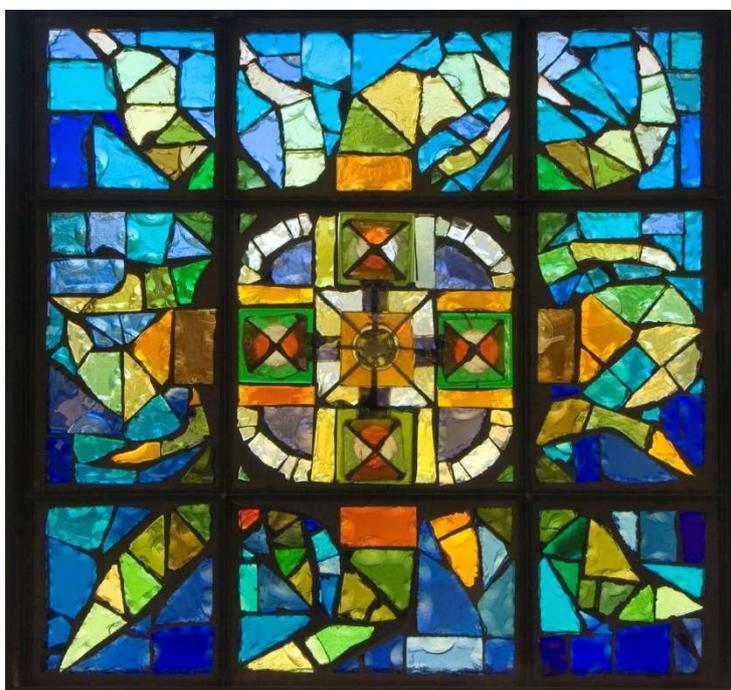


La Trobe Art Institute
Art Collection Project
Significance Assessment



Prepared by Belinda Nemec

November 2016 – March 2017

Prepared for La Trobe University at the request of the La Trobe Art Institute, by Dr Belinda Nemec, November 2016 – March 2017.

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This Report was edited by LAI staff in August 2017 to remove any information that may compromise the security of the University Collections. Areas of redacted content are indicated through the use of this symbol:



Further information regarding this decision can be sought by contacting the La Trobe Art Institute.

Cover image: 'Spring', one of four panels from Leonard French, *The four seasons*, 1975.
La Trobe University Art Collection, purchased 1978.

Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library, 2006.

Australian collections are the memory bank of the nation and a key to its future. They embody the people, history, cultures, science and environment of Australia, and they show the creativity of Australians in all dimensions. Collections give a sense of our place in the world, and explain how the land and nation have evolved.*

Significance is the values and meanings that items and collections have for people and communities. Significance helps unlock the potential of collections, creating opportunities for communities to access and enjoy collections, and to understand the history, cultures and environments of Australia.†

The founders of La Trobe University believed it important that students be surrounded by art. They believed that art should be accessible and understood its role in enriching the student experience. Today I feel so grateful that our founders had the wisdom and foresight to establish this fine art collection.

It is our duty to ensure their legacy prevails for future generations of La Trobe students.‡

* Roslyn Russell and Kylie Winkworth, *Significance 2.0: A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Collections* (Adelaide: Collections Council of Australia Ltd, 2009), 2.

† Ibid., 1.

‡ Professor John Dewar (Vice-Chancellor, La Trobe University), in *Exhibit A(lumni)*, (Bundoora: La Trobe University Museum of Art, 2012), 3.

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1 Executive summary: statement of significance

This report considers the following collections owned by La Trobe University:

- The La Trobe University Art Collection (including the Sculpture Park Collection)
- The Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection
- The Ethnographic Collection
- The Trendall Collection
- The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection
- The F.M. Courtis Collection.

These collections are of historical, aesthetic/artistic, research/teaching, and community significance, to varying degrees. Here I summarise the reasons for particularly high levels of significance.

Historical significance

All the collections are of historical significance in their respective entirety, due principally to their close connection with the history of La Trobe University. This is particularly true of the Art Collection, Ethnographic Collection and Trendall Collection in relation to the Bundoora campus, and of the F.M. Courtis Collection in relation to the Bendigo campus.

Many of the works in the La Trobe University Art Collection, Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection and F.M. Courtis Collection are also of historical significance because they represent the output of historically important figures in the history of Australian art.

Aesthetic/artistic significance

A large proportion of the works in the La Trobe University Art Collection, Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection and F.M. Courtis Collection are of aesthetic/artistic significance, as are selected works (such as many of the bark paintings and some of the Sepik River carvings) in the Ethnographic Collection.

Research and teaching potential

All of the collections have high research and teaching potential. This is particularly true of the Trendall Collection, which was created for this specific purpose.

Community significance

All of the collections have community significance to their campus of origin, that is, to students, alumni, and academic and professional staff whether past and present. This is particularly true of the La Trobe University Art Collection and the Trendall Collection in relation to the Bundoora campus, and of the F.M. Courtis Collection in relation to the

Bendigo campus. The F.M. Curtis Collection also has some community significance to the broader Bendigo community, where it has become known thanks to exhibitions at the Bendigo Art Gallery, as well as for the input of local artists and donors.

The Bundoora collections also hold some significance for its community beyond the campus, although to a lesser degree: there are links with local artists and donors living or working in Melbourne's northern suburbs, while some other donors, although further afield geographically, feel a strong connection to the Bundoora collections that they have supported, sometimes over several decades. Local school and community groups have also become familiar with some of the collections by visiting the numerous exhibitions held at LUMA, the Borchardt Library and the Bundoora Homestead Art Centre, as well as the outdoor sculptures.

2 Background: Context for this report

This significance assessment was commissioned for La Trobe University by the La Trobe Art Institute (hereafter LAI) in November 2016, following the publication in July 2016 of the *La Trobe University Art Strategy* (hereafter the *LTU Art Strategy*).¹ It assesses the significance of the following collections:

- The La Trobe University Art Collection (including the Sculpture Park Collection) (2413 items)
- The Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection (238 items)
- The Ethnographic Collection (854 items)
- The Trendall Collection (87 artefacts plus research library, archive of 40,000 photographs, teaching collection and domestic contents)
- The Stewart E. Fraser Collection (3826 items)
- The F.M. Courtis Collection (324 items).²

The LAI was established in 2013,³ as part of La Trobe's efforts to strengthen its visual arts education programs in regional Victoria.⁴ The LAI aims to build upon existing curatorial, exhibition, education and engagement programs, in order to broker cultural partnerships and foster initiatives in the creative industries. It manages and promotes the cultural assets of the university,⁵ and oversees the following sites:

- the La Trobe University Museum of Art (LUMA) facility at the Bundoora campus, which until its closure in December 2016 displayed contemporary art, including – but not limited to – works from the university's collections
- the Visual Arts Centre (VAC) at 121 View Street Bendigo (across the road from Bendigo Art Gallery), which also displays contemporary art, including student art. VAC opened in 2005 with a gallery, print workshop, studios, lecture theatre and residence.⁶ It now also hosts the offices of LAI,⁷ whose core business is collections and curatorial management, internal/external exhibitions, engagement, research, and business development.⁸ In 2017 the VAC was re-named as the La Trobe Art Institute.⁹
- the Phyllis Palmer Gallery at La Trobe's Bendigo (Flora Hill) campus, which displays mostly student art, although it has also hosted exhibitions from the collections
- the F.M. Courtis Collection, displayed and stored at La Trobe Bendigo (Flora Hill) campus, mostly in the Education Building.

The *LTU Art Strategy* (July 2016) set out the following 'Vision', 'Purpose' and 'Role of the Strategy':

Vision:

La Trobe University will be recognised as a national leader in the arts, and the Australian university of choice for local, regional, national and international arts and cultural industry partnerships.

Purpose:

La Trobe University will build upon its strengths – curating, collecting and exhibiting; teaching and research; engagement and innovation – to make a significant difference to the cultural and economic life of the University and the communities we serve.

Role of the strategy:

The Art Strategy will provide a framework for the La Trobe Art Institute to position La Trobe University as a significant cultural institution within the wider creative industries ecosystem. By building upon La Trobe's history and strengths, the LAI will become a catalyst for innovation and art appreciation; and an influential advocate and role model for the sector's role in underpinning the social, cultural and economic welfare of our vibrant, connected and creative communities.¹⁰

The *LTU Art Strategy* included among its 'Specific Tasks':

4.1.2. Review LUMA operations

- Determine an industry standard solution for a preferred location and exhibition program.
- Temporarily close the existing facility as an exhibition venue (while the preferred location and exhibition program is determined).
- Improve Collection Storage:
 - Relocate the La Trobe University Art Collection into appropriate storage – ensure that international best practice is in place in relation to care and conservation of the collection.

[...]

4.2.2. Exhibition Gallery at Bundoora

- Investigate the possibilities for a suitable location for an exhibition gallery at the Bundoora campus including:

- feasibility study and business case; and
- plans for an international standard exhibition space to showcase collections and temporary exhibitions, including highlighting the existing Leonard French stained glass feature.¹¹

The *LTU Art Strategy's* 'Transition Plan' included:

2018–2019

- Fully operational La Trobe University Museum of Art in Bendigo (including relaunch).
- Fully functional 'collection on loan' program to Bundoora campus.¹²

LUMA was closed as an exhibition venue in December 2016. A new staffing structure was introduced, with some positions being made redundant. The gallery space was converted to a storage facility by installing wooden shelving racks. There are plans to bring works from the La Trobe University Art Collection currently displayed across the Bundoora campus into this store for assessment.¹³

In 2017 La Trobe University is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its first intake of students (at the Bundoora campus in 1967). The *LTU Art Strategy* proposed staging a major anniversary exhibition, to open at the Bendigo Art Gallery in mid-2017 and then to tour regional galleries.¹⁴ This project is taking shape as *Revealing Identity: The Collections of La Trobe University*, which will be on display at the Bendigo Art Gallery from 24 June to 3 December 2017.¹⁵

Another 'Specific Task' in the *LTU Art Strategy* was significance assessment:

Conduct a significance assessment of the art collection, which is comprised of more than 2,000 post war and contemporary Australian art works covering most media and periods of Australian art [...]

Include the F.M. Curtis Collection and the Stewart Fraser Collection of Chinese Propaganda Posters within this assessment.¹⁶

The brief for the present Significance Assessment subsequently broadened out the collections to be assessed, adding the Trendall Collection and the Ethnographic Collection.¹⁷

In November 2016 Dr Belinda Nemeč was appointed as consultant to prepare the Significance Assessment. This report has been prepared using *Significance 2.0*, which is the standard Australian methodology for assessing the significance of collections of all kinds, and of individual items. Assessments prepared in this way enable collection custodians,

communities, funding bodies and any other interested parties to 'analyse and communicate the meanings and values of collections'.¹⁸

Significance 2.0 defines 'significance' as:

the values and meanings that items and collections have for people and communities. Significance helps unlock the potential of collections, creating opportunities for communities to access and enjoy collections, and to understand the history, cultures and environments of Australia.¹⁹

This methodology is described more fully in Section 6: Assessing significance.

3 University art collections: context

3.1 International context

Since their establishment in Europe in medieval times, universities have formed collections of art and other material. Many universities have housed those collections in museums that are open to the public and contribute significantly to the cultural life of their local communities. Some highly renowned European museums are part of universities, such as the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology at the University of Oxford. Founded in 1683, it is the oldest purpose-built public museum in the world.²⁰

This European tradition spread to the New World. The first university art museum in the United States was established in 1832 as the Trumbull Gallery at Yale University (founded 1701) and is now called the Yale University Art Gallery.²¹ Harvard University (established 1636) has three famous art museums: The Fogg Museum (established 1895), the Busch-Reisinger Museum (1903) and the Arthur M. Sackler Museum (1985). These older universities added to their museums over the centuries, while newer universities also created notable collections. In the USA, more than 10 per cent of museums across the nation are college and university museums.²²

3.2 Australian context

There are currently 43 accredited universities in Australia (40 Australian universities, two international universities, and a smaller private speciality university).²³ A 2016 survey found that 31 of them hold art collections,²⁴ although my own research suggests that, with one exception,²⁵ every university in Australia has an art collection. (See Appendix I for list of university art collections extant in December 2016, based on various sources.)

Most university art collections in Australia have fewer than 5000 items (in 2006).²⁶ Although the various art collections at the University of Melbourne together comprise between 19,000 and 25,000 items,²⁷ this is unusual in Australia.

University Art Museums Australia (UAMA) states that, in 2009, the 42 university art museums or collections in Australia represented 26 per cent of the Australian art museum sector.²⁸ As Ted Snell put it in 2006:

The universities of Australia are a national treasure-trove. With well over forty collections and approximately thirty galleries their holdings constitute a significant quota of the nation's cultural heritage and through their annual programme of exhibitions, supported by publications and scholarly work of various kinds, they are a vibrant component of Australia's cultural life.²⁹

UAMA defines a university art museum as:

a professional art museum that conducts a public program of changing exhibitions, and is also responsible for and exhibits an art collection on behalf of a university. UAMs link professional visual arts practices with the university's teaching, research and community-engagement objectives. UAMs have regular opening hours during which the general public can visit. UAMs are eligible for cultural gifts register status, and have clearly defined governance and recognised corporate policies.³⁰

Some universities have one or more dedicated galleries or exhibition spaces, while other collections are displayed only in public and office areas across campuses. A 2016 survey identified more than 20 Australian universities with 'specific art museums or galleries, complemented by smaller galleries and public exhibition spaces for staff, student, national and international visitor artwork, located at sites across the country'.³¹ That survey also found that 'In addition to traditional galleries and performance venues, universities offer a diversity of permanent and temporary public art experiences, [including] sculpture and public art walks'.³²

UAMA's 2009 report examined in detail a sample of eight university museums across Australia (La Trobe was not among them). Each had already assembled an art collection before its museum was established. The report found that university art museums are:

- a valuable teaching and learning resource for university staff, students, scholars, curators, artists, writers, and the broader community
- catalysts and agents of change, being uniquely placed to initiate and support experimental and interdisciplinary activity, engage publicly and immediately with topical issues, and investigate ignored areas
- a national treasure trove and a substantial part of Australia's cultural wealth, as they invest in visual arts and crafts, acquire and commission artworks, and care for university art collections, some of which have scholarly, art-historical and heritage value
- conduits between universities and the wider world
- training institutions and centres for professional development and mentorship.³³

The report also found that this sample of just eight universities owned collections totalling \$134 million in value (in 2009 terms), that the average size of each collection was 4829 works, and that the average value of each collection was more than \$16.79 million.³⁴

The 2016 survey found that university art collections 'represent some of the largest comprehensive collections of specific genres in Australia', citing the example of La Trobe having the largest holding of works by Australian surrealist Bernard Boles.³⁵ Unsurprisingly, the older universities tend to have larger and more wide-ranging collections. It is in the older

university collections that we find a greater number of historical works (although contemporary art is also actively collected). Newer universities tend to focus their collecting on contemporary art, sometimes with an additional emphasis on locally produced art. In this way, each collection clearly reflects the history of its parent institution.

It has also been common for universities to seek to improve their built environment by installing large outdoor sculptures, murals, stained-glass windows, water features and other public artworks. For instance, the University of New South Wales in Sydney, which was founded about ten years before La Trobe, marked the beginning of its art collection in 1955 with the installation of its first major sculpture, *The falconer* by Tom Bass, for the university's first permanent building. The vice-chancellor at the time 'recognised the importance of incorporating art into the built environment to lift the spirit and to enhance campus life'.³⁶

3.3 Victorian context

There are currently nine universities operating in Victoria (including the Australian Catholic University's Melbourne and Ballarat campuses), each of which has an art collection, with displays around campus and in at least one dedicated gallery space. A brief list of art collections is below, but see Appendix I for more detail (particularly for collections comparable to La Trobe's Stewart E. Fraser Collection, Trendall Collection and Ethnographic Collection).

- Australian Catholic University: number of works unknown.³⁷
- Deakin University Art Collection and Gallery: more than 1700 works across all campuses (principally at Burwood, but also at Geelong Waurin Ponds, Geelong Waterfront, Warrnambool, Melbourne CBD, Craigieburn, Dandenong and Werribee)³⁸
- Federation University Australia Art Collection (main campus is at Ballarat; works are also displayed at the Gippsland, Stawell and Horsham campuses): more than 1000 works³⁹
- La Trobe University, Bundoora (2413 in the Art Collection; 238 in the Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection) and Bendigo (324 in the F.M. Courtis Collection)⁴⁰
- Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne: 2016 works⁴¹
- RMIT University Art Collection, Melbourne: more than 1500 works⁴²
- Swinburne Art Collection, Swinburne University, Melbourne: 200 works⁴³
- University of Melbourne Art Collection: between 19,000⁴⁴ and 25,000 works depending on the way it is calculated,⁴⁵ including the Baillieu Library Print Collection (8000 works),⁴⁶ Victorian College of the Arts Collection, and artworks in mixed collections.
- Victoria University, Melbourne: 170 works.⁴⁷

Thus it can be seen that, in terms of size, La Trobe's main art collection on the Bundoora Campus is larger than most other university collections in Victoria, with the exception of the University of Melbourne, which is on an entirely different scale. The F.M. Curtis Collection is a relatively small collection. Australia-wide, the average collection size of 4829 works cited by UAMA in 2009 should be treated with caution, as it is based on a sample of just eight universities, which includes the University of Melbourne.⁴⁸ My inquiries suggest that La Trobe's Art Collections is close to the median size across Australia. I have not included the Stewart E. Fraser, Trendall or Ethnographic Collections in this reckoning.

4 The collections: brief descriptions

This report assesses the significance of the following collections:

- The La Trobe University Art Collection (including the Sculpture Park Collection)
- The Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection
- The Ethnographic Collection
- The Trendall Collection
- The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection
- The F.M. Curtis Collection.⁴⁹

For the purposes of this report, all these are collectively called ‘the La Trobe University collections’.

The Dunmoochin Foundation Art Collection is not assessed, as it is not legally owned by La Trobe University,⁵⁰ although it has been in the university’s custody since 1992.⁵¹ While this report was being prepared the decision was confirmed to return the collection to the Dunmoochin Foundation.⁵² The Larundel Collection – of art made by patients at the Larundel Psychiatric Hospital – was acquired by La Trobe University in 2017 while this report was in preparation,⁵³ but is not assessed here.

Various departments and colleges of the university also hold cultural material that is not part of the collections assessed in this report. For instance, Chisholm College actively collected art, as part of its efforts to foster an appreciation of the arts among its students. Several people consulted during the preparation of this report mentioned the significance of artworks depicting Australian flora and fauna acquired by Chisholm College. This is presumably the collection of 214 items of ‘art mainly on paper featuring flora and fauna’, established in the late 1970s, which was recorded in a nation-wide survey of university collections in 1998⁵⁴ (some works acquired by Chisholm College, although not the flora and fauna works, have been catalogued into the main La Trobe University Art Collection):

The College’s specialist collection of painting and sketches of Australian plants and animals contains many notable works including some by Charles McCubbin and Russell Drysdale. This collection has been enriched with donations from a succession of visiting artists and Artists-in-Residence, such as Ignacio Marmol, Zhang Jian Zhang, Robert Ulmann, Irene Crusca, Margaret Connell and Gareth Jones-Roberts.⁵⁵

Dr Joan Barclay Lloyd recalls:

For one semester I was a member of a committee that chose works of art to add to the University Collections. At that time we acquired prints of Australian flora and fauna. The university had a clear commitment to collect art at that time.⁵⁶

An anthropology teaching and reference collection of 800 objects, established in the late 1970s, was also mentioned in 1998 (this might be what is now known as the Ethnographic Collection), as was a collection of art by past and present students at the Bendigo campus.⁵⁷ Similarly, a door painted by renowned Melbourne artist Mirka Mora while an artist in residence is still in situ in the Chisholm College Art Centre.⁵⁸ I mention these other collections in Section 9 'Recommendations' below.

A brief description of each collection assessed in this report follows. Unless otherwise cited, details and numbers of works are derived from lists generated by La Trobe University's KE Emu collection management system and provided to Belinda Nemeč by LAI staff in November 2016.

4.1 The La Trobe University Art Collection

The core La Trobe University Art Collection comprises 2413 works. It includes easel paintings (on canvas, board, aluminium, glass), works on paper (photographs, prints, drawings, watercolours, gouaches, collage, mixed media, offset-lithograph published posters), ceramics (in addition to the Etta Hirsh Collection which is discussed separately below), sculptures and public art, assemblages and digital media works.

Most works in the Art Collection are by Australian artists of the mid- to late 20th century, and into the 21st century.⁵⁹ Eminent names represented include Rick Amor, Howard Arkley, Arthur Boyd, John Brack, John Coburn, Russell Drysdale, William ('Jock') Frater, Leonard French, Donald Friend, James Gleeson, Bill Henson, Norman Lindsay, John Olsen, Clifton Pugh, Brett Whiteley and Fred Williams. Emphasis is placed on acquiring works by emerging and mid-career artists, and digital media works are a developing area.⁶⁰

There is a small number of earlier works, such as a bronze medallion of Charles La Trobe by Thomas Woolner (1853); two bird images by John Gould; two pencil drawings by William Strutt (c. 1878); *Gums* (1908) by Charles Wheeler; an untitled, undated drawing by Rupert Bunny; an undated oil on canvas landscape by E. Phillips Fox; *Old homestead, Eltham* (c. 1929) by Arthur Merric Boyd; *Grenoble* (c. 1930) by Bessie Davidson; *Remembrances of Summer* by Tudor St George Tucker; *Figures under trees: a morning chat* (c. 1935) by Isabel Hunter Tweddle; an undated etching by English artist Charles B. Dickins (b. 1871); *The interior* by Bernard Hall (n.d.); *Brixham trawlers* by Harold Herbert (n.d.); *Nihonbashi* (Hoeido

edition, n.d.) by Ando Hiroshige; an undated illustration by Mortimer Menpes; and an untitled, undated London park scene by Tom Roberts.

Particularly in the formative years of the collection, male artists were much more strongly represented than were female artists.

Individual artists with the largest number of works in the collection are:

- Yosl Bergner (66 works)
- Allen David (60 works)
- Murray Griffin (49 works)
- Michael Cook (45 works)
- Bernard Boles (44 works)
- William Kelly (40 works)
- Norma Bull (39 works)

Indigenous Australian artists represented in the collection cover various regions and styles (and include a higher proportion of women artists than does the rest of the collection); they include Ian Abdulla, Roy Wuylngambi Ashley, Gordon Bennett, Bindi Cole, Lorraine Connelly-Northey, Michael Cook, Destiny Deacon, Emily Ngarnal Evans, Fiona Foley, Glen Farmer Illortamini, Mona Burns Isyifunma, Lili Karedada, Mary Kemarre, Rhonda Kemarre; Leah King-Smith, Jack Maranbarra, Banduk Marika, Andrea Nungarrayi Martin, Ngarralja Tommy May, Naminapu #2 Maymuru, Eileen Mbitjana, Juwarnda Mirdidingkingathi, Patrick Mung Mung, Michael Tjangala Mutji, Amy Namballa, Eubena Nampitjin, Dorothy Napangardi, Mitijili Napurrula, Marlene Young Nungurrayi, Lena Nyadbi, Elizabeth Nyumi, Lin Onus, Ada Bird Petyarre, Gloria Tamerre Petyarre, Jimmy Pike, Nina Puruntatameri, Angelina Pwerle, Minnie Pwerle, Reko Rennie, Michael Riley, Christian Thompson, Tommy Lowry Tjapaljarri, Long Tom Tjapanangka, Helicopter Joe Tjungurrayi, Turkey Tolson Tjupurrula, Judy Anne Watson, Clara Wubugwubuk.

There are portraits of chancellors, vice-chancellors and other important office-holders of La Trobe University, most of which were commissioned by the university, although a few have been donated by benefactors.

The majority of the La Trobe University Art Collection is located on the Bundoora campus. Small numbers of works are displayed at the Bendigo, City, Albury-Wodonga and Shepparton Campuses. At the time of writing, no works are on display at the Mildura campus.⁶¹

4.1.1 The Sculpture Park Collection

A subset of the La Trobe University Art Collection is 'the La Trobe University Sculpture Park': approximately 20 large sculptural works located around the campus.⁶² These date from the inception of the university in the 1960s and include works from every decade since.⁶³ Some of these were integral to the original master plan of the campus, and they complement the architecture, landscaping, flora and wildlife – not to mention student life. The majority are by Australian sculptors, including notable artists such as Inge King, Robert Klippel and Jock Clutterbuck (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Unveiling of sculpture *A new house among the stars* (1993) by Jock Clutterbuck.

