

## Two Great Men of Art

It is extremely rare for two of the greatest living Australian artists to be exhibiting simultaneously within two kilometres of each other.

It was this unusual occurrence in Melbourne that highlighted the deep respect and esteem that John Olsen and Charles Blackman have for each other.

John Olsen attended Blackman's launch at Mossgreen Gallery in Toorak Road, South Yarra, and requested that he be able to say a few words, which showed genuine affection for Charles. Charles was extremely pleased by this gesture and his gratitude to John was obvious.

Blackman's exhibition of 90 unseen drawings from his studio along with sculptures and paintings, is a feast for the eyes.

The roles were reversed when the following morning, Charles, prior to his return to Sydney, attended a media conference for John at the Olsen Hotel, just around the corner, and reciprocated the respect and high regard he has for John.

John Olsen has launched a highly anticipated collection of new work at Metro Gallery in High Street, Armadale, which runs until April 28th.

The exhibition is Olsen's first at Metro in three years and was inspired by recent trips over the iconic Lake Eyre, sparking a continued fascination with the beauty of the land.

Olsen was the first artist to ever view Lake Eyre from the sky in 1948, when he got on the mail train from Alice Springs and flew over the desert.

He has since visited the location more than 20 times, paying witness to all its glorious transformations.

In a rare event, Lake Eyre has filled with water for the second consecutive year, inspiring works of art that capture the



John Olsen with Walter Granek & Charles Blackman

marvellous play of colour and light on the mirror like surface.

*"The sheer vastness of it is like an inland sea. I'm drawn to the landscape because it's an enigma, it's there but it's not,"* Olsen explained.

*"Today there are thousands of birds and fish and water as far as the horizon but in 18 months, they'll all be gone,"* he says.

The vastness and contradiction of the landscape continues to hold unfinished business for Olsen as does the idea that something that lay dead, dormant and uninteresting can come to life after just a sprinkling of rain.

With a desire to depict the experience of the Australian landscape in a new and contemplative way, his signature style of dots and irregular lines has made him a master of his craft.

Now at the height of his creative powers, Olsen is considered one of Australia's most influential painters.

However, titles such as 'a national treasure' and 'Australia's greatest living painter' don't sit comfortably with Olsen.

*"Frankly, I find it embarrassing because it's not really a race, like mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the best and fairest of us all. There are others of course who have*

*accomplished much. I could be flattered but I'm not really obsessed with such a title. The idea of a national treasure, I don't really think of things like that but I do think it's important that we think the arts are such an important part of living in Australia."*

Olsen's new exhibition features 16 new canvases including four major paintings and 12 watercolours.

The Director of Metro Gallery, Alex McCulloch, says it's Olsen's fourth solo exhibition with his gallery and *"we're delighted to have him back"*.

*"For him to still be producing work of this quality is extraordinary,"* McCulloch says.

*"It's as though his work continues to get better with age, it's absolutely mind blowing."*

Olsen says he'll keep on painting for as long as he lives. *"As long as I've got breath,"* he says.

Olsen paints in his studio most days; mornings, he says, is when *"my Chi is high"*.

*"My biggest joy each day is getting two colors to sing together. But even greater is the joy of getting THREE colors that really work, now you're beginning to talk!"*

This wise man of the canvas says life maybe short but *"art is endless"*.

Olsen was awarded the prestigious Archibald Prize in 2005 for a self portrait.



