

Media Release

Date: 15 March 2012

Almanac: The Gift of Ann Lewis AO

Five decades of Australian and international contemporary art are now on display at Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, in ***Almanac: The Gift of Ann Lewis AO***. Organised by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney, ***Almanac*** provides an extraordinary road map of Australian art practice over the last 50 years, shaped by the vision of one of Australia's best regarded collectors and arts supporters.

Open to the public from Friday, 16 March until Sunday, 29 April, ***Almanac*** presents the generous donation made to the MCA by Ann Lewis. Thanks to Ann's roles as collector, philanthropist and gallerist, visitors to this exhibition can enjoy a collection of works built at the forefront of cultural production across five decades. The exhibition also draws upon the major gifts by Ann Lewis to the Newcastle Region Art Gallery and Moree Plains Gallery.

Tracing changes in taste, influence, styles and ideas, ***Almanac*** reflects a collection with depth and currency. Veering across time and location, it comprises paintings, photography sculpture, ceramics and printmaking including several works which will be on public display for the first time.

The exhibition begins with a 1953 abstract painting by modernist Ralph Balson, and later works by John Firth-Smith and Richard Dunn, and continues through to more recent works by Aboriginal artists from remote regions, including the acclaimed Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Sally Gabori, Gloria Petyarre and Judy Watson. The diversity of materials and approaches is reflected in the media and methods employed by the artists – from Robert Klippel's delicately teetering metal sculptures to Hany Armanious's hot-melt sculptures that solidify the negative spaces of various wine glasses.

Ann Lewis worked tirelessly throughout her lifetime to raise the profile of Australian artists abroad, and to bring international artists to local audiences. Having been amassed as a private collection, this exhibition mirrors the deeply personal relationships Ann Lewis enjoyed with a diverse array of artists. The end result is a fascinating showcase of Ann's friendships and professional networks both in Australia and abroad.



Exhibition organised and toured by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia

Almanac: the Gift of Ann Lewis AO is supported by Visions of Australia, an Australian Government Program supporting touring exhibitions by providing funding assistance for the development and touring of cultural material across Australia.

Tour Partner: Westpac

Exhibition Dates

When: Friday 16 March – Sunday 29 April, 2012

Where: Wagga Wagga Art Gallery