Left to right: [Rhonda Noble, Bernard Smith, Jock Clutterbuck], unidentified (2). This sculpture was commissioned with funds donated by the Friends of La Trobe in 1993.

Photograph: La Trobe University Image Library.

As well as the stand-alone sculptures, there are three prominent architectural installations: Allen David's large glass screen in the main entrance to the University Library; Leonard French's *The four seasons* (1975) – the set of four stained-glass windows installed in 1978 in the undercroft of the David Myers Building – and Leonard French's *Glass mandala* (c. 1979–80), purchased for the conference room in the same building. This piece had been commissioned in c. 1979–80 by Professor Singer for his own home in Kew. When he sold the house, the purchase for La Trobe was arranged.⁶⁴

4.2 The Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection

This collection of ceramics came to La Trobe University from Etta and Emmanuel 'Manny' Hirsh and family. Leading Australian studio ceramicists represented include Les

Blakebrough, David and Hermia Boyd, Victor Greenaway, Harold Hughan, Col Levy, Milton Moon, Mirka Mora, Jenny Orchard, Gwyn Hanssen Pigott and Peter Rushforth. There is a smaller number of Japanese, European and American works. The collection comprises 238 catalogued pieces, although some of these are components of sets, and some items are yet to be catalogued.⁶⁵ The dated works (many do not have dates recorded on the catalogue) span the period from 1955 to 2007. There are dinner services, large platters and bowls, bottles and various other types of containers, vases, coffee pots and teapots, goblets and cups, and a smaller number of sculptural pieces. Materials used are mostly stoneware, followed by earthenware and porcelain. A diversity of styles, techniques, and methods of firing and glazing is represented.⁶⁶

A number of paintings and works on paper by various artists donated by the Hirsh family, and works purchased with funds donated in memory of Etta Hirsh, are in the La Trobe University Art Collection.

4.3 The Trendall Collection

This collection was founded by A.D. Trendall when he bequeathed to the university his collection of 87 antiquities, a teaching collection, his research library and photographic archive, as well as the artworks, furniture and other contents of his apartment in Menzies College.⁶⁷ Trendall also donated works during his lifetime, some under the Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme.⁶⁸

The core of the collection is Trendall's archive of approximately 40,000 photographs of southern Italian vases, and his extensive research library of books and journals.

Among the antiquities, of particular importance are examples of the red-figure ceramics on which Professor Trendall was a world authority (Apulian red-figure fish plate; Paestan lebes gamikos; Attic lebes gamikos; Campanian squat lekythos; Sicilian alabastron; Sicilian Pagenstecher-lekythos; Apulian stemless cup; two Apulian lekanis; Sicilian skyphoid-pyxis; two Campanian bail amphorae; Apulian bell krater; Apulian squat lekythos; Apulian kantharos; Chalcidic skyphos; plus numerous fragments).

Four ceramic items (an Apulian red-figure lekanis with lid; a proto-Corinthian aryballos, an Athenian black-figure 'Siana' cup, and a fragment from an Attic red-figure amphora) were purchased by the Department of Art History (presumably on the advice of Trendall), when La Trobe began offering courses in Greek and Roman art in 1974. The first purchases were made possible by a grant from the Vice-Chancellor's Development Fund. An Anatolian horse figurine was donated in 1994 by Dietrich Borchardt (La Trobe University's first chief librarian).

The A.D. Trendall Teaching Collection comprises items of lesser significance (vessels, lids, fragments, figurines, lamps, bronzes, a relief and an *unguentarium*) of various origins, sizes, styles and condition. The majority (about 96 items) are thought to have been purchased by the Department of Art History. In the early years these items were displayed in a vitrine near the main office in the Department of Art History,⁶⁹ which was located on the 4th floor of the original Humanities 2 Building. Many of the teaching items are now displayed in or on a bookcase in the apartment in the Menzies Building. A further group of ten Greek, Roman and Egyptian antiquities were donated for teaching purposes by Mr Robert C. Clark in memory of his brother, Michael George Carr Clark, in about 1990.

There are also modern-era artworks that were owned by Trendall. Some depict archaeological subjects or sites, such as two Piranesi engravings; four works on paper (1830s–60s) by English artist and writer Edward Lear, depicting Mediterranean locations; a Lionel Lindsay engraving of a (mock classical) ruin in Agrigento; a watercolour by John Moore of Melito in Calabria; three etchings by Raymond Teague; two monotypes of Greek island locations by Sidney Nolan; a watercolour view of Orvieto by Leonard Annois; and a monotype of Pompeii by Thomas Gleghorn. There are also some artworks apparently unrelated to antiquity, by Nancy Parker and Thomas Gleghorn; an etching portrait of German archaeologist Ludwig Curtius by Hubert Andrew Freeth; and a picture of Trendall's *alma mater*, Otago University, by Richard Wallwork.

The domestic furnishings and other contents, still in their original location – Trendall's apartment at Menzies College (itself designed by leading architect Robin Boyd) – constitute, in effect, a house museum.

4.4 The Ethnographic Collection

This collection of about 854 items focuses principally on Australian Aboriginal and Melanesian material culture, with a small number of African items⁷⁰ (some of the latter of uncertain ownership status).⁷¹ The Australian communities represented include the Tiwi people of Bathurst and Melville Islands; west and east Arnhem Land including Elcho Island and Groote Eylandt; the Torres Strait; and individual items from Central Australia, possibly New South Wales, and Western Australia.⁷² From Papua New Guinea, the art of the Sepik River region is particularly well represented. To summarise:

- Artworks, and practical items of a highly decorative or artistic nature, include bark paintings, sculptures, dance wands and ceremonial boards, masks, totems, bone coffins/containers, pukumani (burial) poles, tapa cloths, story boards, some of the canoe prows and shields.
- Specifically ceremonial or symbolic items include a Morning Star pole, carvings, wands, dance boards and story boards, totemic carvings, bull-roarers, and model canoes.

- Practical tools include axes, stone hand-tools, hooks, pins, needles, scrapers, knives, blades, water containers, tongs, a broom, coolamons and other containers, spoons, bags and baskets, fire lighters, spatulas, digging tools, adzes, furniture, mats, headrests, shell money, message sticks, a weaving loom, betel-nut mortar, grinding stones, and a wooden chain.
- Personal items include ornaments and jewellery, clothing, hats, girdles, wigs, combs, smoking pipes, staffs and walking sticks, fans, and a mosquito whisk.
- Weapons and hunting equipment include swords, spears, arrows, blow-darts and pipes, daggers, clubs, fighting sticks, throwing sticks and boomerangs, woomeras, shields, body armour, fish traps, fish hooks, canoe prows and paddles, and a war horn.
- Musical instruments include numerous drums, a Jew's harp, a mouth bow, pan pipes, ceremonial flute, nose flute, other types of flutes, dijeridus, pairs of clap sticks, and a rattle.

4.5 The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection

The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection comprises 3826 posters (among which are many duplicates). The majority are from China, USSR and Vietnam in the 1960s–80s. They are mostly political in nature, promoting views on issues such as civic duty, public health (including contraception), and community life and unity.⁷³ There are also some Australian posters, relating mostly to student and local politics, Aboriginal land rights, and contraception/ family planning.

In assembling the political poster collection, Stewart Fraser aimed to include as many styles, techniques and topics as possible, although he did not claim that the collection aimed to be a comprehensive survey of Chinese poster art; rather it was the selection of one person. They range from the overtly political, such as 'Denounce the Gang of Four anti-party clique for plotting to seize party and state power' to depictions of Chinese landscape or wishes for a happy new year.⁷⁴

Professor Fraser also donated some unrelated items: about 15 early printed maps, a choral music manuscript on vellum (c. 1600), a grandfather clock made c. 1760, and a Russian icon c. 1802–15.

4.6 The F.M. Courtis Collection

The F.M. Courtis Collection comprises 320 works,⁷⁵ mostly paintings and works on paper (drawings, prints, photographs) by Australian artists, as well as some sculptures and textiles. It was originally assembled by Bendigo Teachers' College, which was established in 1926 and became part of the Faculty of Education of La Trobe University in 1991. With a few

exceptions, the collection remains in Bendigo, with works on display mostly in corridors and other public areas of the Education and Business Buildings, and others in store.

As well as easel paintings, drawings and prints, the collection includes work in other media: sculpture, ceramics, textiles, bark paintings and photographs, as well as a selection of children's picture book illustrations that resulted from a biennial children's literature conference.⁷⁶ Regarding subject matter, the collection's founder emphasised landscapes, as did subsequent curators.⁷⁷ The works represent the major stylistic periods and groups of Australian artists from the mid-20th century onwards.⁷⁸

The earliest works of any origin are two British prints by George Cruikshank (1820s). The earliest dated works made in Australia are *Grey kangaroo* by John Gould (1845) and *Moroka River Falls of Mount Kent* by Eugène von Guérard (1860). The relatively small number of 19th-century works also includes examples by William Strutt and S.T. Gill. The early 20th century is represented by Arthur Streeton, Tom Roberts, Charles Wheeler and Harold Herbert.

The collection is particularly strong in the work of Melbourne and Sydney painters after 1940,⁷⁹ including such eminent artists as Arthur Boyd, Sir William Dargie, Robert Jacks, Roger Kemp, Fred Williams and Leonard French. Women from this period are better represented, and include Grace Cossington-Smith, May Neill, Jean Appleton and Elaine Haxton.⁸⁰ This time of emerging modernism is also represented by works by the influential Melbourne teachers George Bell and Arnold Shore, and some of their students (Russell Drysdale, Sam Atyeo, Yvonne Cohen and Fred Williams).⁸¹

Later modernist Roger Kemp and surrealist James Gleeson are represented, as are most of the 'Antipodeans' (Arthur Boyd, Sidney Nolan, John Perceval, Clifton Pugh, James Wigley and Fred Williams), and Melbourne social realists Noel Counihan and Bernard Rust. Works by Sydney artists include those by Lloyd Rees, Brett Whiteley, John Olsen and Ken Done. Like the La Trobe University Art Collection, the F.M. Curtis Collection has a stronger representation of male than female artists. Women are better represented among the Indigenous artists.

Melbourne abstraction has a presence through works by Dale Hickey, Lawrence Daws, John Coburn, Godfrey Millar and others. A small number of Indigenous Australian artists are represented (some are anonymous; those named include Sheila Napaljarri Brown, Annette Davis, Fred Didjbarakk Naroldol Dirdi, Phillip Murray, Nganmirra Narrawarduwurdu, Nawaloinba, Dick Ngulayngulay and Billy Nolan Tjapangati).

The latest dated work is a children's book illustration by John Nicholson, from 2008.

5 History of the La Trobe University collections

The history of the La Trobe University collections is inextricably intertwined with the history of the university itself, particularly the history of the Bundoora campus, or in the case of the F.M. Courtis Collection, the Bendigo campus.

5.1 The La Trobe University Art Collection: history

The period from the end of World War II until the 1970s was a time of rapid expansion in tertiary education in many parts of the world. In Australia, from the 1950s, the Commonwealth Government under Prime Minister Robert Menzies took on a much greater role in supporting universities, although they remained state institutions.⁸² La Trobe was the third university established in Victoria (in 1967), about a decade after Monash (1958), and more than a century after Melbourne (1853). La Trobe's closest interstate contemporaries were Macquarie University in Sydney (1964)⁸³ and Flinders University in Adelaide (1966).⁸⁴ The University of New South Wales in Sydney (established 1949)⁸⁵ and the Australian National University in Canberra (1946–50)⁸⁶ were also undergoing significant development at this time. Some of Victoria's universities of today (such as RMIT and Deakin) were still technical or teacher-training institutions. University growth continued into the 1980s, with Australian university enrolments doubling between 1967 and 1988.⁸⁷

The *La Trobe University Act* was passed by the Victorian Parliament in 1964, and the university taught its first cohort – of 552 students – in 1967.⁸⁸ The Act included a unique clause: that La Trobe would be a university 'in which all enrolled students will have the opportunity of fitting themselves for life as well as becoming learned in a particular branch or branches of learning'.⁸⁹ At the official opening of the new university, the chancellor declared that it should be not only a place of academic excellence but also 'a source of stimulus for those who would work and teach here'.⁹⁰ One early employee recalls of this period:

By 1966, Melbourne had cast off its own post-war parochialism. It was large, diverse, rich in cultural and multicultural life, and exciting. La Trobe University was conceived in this spirit of optimism, where all things were new and possible, even if it was later to be proved that they weren't. La Trobe was a sort of new-age Camelot [...]⁹¹

A large (196-hectare) site was chosen in Bundoora, some 15 kilometres north of the Melbourne central business district.⁹² This land was the farm attached to the Mont Park Mental Hospital. From the university's inception, La Trobe's founders attempted to provide all students, whether resident or non-resident, with a high-quality environment, providing ample recreation areas for music, art, drama and sport – in contrast to the often-cramped facilities of some older universities.⁹³

Mr Roy Simpson of Yuncken Freeman Architects was appointed master planner of the campus. Although the initial planning and construction were completed under great pressure in order to accept students in 1967,⁹⁴ Simpson took the time to begin the university's art collection. His first step in this direction was to invite four philanthropic donors (Mrs Margaret Carnegie, Lady Patricia Potter, Mrs J.M. (Elizabeth) Baillieu and Mrs R.C.M. (Moir) Kimpton) to fund the commissioning of paintings of the site as it was before construction; these works by Charles Bush, Gareth Jones-Roberts and Len Annois were probably the first gifts of any type to the new university.⁹⁵ In this way the commissioning of the kernel of the art collection predated any construction on the new campus,⁹⁶ even when the Bundoora site could still be described as 'either a sea of mud or a dust bowl, depending on the weather'.⁹⁷

Roy Simpson also had the site documented in 1965 by leading modernist photographer Wolfgang Sievers (see Figure 2).⁹⁸ Negatives of these photographs are now held by the La Trobe University Photography Department, but are not part of the La Trobe University Art Collection.⁹⁹ (It is recommended they be accessioned; see Section 9 below.)



Figure 2: Site for La Trobe University.

Photograph by Wolfgang Sievers, 1965. Commissioned by Yuncken and Freeman. © National Library of Australia.

The Bundoora site was described by its master planner as 'a desolate, run-down farm in a swampy valley, devoid almost of trees, or of views less depressing than the encircling panorama of mental hospitals, a cemetery, school yards, gasworks, and industrial backsides'.¹⁰⁰ One student from the inaugural (1967) intake, Don Watson (later speechwriter to Prime Minister Paul Keating), recalled: 'La Trobe was a blob of gentility fallen on a Fred Williams landscape. It was a wilderness out there.'¹⁰¹

But as surveying proceeded, the site's considerable aesthetic potential became clear. The master plan's principles included 'a horizontal rather than a vertical development [...] affinity of design between all buildings and between buildings and the landscape [...] no limits on design creativity; provided always that in the balance of taste, individual virtuosity is subordinated to the interests of overall cohesion'.¹⁰² The swamp was transformed into an attractive system of moats, ornamental lakes and streams. All services were put underground, the result being 'never a pole or a power line in sight'. Landscaping was used 'more than any other feature, to weld and unify the campus'.¹⁰³

The use of water is one of the distinctive features of the Bundoora campus. The moat and its series of interconnected lakes and waterways was one of the first projects undertaken. It serves both practical and aesthetic purposes, being essential for flood control, water purification and irrigation, as well as beautifying the environment.¹⁰⁴ Significant sculptures have been strategically placed in and near the water and have become an integral part of the landscaping, the most important being Inge King's large *Dialogue of circles* (1976), located immediately behind the amphitheatre (Figure 3). This work has been interpreted by some as reflecting the master plan's concept of the campus as a series of concentric circles.¹⁰⁵ King (1915–2016), who lived and worked in Warrandyte, not far from the Bundoora campus, developed a strong relationship with La Trobe over many decades. She would later donate some works by her husband, printmaker Grahame King, her own 1971 sculpture *Group of boulders*, as well as the maquette for *Dialogue of circles*.



Figure 3: Installing Inge King's *Dialogue of circles* in the moat in 1976.

Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library.

Many eminent architects were commissioned to design buildings at La Trobe, such as Robin Boyd (Menzies College), Roy Grounds (East Lecture Theatre Complex; Agora Theatre), Bates Smart and McCutcheon (Humanities/ Education Complex), Stephenson and Turner (Agriculture/ Biochemistry; Biological Sciences 1 and 2; Behavioural Sciences; Animal and Glasshouse complex); Hassell and McConnell (Glenn College); and Yuncken Freeman (Library; Agora; David Myers Building; the Peribolos; Boiler House).¹⁰⁶ The early campus as constructed admirably met the master planner's ambition of creating 'the general character of fairly low, earth-coloured buildings, harmoniously unified in a landscape of shrubs, trees and water that is basically Australian in feeling and endowed with something of the timelessness of our continent'.¹⁰⁷ Today native plants and animals, especially birds, flourish. The campus design was widely praised: Roy Simpson was recognised by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects at both the Victorian and national levels; La Trobe University awarded him an honorary doctorate upon his retirement; and he received the Order of Australia.¹⁰⁸ This is in contrast to the much older University of Melbourne, which originally had no master plan,¹⁰⁹ and the contemporary Monash: 'public discussion of Monash buildings was rare [...]

praise was either vague or faint'.¹¹⁰ Such comments demonstrate the need not only to start with a good master plan, but to follow it over the decades. It has been said that much of Monash's poor architectural environment:

seems to stem from Monash's steady path away from the best of its master plan. The master plan had boldness and it recognised the complexity of university and community. In some ways it linked Monash with its surroundings. However, the plan was in part abandoned and in part retained, with problems left over and new ones created by later changes.¹¹¹

Indeed, La Trobe's landscape is arguably the most successful implementation of a coherent vision of all the mid-20th-century Australian universities:

By the 1970s with the creation of new, and consolidation of old, universities, there were very few of these institutions that could be said to have been planned well, or to have followed their plans conscientiously. An exception was Roy Simpson's plan of La Trobe [...]¹¹²



Figure 4: La Trobe University, final architectural model, built by Yuncken Freeman (1965).

Photograph by Wolfgang Sievers, 1965. © National Library of Australia.

In February 1967 (just before the arrival of the first students), a small and informal Distribution of Art Works Committee was set up, comprising Frank Barnes (business manager), Dietrich Borchardt (chief librarian) and Ben Meredith (master of Glenn College). Its role was to 'be responsible for the housing and location of all paintings, sculpture, glass

work and ceramics objects, artifacts and other similar items which are the property of the University'. The chief librarian was given responsibility for cataloguing the objects 'in a loose leaf system'. The committee was also to liaise with the 'Aesthetics Committee' and to seek out loans of artworks for display. 'First call on paintings would be public areas and secondly for private rooms'. Items not on display would be stored in the Library.¹¹³

The official opening of La Trobe University by Premier Henry Bolte in the presence of Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies in 1967 was painted by Charles Billich in a work donated by Mr Anthony Gorman, which is now on display in the Charles La Trobe Lounge in the Borchardt Library. Another early view, the watercolour *La Trobe University Buildings* (1969) was donated by the artist, John Bloomfield, and M. Officer donated three oil on board paintings completed in 1967 of *Native flowers on La Trobe University site*.

The first full-time employee to take up duty was the chief librarian, German-born Dietrich H. Borchardt; eventually the Library was named in his honour.¹¹⁴ There are several works in the collection with a direct personal connection to Mr Borchardt, such as eight paintings by his wife, amateur artist Janet Duff Borchardt (1916–1988),¹¹⁵ including Janet's portrait of her husband, commissioned by the Library staff on the occasion of his retirement, and which now hangs (appropriately) in the administration area of the Borchardt Library, and her portrait of La Trobe's second vice-chancellor, John Scott, donated by Professor Scott in 1993. Dietrich Borchardt also donated a Piranesi print and an unsigned Mexican work on paper. As one of the original members of the committee set up to advise the vice-chancellor on the acquisition and care of artworks, he did much to help shape the collection in its early years. The Library building was conceived as the 'heart' of the university and was the first building constructed. (The second was Glenn College,¹¹⁶ which later included LUMA). It was therefore also one of the first buildings in which artworks were displayed. The Library also purchased works for the collection, such as two watercolours by John Borrack in 1977 and six works on paper by Russell Drysdale in 1979 (with framing paid for by Borchardt).

The Library and main lecture theatres, and eventually cafés and other facilities, were placed around a courtyard-style 'Agora' (named for the chief marketplace of Athens, the centre of the city's civic life), the aim being to create a 'clustered Bohemia'.¹¹⁷ The master plan separated foot traffic from automobile traffic, creating a series of raised walkways between buildings and precincts. For this reason the original entrance to the Library was on the upper level, and a large artwork – Allen David's *Glass screen* (the artist's only large-scale sculpture in Australia)¹¹⁸ – was commissioned to make a visually exciting entrance to this core building (and one that also 'protected against inclement weather').¹¹⁹ (Interestingly, Monash University in 1967 would consider commissioning a large glass fountain by Allen David for its central 'Forum' but decided against it, thinking it might be damaged during student political protests.¹²⁰) Today La Trobe has the largest holding anywhere of Allen David's works

(60 items);¹²¹ these include working drawings for the glass screen, as well as a small glass plate that Allen created as a sample when submitting his design for consideration, donated subsequently by Beverley and Anthony Knight of Alcaston Gallery, David's dealer, who worked closely with former LUMA director Rhonda Noble.¹²²

Australia's post-war expansion of tertiary education not only meant that more Australians could study at university, but that gifted students no longer needed to go overseas to pursue educational excellence. This development, and government initiatives such as the establishment of the Australia Council, meant that many expatriate Australian artists and academics returned to Australia, and the 'cultural cringe' began to diminish as Australian creativity came to be valued in its own right.¹²³ This trend is expressed in La Trobe's choice to acquire contemporary Australian art, and to foster activities such as artists-in-residence. Other universities founded around this time, such as Monash and Macquarie, took a similar direction in their collecting.

In its first decade, La Trobe became known for its 'very vehement radical student movement'. The early 1970s were years of political protest in many countries, particularly against the war in Vietnam, and the La Trobe campus was no exception, experiencing student 'sit-ins' at council meetings and other demonstrations.¹²⁴ By 1971 La Trobe's student body had a higher proportion of women and of students from less affluent backgrounds than Melbourne and Monash.¹²⁵ In the 1970s La Trobe also admitted more 'early leaver' students: 'students who left school without having had the opportunity to reach the academic levels normally required for university entrance [were] selected after careful interviewing and aptitude testing procedures'. In the Arts, these students achieved well above average results. La Trobe had a more 'socially representative', less elite, student body, than other Victorian universities, with more students from government (as opposed to private) schools, and of greater ethnic diversity.¹²⁶ The collection reflects these trends, such as the steady increase in the representation of women artists since the late 1970s, a time when Australian women's art – both historical and contemporary – was starting to receive greater attention.¹²⁷

Many of the items donated to La Trobe initially came in as loans. Indeed, in its early days the university actively sought out loans while it gradually built up its permanent collection. This pattern of private collectors and dealers lending for many years, before eventually turning the loan into an outright donation, is an enduring one at La Trobe. Many gifts from art dealer and collector Charles Nodrum, for instance, were initially loans, as were many of the ceramics and pictures ultimately donated or bequeathed by Melbourne collectors Etta and Manny Hirsh and family.¹²⁸ The highly significant *Legend of Sinbad the sailor* series by Leonard French, which used to decorate the Council Chamber on the third level of the David Myers Building, originally came in on loan from Mr Ion Nicolades, the owner of the Burke Street café for which it had been commissioned in the 1950s, and was later (in 1999) donated

outright under the Australian Cultural Gifts Program.¹²⁹ In 1987 a brochure listing artworks hanging in the Borchardt Library reveals that many were loans from Charles Nodrum.¹³⁰ The Dunmoochin Collection, which will be returned to the Dunmoochin Foundation,¹³¹ has been on loan since 1992.