Tom Lowenstein & Charles Blackman

### Patron

John Olsen OBE AO

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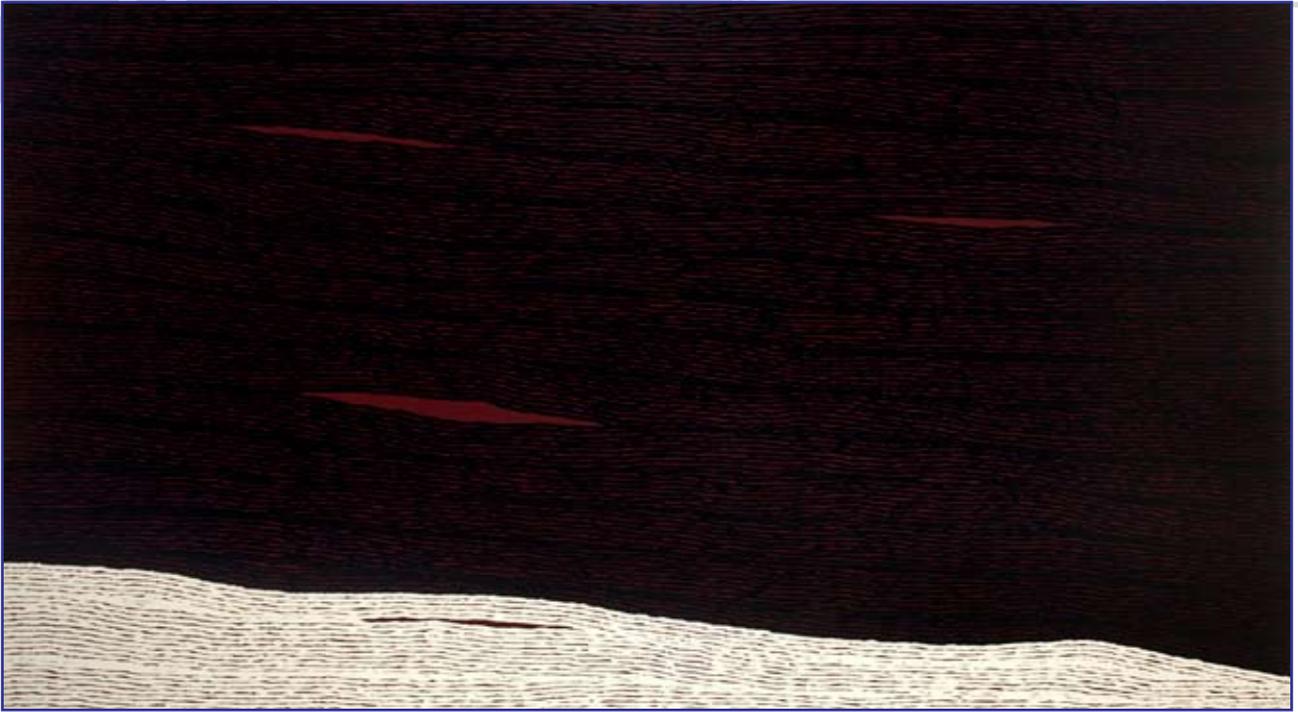
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Rick Amor  
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Ron Robertson-Swan OAM  
Margaret Woodward  
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## ARTISTS BE WARNED

From the 1st of February, 2012 NEW LAWS were introduced which should have the alarm bells ringing for all artists leaving their works at a gallery.

Previously, when an artist consigned artworks to a gallery to be sold on their behalf, the art on consignment remained the property of the artist.

The new Personal Properties Securities Act essentially means artists must register their works left at a gallery OR RISK LOSING THEM!

Under the Act works on consignment at a gallery are considered to be part of that Gallery's collateral or its security interests, unless the artist registers ownership of the works.

This means that any artworks on loan to a gallery will be seized as part of the Gallery's assets, if the Gallery goes into liquidation.

In order for artists to protect their property and prevent their works from being seized they must have an agreement with the Gallery that the artworks are on consignment and MUST REGISTER any art works on consignment to a gallery with the Personal Properties Securities Register, (the PPSR).

The PPSR is an electronic register that allows security interests in personal property to be registered online.

The Federal register only came into effect in February 2012 following legislation passed in 2009.

Upon becoming aware of this Legislation, Lowensteins Arts Management, in conjunction with both Addisons Lawyers and Johnson, Winter & Slattery Lawyers, have produced a Contract that will go a long way to protecting the artist in the event of a gallery liquidation.

Mr Lowenstein says "we have written to most galleries advising them of availability of the agreement and suggesting that they should act on behalf of the artists in effecting registration."

The register is not compulsory, but artists should be aware that unless they register all artworks on consignment or "any works in the possession of a gallery could be sold by liquidators in the event that the business fails".

The Personal Property Securities Register can be found at <http://www.ppsr.gov.au>.

For further enquiries, please contact me on 03 9529 3800.

Evan Lowenstein

## The Mitchell Review

Arts Minister Simon Crean in March released the report of the Review of Private Sector Support for the Arts, chaired by Harold Mitchell.

In his Review, Mr Mitchell was tasked to identify opportunities to broaden and strengthen the base of giving to the arts in Australia.

"A strong partnership between the arts and private sectors will be integral to ensuring our arts sector is positioned to take advantage of the opportunities presented through the National Cultural Policy," Mr Crean said.

