it. There also sculpted paintbrushes with paint on them, suggesting that they have been used for painting.

E: Yes, [the camera doesn’t work] but it suggests the actions that are associated with the thing.

[The Paintbrushes] are artefacts to do with painting and I made it because I’ve been wanting to do painting for a long time, but can’t figure out how to come at it. Painting has all this history, and it’s hard to do. It’s hard to make a good painting. So this is my way of coming at painting, to somehow immerse myself in that ephemera and work with that. It’s about the process of making a painting without having to finish a painting.

A: So these works reflect on your own practice and the way you approach art?

E: Yeah, it’s circular. Reflective.

A: That’s deep [laughs].

E: I’m not saying it’s deep – I’m saying it’s reflective like a whole bunch of mirrors. It gives you the illusion of depth, but it’s still just two flat surfaces looking at each other. So the surface is important to the work. That’s all we’ve got really, I guess.

A: So it’s not a perfect reflection?

E: No, and those objects aren’t perfect reproductions anyway, they’ve got a lot of marks of the hand and they’re squashy. If you put them next to the real object it’s very obvious. But then, when they’re by themselves they’re convincing.

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Power Publications

**Asian Modernities: Chinese and Thai art compared, 1980 to 1999**

John Clark

This is the first analysis that defines a space for Asian modernity without direct reference to Euramerica. Based on John Clark's extensive primary research using vernacular written and interview materials in Chinese and Thai, *Asian Modernities* also develops theoretical perspectives on genealogies of modernity, and the twin phenomena of globalisation and transnational artistic identity. This highly illustrated book combines institutional examination with a close attention to
art works and to the way artists have positioned themselves through them at home and abroad.

John Clark is Professor of Asian Art History at the University of Sydney and a leading scholar on Asian art. He has given major keynote lectures in Beijing, Berlin, London, and Tokyo and organised several international conferences. His research focuses mainly on Japan, China and Thailand, but he also has interests in modern Malaysian, Indonesian and Indian art. He writes frequently for scholarly and art world journals, and has authored and co-edited five books, including Modern Asian Art (Craftsman House/University of Hawai‘i Press, 1198) and Modernities of Chinese Art (Brill, 2010).

Asian Modernities is part of the four-book series Australian Studies in Art and Art Theory and is published with the assistance of the Getty Foundation and the Nelson Meers Foundation.

Asian Modernities was launched at the Schaeffer Library, Department of Art History & Film Studies, University of Sydney on Friday 8 October 2010 by Prof Charles Green (UMelb).

ISBN: 9780909952389, PB 288pp, index, 20 colour & 146 black and white illustrations, 266 x 221mm, $59.95
To order, email: power.publications@sydney.edu.au

Images of the Pacific Rim: Australia and California, 1850-1935
Erika Esau

Australia and California have shared aesthetic ideas through imported popular imagery for nearly two hundred years. From gold rush photography to Spanish-style houses, Images of the Pacific Rim tells the fascinating story of aesthetic exchange between two ‘cultures on the periphery’. The absorption of images into the everyday life of these ‘new’ Western societies, made possible by the development of mechanical processes of production, constructed distinctive cultural iconographies and helped to create a sense of place based upon a shared ocean and climate. Through photography, graphic art, architecture, and the ubiquitous eucalyptus, this book reveals the source elements of what became a ‘Pacific Rim’ aesthetic.

Erika Esau is a native Californian who spent more than a decade teaching art history — including the history of Australian art — at the Australian National University, Canberra. She received her Ph.D. in the History of Art from Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania. Her writings on Australian art and culture include the Blue Guide Australia (with George Boeck), E.O. Hoppé’s Australia (with Graham Howe), and articles on the history of Australian photography.

Images of the Pacific Rim is part of the four-book series Australian Studies in Art and Art Theory and is published with the assistance of the Getty Foundation and the Nelson Meers Foundation.

Book Launch: Images of the Pacific Rim will be launched by Prof Robert Dixon at the Schaeffer Library, Mills Building, University of Sydney at 7pm, Thursday 4 November. To RSVP email powerinstitute@sydney.edu.au

ISBN 9780909952396, $59.95
To pre-order: email power.publications@sydney.edu.au
Art at the University of Sydney
Connie Tornatore-Loong

CHINA AND REVOLUTION:
History, Parody and Memory in Contemporary Art
University Art Gallery
Until 7 November 2010

China and Revolution explores the relationship between poster art of the 1960s and 1970s, specifically the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and contemporary artists whose work engages a conscious dialogue with that period. There are four key contributors to the exhibition - Dahong Liu, Jiawei Shen, Weixin Xu and Gongming Li - as well as original posters from the University of Westminster collection, and contextual materials on film. The exhibition emphasises connective possibilities between past revolutions and the present, and between history, memory and forgetting.