Like most Australian university collections, from 1977 onwards La Trobe benefited significantly from gifts of artworks donated by private individuals under the Commonwealth Government's Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme (now the Cultural Gifts Program). Indeed, some of the most generous donors have been giving works, often with the support of this scheme, for decades. In 1997 the curator, Rhonda Noble, noted that:

The generous donors of works of art and funds have been drawn from four Australian States, thus emphasising the breadth of the Collections' reputation, particularly among directors of commercial art galleries who encourage donors to give to La Trobe University. The directors who have been most generous in directing their clients to the University have been Mr Charles Nodrum who is an alumnus of La Trobe, and Mr William Nuttall of Niagara Galleries.¹³²

Recently Mr Nodrum stated his reasons for his support of the Art Collection, both through his own donations and loans, and by encouraging clients to donate, 'in particular those who feel some connection to the university':

I am firmly committed to the notion that art in our everyday surroundings can play an active and positive role – hence my willingness and enthusiasm for lending paintings to the university, not just for exhibition in the gallery (though I have participated extensively in many, such as 'The Kite – Mike Brown and the Sydney Twelve' in 2007) but to be hung wherever the director or curator felt appropriate.¹³³

In 1973 the informal group advising the vice-chancellor on the acquisition and management of artworks was formalised into the Art Advisory Committee. This was before the establishment of any professional curatorial staff positions. The committee's role was to advise the vice-chancellor on:

- (a) the expenditure of such funds as are made available by the Vice-Chancellor for purchase of art works for the University collection and on the acceptability (or otherwise) of works offered to the University as donations or on loan
- (b) the display of works in the University collection
- (c) appropriate arrangements for the detailed recording of the collection and for the maintenance and protection of the individual items.¹³⁴

The initial members were:

- Professor of art history, Peter Tomory (chair)
- Mr Dietrich H. Borchardt (chief librarian)
- Mr John Waterhouse (schools liaison officer; he was also an artist who had gained curatorial experience at Monash University, later becoming La Trobe University's first salaried curator of the collection)
- Miss D. Sherwin
- business manager.¹³⁵

The committee determined that artworks should be displayed in 'committee rooms, passages, common rooms, offices of the Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Deans, Business Manager, Chief Librarian, and such offices in which considerable numbers of meetings or interviews are held'.¹³⁶

After its first meeting, the committee set itself the goal of commissioning at least one major work (a sculpture or painting in the \$20,000 range) each year, with the help of corporate fundraising and the Council for the Arts, as well as seeking a fund to help schools, departments and the Student Representative Council to acquire smaller artworks.¹³⁷ At some point an annual allocation for acquisitions was built into the university's budget, although it fluctuated according to prevailing circumstances. For instance, in 1979, the vice-chancellor reported that:

in the current period of general financial stringency it had been necessary to reduce the recurrent funds allocation from the usual \$5,000 per annum to \$2,000 for 1979 but suggested that in exceptional circumstances it might be possible to fund any particularly important acquisition in some other way. He hoped that the University would be in a position within a year or so to resume a higher level of recurrent funding for art works acquisitions [...]¹³⁸

One later member of the Art Works Advisory Committee was anthropologist Dr Ross Bowden, who later recalled:

13. Before the Museum [LUMA] was established I served on the LTU Art Committee when the late John Waterhouse was the Curator of Artworks. He was a competent and serious painter and every month or so he and I would do a tour of the private galleries around Melbourne looking for art to buy for the University. One gallery we frequently visited was Charles Nodrum's. Charles was one of the early graduates in Art History at LTU. As a dealer he specialised in 'hard-edge' abstract painting and the works belonging to that style in the LTU collection were mainly bought by John Waterhouse and myself during that period.

14. When John Waterhouse retired Rhonda Noble took over as the Curator of Artworks. She had been his deputy for several years before that and had an honours degree in anthropology from La Trobe. She had done this part-time while working at LTU. I think she did every one of the courses I taught at different times. Unfortunately she died unexpectedly very recently and with her, I'm afraid, went much of the history of the Art Museum covering the late 1980s and early 1990s.¹³⁹

The university had contacts in the business world and sometimes turned this to its advantage in attracting support for the collection. For instance, in 1973 Australian Gypsum Ltd donated funds for the purchase of a series of seven paintings on glass by Michael Goss.

La Trobe's Music Department was established in 1974, and differed from existing tertiary music courses in Victoria, emphasising composition rather than performance, with a focus on new music technology.¹⁴⁰ It also offered opportunities for tertiary music education for students from lower socio-economic areas in Melbourne's northern suburbs. It went on to attract students from all around Australia, and from overseas, and was highly regarded internationally.¹⁴¹ The foundation professor of music was composer, pianist and electronic music pioneer Keith Humble (1927–1995), whose portrait bust is in the collection (Figure 5). The Music Department closed in 1999. This important episode in the history of La Trobe has also resulted in an unusual acquisition: Humble's Steinway 'baby grand' piano, donated by his widow, was accessioned into the Art Collection. It was restored a few years ago by La Trobe and is now formally on loan to the City of Greater Bendigo for use at the Capital Theatre on View Street, Bendigo, next door to the Bendigo Art Gallery and across the road from the VAC.¹⁴²



Figure 5: Maria Kuhn, *Keith Humble* (1981).

Commissioned and donated through the Australian Government's Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme by Mr Hugh Patton. Now in storage.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.

In 1976 the university launched a public appeal for funds 'to introduce to the campus features which will be both of practical help to students as well as those which will make a contribution to the artistic side of university life. This is being achieved through the development of the Moat Theatre, and the acquisition of works of art, to be appropriately placed throughout the University'.¹⁴³ To manage the acquisitions, vice-chancellor Myers enlarged the Art Works Advisory Committee from five members to about eight or ten, including a member of University Council.¹⁴⁴ Myers retired later in 1976 and the appeal was transformed into a three-year fundraising campaign in his honour. The chancellor stated that 'The acquisition of works of art for the University is a matter of high priority. it is intended to purchase Australian works of art, both pictures and sculpture, to be appropriately placed throughout the University'.¹⁴⁵

The 1970s saw a flourishing of art education, writing and publishing in Australia, including in universities. From the 1970s onwards, new disciplines added to La Trobe's Humanities School included Art History, Music, Linguistics, Prehistory (now Archaeology), Religious Studies, Italian and Modern Greek.¹⁴⁶ Art History began in 1972 with the appointment of foundation professor Peter Tomory,¹⁴⁷ who in 1973 became chair of the Art Advisory Committee.¹⁴⁸ This was soon followed in 1974 by Monash University's establishment of its Department of Visual Arts, and an art gallery the following year.¹⁴⁹ Australia's first department of fine arts had been established at the University of Melbourne soon after World War II.¹⁵⁰ Tomory's argument in favour of teaching art history at university level could equally apply to the collecting of art by universities: 'the general recognition that the arts make a major contribution to any national culture' and contribute substantially to 'quality of life'.¹⁵¹ La Trobe wound down its Art History Department from about 2006 and it officially closed in 2012.

The 1980s were a decade of major amalgamations and reorganisations of tertiary institutions across Australia, with partial deregulation of the tertiary education 'market'. The amalgamation of numerous teacher colleges and other institutions with existing universities, or to create new universities, meant that collections also merged, and some benefited from increased acquisition budgets. Monash University, for instance, took on the collections of the Chisholm and Gippsland Institutes.¹⁵² In 1988 Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences was amalgamated with La Trobe and moved from its various sites in inner-suburban Melbourne to Bundoora, creating the La Trobe School of Health Sciences.¹⁵³ There are 27 works in the collection recorded as originating from Lincoln, including the sculpture *Anthology of echoes* by Peter Dingli, now part of the Sculpture Park, which came from Lincoln's Abbotsford campus,¹⁵⁴ as did Elwyn Lynn's mixed media work *Folded landscape* (1987).

The 39 works by World War II painter and printmaker Norma Bull (1906–1980) are connected to the nine works by this artist in the F.M. Curtis Collection at Bendigo Teachers' College:

Bryan Clemson, the second curator of the F.M. Curtis Collection, advised Bull's executors on the disposal of her estate; he placed most of her works with major collections, including the National Gallery of Australia, Australian War Memorial, several regional galleries in Victoria, and the F.M. Curtis Collection. She is also represented in the Royal Collection.¹⁵⁵

The 1990s were not easy for managing the collection, although acquisitions continued apace. In 1997 curator Rhonda Noble noted that, although LUMA was struggling with budget constraints that limited its ability to complete registration and conservation tasks, stage exhibitions, and provide adequate lending services to campuses:

the impressive list of acquisitions [...] are wholly due to Professor Michael Osborne, Vice-Chancellor, whose continuing support by generous funding of the acquisitions ensures that the La Trobe University Art Collection continues to increase and provide a current record of contemporary visual art for the cultural enrichment of the University and wider communities.¹⁵⁶

Donors in the 1990s included William Nuttall and Annette Reeves; Charles Nodrum; James Morgan and Katherine Hattam; artists Robert Nelson, Charles Cooper, Gareth Jones Robert, Michael Cook, Mr Shaikhe 'I Am Art' Snir, La Trobe's master planner Roy Simpson and Mrs Donne Simpson; and ICI Australia. La Trobe's dependence on donations was in contrast to Monash University, where the 1990s were 'a period of unprecedented optimism and growth for the Collection', due in part to the university's decision to allocate 0.05 per cent of total capital works budgets to art acquisitions.¹⁵⁷

Melbourne-based scientist Dr Douglas A. Kagi, who has collected prints since the mid-1970s, is a generous donor of prints to many university art collections, including Curtin University,¹⁵⁸ Queensland University of Technology,¹⁵⁹ Central Queensland University,¹⁶⁰ University of Wollongong¹⁶¹ and University of Tasmania,¹⁶² as well as government collections including the National Gallery of Victoria,¹⁶³ City of Townsville Art Collection (some 478 prints by 67 artists)¹⁶⁴ and Rockhampton Art Gallery.¹⁶⁵ To La Trobe he has donated (mostly during the 1990s) more than 200 prints by various Australian and international artists, including Arthur Boyd, Jimmy Ernst, Colin Lanceley, Banduk Marika, Sidney Nolan, John Olsen, Leonard Baskin, Rafael Canogar Gomez, Jorge Castillo, Jose Luis Cuevas, Josep Guinovart Bertran, Henry Moore, Leonard Nierman, Brian Nissen, David Preston and Antony Tapies.

From the late 1990s La Trobe hosted artists-in-residence, from which selected works were acquired for the collection. The first was Charles Reddington in 1998–99,¹⁶⁶ and the second was John Waller from 1999 to 2007.¹⁶⁷ Others included Mirka Mora and Eltham ceramicist Peter Accadia.¹⁶⁸ Artists were given a studio space on the Bundoora campus.¹⁶⁹ Each residency involved a solo exhibition at LUMA, open-studio sessions for students, public seminars and other programs, and a work was acquired each year for the collection.¹⁷⁰ The collection holds 15 of John Waller's works, some donated and some purchased.¹⁷¹ Although

the artist-in-residence program has been discontinued, works from other exhibitions held at LUMA and elsewhere on campus are acquired regularly.¹⁷² For instance, Chris Bond's small work *Phthalo blue*, purchased from a group exhibition in 2014;¹⁷³ Brendan Lee's photographic series *Sentimental blokes (passports)* (2010); Jennifer Marshall's *Ironpot* (1997) and Katherine Hattam's *Graffiti Merri Creek* (2012).

The renowned art collector, dealer, adviser and patron Dr Joseph Brown AO OBE (1918–2009), widely lauded as 'Australia's greatest art patron',¹⁷⁴ generously supported the collections of La Trobe University for decades, as well as those of Melbourne,¹⁷⁵ Monash, and Deakin,¹⁷⁶ making it possible for these institutions to acquire works out of reach of their budget or (in the case of Monash) out of scope of its purchasing policy, which admitted only contemporary art.¹⁷⁷ Dr Brown's gifts to La Trobe number more than 100, and include works by William Strutt, Mortimer Menpes, Norman Lindsay, Charles Blackman, Sidney Nolan, Victor Majzner, Vic O'Connor, Guy Boyd, Rupert Bunny, Charles Bush, Fred Williams, Teisutis Zikaras, Roger Kemp, Brian Dunlop, John Perceval, George Johnson, Jeffrey Makin, Robert Klippel and Rick Amor. Dr Brown also gave four of his own works: three paintings and a bronze, encouraged clients to donate to La Trobe, and advised La Trobe on acquisitions. The relationship between La Trobe and Dr Brown was an enduring one; La Trobe staged an exhibition of portraits of Dr Brown in 1991,¹⁷⁸ awarded him an Honorary Doctorate in 1997¹⁷⁹ (as had Monash in 1981¹⁸⁰ and Melbourne in 1986¹⁸¹), and established an annual Joseph Brown Lecture in 2001, in order 'to honour Joseph Brown's generosity and commitment to Australian art';¹⁸² speakers have included Dr Patrick McCaughey (former director of the National Gallery of Victoria).

Melbourne art dealer Charles Nodrum (b. 1947) is another major supporter of the collection, through numerous donations and loans, and by encouraging his clients to donate works to La Trobe. Nodrum began his art career by working for Joseph Brown.¹⁸³ He studied at La Trobe from 1979 to 1982 (BA, majoring in philosophy), while he was already collecting art personally and working in the art trade.¹⁸⁴ Mr Nodrum has donated works by Ronald Millar, Michael Shannon, Sidney Ball, John Peart, Tim Storrier, Andrew Sibley, Kenneth Rowell, Ron Robertson-Swann, Peter Tyndall, Gareth Jones-Roberts, Gareth Sansom, Charles Reddington, Mike Brown and many others. He has also lent works from his private collection, both for short-term exhibitions and for long-term campus display. He explained recently that in the early days, when he loaned works via the first curator, John Waterhouse, there was no gallery on the campus and works were displayed in the Library. Gradually, however, as the Library's collections of books and journals grew, more wall space was needed for bookshelves and the artworks were 'squeezed out' from the Library and moved elsewhere.¹⁸⁵ Many of Mr Nodrum's extended loans eventually became outright donations, while other works were donated in the first instance. In 1994 he donated a work on paper by Ronald Hewison Stuart to 'mark the launching of the La Trobe University Alumni'. In 2010

Mr Nodrum was invited to select his favourite works from the collection of his *alma mater*, for the exhibition *Charles Nodrum Selects*,¹⁸⁶ staged at LUMA to coincide with another LUMA-curated exhibition staged at Bundoora Homestead Art Centre: *Unearthed: Fifty years of Australian Landscape Art from the Charles Nodrum Collection*.¹⁸⁷

William Nuttall of Niagara Galleries and his wife Annette Reeves have also been very generous supporters; between them they have donated 96 works to La Trobe, over several decades. Their gifts include works by Patrick Henigan, Peter Powditch, William Bridges, Rick Amor, Yvonne Boag, George Kosturicov, Aida Tomescu, Vicki Varvaressos and Angelina Pwerle.

Long-term relationships have led to acquisitions from other sources, such as works donated in honour or memory of staff, alumni and others with a connection to La Trobe. For instance, in 2013, Andrew Southall's *Country triptych* (2011) was donated in memory of Southall's ex-wife, the arts writer and broadcaster Andrea Stretton (d. 2007), who gained her BA at the Bundoora campus.¹⁸⁸ The Fred Williams painting *Scrub, Lysterfield* (1967) was a gift from the artist's family on the untimely death in 1987 of student Jenny Wilkinson, who was killed in a car accident after leaving the Williams' home. Jenny was writing a thesis on the artist for her postgraduate studies in art history.¹⁸⁹ In 1993, artist William Kelly donated a drawing *Act of love* in memory of Vesna Markovska, a La Trobe alumna who was killed at the age of 24 in the Hoddle Street massacre in 1987.

The untitled painting of eagles by Yolngu artist Roy Wuyngambi Ashley was commissioned in 2003 for the Biological Sciences building, to commemorate long-standing research links (since 1971) between the Yolngu community and the university, led by Dr Neville White, who developed a particularly close relationship with the Marralarrmirri clan (of which the artist is a member) through decades of collaboration.¹⁹⁰ Dr White said at the time:

Members of the clan see La Trobe University as my 'company lineage' and were impressed by the wedge tail eagle logo on vehicles and at my research station in the Donydji Homeland Centre. I explained that the eagle was the University's totem as it is for the Wagilak ... The entwined eagles show the closeness between the University and the artist's Marralarrmirri Clan and that of his 'mother', the Birdingal Ritharrngu.¹⁹¹

University departments have also acquired works in various ways, such as the stained-glass panel *Arthurian legend* by James Gleeson (1971) which was purchased by the Careers and Appointments Service. The Student Union used to commission artworks independently; it is thought that over the years some might have been disposed of, but the significant ones that remain are now managed as part of the main La Trobe University Art Collection.¹⁹² An exception is the large *Cinema* mural attached to the exterior wall of the Agora Theatre, completed by Linda and Ray Richards in 1987.¹⁹³ There are also works in the collection by

La Trobe alumni, such as two pencil drawings from the early 1990s by renowned art historian Christopher Heathcote.

Initially the Bundoora campus had no dedicated space for the display of artworks; consistent with the original purpose of the collection – to enrich the university environment – early acquisitions were displayed in various public spaces, especially the Library. But in 1983 a gallery space was created in the ground floor foyer or ‘undercroft’ of the David Myers Building (see Figure 6 and Figure 7).¹⁹⁴ The first exhibition, *Works from the University Collection*, included art by Charles Blackman, John Coburn, Leonard French, William Frater and Tom Roberts.¹⁹⁵ Dr Joseph Brown presided over the official opening.¹⁹⁶ (By way of comparison, the University of Melbourne had set up its first dedicated gallery space on the fourth floor of its new Faculty of Arts building in 1972,¹⁹⁷ while Monash University opened its first gallery, attached to the Department of Visual Arts, in March 1975.)¹⁹⁸



Figure 6: Staff installing an exhibition in the art collection’s first dedicated gallery space, located in the university’s main administration building (the David Myers Building), c. 1983.

Photograph from LUMA files.

In late 1991 the gallery space in the David Myers Building reverted to use as a foyer. The collection then moved to Glenn College, to share an undercroft space occupied since 1980¹⁹⁹ or 1981²⁰⁰ by the Prehistory and Anthropology Collections (discussed in Section 5.4 below). Initially all three collections shared the space, with either combined or alternating displays, but gradually the Art Collection took over and the gallery in Glenn College became known

(from around 1994) as the La Trobe University Art Museum (re-named La Trobe University Museum of Art, or LUMA, in about 2009).



Figure 7: Visitors enjoying an exhibition in the Art Collection's first dedicated gallery space, located in the university's main administration building (the David Myers Building), c. 1984.

Photograph from LUMA files.

The first staff member given professional responsibility for the university's art collection was John Latham Waterhouse (1933 – c. 2011). Waterhouse's official role was schools liaison officer.²⁰¹ But he was also an artist (there are six of his works in the collection, some of which he donated) and had been curator at Monash University,²⁰² so he was recruited to serve on the Art Advisory Committee.²⁰³ As a result of this he gradually became the 'de facto honorary curator'; his curatorial role was more formally recognised (although still in a part-time capacity) in 1978. In November 1984 Waterhouse relinquished his other role and became full-time curator. (By way of comparison, Monash University had appointed its first full-time curator, Grazia Gunn, in around 1974.)²⁰⁴ At some stage in the 1980s, Rhonda Noble (an anthropology graduate who had studied Aboriginal art) was appointed as an assistant to Waterhouse; when he retired in 1990 she took on the role of curator.²⁰⁵ Following Noble's retirement at the end of 2003, Ewa Kozlowski became managing curator during 'a period of transition and restructuring of the Art Museum'. In late 2005 Vincent Alessi was appointed as managing curator of the La Trobe University Art Museum and Collections.²⁰⁶ He remained in charge (although job titles changed) until February 2014,²⁰⁷ at which point Dr Michael

Brennan was appointed as acting artistic director. Meanwhile, the La Trobe Art Institute was established in 2013, under the direction of Associate Professor Neil Fetting,²⁰⁸ who resigned in December 2015.²⁰⁹ A restructure of LUMA occurred in 2016 under new LAI director, professor of practice Karen Quinlan (who is also director of Bendigo Art Gallery), with several positions being made redundant and the LUMA gallery being closed.²¹⁰

Since La Trobe's incorporation of the Bendigo College of Advanced Education in 1991,²¹¹ there has been fruitful cooperation between the Bundoora and Bendigo campuses (and subsequently with the Albury-Wodonga, Shepparton and Mildura campuses and local communities), including regular exhibition exchanges and loans of individual artworks. For instance, the 2016 exhibition *Claudia Terstappen: A Language of the Vanishing*, curated by Anita La Pietra at LUMA, was displayed at LUMA, VAC Bendigo and at the Murray Art Museum Albury.²¹² There are many other examples (see Appendix II, which includes touring exhibitions).

As well as these and other links with the local community (such as supporting, although not acquiring from, the Banyule – La Trobe University Young Artists Awards),²¹³ the collection also reflects links with individual local residents, such as the textile work *Mootwingee landscape* (1981), by Plenty Valley artist Gillian Borrack, which was donated by Dr Warren Lett, former dean of education, and several works by her husband, John Borrack, which were purchased with library funds.

Consistent with the aims of the founders of the university and the collection, a large proportion of the collection at any given time is on display across the campus. At the time of writing there are between 500 and 700 works (including the Sculpture Park and Etta Hirsh Ceramics) on display around the Bundoora campus, and a small number at Bendigo (these are in addition to the large number of works from the F.M. Curtis Collection), Albury-Wodonga and Shepparton. The total figure represents between 25 and 30 per cent of the collection.²¹⁴ In particular, a large selection of prominent and significant works is displayed in the Chancellery in the David Myers Building. The staff of LUMA has administered the placement of paintings and other works in foyers, meeting rooms, staff common rooms, lecture theatres, offices and other spaces, at no charge. A number of years ago, a larger proportion, up to two-thirds of the collection, was out on display, dispersed not only across the main campus but also at affiliated sites such as teaching hospitals. Such loans were brought back, probably in the late 1990s.²¹⁵

LUMA has acquired works from exhibitions it has staged, although some exhibitions are highly experimental and do not lend themselves to traditional acquisitions, such as Hannah Bertram's *Global Dust Project: Aisles of the Dead* (2015). Bertram laboriously makes fragile, ephemeral artworks out of dust – in this instance, dust carefully brushed from artworks in LUMA's main paintings storeroom.²¹⁶ The Guerilla Art projects (see Figure 35 and Figure 36)

now also serve a similar purpose to earlier artist residencies, but for shorter periods of time. Similarly, Bendigo's biennial Façade Project competition, launched in 2011 as a joint project of the La Trobe University Visual Arts Centre and the City of Greater Bendigo, gives the winning artist the opportunity to use the entire 13-metre-wide VAC façade on View Street as a 'canvas' for an artwork, which remains in place for a year or more.²¹⁷ The 2011 project was by Jenny Pollack,²¹⁸ 2012–13 was by Owen Leong,²¹⁹ 2013–14 was Julie Rrap's *OuterSpace*, and, at the time of writing, Ash Keating's *Gravity system response #1 (diptych)* was on display.²²⁰

The sculpture collection began at a time (the 1960s) when:

Australian sculpture began to shift away from a monumental and commemorative role – and a subsidiary role as architectural embellishment – to concern itself with the 'autonomy' of the object, with idealist notions of form and space, and the integrity of 'medium-specificity'.²²¹

Some of the La Trobe sculptures reflect this move away from the commemorative, such as Inge King's *Dialogue of circles*, Robert Klippel's *Sentinel* (1987) and Jock Clutterbuck's *A new house among the stars* (1993).



Figure 8: Bart Sanciuolo, *Dante's Divine Comedy* (1980–83).

150th Anniversary Gift from the Italian Community of Victoria to the People of Australia, presented 1987.

Photograph La Trobe University Media Library.

In 1981 the first Australian Sculpture Triennial, an initiative of the Victorian Ministry for the Arts (four were held in all), was held on the campuses of La Trobe University and Preston Institute of Technology,²²² in recognition of the La Trobe campus's suitability as a site for outdoor sculpture;²²³ it is thought that some works were acquired from this, although the details require confirmation.

In 1983 the Italian community of Victoria donated a sculpture by Bart Sanciolo, *Dante's Divine comedy*, to the people of Australia on the occasion of the 150th anniversary [of European settlement of Victoria?]; the university also acquired five working drawings, which give context to this significant piece (Figure 8).

The university continues to develop the Sculpture Park, for instance with the commission of the large multi-piece *Murri totem poles* by Aboriginal artist Reko Rennie, installed in 2013 on the steps of the La Trobe Institute for Molecular Science (Figure 9). In the spirit of the Bundoora campus master plan, this commission was specifically designed in consultation with the architects of the new building.²²⁴ In 2017 the campus will take delivery of a large kinetic sculpture by Phil Price (donated under the Cultural Gifts Program).²²⁵



Figure 9: Reko Rennie, *Murri totem poles* (2013) in the forecourt of the La Trobe Institute for Molecular Science.

This work was specifically designed and commissioned for this location.

Photograph by LAI staff.