Mr Mitchell said he was "pleased to see the priority the government places on the important issue of private sector support for the arts."

"Support from philanthropists and business is vital to ensuring that our artists are free to create, explore and innovate so that our arts organisations are able to plan for the long term," Mr Mitchell said.

Mr Crean says the Mitchell Report "highlights the success of many current initiatives such as the Cultural Gifts Program", however, he admitted there was "a clear need for a refreshed approach to increase private sector support."

"Private philanthropy and sponsorship for the arts is vital for growth and durability; it enables artists and organisations to plan for the future and produce high-quality, challenging and relevant work," Mr Crean said.

The Federal Government will consider the recommendations as part of the development of the National Cultural Policy.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Reduce red tape for the Cultural Gifts Program, ie donors of artworks need only one valuation rather than two, and transfer responsibility for the program to the ATO.
2. Give donors a capacity to provide a cash gift through their will to an arts organisation in return for an immediate tax benefit.
3. The Australian Government commits funding to support a 'matched funding for the arts' initiative.
4. The Australian Government implements a formal program of recognition for significant donors to the arts.
5. Merge the Australian Business Arts Foundation with Artsupport under a new body with responsibility for all private sector support for the arts in Australia.
6. The new private sector support body should promote a program of fundraising, sponsorship and philanthropy to support small to medium art organisations as well as expanding its training activities to support students and emerging artists and retain private sector support.
7. Amend the guidelines for the Register of Cultural Organisations to improve the definition of 'cultural' to encompass Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural practices.
8. Develop a crowd-funding scheme with the idea being for the Federal Government to give 20 percent of needed funds once 80 percent has been raised through crowd-funding.
9. The Australian Government provides funding to support a micro-loans scheme for the arts sector.
10. Cultivate donors through an awareness raising program that targets financial planners, tax accountants and estate lawyers as well as instigating a public campaign to promote the benefits of giving to the arts.

## The Hong Kong Art Fair

The Hong Kong Art Fair has become a key fixture on the international art calendar attracting art enthusiasts from around the world.

Since its inception in 2008 the Hong Kong Art Fair has managed to attract some of the most respected leading international galleries with collectors, curators and artists alike drawn to the former British territory to view a showcase of incredible works.

Its success reflects the increasing importance of the Asian art market on the world stage with Hong Kong now the third largest auction market after New York and London.

The Hong Kong Art Fair has steadily grown each year and 2012 is no different with the art spectacular attracting 266 highly respected galleries from 37 countries, including Australia.

Twelve galleries from Australia are

represented including Gallery Barry Keldoulis, Sullivan and Strumpf Fine Art, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Anna Schwartz, Tolarno, Nellie Castan, Tristian Koenig, Damien Minton, Ryan Renshaw, Neon Parc, Anna Pappas and Tim Olsen.

In fact it was Tim Olsen who actually suggested having an art fair in Hong Kong to Tim Etchells, the managing director of Single Market Events, as the two lunched in Sydney back in 2007.

Single Market Events is also responsible for the Art Sydney and Art Melbourne fairs.

"I'd just returned from Hong Kong after having done an exhibition there", Tim Olsen recalls.

"In my mind it was looking more like the

belly button of the world", he said.

Tim explains that with a huge expat market residing in the region and an emerging upper class in China, along with new money, "we needed to start something in Hong Kong".

Tim says Tim Etchells registered the Hong Kong Art Fair soon after their discussion and since its inception in 2008, "it's become bigger than Ben Hur".

The Tim Olsen Gallery has been a participant from the beginning and describes it as "a minestrone of art".

"It doesn't always lead to immediate sales, but follow up sales it does", he says.

Sydney-based, Gallery Barry Keldoulis,



has also been involved with the Hong Kong Art Fair since its inception five years ago.

Barry Keldoulis says "it has exceeded our expectations".

"Over the years our sales have progressed from what was expected to expat Australians, to the majority of sales being to Chinese collectors, including Hong Kong and Taiwan".

Barry says his gallery initially engaged with the Hong Kong Art Fair because of its geographical location and anticipated it would be an "international Asian fair", however, he says it's actually become a "world fair"

"Since 2010, we have had the phenomenon of collectors coming from Paris to meet friends from LA in Hong Kong", he says.

