

MEDIA RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dobell Foundation to Support New Exhibition Program Across Regional NSW

Launched today, the *Dobell Exhibition Grant* (DEG) will allow the development of new, curated exhibitions of visual arts in NSW regional galleries.

With a generous gift from the Sir William Dobell Art Foundation, Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW) will offer \$40,000 in funding to one NSW regional gallery per annum. The program is expected to run for up to 6 years. Funding will be targeted towards the development and delivery of curated exhibitions that significantly support artists, extend public appreciation and engagement with the visual arts and expand curatorial skills and creativity.

In addition to the support provided by the Sir William Dobell Art Foundation, M&G NSW will offer successful applicants the opportunity to develop a national tour of their funded exhibition.

The gift is the result of the Foundation's vision and began with a consultative process with arts organisations and institutions in 2014. Their goal was to invest in the right program that furthered their aims to develop audiences and appreciation for the visual arts in NSW. By then, M&G NSW had identified a growing need for exhibition development in the regions.

As Karen Wann, Chairman of the Sir William Dobell Art Foundation explains, there is incredible value in the partnership:

"The fundamental tenet of the Foundation is to expand engagement with the visual arts in NSW. M&G NSW's intention to support exhibitions that speak to a broad audience across the state and creatively engage artists and the community, speaks to our core purpose. We look forward to seeing the wonderful exhibitions that will result from this gift."

Michael Rolfe, CEO M&G NSW is anticipating the delivery of cutting-edge exhibitions at a regional level: *"A gift such as this will stimulate creative risk-taking and allow freedom for the very best of contemporary exhibition practice to flourish."*

This is not the first time M&G NSW and the Foundation have connected. The twentieth anniversary of the Dobell Drawing Prize at the Art Gallery of NSW was celebrated in 2013 with a touring exhibition managed by M&G NSW. *Contemporary Australian Drawing: 20 Years of the Dobell Prize for Drawing* toured the previous prize winning works and others acquired into the AGNSW collection to regional galleries in NSW and the ACT. A special book was published detailing the history of the Prize and it's over 700 participating artists.

Since it was formed in 1971, the Foundation has been intrinsic to arts development in metropolitan and regional NSW. Among its contributions, the Foundation is a founding patron of the Australian Centre for

Photography; it supports the Gunnerly Art Centre studios for artists in residence at Artspace, and it funded the refurbishment and presentation of the Dobell Room at the New England Regional Art Museum in Armidale. The Foundation also supports new generations of artists throughout the state, awarding annual scholarships and prizes to students at NSW tertiary art institutions; it is a founding sponsor of Art Express, and funds the annual Dobell School of Drawing at the National Art School, Sydney, for 75 Year 11 students from regional NSW.

For M&G NSW, who in the last three years has reached over 542,000 visitors nationwide through 16 exhibitions of contemporary art, and supported numerous artists, curators and regional galleries with the Arts NSW Curatorial Support Initiative and CAL's Artist or Curator Residency Program this partnership fits perfectly.

Now, because of the vision of the Sir William Dobell Art Foundation, M&G NSW is able to deliver much needed support for exhibition development and delivery at a regional level.

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ABOUT THE SIR WILLIAM DOBELL ART FOUNDATION

The Foundation was formed in 1971 from the artist's bequest with instructions that "*a Foundation be established for the benefit and promotion of art in NSW.*"

The Foundation has sponsored a wide variety of projects since then, establishing art exhibitions, funding publications and acquisitions, supporting educational projects, art schools and scholarships and has made possible major public art commissions.

ABOUT M&G NSW

Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW) supports the development of galleries, museums and Aboriginal cultural centres in NSW, working with them to grow audiences, programs and capacity.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.dobellartfoundation.org/>

or

<http://mgsw.org.au/sector/news/dobell-foundation-support-new-exhibition-program-across-regional-nsw/>

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Image attribution:

Image 1: Sir William Dobell painting H Rubenstein at Dobell House, Wangi Wangi.

Image 2: Max Dupain, *William Dobell*, 1942, gelatin silver photograph, 30.1 x 30.3 cm

Collection: National Portrait Gallery, Canberra. Gift of Richard King, 2008