5.2 The Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection: history

The Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection comprises some 238 catalogued works created by more than 80 named ceramicists (some works are unsigned), most of whom are Australian. Although Etta and 'Manny' Hirsh broadened their collecting to take in paintings, sculpture, jewellery, antiques, curiosities and clothing, ceramics were the first type of art they collected (from the beginning of their marriage in 1956 until the late 1980s), and ceramics held a particularly strong place in their hearts. This is also a very personal collection, as the family made a point of commissioning dinner services, which they used for family meals and for entertaining, as well as using many of the vases, tableware and other pieces.²²⁶ Although all the works were formally accepted in 2008, the collection came to La Trobe at different times: some ceramics were donated by Emmanuel Hirsh in memory of his late wife Etta Hirsh,²²⁷ and after Emmanuel's death a group of works was donated by Anouk and Vaughan Hulme (daughter and son-in-law of Etta and Manny) in memory of Etta, some through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program.²²⁸ But well before this, the Hirsh family had been long-term lenders and donors of works to the La Trobe University Art Collection,²²⁹ and formed a particularly strong relationship with curator Rhonda Noble.²³⁰ Some of the ceramics are yet to be accessioned, and La Trobe University is in possession of other artworks on loan from the Hirsh family.²³¹

The collection has its own accession number prefix (LTUEH as opposed to the LTU prefix used on the rest of the Art Collection). This reflects the intentions of the donors that the collection be used as a teaching and research collection (as well as being available for display), and the fact that many of the objects originally came to La Trobe as loans, being later converted to gifts. (Non-ceramic Hirsh family gifts, such as paintings and works on paper, have been accessioned into the main LTU series). One of the reasons the Hirsh family chose La Trobe over other universities as the recipient of the ceramics was because La Trobe was one of the few universities still offering courses in ceramics (at the Bendigo campus).²³²

5.3 The Trendall Collection: history

The founder of this collection, Professor A.D. ('Dale') Trendall (1909–1995) (Figure 10) has been described as one of the world's leading authorities on ancient Greek vase painting and one of the foremost classical art historians of his time. He was also Australia's first professor of archaeology.²³³

Trendall came to La Trobe in 1969 after a distinguished career that traversed his birth-country of New Zealand (school student at King's College, Auckland, then undergraduate at University of Otago 1926–29), Trinity College at Cambridge University (student 1931–33 and briefly fellow), the British School at Rome (librarian 1936–38), University of Sydney (professor of Greek and subsequently also archaeology 1939–54, as well as acting vice-chancellor) and Australian National University (inaugural master of University House 1954–

69, and deputy vice-chancellor 1958–64). During World War II he undertook important work with a group of academics decoding Japanese signals, which included his invention of a new cipher dubbed 'TRENCODE', which remained in use until at least 1946.²³⁴

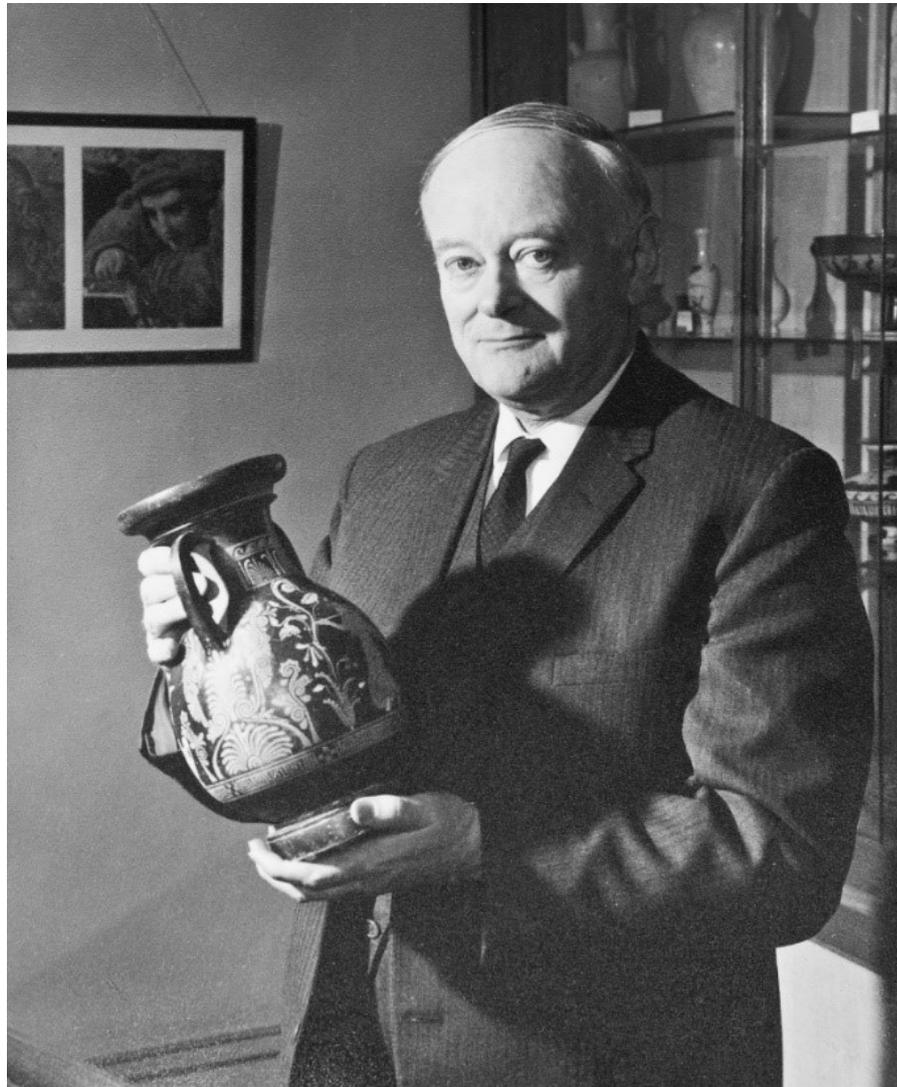


Figure 10: Professor A.D. (Arthur Dale) Trendall (1909–1995).

Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library.

La Trobe University originally planned that every student and staff member would be a member of a college, even if not in residence. Although this plan withered on the vine, with only three colleges established,²³⁵ in 1969 Trendall was appointed as La Trobe's first (and, as it turned out, only) resident fellow.²³⁶ Trendall came to La Trobe upon his 'retirement' from ANU; he lived and worked for 26 years in a purpose-designed apartment on the top (seventh) storey of the south wing of Menzies College (Figure 11). This flat became 'his home, study, library and repository for his photographic archive, and also a destination not only for international and local scholars but also for the young students he befriended and mentored. Here too more major studies were produced'.²³⁷

Trendall, who was unmarried and childless, eventually bequeathed the bulk of his estate (including funds) and the contents of his flat (research library, photographic archive, art and antiquities, domestic chattels) to La Trobe,²³⁸ to form a research centre for ancient Mediterranean studies in the flat in Menzies College, with all items to be kept together as a collection in that location. Trendall nominated as trustees his collaborator Dr Ian McPhee (also an expert in Greek red-figure ware, and a lecturer in Greek and Roman Art in the Department of Art History since 1974), and McPhee's wife, Dr Elizabeth Pemberton (then reader in classics and archaeology at the University of Melbourne; now an honorary researcher at La Trobe). Upon Trendall's death in 1995, the university complied with the terms of his bequest and, in late 1998, the A.D. Trendall Research Centre for Ancient Mediterranean Studies was established, with Dr McPhee as director.²³⁹ Trendall deliberately wanted the centre to be the responsibility of the university, not of an individual faculty, and today it has its own budget (derived from his will). According to Professor Chris Mackie, the will specified that the collection must stay at Menzies College; any change to these arrangements would require the approval of Trendall's trustees.²⁴⁰



Figure 11: Menzies College (designed by Robin Boyd), pictured in 1970.

The 'solarium' of Dale Trendall's flat can be seen protruding upper right.

Photograph by Mark Strizic, 1970. © State Library Victoria.

Dr McPhee retired from his substantive role as a lecturer in 2007, but continued as director of the Trendall Research Centre in an honorary capacity until early 2012. In 2012 Dr Chris Mackie acted as director, with Dr Gillian Shepherd as deputy director. In 2013 Dr Shepherd took over as director.²⁴¹ Half of the director's salary is paid out of investment returns on the money from Trendall's bequest (the director's role is equivalent to half of a full-time position; the other half is as a lecturer and researcher).²⁴² There is also a one-day-per-week administrative staff member. LUMA staff provide assistance with collections management.

²⁴³



Trendall's archive of some 40,000 photographs of Greek/Southern Italian vases is a truly unique research resource. Trendall began building this collection many years before he came to La Trobe, but used it for his major publications, most of which were produced during his La Trobe years. Indeed, the photographs are filed in a method following the order of his books (Figure 12).²⁴⁴ The photographs are complemented by his substantial research library, which fills almost all the walls of the apartment (see for instance Figure 13).



Figure 12: One drawer from A.D. Trendall's photographic archive.

The photographs are filed according to the order of Trendall's major publications.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.



Figure 13: The study (formerly the living room) of the A.D. Trendall Research Centre, with a portion of Trendall's library.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.



Figure 14: Original chairs by Australian manufacturer 'Fler', bookcase, carpet and items from the teaching collection, in the A.D. Trendall Research Centre.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.



Figure 15: Original furniture during A.D. Trendall's time in the apartment at Menzies College.

Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library.

Today, the Trendall Collection is an integral part of the A.D. Trendall Research Centre for Ancient Mediterranean Studies, which has the following objectives:

- To promote research in the general area of ancient Mediterranean studies, particularly in the archaeology of south Italy and Sicily during the Classical period.
- To disseminate within the general community in Australia the results of the latest research in Greek and Roman art and archaeology, through the sponsorship of conferences, lectures and seminars.
- To make available, at the Director's discretion, the resources of the Centre to all scholars and graduate students, whether from Australia or overseas, who wish to use the library and archive.
- To maintain and extend both the Library and the Archive (as unique research resources in Australia) through the acquisition of books and periodicals relating to Greek and Roman culture, and images of south Italian red-figure vases.²⁴⁵

The Centre is used by La Trobe staff and higher-level students, visiting scholars from Australia and overseas, and other researchers. Use of the collection is by prior arrangement with the director, Dr Gillian Shepherd.

5.4 The Ethnographic Collection: history

In 1979 the Division of Prehistory (then chaired by ethnohistorian Mr Nigel Oram and part of the School of History) set up a small museum (measuring 9.2 × 4.7 metres) in the 'centre of the university' (the David Myers building).²⁴⁶ Its exhibits, such as a mock-up of an excavation of a shell midden, were used for teaching.²⁴⁷ The Division of Prehistory at the time taught courses on world prehistory with an emphasis on Australia and the Pacific. One part of the course covered museology, giving students a brief introduction to some curatorial responsibilities and activities, and display design. Students curated and designed their own exhibitions, with guidance from Prehistory Division staff, and produced a handbook for visitors. Some showcases and many of the objects were on loan from the National Museum of Victoria (now Museum Victoria).²⁴⁸

In 1980²⁴⁹ or 1981²⁵⁰ it was decided to create a combined Anthropology and Prehistory Museum, in the undercroft of Glenn College, measuring 22.5 × 9.5 metres (the space that until recently was occupied by LUMA).²⁵¹ ✦²⁵² The purpose of this combined museum (see Figure 16 and Figure 17 and Figure 18), which was administered by Dr David Frankel of Prehistory and Dr Ross Bowden of Sociology, was to provide:

- an official and organised store for research, study and teaching collections
- a display area related to the two departments' teaching and research
- practical experience in museology – curatorial and display design – for students.²⁵³



Figure 16: Papua New Guinean display at the combined Prehistory and Anthropology Museum, 1981.

Photograph by Dr Ross Bowden, from LUMA files.



Figure 17: Unknown maker (East Sepik region, Papua New Guinea), Dancing wagan mask, donated by Dr Joseph Brown, on display in the Prehistory and Anthropology Museum, 1981.

Photograph by Dr Ross Bowden, from LUMA files.

Dr Bowden was instrumental in founding the Anthropology Collection and Museum. He was a tutor (from c. 1976), then lecturer and senior lecturer in cultural anthropology until 1999. After this he was a visiting researcher in the Department of Art History until that department closed.²⁵⁴ Dr Bowden was very successful in attracting donations, some of which came through the Commonwealth Government's Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme.²⁵⁵ He knew Mr James (Jim) Davidson of Ivanhoe (1908–1994), one of Melbourne's main collectors and dealers in Aboriginal and Oceanic art, and his wife, Irene Davidson (d. 2011). Through Dr Bowden, the Davidsons loaned and subsequently donated, over a number of years and with the support of the Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme, some 200 Aboriginal and Oceanic artworks (including some significant Aboriginal bark paintings) and material culture items to support teaching and museum programs. These were initially housed in the Department of Prehistory and it is said that some may have gone missing at the time.²⁵⁶

Initially, the Departments of Prehistory (later called Archaeology from 1985)²⁵⁷ and Anthropology organised displays separately. For instance, Mr Ron Vanderwal, then a tutor in archaeology (and later head of anthropology at Museum Victoria), installed an exhibition based on his archaeological work in the PNG village of Kinomere, presenting basketry, masks and other items he had collected there (Figure 18).²⁵⁸ Other displays included casts of skulls illustrating the development of modern man, stone tools lent by Museum Victoria or collected by staff on fieldwork, and mock-ups explaining the methods of archaeologists working on 'digs'.²⁵⁹

But tensions arose between the Departments of Anthropology and Archaeology, and the latter withdrew from the museum, leading to its renaming as the 'Anthropology Museum'. Management responsibility passed to the School of Social Sciences, with Dr Bowden serving as curator. Part of the area was used as a teaching centre for anthropology, one section for cultural displays from Papua New Guinea, while the area formerly used by the Department of Archaeology now displayed bark paintings and artefacts from Arnhem Land.²⁶⁰

Artefacts were also used for teaching art history, as well as by other departments, and for communicating to the public.²⁶¹ Dr Bowden used the museum for various anthropology subjects. He curated a series of exhibitions of mostly bark paintings and other Aboriginal material, the largest of which was held in 1986, to coincide with Open Day (Figure 19), and published a catalogue.²⁶² For Open Day 1987 he organised a performance by the Indjibundji Tribal Aboriginal Cultural Dance School in the forecourt of the museum.²⁶³



Figure 18: Kinomere display in the Anthropology Museum, Open Day 1986.

Photograph by Dr Ross Bowden, from LUMA files.



Figure 19: Greek-community dancers outside the Anthropology Museum, Open Day 1986.

Photograph from LUMA files.

Although the university was aiming to build up a well-rounded *teaching* collection, rather than a large collection,²⁶⁴ some significant donations (as well as those from the Davidsons) came in with support from the Australian Government's Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme,²⁶⁵ such as a small group of PNG objects donated in 1980 by Mr Carl T. Shipman,²⁶⁶ which included a fine Kwoma pottery *yena* ceremony figure. In the early 1980s, one of the anthropologists on staff, Dr Paul Sillitoe (now a professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Durham in England), collected representative items from the Wola community (probably during Dr Sillitoe's anthropological fieldwork, and possibly with fees paid to the craftsmen)²⁶⁷ in highlands PNG where he had worked for many years, and these came into the collection and were exhibited.²⁶⁸ Dr Joseph Brown donated, among other items, a spectacular East Sepik roof gable mask,²⁶⁹ and the 71 objects donated in 1992 by The Right Reverend Bishop John Bayton included a ceremonial headdress and dance club from Mer Island in the Torres Strait.²⁷⁰ Some 39 items from Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Africa, collected by Colonel Walter Howard Tunbridge, were donated in 1992 and 1993 by his daughters, Misses Jill and Barbara Tunbridge.²⁷¹ Approximately 150 artefacts from Papua New Guinea collected by Mr John Keith McCarthy CBE were donated by Mrs Jean McCarthy in 1997.

In the 1990s the university held on loan the Christensen Fund Collection of Pre-Columbian Artefacts, which was exhibited in 1992 and a catalogue was published.²⁷² The relationship between the Fund and La Trobe lasted for some years, and appears to have led to the donation of a collection of African artefacts, including Coptic crosses,²⁷³ although the

whereabouts of these crosses is presently unconfirmed. The four works with Christensen Fund provenance recorded in the collection today are African: a carved-stone 'Shona' figure of a young girl by Bernard Matemera (Zimbabwean, 1946–2006), two paintings incorporating beadwork by Jimoh Buraimoh (Nigerian, b. 1943), and one by Rufus Ogundele (Nigerian, 1946–1996).

In about 1991 Dr Bowden suggested that the 'University' take over management of the Anthropology Museum and incorporate the Ethnographic Collection into the La Trobe University Art Collection, which had lost its display space in the foyer of the David Myers Building. So Ms Noble and her staff moved into the museum offices in Glenn College²⁷⁴ and the facility became the La Trobe University Art Museum, with management divested from the School of Social Sciences.²⁷⁵ The museum saw itself as having 'a dual role and responsibilities', and would sometimes display contemporary non-Aboriginal works in combination with Aboriginal ones, for example an exhibit for Open Day 1995 combining Leonard French's series of paintings *The legend of Sinbad the sailor* with Aboriginal bark paintings, under the title *Different Mythologies*.²⁷⁶ Dr Bowden retained an interest in the museum and organised an exhibition of Sepik River shields there in 2006, *The Art of War*, accompanied by a short catalogue.²⁷⁷

Although at first the space was refurbished to accommodate both types of display – ethnography and art – over time the Art Collection came to predominate, and much of the Ethnographic Collection was placed in a small storeroom created in a former men's shower on the ground floor of Glenn College. This facility was totally inadequate for a collections store;²⁷⁸ in about 2010–11 it was damaged by flood and all remaining collection items were removed.²⁷⁹



There is also a small display of selected Ethnographic Collection items in a hallway on Level 4 of the Social Sciences Building (Figure 22). This was organised through collaboration between LUMA and the Anthropology Department, who have also been working together to prepare an ARC grant application to fund research on the Ethnographic Collection, with the support of CAVAL.²⁸⁰ The collection is not being actively added to at present.



Figure 20: Ethnographic Collection items, stored.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.



Figure 21: Spears and other weapons from the Ethnographic Collection, stored.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.





Figure 22: Works from the Ethnographic Collection, on display on Level 4 of the Social Sciences Building, Bundoora campus.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

5.5 The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection: history

The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection was assembled by Professor (later Emeritus) Stewart E. Fraser (1929–2001), who in 1976 was a founder of the university's School of Education,²⁸¹ holding the chair of education in the Centre for Comparative and International Studies in Education.²⁸² He was born and spent much of his childhood in Tianjin, and was educated at the Universities of Melbourne, Oxford, Stanford, Colorado and London.²⁸³ Fraser acquired the posters during visits to China in the 1970s, at a time when poster art in China was flourishing, embracing a wider range of styles and subject matter than ever before. Almost the entire output of Chinese posters at the time was controlled by the government of the People's Republic; some posters were intended for internal consumption, while others (often with multilingual captions) were for international distribution. Fraser noted that 'The distribution of Chinese poster art throughout the world has contributed to the popularization both of the medium and the message of revolutionary action to an extent which may have even surprised the Chinese themselves'.²⁸⁴

La Trobe University in its early decades took pride in its strong relationship with the People's Republic of China. In 1989 the vice-chancellor recalled:

We were one of the first Australian universities to accept official exchange students under the Australian–Chinese educational program, and our academic and

administrative staff took great pains to make their stay profitable and interesting. Since then we have had a large number of staff and students from China and have sent staff and students there in modest numbers. The University has exchange agreements or relations with about a dozen Chinese universities and institutes. In connection with these agreements, I have now been to China four times and am always proud to hear La Trobe mentioned as the best-known Australian University. It is exciting that in 1989 we shall start teaching Chinese as a language. I believe all this to be a far-sighted policy on behalf of the University.²⁸⁵

In 1987 Chisholm College entered into an artist exchange agreement with the Painting Academy of Yunnan Province, which led to the first delegation of Chinese artists to Australia since the Chinese Revolution, and a return visit by Chisholm's artist-in-residence in 1989.²⁸⁶ Works from Chinese artists-in-residence such as Zhong Xiang Li, Jian Zhong Zhang and Gang Feng have been acquired into the collection.

La Trobe continues to promote its links with China. It has an active Centre for China Studies; opened a Confucius Institute in 2011; runs exchange programs with Peking University, Beijing Foreign Studies University, and Chongqing University; and maintains various research and teaching links, including the China Health Program and the Australia–China High-Level Talks Project. La Trobe offers a three-year BA with a major in Asian Studies, and teaches Mandarin.²⁸⁷

At present the Stewart E. Fraser Collection is not being actively added to; it remains the collection of one academic collecting at a particular time in China's history.

5.6 The F.M. Courtis Collection: history

The F.M. Courtis Collection originated in the 1950s in the Bendigo Teachers' College.²⁸⁸ It was founded with two purposes in mind: to use as a teaching aid for courses, and as a 'complement' to student life.²⁸⁹ This history of the collection is inextricably linked to the history of the institution since the second half of the 20th century.

The Bendigo Teachers' College had opened in 1926 to become, alongside Ballarat, Australia's first non-metropolitan teachers' college. The only other teachers' college in Victoria at this time was Melbourne Teachers' College (subsequently subsumed by the University of Melbourne).²⁹⁰ The opening up of soldier-settlement farms after World War I brought new demand for more teachers in rural areas.²⁹¹

Both the Bendigo and Ballarat colleges closed during the Great Depression, but re-opened in 1945 and 1946 respectively, at which time there were still only seven state teachers' colleges across all of Australia. The post-war period brought an urgent demand for teachers across the nation. Trainees who had interrupted their studies to join the armed services needed to

complete their courses, teachers who had left the profession needed to be replaced, and the baby-boom and large-scale immigration changed the nation's demographics.²⁹²

Many of the rural trainee teachers (who were predominantly women) came from modest backgrounds; they were often the children of farmers, small shopkeepers, tradesmen, unskilled or semi-skilled workers or clerical staff. Many would have been the first in their families to study at the tertiary level.²⁹³ The colleges had to improve these candidates' own secondary education, as well as training them in how to teach. Most students lived in hostels on campus and the colleges attempted to inculcate certain values.²⁹⁴

Although Victoria had enjoyed a strong network of regional art galleries since the 19th century, trainee teachers from rural areas had presumably enjoyed less exposure to fine art (as well as music, theatre and other cultural pursuits) than did their counterparts in Melbourne. Colleges attempted to compensate; for instance in 1945 the Bendigo Teachers' College, then located in very cramped and substandard premises, acquired a wireless, a gramophone, a piano, a table for the library, and fourteen prints; it also borrowed two pictures from the Bendigo Art Gallery (founded in 1887).²⁹⁵

While the Bendigo Teachers' College occupied temporary premises at Camp Hill, in the city centre, the Bendigo Art Gallery continued to lend art works to 'brighten up their temporary location and to provide an atmosphere of cultural enrichment for all'.²⁹⁶ It was also easy for students to visit the gallery, which was a short walk away. Mr Fred M. Courtis, lecturer and later head of art education at Bendigo Teachers' College, acquired the first works of what would become the F.M. Courtis Collection in 1955, while the college was still at Camp Hill, but a new campus was being planned at Pleasant Vale (Flora Hill),²⁹⁷ to which it moved in 1960.²⁹⁸ This location was further from the centre of town and visits to the Bendigo Art Gallery would not be so easy.

Courtis began the collection so that students and staff would have daily contact with original artworks, and to help foster a sense of national identity.²⁹⁹ During the planning of the new premises, he and the college principal, Len Pryor, met with the architects: 'I was well aware of course of the large areas of bare walls that we would be confronted with and a long range thought was to put on these walls art works that would reflect a cultured atmosphere.'³⁰⁰ Some of the staff appointed at Bendigo after the war (including Courtis) had studied or worked at Melbourne Teachers' College, where they had become familiar with the A.J. Law Collection of Australian art – mostly landscape paintings (see Appendix I below).³⁰¹ F.M. Courtis recalled that 'The idea [of setting up an art collection at Bendigo Teachers College] was probably influenced a small amount by my earlier contact with the A.J. Law Collection at the Melbourne Teachers' College'.³⁰²

Under Courtis's guidance staff began raising money from social events and by 1958 had enough to start buying art. Courtis wanted to acquire works of artists who 'had a big future'.³⁰³ Courtis also wanted works that were good examples of technique in their respective media, as well as art with a close link to Bendigo, either through the artist or the subject matter.³⁰⁴ His first two acquisitions were an Arthur Boyd oil painting, *The Grampians* (Figure 23), and a Len Annois watercolour, *Templestowe landscape*.³⁰⁵ New acquisitions were always either brought to an assembly or displayed somewhere prominently for the college community to see.³⁰⁶ In the early years, works were hung in the administration area, because it was regularly frequented by students, but the ultimate aim was to use the collection as a teaching resource and to spread the works throughout the college.³⁰⁷



Figure 23: Arthur Boyd, *The Grampians* (1950). F.M. Courtis Collection.