The numbers attending the Art Fair at the centrally located Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre have also steadily grown.

Last year about 60,000 people attended,

this year it's expected 80,000 people will converge on the Exhibition Centre for the four day Art Fair which opens on May 17th.

Tom Lowenstein who attended the Hong Kong Art Fair last year was very impressed by the professionalism and the atmosphere of the Fair.

The Australian Galleries represented at the Art Fair featured some of Australia's best talent and compared more than favourably with other international artists.

The number of new contacts made by artists, galleries and collectors and friendships and business relationships developed as a result of attendance at the Art Fair has ensured that Australia's participation will continue in great numbers.

Gallery Barry Keldoulis will be taking a number of works to Hong Kong including rising international stars, Sean Cordeiro & Claire Healy.

"Jess MacNeil is internationally

recognised and her aesthetic always appeals to the Asian eye", Barry explains. "Likewise Hitesh Natalwala has also always sold well in Hong Kong".

"Fiona Lowry has not had a lot of exposure but we expect to do well with her works", Barry said.

Tim Olsen Gallery will be showcasing one of its artists in Cherry Wood who he expects will be well received in Hong Kong.

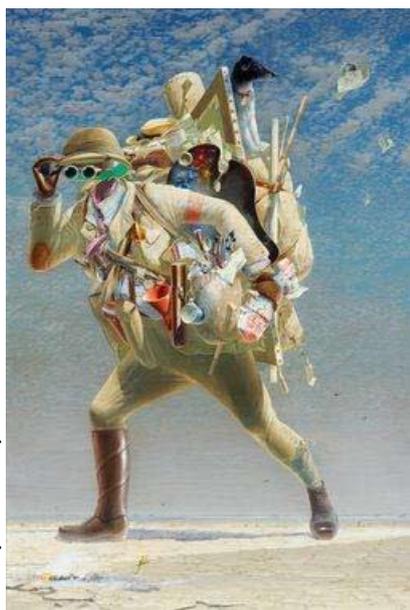
Describing her as "a very underrated international contemporary artist", Tim Olsen says "there's a fascination for portraiture in China" and Wood's work is likely to please.

In previous years the Hong Kong Art Fair has successfully orchestrated million dollar sales of works catapulting it into the spotlight as a truly remarkable art fair.

"It's a great party", says Tim Olsen, "you meet people from all over the world".

Barry Keldoulis concurs. "It's great fun and incredibly vibrant".

## Another Good Win for Tim



Tim Storrier, *The histrionic wayfarer (after Bosch)*, Courtesy of Art Gallery of NSW

Congratulations to Tim Storrier who won the 2012 Archibald Prize for the best portrait, with his painting, *Histrionic Wayfarer (after Bosch)*.

Storrier's work was selected from a field of 41 finalists and an original entry pool of more than 800 works.

The veteran artist won with his "faceless"

self-portrait featuring his pet dog, Smudge.

Smudge, who is depicted on top of his rucksack, nearly stole the spotlight when it was embraced by Storrier on the winner's podium at the Art Gallery of NSW.

52-year-old Storrier accepted the \$75,000 prize for his painting saying he owed a debt of gratitude to his seven-year-old fox terrier he rescued from the pound four years ago.

"I was initially reluctant to put the dog in the painting," he said.

"It's a bit like a cheap trick. But it was emotionally accurate from my point of view. They were going to have her put down when we got her. Smudge is ever loyal and never critical."

However, Storrier admitted he had endured difficulties in getting Smudge to sit still while he painted her. "Dogs are very aware of their profile and she kept turning her head. Keeping her still was tough", he explained.

Storrier, who has entered the Archibald three times and been hung twice, was reluctant to give too much weight to the

notion of a faceless artist.

"I don't particularly like to paint my own face. Simple as that," he said. "It's part of a series I've done, and none of them have faces."

Board president, Steven Lowy, said Storrier was a worthy winner.

"It's a wonderful painting of him, by him", Lowy said.

Australia's best-known artists, including last year's winner Ben Quilty and Garry Shead were submitted for the Archibald Prize, which is now in its 91st year.

This year's finalists will be exhibited at the Art Gallery of New South Wales until June 3 before touring regionally and interstate.

*The Archibald Prize is regarded as the most important portraiture prize in Australia.*

*It was first awarded in 1921 after a bequest from J.F. Archibald, the editor of The Bulletin, who died in 1919.*

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