EXPOSED:
Art and the Naked Body
University Art Gallery
Late November 2010 - 27 March 2011

We are born naked and discover embarrassment.
We clothe ourselves in nudity and are unembarrassed.

A multidisciplinary exhibition that examines how we view the naked body, Exposed includes artworks by many artists including Picasso, Cocteau, Matisse, Brett Whiteley, John Power and Rupert Bunny, Greek sculptures featuring the eternally youthful bodies of ancient Greek pottery, mysterious human forms from 2500 BC and a life-sized 19th-century anatomical model.

From the collections of the University of Sydney and The Hon. Roddy Meagher

University Art Gallery website:
sydney.edu.au/museums/whatson/exhibitions/art_current.shtml

DAMAGE
Works from the USU Collection together with submissions from invited artists exploring the themes of trauma and decay
Verge Gallery, Jane Foss Russel Plaza, The University of Sydney
4 October to 29 October
Free entry www.usuonline.com

Damage explores the concepts of frailty, decay and trauma. This exhibition features works from the University of Sydney Union collection together with emerging artists and current students of the Sydney College of the Arts.

Exhibited works examine the idea of physical, compositional and conceptual breakdown, as they occur by chance or by design. Scenes of ruin and fragile structures vie with grotesque images that also expose the darkly funny side of destruction.

Damage is co-curated by the University of Sydney Union’s 2010 Art Collection Officers, Harriet Gordon-Anderson and Scott Wark.
Win one of 5 Double Passes!

PAINTING THE ROCKS: THE LOSS OF OLD SYDNEY
Museum of Sydney www.hht.net.au
Exhibition on until 28 November 2010

Countless colonial buildings were demolished in The Rocks in the early 1900s. A group of artists set out to capture ‘Old Sydney’ before it disappeared. Retrace the lost streets of Sydney’s oldest neighbourhood. Book available online at shop.hht.net.au and at all good bookstores.

To win one of 5 double passes to see the exhibition email your contact details to competition@hht.net.au with "Power" in the subject line. Only winners will be contacted.

Upcoming Alumni and Friends Association Events

Tour of the Art Gallery of New South Wales Lilyfield Storage Facility
Friday 22 October
AGNSW Lilyfield Collection Store, Canal Road, Lilyfield, NSW
$20/$15 students
RSVP essential to powerinstitute@sydney.edu.au

You are invited invites you to a tour of the Art Gallery of New South Wales Lilyfield Collection Store. Members will be introduced to the store by Anne Flanagan, Deputy Director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and be taken on a tour of the facility, learning about the processes and procedures involved in packing up and moving the collection.

Gallery staff will discuss the planning of the new storage facility and the different storage methods used, as well as current collection management procedures.

Free Public Lecture for Power Alumni

From gems to masterpieces: ancient cameos and intaglios as a source for the Old Masters
Robert Wellington, PhD candidate, Art History and Film Studies (USYD)

Wednesday 27 October, 6 for 6:30pm
Nicholson Museum, University of Sydney
$30/$20 for Friends of the Nicholson Museum, free for Power Institute students and alumni
Champagne and food provided
Bookings essential: (02) 9351 2812

Many Renaissance and Baroque artists thought engraved gems to be the most perfect survivals from antiquity. Fifteenth-century Florentine sculptor Lorenzo Ghiberti once described a chalcedony intaglio in the collection of his patron Lorenzo de Medici, as “the most perfect thing I ever saw.” This sentiment was echoed nearly two centuries later by Sir Peter Paul Rubens – himself an avid collector of ancient cameos – who wrote in a letter to fellow antiquarian Claude Peiresc that “nothing has ever delighted me more than gems.”
The ardent admiration for glyptic art was reflected in the works of many artists from Botticelli to Rubens, who referenced cameos and intaglios, sometimes through a painted copy of the jewel, but more often as a source for iconography and composition. This talk will examine the various ways in which these ancient and exquisite objects were a source of inspiration to the ‘Old Masters.’

Donate

Donations from as little as $20 will help support the Power Institute Alumni Prize in Australian Art awarded annually to a student of Australian Art History in the Department of Art History & Film Studies. Donations to the Power Institute Alumni & Friends Association, University of Sydney are fully tax deductible. For more details contact the Power Institute.

POWER INSTITUTE ALUMNI AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

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