Hanging in hallway of Education Building, Bendigo campus.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

In the 1960s further acquisition funds were raised by taking a percentage from gross sales of books and other supplies from local newsagents, which were processed by staff of the Art Education Department. By the 1970s the college administration established a dedicated annual budget line (initially \$1000) for acquisitions. This could accumulate over several years, thus enabling more significant purchases. Some works were donated or sold to the college at very low prices, and on occasion students contributed directly, such as for the major Leonard French mural *The legend*. There was a general sense of goodwill towards the college and people were generous, including local families such as Bendigo residents Leo Cohn and family, who gave three lithographs, and the Every family, who funded the purchase of the

William Frater painting *Bendigo*.³⁰⁸ One major benefactor and informal advisor (as with the La Trobe University Art Collection) was dealer Joseph Brown.³⁰⁹

Other generous benefactors include Kevin Carney, director of a local art gallery who previously had been an art teacher and was on the board of the Bendigo Art Gallery. He would sell works to the college at substantially discounted prices.³¹⁰ Staff members and colleagues at other teaching institutions would provide works for free or at cost, including Victor Greenhalgh's bronze sculpture *Mother and child*; Greenhalgh was head of RMIT's art school when Bryan Clemson (the second curator of the F.M. Curtis Collection) and his wife, Mary, studied there. He sold this sculpture to Bendigo Teachers' College at foundry cost, for which funds were provided by the State Bank, whose representative would visit the college every payday to dispense the students' State Government studentships.³¹¹

David Newbury (1925–2003), who donated three of his own works, had been assistant to Fred Curtis when the latter was head of art education at Bendigo and had shared an office with Clemson at Melbourne Teachers' College in the late 1950s. John Howley sold his *Nude* at a heavy discount as he and Clemson had studied together at the National Gallery School.³¹² Peter Perry, who served as director of Castlemaine Art Gallery from 1975 to 2014, was an alumnus of Bendigo Teachers' College and donated a work by a F.M. Curtis's old friend Colin Hunt, head of art at the Bendigo School of Mines.³¹³ The collection holds three works by Roger Kemp, who was born in Bendigo (see for example Figure 44).

In the 1970s Bendigo Teachers' College began educating teachers to work in Aboriginal communities, particularly in the Northern Territory, and were given an introduction to traditional Aboriginal culture and undertook a practicum in an Aboriginal community or school. A few Aboriginal teaching students also trained at Bendigo. The college began acquiring Indigenous works, often when staff travelled north to supervise students. These include bark paintings by Fred Didjbarakka Naroldol Dirdi (Kunwinkju) (b. 1920/24), Robin Nganjmirra (1951–1991), Nowaloinba (a former student at Bendigo, who presented the painting as a farewell gift to the college), Burrumpali, and Dick Ngulayngulay. There is a didjeridu by Willie Munumbur, and acrylics on canvas by Billy Nolan Tjapangati, Annette Davis, Sheila Napaljarri Brown and Phillipa Murray.³¹⁴ Between about 1979 and 2006 a collection of Aboriginal material culture belonging to the Yanyuwa people was held for safekeeping alongside the F.M. Curtis Collection. It was repatriated to its community in Borroloola on the Gulf of Carpentaria in about 2007.³¹⁵

In 1973 Bendigo Teachers' College became the State College of Victoria – Bendigo, which in 1976 amalgamated with the Bendigo Institute of Technology (originally the Bendigo School of Mines and Industries, then from 1966 the Bendigo Technical College) to become Bendigo College of Advanced Education.³¹⁶

Clemson in the 1970s attempted to ensure that half of one per cent of the construction costs of any new building would be set aside for the purchase of significant artwork. Although he was not successful, the new Education Building on the Edwards Road campus was designed with the display of the art collection in mind. The collection was transferred there and Clemson later recalled that 'the Education Building came alive. Staff and students were very proud of what they had'.³¹⁷ Following the merger with Bendigo Institute of Technology, Clemson was concerned to ensure that the collection be put on a sound administrative footing and that it remain intact at the School of Education. He succeeded, with the exception of a small number of works being placed in executive areas.³¹⁸ It was also at Clemson's suggestion that the collection was named in honour of F.M. Curtis 'as a tribute to a visionary in education who raised a collection from nothing to what it was then'.³¹⁹

Between about 1976 and 1990, Lyndon Langan expanded the types of works acquired, including three-dimensional works and more prints. He continued to espouse the two original purposes of the collection: to expose students studying art to original works in a broad range of media, techniques and styles, and also to surround those young people training as general primary and secondary teachers with 'things of a fine art and cultural nature'. He noted that even in the 1970s many of the rural students came from backgrounds with limited exposure to art. He encouraged student teachers to bring groups of children to the collection as a gallery trail as part of their practical training.³²⁰ Staff and student fundraising supported acquisitions at this time, along with college funds and generous donations from private benefactors.³²¹

In 1980 the F.M. Curtis Collection received some works from the Victorian Institute of Colleges' Collection: a series of six embroidered medallions in gold thread, and an oil painting, *Summer landscape*, by Neil Douglas.³²² The Victorian Institute of Colleges, established in 1965 to provide systematic planning and accreditation in order to allow technical colleges to offer degrees,³²³ was disbanded in the 1980s and its art collection deaccessioned.³²⁴

In 1986, to celebrate the first ten years of the Bendigo College of Advanced Education, a major exhibition of the F.M. Curtis Collection was held at the Bendigo Art Gallery,³²⁵ and a set of serigraphs, *The journey*, by Leonard French (who lived and worked in nearby Heathcote), was acquired at a cost of some \$15,000.³²⁶ In the catalogue for this exhibition the curator, Bryan Clemson, set out the aims of the collection:

- Acquire and display original works of art of excellence by Australian artists.
- Foster a national identity through the appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the arts.
- Foster cultural literacy in our society.

- Encourage teaching and learning strategies suitable for inducting children into Australian cultural studies.
- Promote pride in our heritage and environment.
- Contribute to the cataloguing, display and conservation of Australian Art.³²⁷

The collection was traditionally administered by the head of art education at Bendigo. So when Fred Curtis was promoted to deputy vice-principal in about 1964, he handed the curator role to his successor, Bryan Clemson. When Clemson was promoted to controller of primary teaching in 1976, Lyndon Langan became the third curator of the collection. In around 1990 the fourth curator, John Higgs, took over.³²⁸ When Higgs retired in 2002,³²⁹ responsibility for the collection passed to a committee chaired by the head of art education, Dr Barry Brockley, with committee member Sylvia Reeves taking on the role of curator, logistics and conservation, while Penelope Collet (senior lecturer in art education) served as curator, acquisitions.³³⁰

After the Bendigo College of Advanced Education became part of La Trobe University in 1991, Bryan Clemson attempted to obtain approval for the F.M. Curtis Collection to receive tax-deductible gifts of artworks as a public art gallery. Unfortunately, the Federal Government declined on the basis that the gallery space needed at least a part-time curator, so Bendigo missed out on the substantial benefits that the La Trobe University Art Collection received from this scheme over the decades.³³¹

A 2007 management plan stated that the F.M. Curtis Collection's annual financial allocation had been removed from the Bendigo campus budget to La Trobe University Central Administration and that management was apparently now part of the role of the director of LUMA at Bundoora, although the wording is tentative.³³² While the principles set out in the management plan are laudable, it appears that they were written at a time of lack of resources to implement them. Although LUMA staff have assisted with the management of the F.M. Curtis Collection, resources were always limited. For instance, no acquisitions have been made for nearly a decade. Penelope Collet and Sylvia Reeves both retired in 2012, after which time Paul Northam (Managing Curator of the VAC) curated the collection until the recent restructure brought it under the remit of the LAI.³³³ Two members of staff at Bendigo – David Beagley (lecturer in children's literature and literacy, and co-ordinator of honours study program in the School of Education) and Simon O'Mallon (lecturer in design & technology; visual & performing arts education, in the School of Education) – have long taken on some responsibilities. These two lecturers are the most active users of the collection for teaching, but any work they undertake in caring for the collection is not formally recognised as part of their role. They advise that there have been offers of donations to the collection, but that because they are not aware of any agreed process in place for considering and

accepting acquisitions, these have not been followed up. The acquisitions policy needs review, and storage is also a problem.³³⁴

In 2008, to celebrate the collection's 50th anniversary, a touring exhibition, *Landmarks and Milestones: Fifty Years of the F.M. Curtis Collection*, was held in partnership with the Bendigo Art Gallery. Its focus on landscape works reflected the main emphasis of the collection.³³⁵ In 2012 an exhibition *Framed: Highlights from the FM Curtis Collection* was staged by LUMA,³³⁶ and in 2013 La Trobe continued its tradition of inviting esteemed alumni to select works for display, by inviting 'its most notable Bendigo alumni' to select their favourite artwork from the F.M. Curtis Collection for *Exhibit B(endigo): Works from the F.M. Curtis Collection*, held at the VAC. Participants included some of Bendigo's most prominent community and business leaders, including the 2013 Bendigo Citizen of the Year, Linda Beilharz; Member for Bendigo East, Jacinta Allan; director of Bendigo Art Gallery, Karen Quinlan; Bendigo Bank senior executive Scott Elkington; and local historian Dennis O'Hoy.³³⁷

In early 2015, an exhibition of selected works from the collection was held at the Phyllis Palmer Gallery on La Trobe's Bendigo campus, curated by Sylvia Reeves.³³⁸ In November 2015, VAC casual staff member Noel Hourigan conducted an audit of the collection and helped to relocate artworks during building renovations, after which many were re-hung. In May 2016, Dr Karen Annett-Thomas, then a casual staff member at the VAC, was hired to attend to urgent labelling and location matters, and to undertake a review of the entire collection and its documentation.³³⁹ Dr Annett-Thomas's report makes a series of recommendations to improve management of the collection; these are set out in Appendix VI and endorsed in Section 9 below.

At the time of writing (February 2017), selected works from the F.M. Curtis Collection are again on display in the Phyllis Palmer Gallery.³⁴⁰

6 Assessing significance

6.1 What is significance?

'Significance' refers to the values and meanings that items and collections have for people and communities.³⁴¹

6.2 Significance criteria

Significance 2.0 involves four **primary** criteria:

- historical significance
- artistic or aesthetic significance
- scientific or research potential (hereafter called research and teaching potential)³⁴²
- social or spiritual significance (hereafter called community significance)³⁴³

Four **comparative** criteria can help us evaluate the degree of significance. They are modifiers of the main criteria:

- provenance
- rarity or representativeness
- condition or completeness
- interpretive capacity.

Assessing significance involves considering all of these criteria. However, they might not all apply to a particular object or collection. An item or collection to which only one of the primary criteria applies may still be highly significant.

6.3 Who decides what is significant?

The significance of an object or collection can be contested by different people and can change over time:

[W]ho determines what collections mean? Is it the expert curator who identifies and catalogues the item, or the scientist who names and describes a specimen? Or is it the people once associated with the item in its original context? Sometimes the meaning of a collection is highly contested [...] With more democratic access to collections, the collecting institution and its staff are no longer the sole authority on meaning [...] many people may have an interest in a collection and contribute to an understanding of its importance [...] Significance assessment recognises the importance of people, places and context in understanding collections.³⁴⁴

For this reason it is important to have an agreed set of criteria to logically analyse, explore and articulate the meanings and values of items and collections.³⁴⁵ There may be different views on the relative weights of the different aspects of significance, or of the relative significance of different objects or collections, but by using this agreed methodology we can have a useful discussion based on shared definitions, and make decisions that are based on a rationale that is clearly enunciated, even if aspects of it are not shared by everybody.

6.4 Why assess significance?

Assessing the significance of collections helps the organisations responsible for their care to:

- involve the community with the collection
- advocate for the collection
- make good collection management decisions.³⁴⁶

It is the duty of organisations charged with caring for collections to maintain or even increase the significance of those collections, whether as individual objects or as a whole. Decisions on the way the collection is managed and used should not lead to any diminishment of its significance. For instance, displaying a drawing on paper in conditions of high light for extended periods of time will lead to fading. The condition of the work will worsen and this will usually diminish its aesthetic significance. On the other hand, researching and documenting an item thoroughly may reveal information about its provenance that increases its historical significance. Removing an object from its original context (for instance, taking a stained-glass window out of the rural church for which it was commissioned and displaying it in an art gallery in the capital city) may sever the connection with its original place and community and thus diminish its community significance, even though its artistic/aesthetic significance remains unchanged.

Sometimes such management decisions are not straightforward. An object in its original context may be suffering damage (for instance, a public sculpture has been deliberately vandalised, or a painting hanging in a busy corridor is getting accidentally scuffed by passers-by). Deciding how best to preserve the significance of the artwork involves balancing up the various significance criteria. Is maintaining its community significance (through the connection with its original location and community) more important than preserving its aesthetic significance by removing any possible risk of vandalism, fading or scuffing, by placing it in a museum store, where it is seen by nobody?

In this report, Section 9: Recommendations takes such matters into consideration, to assist La Trobe University in making decisions on managing the collections in a way that will also preserve and communicate their significance.

6.5 What is the assessment process?

Significance assessment involves five main steps:

- analysing the collection (in this case, looking at examples of items from the collections, whether on display or in store, and associated documentation)
- researching its history, provenance and context (looking at database records and catalogue sheets and cards, published books and other literature; discussion with university staff, curators, researchers and other individuals with an interest in the collections)
- comparison with similar collections (discussion of other university collections, particularly in Victoria)
- understanding its values by reference to the criteria
- summarising its meanings and values in a statement of significance.

7 Significance assessment of La Trobe collections

Each of La Trobe's collections is assessed here in turn, using the four primary criteria, and secondary criteria where useful.

7.1 The La Trobe University Art Collection: significance

7.1.1 *La Trobe University Art Collection: historical significance*

One university staff member consulted for this report stated that the art collection is 'so intrinsic to the history and philosophy of the university, it is part of the DNA of the university, and says a lot about its ambitions and aims and master plan'. The way the collection reflects this history is explained in Section 5 above. The close association between artworks and the groups and individuals who played important roles in the founding of La Trobe, and the role played by artworks in forming the ambience desired by the founders, mean that the collection as a whole is of historical significance.

Supporting this is the provenance of individual works: that is, the history of their creation and chain of ownership. For most works in the Art Collection this can be reliably demonstrated and documented. Much of the collection has very good, indeed excellent, provenance. Numerous works were commissioned directly by the university; purchased on the primary art market (that is, directly from the artist or their official representative); donated by artists' dealers such as La Trobe philosophy alumnus Charles Nodrum (48 works), the late Dr Joseph Brown AO, OBE (101 works) and William Nuttall of Niagara Galleries (80 works, some donated jointly with his wife, Ms Annette Reeves, who also donated 16 works in her own right); or donated or bequeathed by artists or their families (for example, the 31 paintings by Murray Griffin, donated by the artist's family in 2005)³⁴⁷ or acquired as part of artist-in-residence arrangements. A group of works by Yosl Bergner was donated by Bergner's dealer, Shaike 'I Am Art' Snir. The Noel Counihan charcoal drawing *Woman at the window, Opoul*, was donated by the artist's widow, Mrs Pat Counihan. The Fred Williams painting *Scrub, Lysterfield* (1967) was donated by the Williams family. Five works by Lionel Lindsay were donated by his brother, Sir Daryl Lindsay, a former director of the National Gallery of Victoria. There are far too many other examples to name.

Further, many works were acquired from dealers who were not the artist's official dealer but who knew the artist well over a number of years, collected their work in a personal capacity, sold their works on the secondary market or included them in group shows, for example Joseph Brown and Charles Nodrum.³⁴⁸ Such works also have strong provenance.

Many works have been donated under the Commonwealth Government's Cultural Gifts Program (and its predecessor, the Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme). Under the Government's stringent conditions for approving the tax deductibility of such gifts, every

work must be well documented, and valued by at least two government-approved valuers. This helps to ensure (although cannot guarantee) that only works of dependable provenance are accepted.

Another group of works with a strong historical significance are portraits of chancellors, vice-chancellors, and occasionally other office holders, including official portraits commissioned by the university. They are historically significant due to their connection with important figures in the history of La Trobe University. The university commissions a portrait of each chancellor and vice-chancellor at the time of their retirement from the role, and most of these are hung in the Chancellery in the David Myers Building. The process of selecting the artist and commissioning the work involves the subject and the staff of LUMA, and most have been done by well-known artists whose specialities of practice include formal portraiture. This series includes:

Chancellors

- Archibald Glenn (1968) painted by Alan Martin (donated by the artist in 1982)
- medallion portrait of Archibald Glenn by Paul John Beadle (1979)
- Reginald Smithers (1981) by Brian Dunlop (together with an artist's preliminary drawing)
- Richard McGarvie (n.d.) by Wes Walters (together with an artist's pencil study)
- Nancy Millis by Brian Dunlop (1997)
- Sylvia Walton by Juan Ford (2011)

Vice-chancellors

- David Myers by Sam Fullbrook (1975)
- bronze medallion of David Myers (1976) by Michael Meszaros
- John Scott (1987) by Clifton Pugh
- John Scott (n.d.) by Janet Duff Borchardt
- Michael Osborne (1998) by Wes Walters
- Michael Osborne (1997) by Peter Zageris
- Paul Johnson by Vincent Fantauzzo (2012)

Other office holders

- bronze medallion of University Registrar T.S. Taylor (1981) by Michael Meszaros
- painting of inaugural University Librarian D.H. Borchardt (1981), by his wife, Janet Duff Borchardt, purchased by Library staff on the occasion of the retirement of the Chief Librarian

- *Portrait of Professor Tomory of Velazaquez* (1981) painted by Robert Nelson (depicts Peter Tomory, foundation professor of Art History)
- two watercolour portraits by Louis Kahan commissioned by the Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences, which was absorbed into La Trobe in 1988:³⁴⁹ Professor R.H. Day (1988) and Premier R.J. Hamer (1980).

The La Trobe University Art Collection is also **representative** of university art collections founded in the mid-20th century. Most of these focus on Australian contemporary art, often with a particular emphasis on the art of their locality. Certain Australian artists feature in many university collections, particularly through large commissions for prominent locations. The most notable is Leonard French OBE (1928–2017), whose *Four seasons*, untitled Glass mandala, and *Legend of Sinbad the sailor* are among the most important and best-loved works in the La Trobe University Art Collection. French has been described as one of Australia’s ‘most distinguished, original and unusual artists,³⁵⁰ and prominent commissions by him are considered some of the ‘treasures’ on the campus of Australian National University (the result of a relationship between ANU and the artist that spanned more than 30 years),³⁵¹ while French’s huge ‘temporary’ mural *The symmetry of sport* (1956) in the University of Melbourne’s Beaurepaire Centre³⁵² has been preserved and is still one of the visual highlights of the campus. The magnificent stained-glass rose window *Alpha and Omega* (1969–70) dominates Monash University’s Robert Blackwood Hall, itself influenced by French’s own series of paintings, *The seven days of creation*, completed for ANU in 1962–65.³⁵³ RMIT University also holds works by French.³⁵⁴



Figure 24: Leonard French working in his studio on *The four seasons*, in about 1975.
 Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library.

Numerous other 20th-century artists are represented in many Australian university collections (as well as La Trobe's); just a sample of names would include Len Annois, Peter Booth, Clifton Pugh, Charles Blackman, Bill Henson, Robert Jacks, Roger Kemp, Robert Klippel, Les Kossatz, John Perceval, Paul Partos, Fred Williams, Arthur Boyd and George Johnson. A former artistic director of LUMA stated that the La Trobe University Art Collection 'was never meant to be a comprehensive survey of Australian art, and it does have some weaker parts, but it broadly documents the period since 1967 (the founding of La Trobe).³⁵⁵ Among mid-century universities, the active collecting of contemporary Aboriginal art is now a mainstay, although it was rarely among their earliest priorities. In this sense, too, La Trobe is representative.

Lucy Ellem (a foundation member of the La Trobe University Art History Department, holding positions of lecturer then senior lecturer between 1973 and 2003, and now an Honorary Research Associate, Department of Archaeology and History, La Trobe University) expressed the view that the historical significance of the collection is 'very high', as it is:

an important post-war and contemporary collection, not only for the range and quality of works held but also as an indicator of changing cultural interests and taste. The collection itself is a cultural 'artefact'. The history of its formation and its continuing development reflects changing understandings of the nature of art, its role in and relevance to society.³⁵⁶

Outdoor sculpture collections or sculpture walks are a common feature of Australian universities. Older universities have accrued sculptures incrementally over the years. Although they have sometimes deliberately commissioned a work to mark a particular occasion or event, or have included a relief or mural in the design of a new building, they have more often acquired sculptures in an ad hoc or serendipitous fashion, or when funds have become available. The result can often be an eclectic, even disparate collection.³⁵⁷

But at La Trobe, public art was an integral part of the campus planning from the institution's earliest years. Allen David's 11-metre-wide glass screen, commissioned in 1966 on behalf of the university by its master planner, Dr Roy Simpson AO (d. 1997), for the main entrance to the University Library, is 'highly regarded as a significant example of a site-specific, abstract sculptural commission from the mid-1960s. This work is also significant for its rarity, being this artist's only large-scale glass sculpture in Australia.³⁵⁸ It is supported by the largest collection anywhere of works by Allen David.³⁵⁹ Most of these works on paper were donated by the artist, although some came from other donors, and provide deep context to this major feature of the campus.

One prominently located work, the bronze statue *Sofia* (1970) by Herman Hohaus, located in the Peribolos lawn at the formal entrance to the campus, was on loan to the university for

many years before being purchased in 1986 with funds donated by Roy Simpson through the Friends of La Trobe University. Simpson was the first president of the Friends group and continued to support the collection by donating and bequeathing works. His widow, Mrs Donne Simpson, continued to make donations of money and artworks.

The set of four stained-glass window panels by Leonard French, *The four seasons* (1975), was purchased in 1978 from the artist, via dealer Joseph Brown.³⁶⁰ The acquisition was funded by the appeal launched in 1976 and chaired by chancellor Sir Archibald Glenn to mark the retirement of foundation vice-chancellor, David Myers.³⁶¹ University representatives viewed the work in progress at French's studio. The choice of location (undercroft of the main administration building, later named the David Myers building) was the choice of the artist, although the hope was that the panels would eventually adorn a 'great hall' on the campus – a structure that never eventuated. It was also hoped that French's *Glass mandala* could go into the proposed great hall, as the artist was never happy with its location in the David Myers building, which required artificial rather than the natural lighting for which it was designed.³⁶²

The cost of constructing the steel frames to hold the *Four seasons* panels was met by Joseph Brown.³⁶³ Roy Simpson said that this fine work satisfied one of his aims for the Bundoora campus, of creating a 'harmonious interdependence of architecture, artworks and environment'.³⁶⁴ The location was the main entrance to the campus, where buses pulled up and unloaded passengers, so the artwork was very prominent and familiar to staff, students and visitors.

Inge King's work features prominently at other university campuses, including ANU,³⁶⁵ Melbourne and Monash.³⁶⁶ But La Trobe demonstrated considerable vision in commissioning a major work from King in 1976 (selected from designs submitted by three invited artists);³⁶⁷ she later said that *Dialogue of circles* was one of her first breaks to do a large-scale work.³⁶⁸ This commission, and a subsequent exhibition at LUMA of drawings by her husband Graham King, led to Inge donating two works, and a strong relationship was forged between the artists and La Trobe. Similarly, *Dante's Divine Comedy* (1983) was Bart Sanciolo's major commission in public art – he has since received numerous commissions from industry and community groups³⁶⁹ – and the imposing five-part sculpture *Murri totem poles* (2013) was a significant commission for Aboriginal multi-media artist Reko Rennie. 'The university under-sells what it has done for artists'.³⁷⁰

The collection is historically significant in another sense: it is representative of Australian sculptural practice since the 1960s. In 1977 curator John Waterhouse argued that La Trobe could not compete with other universities in purchasing paintings, but that Bundoora's wide open spaces should be seen as an advantage as an ideal venue for outdoor sculptures.³⁷¹ The Sculpture Park as a formal concept was launched in 2007 as part of the university's 40th anniversary celebrations, with the unveiling of *Landmark* (the upside-down statue of

the university's namesake, Lieutenant-Governor Charles La Trobe) by Charles Robb (Figure 34). On that occasion the artist and donor said: 'universities are places for testing new ideas, where we sometimes turn things on their head so we can gain a new perspective'.³⁷²

7.1.2 La Trobe University Art Collection: artistic/aesthetic significance

A large proportion of the works in the La Trobe University Art Collection are by Australian artists of high repute. These are too numerous to list in full but a small selection includes Rick Amor, Howard Arkley, George Bell, Charles Blackman, Bernard Boles, Peter Booth, Boyd family members, Charles Bush, John Coburn, Robert Dickerson, Russell Drysdale, Leonard French, Bill Henson, Roger Kemp, Inge King, Lindsay family members, Banduk Marika, Sidney Nolan, John Olsen, John Perceval, Clifton Pugh, Arnold Shore, Tim Storrier, Rover Thomas, Napier Waller, Brett Whiteley and Fred Williams. Although it is beyond the scope of this assessment to rank the works by these artists in their respective oeuvres, it can be safely said that as a result of the high calibre of the artists represented, the overall artistic significance of the collection is high.



Figure 25: Interior of The Legend Café in Bourke Street, Melbourne, showing Leonard French's mural series *The legend of Sinbad the sailor* (1956).

Museum Victoria, 'Marvellous Melbourne: Postwar City: Café Culture', https://museumvictoria.com.au/marvellous/image_pages/mn007960.asp?URL=http://museum.victoria.com.au/marvellous/postwar/cafe.asp.

Leonard French's series of seven paintings *The legend of Sinbad the sailor*, originally the centrepiece for Melbourne's iconic Legend Café in Bourke Street, whose modernist interior was designed by sculptor Clement Meadmore (Figure 25),³⁷³ has been described as one of

French's most important commissions of the 1950s.³⁷⁴ French is best known for his magnificent ceiling in the Great Hall of the National Gallery of Victoria (1963–68), but on a smaller scale his *Four seasons* and *Glass mandala* at La Trobe are excellent examples of his stained-glass work, albeit less impressive in scale than Monash University's *Alpha and Omega* (1971).

The Sculpture Park Collection is mostly the work of Australian artists, many of whom were leading Australian sculptors of the mid- to late 20th century, such as Inge King, Robert Klippel and Jock Clutterbuck. Aesthetically the pieces are mostly fine examples of each artist's work, and fit in with their surrounds: they 'complement the architecture, lively population, flora and extensive wildlife that form part of the much admired landscape of the Bundoora campus.'³⁷⁵ Allen David's monumental glass screen, particularly in its original setting, was a work of great visual effect:

[...] it allows the variable effects of light, which filters through the rich palette of colours and textures of the different glass-types, to soften the dark monochromatic surface of the surrounding brick pavers [...] The colourful swirling expressionist forms, which represent a rising phoenix, allude to 1960s psychedelic art and themes relating to the metaphysical qualities of the universe and expanding cosmos.³⁷⁶

Leonard French's *Four seasons*:

[...] are constructed of thick French and Belgium [*sic*] glass with each piece of glass hammered into shape, evident from the half circle shatter marks. This technique imbues a textural quality to the windows giving them the impression of being enormous jewels.³⁷⁷

The relationship of the sculpture collection to the landscape is essential to its aesthetic significance. In 1977 the idea of developing the university's outdoor sculpture collection was re-iterated in the revised master plan for the campus.³⁷⁸

Roy Simpson was grateful to the university authorities for respecting his master plan, writing to the vice-chancellor in 1979:

We are especially appreciative of your recognition of the interdependence of the artworks and their environment and the attention that has been paid to bringing about a happy fusion in which the delight of the [Leonard French] panels themselves enriches the whole area in which they are located.³⁷⁹

Former LUMA artistic director Dr Vincent Alessi classes the Fred Williams oil on canvas *Scrub, Lysterfield* (1962) as one of that artist's best works, and highlights the excellence of some of the outdoor sculptures, such as those by leading Australian sculptors Robert Klippel and Inge King.³⁸⁰

It is standard for universities to commission portraits of senior office holders such as chancellors and vice-chancellors, usually when they retire. La Trobe's formal portraits are, by and large, more interesting than the University of Melbourne's relatively conservative choices, although I would argue that Monash University in its early decades took the most risks in these sorts of commissions, and thus has ended up with the most adventurous portraits. Patrick McCaughey nailed this when he wrote that Kevin Connor's portrait of Sir Douglas Menzies (1963), Fred Williams' of Sir Louis Matheson (1976) (both commissioned by Monash) 'transcended completely the marmoreal quality of most university portraits which make their former Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors look like exhumed men'.³⁸¹ La Trobe's commissioned portraits are certainly not marmoreal.

Condition and **integrity** (degree of completeness) are important when determining significance. Works that are damaged, deteriorated or incomplete can lose some of their aesthetic value. The La Trobe Art Institute is commissioning a detailed condition survey of the La Trobe University Art Collection, to be undertaken by the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation (University of Melbourne) following this significance assessment.³⁸² Nevertheless, I did briefly inspect the storage of collections as well as some of the artworks displayed around the campus. ✦ This appears relatively clean but the environmental controls (temperature and relative humidity) are of office standard, not museum standard. Lighting is fluorescent but is only switched on when staff are present. There is appropriate storage furniture (racking, shelving, plan drawers, filing cabinets) but the store is overcrowded with works. Additional space is urgently needed (Figure 26 and Figure 27).



Figure 26: North Store, showing works resting on the ground due to lack of space.
Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.



Figure 27: North Store, showing works resting on the ground due to lack of space.
Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.

The 'South Store' contains larger paintings, stored vertically in racks, the Etta Hirsh Ceramic Collection and some Ethnographic Collection items, all in archival boxes, smaller sculptures such as the maquette for Inge King's *Dialogue of circles*, some historic plaques, as well as archival material on artists including Bernard Boles and Mike Parr. It is less crowded than the larger North Store but has little room for collection growth (see Figure 28) and again, has only office-standard environmental control.



Figure 28: South Store, showing larger paintings.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.

Works that I saw around campus were generally displayed in appropriate locations in hallways, foyers, large stairwells, meeting rooms, and offices, especially in the Chancellery area of the David Myers Building. Campus display always requires compromise (in terms of light exposure, climate control, access and security) in comparison to strict museum conditions. Works on paper should be displayed for limited periods of time and unglazed paintings can often get accidentally knocked by backpacks, etc. Occasionally there is deliberate damage or theft. The proposed condition survey of the collection will no doubt identify some of these risks. One example I saw, of a work that should perhaps be relocated, was an untitled acrylic on canvas by Jabarda Collins, which is hanging in a meeting room, partly concealed by a whiteboard. Not only does the whiteboard hide part of the work but there is a risk that it could be accidentally pushed into the canvas (Figure 29). Also, a heavy rain downpour over the Christmas 2016 break caused numerous minor flooding incidents across the Bundoora campus. Although not suffering direct water damage, some artworks

were left in areas of very high humidity for some days, until they were reported and removed by LUMA staff.³⁸³

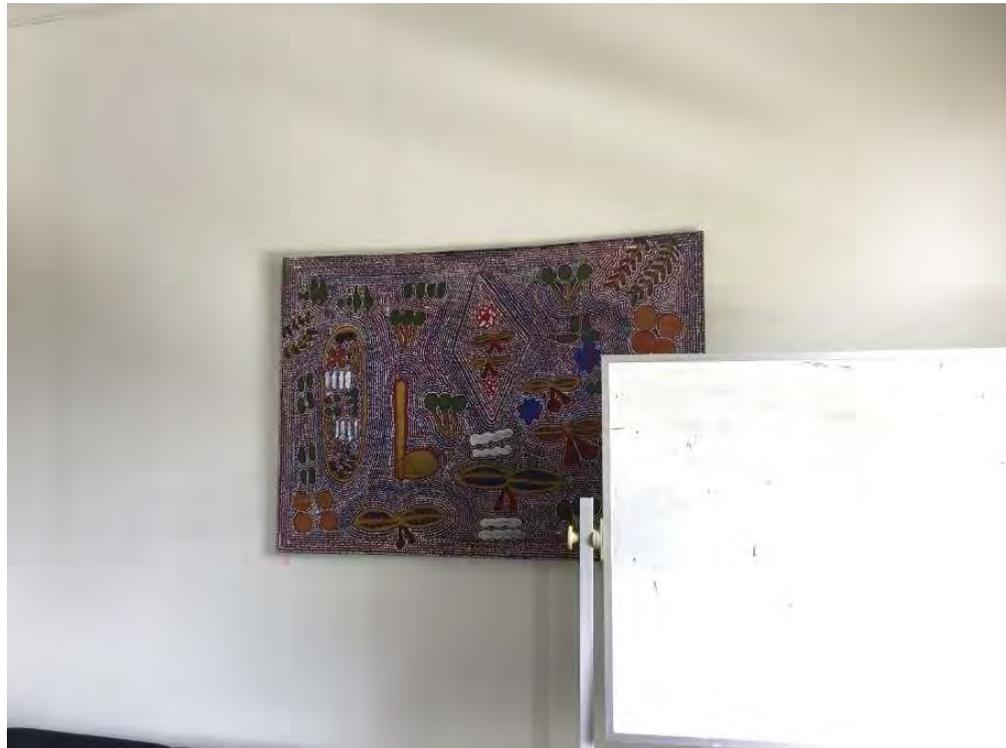


Figure 29: Jabarda 'Nuggett' Collins, *Untitled* (n.d.), hanging in a meeting room on Level 4 of the Social Sciences Building.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

Outdoor artworks can suffer from damage over time. It is important to invest resources in caring for these works to preserve their artistic/aesthetic significance. Two commendable examples of La Trobe taking such steps are the recent conservation and reinstatement (in December 2016, see Figure 30 and Figure 31) of *The four seasons* and the conservation and elevation of Inge King's *Dialogue of circles* in 2015 (see Figure 32). The latter project was undertaken in collaboration with the artist, as changes to the surrounding landscape since its installation in 1976 were obscuring it. The work required conservation (which was carried out by the foundry where the work had been made, Fasham), and reinstatement provided the opportunity to elevate the base so that the sculpture regained some of its original visibility in the landscape of the moat and theatre.

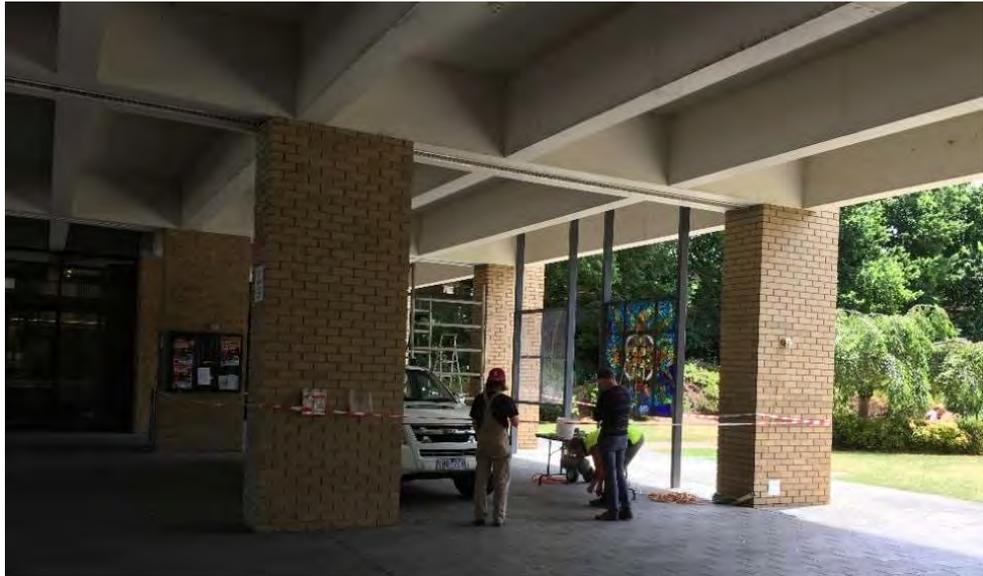


Figure 30: Reinstallation of Leonard French, *The four seasons* (1975) in the undercroft of the David Myers Building following conservation treatment, December 2016.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.



Figure 31: 'Summer', one of the re-installed panels of Leonard French, *The four seasons* (1975), following conservation treatment, December 2016.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.



Figure 32: Reinstalling Inge King's *Dialogue of circles* in 2015, following conservation treatment and raising the level of the supporting plinths.

Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library.

7.1.3 La Trobe University Art Collection: research and teaching potential

The research and teaching potential of any collection depends to a large extent on the amount and quality of information available to researchers about each work, and indeed on the ease with which teachers, students and researchers can even become aware of the existence of a work. At La Trobe, the quality and quantity of detail of information on the works in the collection vary considerably. Nearly all works are registered with a unique alphanumeric identifier and recorded on the collections database.³⁸⁴ For most works, most of the basic fields are completed: accession number; creator's name and dates; title of work; date made; medium; dimensions; physical description; credit line; provenance; location;

previous loans and exhibitions; condition/conservation; monetary value. Most works have been photographed, although not necessarily to publication standard. The catalogue data was originally transcribed from a series of catalogue cards prepared by the early curators of the collection, which are now housed in the paper file for each work. From 2011 the present collection registrar introduced a catalogue record sheet (see example in Figure 33 below). In some cases this record sheet and original card are still the only content of the paper file, while others extend to multiple volumes (for example Inge King's sculpture *Dialogue of circles*). These files are safely housed in numerical order in the main museum store. In the case of more comprehensively documented objects, not all data has yet been transferred to the database. There is wide scope for information from other sources (such as photographic files, finance files, Art Advisory Committee files, correspondence, invoices, historical photographs in the La Trobe University Media Library, exhibition catalogues) to be added to the object files and database, which would greatly enrich the amount of information available on each work.³⁸⁵

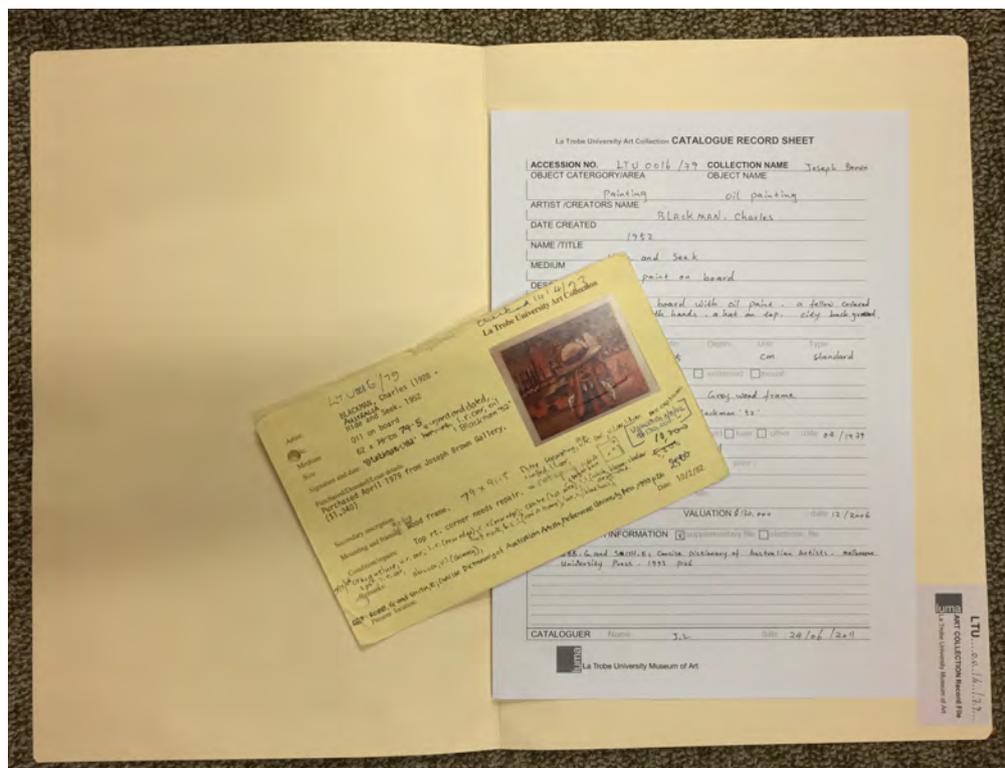


Figure 33: Example of a minimal object file, containing original catalogue card with photograph, plus subsequent record sheet.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.

The first collection database was a simple FileMaker Pro system, introduced in around the 1980s.³⁸⁶ The present system is KE Emu, a reputable Australian-made relational database used in many larger museums in Australia and overseas. It has the capacity for a public web

interface of selected fields of the museum's choosing. At present however there is no database online, only an alphabetical list of artists represented in the collection.³⁸⁷

The La Trobe University Art Collection was *not* founded as a teaching collection, but has been in the past, and could again be in future, a valuable teaching resource. This was particularly the case when Art History was taught at Bundoora, between 1972 and 2012. The eminent critic and art historian Christopher Heathcote was employed as a tutor at La Trobe while completing his PhD there in the early 1990s. In 2004 he recalled:

When I started teaching Australian art, Rhonda [Noble] would send over suitable paintings each week so that students in my seminar could scrutinise the real thing (a luxury I have not had anywhere else since I have taught before or since). I shall always remember the joy of the young student who was to deliver a class paper on John Brack, upon learning that the gallery staff had brought over a study for one of the paintings she intended to discuss. Here it was, a bona fide Brack! Tears in her eyes, the student was quite overwhelmed.³⁸⁸

Others teaching at La Trobe regularly used the collection, or called upon LUMA staff to speak to student groups. Former curator Dr Alana O'Brien recalls:

Members of the LUMA team were often approached for lectures, floor talks, sculpture walks and other activities by members of the Art History Department. While I also provided a talk on European art, more pertinent to the current discussion was a lecture that I gave on Aboriginal Art. For this paper, I drew into the discussion various works from the La Trobe University Art Collection, including: Gloria Petyarre's *Leaves on the ground*, Minnie Pwerle's *Awelye Atnmengerrp*; Fiona Omeenyo's *Awu man, Awu woman*; Ian Abdulla's *Sunday's drive*; Leah King Smith's haunting image from the 1991 series *Patterns of connections*; and a photograph from Fiona Foley's *HHH* series.³⁸⁹

Lucy Ellem (lecturer then senior lecturer in the Art History Department from 1973 to 2003) wrote that she used the art collection:

As teaching tool – My field was 19th to early 20th century French painting, not well represented in the collection. However I have brought works into class, especially for the colour course, Colour in Theory and Practice, 19th to 20th Centuries (CTP), that I began teaching in 1976. Also took the Colour classes to for studio visits with artists in residence (John Waller), or asked the artists to lecture and speak to the class (Charles Reddington). Both of these artists are represented in the LTU collection.

[...]

Use by my students – works were chosen for colour analyses for colour course.

[...]

Had used classical vases teaching First Year students in early years. Began teaching colour course in 1976. Involvement with works and Artists in Residence mainly in 1980s to 1990s.

Dr Caroline Jordan, when lecturing in the Art History Department between 2008 and 2012, would take students to LUMA in order to meet the curator, talk about exhibitions, and explore career possibilities in museums. They would also go to Heide Museum of Modern Art and sometimes work there as volunteers, because LUMA did not have the capacity to offer many volunteer opportunities.³⁹⁰

Dr Joan Barclay Lloyd, former Associate Professor of Art History, used to ask undergraduate and postgraduate students to use artworks from the collection for their research projects.³⁹¹ She stated that while teaching here 'we often encouraged students to view art exhibitions at the gallery to enhance their knowledge of the art involved'. She was sometimes asked to open exhibitions in the gallery, on which occasions she would indicate the importance of the works displayed and the range of an artist's endeavours. Dr Barclay Lloyd also used the collection for her own research: 'at least one exhibition of art at La Trobe impacted on my research, leading to my collaboration with colleagues at the University of Melbourne, and then publishing a joint paper'.³⁹²

Dr Jordan (and some other people interviewed) cited the employment by the Ian Potter Museum of Art at the University of Melbourne of a dedicated curator of research to liaise with academics so that the collections are used as a resource for the entire university. In these programs (which were pioneered in leading American universities such as Harvard),³⁹³ art collections are used for teaching specific skills in various disciplines well beyond the visual arts, including medicine and dentistry.³⁹⁴ One example is the course Arts in Health Education, in which the Potter's collections are used 'to teach students in the Faculty of Dentistry, Medicine and Health Sciences visual observation skills and enriched empathetic attributes'.³⁹⁵ At La Trobe, lecturers in many areas are unfamiliar with what is in the collections, so they are unaware that they could use them in their teaching and research programs. Dr Jordan argued that the collection should be photographed and the entire catalogue made available online; this would help academics see it as a resource, rather than just as 'pictures to decorate offices'. She gave an example of an honours course in history that she coordinated at La Trobe for three years, which involved teaching history students how to use visual resource material (such as photographs) and material objects (three-dimensional artefacts), rather than depending only on texts. For this they would go to Melbourne Museum but if the collections at La Trobe were more accessible they would be ideal. ³⁹⁶ Dr Jordan referred to the new Arts West Building at the University of Melbourne, much of which (both interior and exterior) was designed around the cultural collections. It

has laboratories with display storage of archaeological artefacts for hands-on learning, display cases with original objects and artworks throughout the public areas, a dedicated ground-floor gallery space that faces directly onto one of the campus's main pedestrian thoroughfares (Professors Walk), while the external façade features images derived from an Aboriginal painting and a Greek vase in the collections.³⁹⁷

While the largest numbers of La Trobe students and staff would encounter collection items as they go about their daily business across the campus, the hub of planned programs and activity for the Art Collection has been LUMA. It has produced an impressive body of exhibitions and other events since the 1990s (see Appendix II). Many of them tour to one or more of La Trobe's regional campuses, to other regional art galleries in Australia, and sometimes overseas (particularly to the Philippines). Most LUMA exhibitions are accompanied by a catalogue, many of which include a substantial essay. In recent years, some have been published online as well as in print,³⁹⁸ and can be downloaded from the LUMA website. They are evidence of significant research already undertaken on the collection, and also indicate the potential for future research. For instance, a handbook on the Sculpture Park was published in 2007,³⁹⁹ but there is scope for a new edition, given that there have been several acquisitions since that date. The easy access to these outdoor works also lends them to use in teaching programs.

The breadth and quality of LUMA's exhibition program over the years is commendable, particularly given the relatively small size of its single gallery room, small staffing level, and non-central location. As one survey correspondent, a former student of La Trobe who subsequently worked as a curator and cataloguer with the collection for several years, noted:

The problem with La Trobe Collection has been that it was seen as remote in terms of Bundoora campus location. Many students (who congregate around cafes & library) were unaware of the existence of the LUMA gallery which was on the outskirts, rather than centrally located, on campus. [...] The Collection needs to be housed where it would glean greater exposure to encourage student and staff to drop in.⁴⁰⁰

One significant gap in LUMA's research and publication output, compared to other universities, is a substantial book surveying the entire collection, or giving a history of the collection, or publishing the highlights. University of Melbourne has published several such books over the years,⁴⁰¹ and Sydney,⁴⁰² ANU,⁴⁰³ Monash,⁴⁰⁴ RMIT University⁴⁰⁵ and others have produced generously illustrated volumes on their collections. These types of books are expensive to produce, but La Trobe's 50th anniversary celebrations would provide the ideal opportunity, perhaps with contributions from various curators, donors, artists, and others with a knowledge of the collection.

International partnerships are an important avenue for university research and teaching. La Trobe enjoys a strong partnership with the Ateneo Art Gallery at the Ateneo de Manila

University, with regular exhibition exchanges and other projects organised through the Ateneo–La Trobe Arts Linkage, under the aegis of La Trobe’s Philippines Australia Studies Centre.⁴⁰⁶ The exchange began in 2006⁴⁰⁷ and involves the exchange of exhibitions, the hosting of art residencies in both countries, and cross-discipline academic partnerships.⁴⁰⁸ Most recently, the 2016 exhibition *Octoroon*, curated by Michael Brennan of LUMA and artist Bindi Cole Chocka, was displayed at LUMA, VAC and then at Ateneo.⁴⁰⁹

The past few years have seen increasing academic interest in mid-20th-century Australian architecture and design. A current Australian Research Council–funded project steered by the University of Melbourne, ‘Campus: Building Modern Australian Universities’ (2016–18), includes consideration of La Trobe’s Bundoora campus and of the role of artworks (such as murals and sculptures) in campus design.⁴¹⁰ Dr Caroline Jordan is researching university artworks as part of this project, and is using the La Trobe University Art Collection and related correspondence files as sources.⁴¹¹

Another current project is research by Lucy Ellem into the works of the influential American-born abstract expressionist painter Charles Reddington, which came into the collection as a result of his artist residency at La Trobe in 1998–99.⁴¹² Reddington settled permanently in Australia in 1996⁴¹³ and became a local artist (he lived in the nearby suburb of McLeod) with a strong affiliation with La Trobe, as well as with the Dunmoochin Foundation.⁴¹⁴

There are many individual works and groups of works that, although they have been the subject of exhibitions with perhaps an accompanying essay, still hold great potential for the generation of new knowledge. For instance, La Trobe has the largest holdings anywhere of the works of expatriate Australian artist Allen David (b. 1926), and of surrealist painter and sculptor, writer and critic Bernard Boles (1912–2001). Boles, who lived in nearby Reservoir, donated his entire personal collection of paintings, sculpture, sketches, notes and memorabilia to La Trobe University in 1998.⁴¹⁵ La Trobe lecturer and former artistic director of LUMA, Dr Vincent Alessi, is currently using these Boles works and associated archival material to research the life and work of this important Australian artist and critic.⁴¹⁶

Even students who go on to totally different careers have benefited in very specific ways from being exposed to the collection. For instance, Ms Sandra Nicholson (BA Art History, 1982, now president of the La Trobe University Alumni Art History Chapter), studied part-time at La Trobe when she was working as a detective in Victoria Police. Ms Nicholson, who eventually rose to the rank of Assistant Commissioner and was one of La Trobe’s seven ‘inspirational alumni’ of 2016,⁴¹⁷ stated that ‘I studied art to give me another dimension to what I was doing on a daily basis. Looking at paintings in the collection helped me as a detective, making me observe much more closely.’ She also sought to pass on these skills, when in turn she became responsible for training younger police officers.⁴¹⁸

Another subject area with further potential for use of collections in research and teaching is Aboriginal Studies, which attracts about 500 students, including Aboriginal and international students. Convenor Dr Julie Andrews in 2016 shot a short film of the acting artistic director of LUMA, Dr Michael Brennan, discussing a number of contemporary Aboriginal artworks in the collection, for the subject 'Aboriginal Arts'. This subject is offered to students at all La Trobe campuses and therefore requires extensive online content, rather than accommodating personal tours of the museum. Dr Andrews commented that strongly political works such as Bindi Cole's photograph *Wathaurung mob* (2008–12), Fiona Foley's photograph *HHH#3* (2004) and Gordon Bennett's painting *Abstraction (Fringe Dweller)* (2013) are particularly useful for teaching this subject and stimulating class discussion. Bindi Cole (Chocka) for instance is one of the people who in 2011 successfully sued journalist Andrew Bolt for racial vilification under the *Racial Discrimination Act*. Dr Andrews noted that 'La Trobe does not stereotype its Aboriginal people here. That's what La Trobe's about'.⁴¹⁹

Dr Andrews reported that the art element of her subject is very popular and believes a subject devoted entirely to Aboriginal art would attract high enrolments. She would like to work with the art collection but would need to collaborate with staff at LUMA. Unfortunately, she reports that in recent years she has found the LUMA collection difficult to access, with no online catalogue, no signage outside the gallery and the gallery door 'always locked'. She has not been included on mailing lists and does not get invited to exhibition openings, or to be on any committees to discuss programming or acquisitions (to which she would be keen to contribute). By contrast, in her undergraduate years Ms Andrews and other students worked closely with curator Rhonda Noble, who facilitated several exhibitions of Aboriginal art curated by students, involving La Trobe's Koorie and Gubba Club (part of the Student Representative Council). These exhibitions brought in artists, and always included an opening event with musical performances and other activities. One example was an exhibit at Chisholm College in the early 1990s, of art from Balgo in the Kimberley. Another involved Aboriginal artists in gaol. Dr Andrews described Ms Noble at that time as 'very supportive and dynamic'.⁴²⁰

However, Dr Andrews was very impressed with the 'fantastic' exhibitions including Aboriginal art that were held from time to time in the Writers Block Café: 'That kept me in touch with LUMA'.

Dr Andrews also suggested that art therapists in training could benefit from working with the collection. There is an Aboriginal art therapist (Ms Robyne Latham, who is also an artist) at the Bouverie Centre in Brunswick, which is affiliated with La Trobe.⁴²¹

The Art Collection has been used for cross-disciplinary research, teaching and publishing. For instance, members of several La Trobe University departments contributed essays to the exhibition catalogue *Three degrees of change* (2009),⁴²² which was about global warming:

economist Venkat Narayanan, sociologist Dr Nonie Sharp, Professor Noel Gough of the Department of Outdoor and Environmental Education, and photographer Julie Millowick. A related symposium was chaired by Ashley Crawford of publishers Thames & Hudson, with panel members including the artists represented in the exhibition, plus architects Norman Day and Graham Crist.⁴²³ Vera Möller's exhibition *Neomorphics (Neugemüse)* of 2008 involved the Department of Zoology. Möller had originally trained in biology and microbiology, and she made a presentation for the Zoology Seminar Series, which was very enthusiastically received.⁴²⁴

Several people whom I consulted mentioned the possibility of art history being reinstated at the Bundoora campus, initially as a minor (with the possibility of a major), as well as the possibility of teaching curatorial studies. Although these ideas are only at the early discussion stage, if they were to eventuate all felt that having an art museum and permanent collection on campus would be extremely useful, if not essential.

The *LTU Art Strategy* of June 2016 stated that the core business of the La Trobe Art Institute would include:

3.3 Engagement

- Provide a framework for community focused events, research opportunities and professional development for students and staff, and connectivity with primary and secondary schools.
- The profile of the LAI will enhance the reputation of La Trobe's academic program in associated disciplines, particularly in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

[...]

3.4 Research

- Conduct relevant industry research that contributes to the growth and development of the sector [...]
- Publish best practice and industry findings at relevant conferences and other suitable forums.⁴²⁵

Specifically, the LAI is developing plans for industry-led postgraduate content that provides practical, vocational training and hands-on experience in exhibitions and collections management. Course content would be developed in close collaboration with the museum industry to ensure that students gain the particular skills and expertise that are needed for a successful career in museums. LAI staff are themselves museum industry professionals, with

experience that can be of benefit to students wishing to have careers in this sector. There are opportunities for dedicated postgraduate courses as well as individual subjects that could be taken as part of other degree programs. Such students would benefit greatly from using the La Trobe University collections, as well as working with partner institutions including Bendigo Art Gallery, Murray Art Museum Albury, Castlemaine Art Museum, Shepparton Art Museum, and overseas institutions, especially in Asia, the United States and the United Kingdom.⁴²⁶

7.1.4 La Trobe University Art Collection: community significance

University art collections can be of community significance in two ways (which can overlap):

- to their university community: students, academics, professional staff and alumni
- to the wider community outside the university.

For this reason they can also play an important role in bringing the two communities together, and in breaking down the town/gown divide.⁴²⁷

The university community

The Art Collection was established with the intention of enriching the Bundoora campus environment and thus the lives of students and staff. People's affectionate recollections of particular artworks show that it has succeeded in these efforts, and thus over the years has acquired community significance. For instance, Dr Alana O'Brien recalls:

[...] my initial engagement with the La Trobe University collections extends back to 1990 when I first began to frequent La Trobe University as a student. My primary awareness of the La Trobe University Art Collection, as a student, was through those works displayed around the campus grounds and in the buildings that I used (library, departments in which I studied, the Union building). Inge King's *Dialogue of Circles*, reaching majestically above the Moat Theatre, is one of the works that is perhaps best impressed on my mind from my earliest student days – but then so is Len French's *Four Seasons*, which I would see as I arrived for a new day of study, or as I waited for the bus in all sorts of weather. And there in the garden, nearby, knelt Herman Hohaus' *Sofia* – her name alluding to the knowledge and wisdom that we were all there to seek. Another work that looms large in my memory is Allen David's Untitled (though if I remember correctly, representing a massive phoenix). When I began studying at La Trobe, the entrance to the library was on the upper level of the Agora, and one could not help but pass by it. Allen's massive glass screen was born with the foundation of the university.

In the library, there was a display of beautiful Greek vases – I can only presume that they were a part of the Trendall collection – and as a first year art history exercise we had to do a visual analysis of one of the vases. Perhaps one of my favourite works at the time, though, was Fred Williams' painting: *Scrub, Lysterfield* 1967, which hung in the office of the administrative officer of the Art History Department. The work had a particular

significance for the department, as Fred Williams' family had donated it to the Art History Department in memory of a student who had been studying the artist. In the Art History visual librarian's office, we also had the fortune of one of Charles Blackman's 'School Girls' paintings: *Hide and Seek*.

I enjoyed glimpsing, or examining, many other works as a student (indigenous bark paintings; Sydney Ball, Bernard Boles, Mike Brown) – and although I now cannot remember which precise works I saw, when, and where, on some level it was the overall impression of art as an essential part of the university environment which remains with me. It was only many years later, as a curator, that I came to understand that this was exactly the intention of the founders of La Trobe University, and of the University's Master Architect – Roy Simpson – that art should form a significant part of the University's cultural and intellectual environment.⁴²⁸

Ms Lorraine Wallis (BA, Art History, 1981), who was Secretary to the Dean of Humanities (1982–94) and Administrative Officer in the Department of Art History (1994–2007), recalls the artworks that were displayed in her office area:

When Professor Nigel Morgan occupied the Art History Professor's office the artworks on the walls were: a Brett Whiteley fairly large sketch or print of a Nude (charcoal I think), a large, framed page from a 14th century Music Manuscript and a stained-glass half window (which needed restoration). In my office hung the Fred Williams painting *Scrub, Lysterfield* (which was, I understand, a gift from the Williams family on the death of Jenny Wilkinson who was killed in a car accident, after leaving the Williams' home. Jenny was writing a thesis on Fred Williams for her post-graduate studies in Art History). The painting was given to the Art History Department, but the last I heard it was hanging in the Vice-Chancellor's office. I feel the painting's story should be recorded (if not already). Then there was a painting *Street in Fitzroy* by Danila Vassilieff and a small painting of a Tree by Elizabeth Cross (who had connections with Art History over a long period). On one wall stood a cabinet containing examples of Ancient Greek Red and Black Figure vase painting and pottery, on loan from the Trendall Collection, and used for teaching purposes. In the computer lab were two Mike Brown paintings (Mike gave a seminar and tutorial in the Department); also a poster relating to an exhibition on 'The Book of Kells', donated by a member of staff. Moving down to the Slide Library, there was a small painting of Professor Peter Tomory, dressed in red robes, done by one of his students, and a series of small Clifton Pugh framed prints. In the Slide Librarian's office was one of the 'School Girl series' paintings done by Charles Blackman and in the viewing room opposite, above the viewing boxes, a series of poster sized prints taken from the Sistine Chapel ceiling. A showcase at the front of the viewing room held a number of artefacts plus one of the late Roman mosaics from which a facsimile of the fish motif was taken. The 'fish' became the emblem used by the Art History Chapter, later known as the Art History Alumni.⁴²⁹

University staff also donated works, such as a set of 18 works on paper by Claude Marquet donated by Professor Joan Rydon, the first woman appointed to a chair of political science in Australia,⁴³⁰ Marlene Young Nungurrayi's *Traveling women rock holes my country* (2007), donated by former chancellor, Professor Emeritus Nancy Millis AC; poet Judith Rodriguez's gift of a bronze plaque, *Seated girl*, by Ian Rasmussen (1974), donated as a tribute to the retiring vice-chancellor, David Myers; and the 1980 gift from Mme R. Zikich of four works by Amélie Simon-Dorbritz for the Department of French. Staff have also attracted donations to the university through their work. For instance, Dr Joan Barclay Lloyd 'was asked by Graham Geddes to identify some pieces of late Roman art for his antiques business, and then he donated two late Roman mosaics to the University'.⁴³¹

The Friends of La Trobe University group was established in 1985;⁴³² its first chairman was campus master planner and initiator of the art collection Roy Simpson. The group funded the purchase of the statue *Sofia* statue and contributed money towards the Agora clocktower.⁴³³ More recently it has supported acquisitions such as Angela Brennan's *A possible world* (1991) and the commissioning of Jock Clutterbuck's sculpture *A new house among the stars* (1993) (see Figure 1). The Sculpture Park Collection includes well-loved landmarks of the Bundoora campus which are familiar to all students and staff. They help form the backdrop to daily work, contemplation and relaxation. For instance, Inge King's *Dialogue of circles* is the backdrop to public performances and gatherings at the open-air Moat Theatre. *The four seasons* and *Sofia* were located at the main entrance to the campus, while Allen David's glass screen was at the entrance to the Library. The publication of a guide to the sculpture park was very useful in encouraging visitors (such as school groups) to enjoy the collection and explore the campus. For these reasons this collection has a particularly high level of community significance.

Dr Caroline Jordan argued that 'it should make students feel proud that they have these collections. They feel special.' Certainly, many works around the campus have been enjoyed by generations of students and staff, such as the very arresting portrait of Peter Garrett (*Don't wanna be the one*, by Robert Hollingworth, 1982) which hangs in the main stairwell of the David Myers Building. Long-time artistic director of LUMA and now lecturer, Dr Vincent Alessi, recalls starting at Bundoora as an undergraduate in 1993 and being 'bowled over' by coming across an original Fred Williams in the Art History Department (which was located on the 4th floor of the original Humanities 2 Building). He appreciated being in 'an environment where there are great works of art – a great privilege'.⁴³⁴ However, object-based teaching was lacking during his undergraduate years; he recalls one instance of a lecturer, Richard Haese, bringing an artist (Mike Brown) to speak to his tutorial group; it 'had a real impact' and was 'memorable' – a good analogy to using original art: 'It seemed a shame to use slides and books when artworks were available.'⁴³⁵

Previous LUMA staff recall that whenever they removed a work from a meeting room or other location where it had been hanging for a while, staff would always ask about it: 'when is it coming back'? There was a 'sense of ownership' – the artworks were 'valued'. Students would sometimes complain about works, such as works placed in the Library that they found offensive, but in the staff's experience nothing was ever stolen or deliberately damaged.⁴³⁶ Dr Vincent Alessi recalls the Charles Robb sculpture of upside-down Charles La Trobe being really loved by students and bringing positive feedback, as well as generating discussion about its intent and meaning:

Some are offended by the statue of La Trobe, which was unveiled at La Trobe Uni's Bundoora campus. 'It's the one work on our campus that has generated debate,' Vincent Alessi, curator at La Trobe, said. 'Most people ask, why is it upside down? Is it disrespectful? Is it us taking the piss out of ourselves?'⁴³⁷



Figure 34: Charles Robb, *Landmark*, 2004.

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Mr Charles Robb.

Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library.

When the Leonard French *Sinbad* series was first acquired, it was displayed for a time in the Writers Block Café (in the spirit of its original 1950s location, a café in Bourke Street); Dr Alessi recalls overhearing patrons saying 'how great' the paintings were, and when they were removed people complained.⁴³⁸ Artworks from the University Art Collection are often used on the university's official Christmas cards, student diary and other publications.⁴³⁹

LUMA staff contributed to other art-related activities around the campus that involve the university community, although not always related to the permanent collection. They

include Guerilla Art events in the Library and the Agora, and school visits to the gallery. Tracking the Guerilla Art events on social media was a way to make LUMA more visible to a younger audience; the students appreciated being treated as adults.⁴⁴⁰ Although the Guerilla artworks are themselves ephemeral, the process of collaboration with the artist can lead to acquisitions into the permanent collection, whether by purchase or gift from the artist. For instance, Jon Campbell's Guerilla Art project *RELAX* of 2013 (Figure 35 and Figure 36) led to the acquisition of a painting *Combination 3* (1996).

LUMA staff also curate exhibitions that respond to particular events in the Indigenous events calendar, such as Sorry Day and Naidoc Week, often staged in the Borchardt Library in collaboration with the Indigenous Education Unit.⁴⁴¹ They coordinate the series of exhibitions that involves inviting eminent alumni and community members to select a work from the collection that has particular meaning to them, and writing a personal reflection on it. In 2016 the alumni invited to select works for the exhibition *Exhibit E(migrate)*, which was held in the Writers Block Café on the ground floor of the Borchardt Library, included former La Trobe staff member Dennis O'Hoy AM; author, multicultural consultant and social-justice activist Tasneem Chopra; Moustafa Fahour OAM, founder of the Islamic Museum of Australia; businesswoman Jamila Gordon; former art history lecturer Dr Frank Heckes; Oscar Yildiz, former mayor of City of Moreland and anti-bullying campaigner; lawyer Konfir Kabo; La Trobe Alumni and Advancement staff member Sanchit Dhawan; and teacher Theodora Papadakis.⁴⁴² This was the fifth in the series of exhibitions which began in 2012 with *Exhibit A(lumni)*, displaying the selections of Dr Peter Frost, Terry Moran AC, Dr Geoff Raby, Geoffrey Walsh AO, Dr Patricia Edgar AM, the Honourable Tony Sheehan, Tamsyn Lewis, and Kon Karapanagiotidis OAM.⁴⁴³



Figure 35: Jon Campbell working on his Guerilla artwork *RELAX*, in the Borchardt Library, 2013.

Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library.



Figure 36: Jon Campbell, *RELAX*, Guerilla artwork in the Borchardt Library, 2013.

Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library.

Nearly all staff, alumni and other individuals consulted for this report stated that they felt a personal connection to, or strong memory of, the artworks displayed around the Bundoora campus, whether indoors or outdoors. In the words of one former student, 'it gives the university a cultural dimension, rather than just "rats and stats"'. She argued that students who are studying science and other non-arts disciplines benefit from an arts presence on campus, as it helps to create a well-rounded person. Many mentioned individual works with which they felt a particular connection. One said that 'I think it's a good look to have art scattered across campus. The new sculpture outside the John Scott building is terrific.'

The La Trobe University Alumni Art History Chapter,⁴⁴⁴ established in 1996, includes former students and staff (such as Dr Joan Barclay Lloyd, formerly Associate Professor of Art History). It has some 70 members and until the recent closure of LUMA remained actively involved with the collection, the gallery and the works around campus.⁴⁴⁵ Over the 21 years in which it has existed, the group has organised an annual program of activities, many of which involved visiting LUMA for exhibitions, curator's and artist's talks, lunchtime art sessions, and other events. For 19 years it has staged the annual Rae Alexander Lecture, named in honour of the Chapter's first president, with proceeds from ticket sales helping support scholarships and prizes awarded to La Trobe students.⁴⁴⁶ It has previously awarded an annual Art History Alumni Third-Year Prize (\$500) to the student with the highest academic results, and the Art History Alumni Honours Prize (\$250) to the student with the highest academic results for a first-class standard thesis on a topic of art history.⁴⁴⁷ It also takes an interest in, and supports, the Bendigo campus, attending exhibitions there (and at

Bendigo Art Gallery). It recently endowed a \$1000 acquisitive prize for a final-year visual arts student on the Bendigo campus, the work to be added to the La Trobe University Art Collection. This will now be reviewed after it expires in three years' time. The group also funds a \$500 prize for the best student in the annual NGV Summer School.⁴⁴⁸ In 2008 it contributed funds towards the acquisition of Juan Ford's *From grave to cradle* (2007–08) (Figure 37).⁴⁴⁹ Chapter members hope that despite the announced move of the collection to Bendigo, that this painting will stay on the Bundoora campus, for which it was acquired.⁴⁵⁰

The Art History Alumni are said to be the most active of La Trobe's 14 Alumni Chapters. Its committee meets every two months, but the recent closure of LUMA means that it is actively seeking out other venues for its activities, such as a recent tour of the new Arts West building at the University of Melbourne, and exhibitions at Monash University Museum of Art.⁴⁵¹



Figure 37: Juan Ford, *From grave to cradle*, 2008.

Purchased with assistance from the Art History Chapter, La Trobe University Alumni.

The broader community

The role of collection as bridge between university and broader community is certainly not unique to La Trobe – even the earliest medieval universities participated actively in their local communities, and this remains true of many university collections today:

It is important to understand that universities, as well as being places of learning and research, are also a part of the community in which each one is located. As such it is the duty of a university to share its resources with the population that supports it and with seekers of knowledge everywhere. University museums welcome any visitor seeking to know more about the world in which we all live. University museums are part of the huge family of museums and wish to work closely with [their] colleagues everywhere.⁴⁵²

Further, it is worth noting that the 1964 Act of Parliament establishing La Trobe University specifically called upon the university to serve the community:⁴⁵³

5. Objects of the University

The objects of the University shall be –

(a) to serve the community and in particular the citizens of Victoria –

(i) by making knowledge available for the benefit of all; and

(ii) by providing an institution in which all enrolled students will have the opportunity of fitting themselves for life as well as becoming learned in a particular branch or branches of learning; and

(iii) to promote critical enquiry within the university and in the general community [...]⁴⁵⁴

There is evidence that from its earliest days the university made significant efforts to put these words into practice. In the book published to mark La Trobe's 25th anniversary, the chapter on 'The university and the community' reports at some length on the contribution of the collections:

for the past twenty years the world of art has played a significant role in the development of the University and these days the University Gallery [...] attracts large numbers of visitors to the campus [...]

Both the Gallery and the Anthropology Museum have played a vital role in reaching out to the community and have served as a focus for community interest ... [the Anthropology Museum] has been able to accommodate visits from school groups and other organisations. Its contribution to Victoria and Australia was recognised in March 1982 when it was officially commended for its quality in the form of an award in the Museum of the Year awards.⁴⁵⁵

[...]

In the past twelve years, the University has opened an Art Gallery and a Museum, both of which have regular exhibitions. It has acquired the magnificent Four Seasons glass panels by Leonard French, installed under the David Myers Building, and accommodated the Dante Sculpture donated to Victoria as a 150th anniversary gift from the Italian community.⁴⁵⁶

In the case of La Trobe, serving, involving and responding to the needs of the wider community is achieved in particular when members of the general public visit exhibitions at LUMA or touring exhibitions, or see La Trobe works that are on loan to exhibitions in other museums. Education programs also attract groups, such as local school groups, to exhibitions and other activities on campus, while publications about the collection are read and valued by visitors, external researchers and art lovers. Seminars, public lectures and symposiums extend the collections' scholarly community to other places of learning. Former curator Dr Alana O'Brien recalls:

As curator, I also gave tours of the sculpture park. On several occasions, I gave talks in Italian on *Dante's Inferno*, before the sculpture of the same subject by Bart Sanciolo. The talks were especially arranged for students studying Italian at one of Melbourne's high schools and were intended (by marketing) to encourage the students to consider the possibility of taking up study at La Trobe. I still get an email annually from marketing (and by extension, the teacher who brought them to the university) requesting repeats of the talk.⁴⁵⁷

As a participant in a recent survey of Australian university collections pointed out:

There is not much in the university that you can make public. You can't let the public into your laboratories [or] language labs [...] they are closed spaces. Whereas the visual and performing arts, in order to do their stuff, they have got to go public and therefore we are always going out, as entirely natural, to have that external face.⁴⁵⁸

One of the most active supporters of the Art Collection, art dealer and collector Charles Nodrum, also noted that the significance of the collection was 'constrained by the relative youth of the university and the lack of an exhibiting gallery to compare with Melbourne, Monash or RMIT'. He believed that the collection could play a bigger part in the public image or reputation of La Trobe University 'if the gallery space were more substantial and could be more actively used by art history students'.⁴⁵⁹

La Trobe University's new (2014) Master Plan for the Bundoora campus emphasises involvement with the local community:

- The campus will transform and 'open up' to meaningfully address the surrounding community.

- The University will engage more deeply with Melbourne's north by strengthening its regional attractors in employment, sports, arts, culture and health.⁴⁶⁰

It envisages the campus as a 'university town', which:

recognises the value in positioning the core academic campus within a vibrant and relevant town setting – a place that supports the employment, lifestyle, housing, cultural, environmental and services needs of the La Trobe University family, its local community, and the region. [...] Our rich history and culture will be celebrated and the key elements that make La Trobe such a special place will be protected and enhanced.⁴⁶¹

The art collections could play a role here, perhaps in the proposed 'Arts & Cultural Hub Area' in a 'new signature building on Kingsbury Drive'.⁴⁶² Interviewees also suggested that more could be done using the sculpture trail for local community outreach: 'People don't come on campus – the geography prohibits this. But the University wants to encourage people on. The sculpture trail could potentially break that down.'⁴⁶³ Dr Caroline Jordan also sees the campus as a 'university town', arguing that:

an art museum is part of the life of the campus. It should be a place where cultural and political events occur. The campus is a mini-city; it reproduces the kind of services and amenities of a city and provides it to the citizens-in-the-making, for instance in local governance (the SRC), student newspaper, theatre, sport and art. It is participatory democracy for students – an important stepping-stone. To deprive them of having cultural collections is, I think, a crime.⁴⁶⁴

Other universities in Australia and overseas have exploited the potential of their museums and collections to link the campus with the wider community. The site of the University of Melbourne's new art museum (the Ian Potter Museum of Art, opened 1998) was deliberately chosen for its location on the edge of the campus, facing onto the main thoroughfare of Swanston Street, which includes the main tram terminus. The museum faces out onto the street, not inwards towards the campus.

Similarly, the University of Sydney is investing significant resources (and attracting very generous philanthropic support) to build its new Chau Chak Wing Museum. This new home for the university's highly significant collections of archaeology, natural history, sciences and art will be located at the most prominent entry point to the campus. Due to open in 2018,⁴⁶⁵ it is named in honour of Mr Chau Chak Wing, a Chinese-Australian businessman, property developer and philanthropist, who donated the remarkable sum of \$15 million to make the project possible.⁴⁶⁶ These funds then attracted further gifts, such as \$1 million from the Nelson Meers Foundation, and \$750,000 from architect Penelope Seidler. Nelson Meers AO and his daughter Samantha Meers, and Ms Seidler, are all University of Sydney alumni.⁴⁶⁷



Figure 38: Sculptor Herman Hohaus and family members with Hohaus's sculpture *Sofia*, (1970), purchased with funds donated by Dr Roy Simpson through the Friends of La Trobe University, on the Peribolos Lawn, photographed c. 1980–89.

Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library.

La Trobe's collections have also served a purpose during times of major structural change. For example, in 1997 curator Rhonda Noble made a report to the Council of Australian University Museums and Collections which stated that, in the wake of the Dawkins (Federal Labor Government) reforms of Australia's tertiary sector, LaTrobe 'has encompassed and created eight campuses throughout Victoria [...] Albury-Wodonga, Beechworth, Bendigo, Mildura, Mount Buller and Shepparton'. She noted that such mergers can be perceived as a university 'taking over' the regional institution, but that:

by offering travelling exhibitions of the University's art, ethnographic and loan collections, La Trobe University is able to interact with communities associated with regional campuses in a user-friendly way and provide education, culture and entertainment. These activities are regarded as important parts of the University's outreach programme and are implemented through the State's public galleries network.⁴⁶⁸

Aboriginal Studies Convenor Dr Julie Andrews, although based at Bundoora, teaches at all La Trobe campuses. She would like to see La Trobe purchasing more art from the Koorie communities at Mildura and Shepparton (for instance from the Kaela Aboriginal Community Arts organisation), perhaps by working with the Koorie Heritage Trust. Although most of La Trobe's Aboriginal students are enrolled at Bundoora, activities involving Aboriginal art should involve all the campuses; there are many artists in the regions setting up as small

businesses. Exhibition tours both to and from the regions would 'start a conversation – what can La Trobe do for me? Should I send my kids to La Trobe?'⁴⁶⁹

It is clear that LUMA has generated considerable activity in its efforts to engage the community with the collections, and with art and culture more generally, with its active program of temporary and touring exhibitions, loans, lectures, symposia, school visits and the like. Less typical community programs over the years have included a series of Gallery Readings (part of La Trobe's English program);⁴⁷⁰ and annual exhibitions of art by young adults with disabilities involved in the La Trobe Lifeskills program (see Figure 39 for example)⁴⁷¹ – these works are not acquired for the permanent collection. La Trobe is the official 'Summer Education Partner' of the National Gallery of Victoria, with staff giving lectures, such as for the 2016–17 exhibition of David Hockney, and for some years was 'Education Partner' with Heide Museum of Modern Art.⁴⁷²



Figure 39: Artist's name not noted, work from LifeSkills exhibition held at LUMA in 2016.

Photograph: La Trobe University Media Library.

From 1997⁴⁷³ to 2009 the university was the joint supporter of the City of Darebin – La Trobe University Acquisitive Art Prize. ⁴⁷⁴ Vice-chancellor Michael Osborne noted in 2005 that 'Significant cultural events – such as the Acquisitive Art Prize – are an important part of the University's education and community outreach program',⁴⁷⁵ and in 2003 he said that 'with its ability to challenge attitudes and values, communicate ideas and encourage further inquiry, art is an important element of education'.⁴⁷⁶ This partnership also had the added benefit of bringing at least 13 works – by emerging and established artists – into LUMA's permanent collection.

7.2 The Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection: significance

The significance of the Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection is, firstly, of an **aesthetic/artistic** nature. It was formed by a collector who developed her eye for ceramics over many years, and who enjoyed living with the works in her home, seeing them every day and using many for eating or drinking. There are works by leading Australian studio potters including Les Blakebrough, Greg Daly, Gwyn Hanssen Pigott, Harold Hughan, Col Levy, Milton Moon and Peter Rushforth. Although the collection is not as large as the Margaret Lawrence Collection at the Victorian College of the Arts (some 2000 pieces, see Appendix I), it is arguably more coherent in style, focusing as it does on studio works from the second half of the 20th century.

The Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection is of some **historical significance** due to its association with a discerning Melbourne collector, Mrs Etta Hirsh, who with her husband Emmanuel Hirsh was 'central to the Australian art world for over five decades. They have not only been important collectors, they have also been great mentors, supporters and advocates of the visual arts throughout the period.'⁴⁷⁷ Also, the collection includes fine examples of works by studio potters who are important figures in the history of Australian ceramics.

The collection has some community significance within La Trobe:

La Trobe University Museum of Art has been one of the many beneficiaries of the Hirshs' generosity and support. For almost a decade the Hirsh family have donated important works to the La Trobe University Art Collection. These works have graced public spaces across all of the University's campuses ensuring that staff, students and visitors work in a culturally rich environment. [...] For all of us involved at La Trobe University, the collection is a permanent reminder of the generous spirit of the entire family, especially Etta, and the lasting contribution they have made to the cultural life of the University.⁴⁷⁸



Figure 40: Some of the Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection, in the South Store on the Bundoora campus.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.

La Trobe has another substantial holding of ceramics, donated by alumna Ms Anne Rutland, in 2008–09.⁴⁷⁹ This comprises about 180 accessioned pieces (some of which form sets, such as a dinner service by Gwyn Hansen Pigott).⁴⁸⁰ Like the Hirsh Collection, Ms Rutland's donation includes work by renowned Australian studio potters, such as Arthur Merric Boyd, Harold Hughan, Klytie Pate, Milton Moon, Charles Wilton and others, but it also has a quantity of pottery from commercial (mostly post-war) Australian manufacturers such as Bakewells, Bendigo Pottery, John Campbell Pty Ltd, MDK (Ellis Ceramics), and Premier Pottery (Remued Ware) which was located in Preston. And from about 1999 until 2008 La Trobe supported the Sidney Myer Fund International Ceramics Award at the Shepparton Gallery, acquisitions from which helped to develop La Trobe's ceramics collection.⁴⁸¹

The Hirsh Collection, especially when considered alongside the Anne Rutland donation of studio and commercial pottery, has potential to support **research and teaching** of both the history of 20th-century ceramics in Australia, and the making of ceramics more generally. There have already been some exhibitions: in 2016 an exhibition at the Phyllis Palmer Gallery on the Bendigo campus combined selected Hirsh works with ceramics made by Bendigo students in response to works in the Etta Hirsh Collection. This was curated by LUMA staff in collaboration with lecturer Anthony Conway, who had been drawing upon the Hirsh collection for the teaching of form and technique.⁴⁸²

La Trobe presents the annual Dennis O'Hoy Ceramic Award to 'a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Ceramics) student who has revealed an innovative approach towards design concepts in their major study and is continuing their studies in the undergraduate program at the Bendigo campus'.⁴⁸³ The Hirsh ceramics are the basis of a large display in the Borchardt Library (Figure 41) and are used from time to time by LUMA staff for teaching.⁴⁸⁴ The combination of the Hirsh and Rutland gifts and other ceramics in the collection could also allow for research on the links and influences between studio and commercial pottery practices. For instance, the Australian imagery (koalas, gum nuts and the like) for which the commercial Remued Ware (produced in Preston) was renowned was introduced by Margaret Kerr, who had studied with Merric Boyd.⁴⁸⁵ Ms Rutland had a particular interest in the local potteries of Melbourne's northern suburbs.⁴⁸⁶



Figure 41: Selections from the Etta Hirsh Ceramic Collection, on display in the Borchardt Library.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.

Ceramics are useful for longer-term display under non-museum conditions (such as campus display), being less vulnerable than many other media to deterioration when exposed to high light-levels, and fluctuating temperature and relative humidity. Items from the Etta Hirsh Collection not on display are safely housed in archival-quality boxes in the South Store (see Figure 40).

7.3 The Ethnographic Collection: significance

7.3.1 *Ethnographic Collection: historical significance*

The Ethnographic Collection is of historical significance for its association with teaching programs at La Trobe, and because of the provenance of some groups of items. One of the principal donors was Mr James (Jim) Davidson and his wife Irene. The Davidsons lived near La Trobe University (at Ivanhoe) and in the early 1980s were persuaded by then lecturer in

anthropology, Dr Ross Bowden, to donate a significant number of items from PNG and northern Australia to the university.⁴⁸⁷

Further, Jim Davidson's links with PNG went back to the first foreign incursions into the remote regions in the 1930s, when he helped map the upper Fly River as an employee of Standard Oil. After World War II he grew coffee for 13 years near Mount Hagen and then returned to Melbourne, working as a dealer in Aboriginal and Oceanic cultural material,⁴⁸⁸ establishing the Aboriginal and Pacific Art Gallery in Ivanhoe in 1961.⁴⁸⁹ The business is now run by the Davidsons' son Malcolm, and is said to be the oldest tribal art dealership in Australia.⁴⁹⁰ Davidson had a strong knowledge of the area, had known the legendary American anthropologist Margaret Mead, and donated items not only to La Trobe but also to the National Gallery of Victoria (from the 1960s onwards), and encouraged other major Australian and international museums to collect the work of particular Aboriginal artists.⁴⁹¹ The National Gallery of Victoria made him a life member in 1991, in recognition of his services to Indigenous art.⁴⁹²

Other donors are also of historical interest. For instance, Melbourne businessman Mr Carl T. Shipman (a German-Jewish refugee), who gave about 15 items to La Trobe, had previously donated a collection of 500 PNG artefacts to the Israel Museum in 1975 on the eve of PNG's independence from Australia. This gift formed the nucleus of a new ethnographic section of the Israel Museum.⁴⁹³ Anthropologist Dr Paul Sillitoe is an established ethnographer who, while working at La Trobe, did extensive fieldwork in PNG. He now works at Durham University. The Right Reverend Bishop John Bayton worked on Thursday Island in the 1960s, helped found the collection of the Rockhampton Regional Art Gallery, and is an artist in his own right. Colonel Walter Howard Tunbridge CB CMG CBE VD (1856–1943) was highly decorated as a soldier in the Boer War, and both World Wars, as well as being a successful architect in Townsville and Melbourne.⁴⁹⁴ His daughters donated 44 items of Zulu and southern African origin that he collected during the Boer War.⁴⁹⁵ Mr John Keith McCarthy CBE (1905–1976) worked as an administrator and later member of parliament in New Guinea between 1927 and 1971.⁴⁹⁶

This collection therefore has historical significance for its connections with the teaching of ethnography at La Trobe University, and for its associations with donors, particularly Mr Jim Davidson.

7.3.2 Ethnographic Collection: artistic/aesthetic significance

The largest single donor to this collection was dealer James Davidson, who also made substantial donations to the National Gallery of Victoria. Of his gifts to La Trobe, the Australian bark paintings are considered particularly fine (such as David Milaybuma's *Namanwadi* [Crocodile] and others by Gawirrin Gumana, Mithinari Gurruwiwi, Wandjuk Markia and Jimmy Njiminjuma), although it is likely that the NGV received those items of the

highest artistic value. Davidson has been acknowledged as one of the first collectors to recognise the quality of Aboriginal art as fine art in its own right, not just as ethnographic information: 'Jim's significant legacy was the early recognition and appreciation of Aboriginal art, something we now all take for granted.'⁴⁹⁷ Similarly, Mr Carl T. Shipman's 1975 gift of 500 PNG items to the Museum of Israel probably contained the cream of *his* collection. On the other hand, Joseph Brown always collected with a discerning artistic eye. The huge East Sepik dancing wagan mask he donated is a remarkable object of great visual power. Some of the Papua New Guinean carvings – the masks in particular – are visually striking, showing fine workmanship and strong design, as does the Trobriand Island dance wand donated by the Misses Tunbridge. Other PNG items of aesthetic interest include the decorated tapa cloths donated by J. McCarthy.

7.3.3 Ethnographic Collection: research and teaching potential

This collection was created for the purpose of teaching. Although it has fallen largely into disuse in recent years, there is scope to revive its use in various teaching areas, such as Australian and Pacific history; post-colonial studies; geography; and ethnography. Dr Julie Andrews, Convenor of Aboriginal Studies at La Trobe, is aware of the existence of the Ethnographic Collection but has never used it for teaching or research. She said that colleagues in her department use the collection but she feels 'uncomfortable' about using it.⁴⁹⁸ The collection is catalogued but most of it is in storage . If the catalogue were published online with photographs, staff, students and outside researchers could be encouraged to use it. Also, the interesting provenance of many of the collections leaves scope for research into the history of the items themselves and the circumstances in which they were collected.

The collection's significance (whether historical, aesthetic or research/teaching) is not on the same level as the many highly important ethnographic collections that exist in Australian universities, such as, the Donald Thomson Collection at the University of Melbourne, the Berndt Museum at the University of Western Australia, the Pacific and Torres Strait material in the Macleay Museum at the University of Sydney, or even the Leonhard Adam Collection at the University of Melbourne.

7.3.4 Ethnographic Collection: community significance

The Ethnographic Collection is largely hidden from view at present, and was not nominated as being of particular importance to groups or individuals consulted while preparing this report (although several people who were most closely involved with the collection in the past were not available for consultation). It is possible that Indigenous communities of origin may feel a connection to some of the items if they were aware of their existence. Projects to identify and contact communities or individual artists, such as the work being done at the University of Melbourne to contact the creators of works (from various countries) now in the Leonhard Adam Collection,⁴⁹⁹ are important for communities and also for custodians.

7.4 The Trendall Collection: significance

The significance of the A.D. Trendall Collection lies primarily in its **research and teaching potential**, and in its **historical significance** due to its association with A.D. Trendall.

7.4.1 *The Trendall Collection: historical significance*

Much of the historical significance of the Trendall Collection lies in its provenance: its connection with its founder, Arthur Dale Trendall, one of the world's leading authorities on ancient Greek vase painting, one of the foremost classical art historians of his time, and Australia's first professor of archaeology.⁵⁰⁰

Trendall was part of a lineage of eminent scholars in his field, particularly through his inspiration by the work of Oxford University's J.D. Beazley (1885–1970), who revolutionised the study of Athenian vase-painting, and whom Trendall met in the 1930s.⁵⁰¹ In setting up his photographic archive, Trendall was influenced by the Beazley Archive,⁵⁰² which is the world's largest collection of images of ancient figure-decorated pottery, and is now the core of the Classical Art Research Centre at the University of Oxford.⁵⁰³

Trendall's significance as a scholar was acknowledged internationally well within his lifetime. For instance, his work in the 1950s, cataloguing the south Italian red-figure vases in the Vatican collections,⁵⁰⁴ led to his being honoured as a *Commendatore* of the Order of St Gregory the Great (of which the medal is in the Trendall Collection), and also as a *Commendatore* of the Italian State. His medal for the Companion of the Order of Australia (awarded 1976 for his scholarship and contribution to education) is also in the collection.⁵⁰⁵ Trendall had extensive experience in building up museum collections, having served as honorary curator of the Nicholson Museum while he was professor of archaeology at the University of Sydney between 1939 and 1954.⁵⁰⁶ He was generous with his expertise, advising the National Gallery of Victoria on building its distinguished collection of Greek vases.⁵⁰⁷

Another factor in the Trendall Collection's historical significance is its **integrity**, which in this case is related to its provenance. The Centre holds Trendall's photographic archive, library, antiquities, artworks, furniture and domestic chattels. Together they form an integrated whole that tells us of the life, work, interests, circle of friends and colleagues, and personality of a leading humanities scholar of the mid-20th century. The 1960s 'Fler' brand lounge furniture has been retained, with original upholstery. Some of the artworks were made by friends of Trendall (such as Sidney Nolan) and depict places of direct relevance to Trendall's research, particularly ancient sites in Italy and elsewhere in the Mediterranean. Some have been dedicated to him by the artist (such as etchings by R.T. Cowen inscribed 'To Dale') and most hang in the same positions as in Trendall's day. The kitchen is intact and still holds some of his silverware and dishes. (Unfortunately, repainting of the interior did not follow the original paint scheme chosen on the advice of the building's architect, Robin Boyd, but there

is ample evidence of it in areas behind bookcases, which could be used as the basis of a historically informed repainting in the future.) Although some arrangements have changed (for instance Trendall's bedroom is now an office), and Trendall destroyed most of his personal papers, small but intriguing items that tell us about Trendall's life and teaching at La Trobe have been preserved, such as the small hand-held 'clickers' he used in his lectures to tell the projector operator when to display the next slide.⁵⁰⁸

Another aspect of the collection's historical significance is the role that Trendall played in shaping the La Trobe University campus environment in its early years. Many people familiar with the campus attribute to Trendall's influence the naming of the central common area the 'Agora' after that of ancient Athens; the planting there of four plane trees (as the fifth-century BC statesman Kimon did in the Athenian Agora); the naming of the Peribolos to the north of the Agora; and the design (modelled after a Greek *theatron*) of the open-air theatre.⁵⁰⁹ These areas are essential to the La Trobe Bundoora campus experience: 'Students love the Agora'.⁵¹⁰

7.4.2 The Trendall Collection: artistic/aesthetic significance

The 40 or so 'pots' in the Trendall Collection are not highly significant by international standards. Nor are they comparable to those held at the Universities of Melbourne, Sydney or Macquarie. Nevertheless, they are useful and interesting examples. They are far superior to those fragments designated as the 'teaching collection', being either intact or largely present and repaired. Some are too fragile to be handled as teaching material. All were acquired by Trendall, but he left no records of their provenance; they were probably gifts from other archaeologists. A particular favourite (both of Trendall and of the current director of the Trendall Centre) is the Apulian red-figure fish plate included in Figure 42.⁵¹¹

The framed prints, paintings and drawings that decorate Trendall's apartment are not outstanding as artworks, although some important artists (such as Sidney Nolan) are represented, their importance lies more in that they 'complement the scholarly environment, which is what Dale Trendall wanted, and they match the period of the architecture'.⁵¹² That is, they contribute to the integrity of the collection.



Figure 42: Selected antiquities from the A.D. Trendall Collection.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

7.4.3 The Trendall Collection: Research and teaching potential

The significance of the Trendall Collection lies principally in its **research and teaching potential**. It has supported substantial research, publications and exhibitions, particularly on the subject of Greek vase-painting in southern Italy. Its founder created, and drew upon, the substantial photographic archive both before and during his time at La Trobe, when researching his numerous important publications,⁵¹³ including *The Red-Figured Vases of Apulia* (with Alexander Cambitoglou, 1978 and supplements),⁵¹⁴ *Greek Red-Figured Fish Plates* (with Ian McPhee, 1987 and addenda),⁵¹⁵ and *Red Figure Vases of South Italy and Sicily* (1985),⁵¹⁶ to name but a few.⁵¹⁷

Following Trendall's death, a special issue of the *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* was published, based on a special conference dedicated to honouring his life and work.⁵¹⁸ One contributor said:

What then of the future without Dale? [...] Dale's photographic collection and library will be an immense resource for the future study of the subject. It is now in the capable and enthusiastic charge of Ian McPhee at La Trobe. He will ensure that Australia remains at the forefront of South Italian pottery studies. But the Trendall archive will also become a Mecca for scholars and students researching into other areas of South Italian art and archaeology, including those focusing on social, religious and historical aspects – all thanks to Dale's foundation work and his own great breadth of vision.⁵¹⁹

Professor Trendall influenced a generation of scholars, one of the most eminent being his successor as director of the Trendall Centre, Dr Ian McPhee, also an international expert on Greek red-figure pottery who has drawn upon the collection for his research.⁵²⁰ The library and archive are 'fundamental' to the research of the current director, Dr Gillian Shepherd. The collection is also used for undergraduate teaching; staff believe that hands-on, experiential learning is essential for archaeology studies; the presence of a 'teaching' collection of pot sherds and small objects makes this possible. Students respond very positively to handling fragments of items that date back thousands of years.⁵²¹

Collection items are used for education in the broader sense, through public outreach. For instance, in 2007 some 30 pieces from the collection were loaned for display in the Hellenic Antiquities Museum in the Old Mint Building in William Street,⁵²² and for several years this was followed by a rolling loan arrangement for longer display periods. Discussions for future loans are continuing.⁵²³ As part of a Mediterranean studies conference in 2012, the exhibition *Connoisseur and Code-Breaker: A.D. Trendall and South Italian Vase-Painting* was staged at the Museo Italiano in Carlton. This included the Apulian fish plate and a *lebes gamikos* or wedding vase from the collection. The displays and associated educational programs demonstrated also the interpretive potential of the collection, examining as they did many aspects of everyday life in ancient Greek and Roman society, such as food, clothing, theatre, music, rituals and customs.⁵²⁴

The Library at the Trendall Centre focuses on the ancient Mediterranean region, especially southern Italy and Sicily.⁵²⁵ Trendall bequeathed funds to enable the library to continue to develop, meaning that it is kept up to date and therefore continues to be highly useful for research,⁵²⁶ containing as it now does some 10,000 volumes plus numerous periodicals. It is La Trobe University's only specialist library, a 'superb research library' of national importance, which includes some very rare historical volumes, including 19th- and 20th-century museum catalogues, now difficult to obtain, as well as rare journals, and books not even held by the libraries at the university of Oxford, Cambridge or London.⁵²⁷ La Trobe students who use the collection for research tend to be at the third-year, honours, or postgraduate levels, rather than early undergraduates. Scholars from Britain and Italy have come to La Trobe to use the research collections,⁵²⁸ and a Trendall scholarship was

established in 2002 to facilitate such exchanges.⁵²⁹ Work is in progress to incorporate the library catalogue into the main La Trobe University online catalogue.⁵³⁰

What makes the Trendall Collection truly unique and significant internationally is the photographic archive of some 40,000 photographs, mostly of south Italian vases. Professor Chris Mackie describes these photographs as 'just amazing' and 'very important'.⁵³¹ They are currently being digitised to form an online resource, in conjunction with Oxford University's Beazley Archive; scanning has been done by student interns and is nearly complete.⁵³²

Recently a selection of 21 of Dale Trendall's scholarly articles, together with a brief biography, was published in a volume edited by Dr McPhee.⁵³³ This will be the first in a Trendall Centre series; the second volume is currently in preparation.⁵³⁴

The collection is used regularly for teaching. 

Dr Joan Barclay Lloyd stated that she used the Trendall Collection 'as a teaching tool – we regularly set an essay for first-year students on items from the Trendall Collection'.⁵³⁵ Professor Chris Mackie has used the collection for his own research and publishing, and for teaching. His students use it for their research at honours and postgraduate level, as do the students of Dr Gillian Shepherd and Dr Rhiannon Evans. The only impediment is access: a staff member must be present and the hours are limited. Having the staffing resources for longer access hours and more flexible arrangements would mean the collection would be used much more.⁵³⁶ More display space is also needed. Professor Mackie stated:

The Trendall Centre is the only thing that La Trobe University owns that is number-one in the world. It is the best resource anywhere for studying the Greeks of southern Italy and Sicily. [...] The library has publications that Trendall could acquire *because he was Trendall* – people would send him things. Even in Oxford you can't have the experience of such a library collection all in the one place, where you can browse; there is a serendipity factor.⁵³⁷

When asked about something in the collection of particular significance to him, Professor Mackie nominated LIMC (the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*), the seminal source in the field of classical iconography, which runs to more than 20 volumes: 'There it is up on the shelf! You can't do that at Melbourne University!'⁵³⁸ He went on to say:

But the Trendall Centre needs some big decisions to be made about its future. The university has never really 'got it out there' as much as it deserves. La Trobe has a visibility problem. It is an astonishing collection. But it has to modernise. It would be absolutely perfect for a philanthropic project. La Trobe is a leader in this field and could capitalise on this [...] The Trendall Collection influences the way academics in related fields perceive La Trobe University and could help attract senior students and researchers, particularly if it were made more accessible.⁵³⁹

7.4.4 The Trendall Collection: community significance

The Trendall Collection is widely known and highly regarded in archaeological circles in Australia and overseas, although not well known to the general public. Students who have used the collection describe the centre as 'incredibly cool' and all users enjoy the sense of community that working together in this unique space creates.⁵⁴⁰ The La Trobe University Art History Alumni group has visited, maintains links with it and attends other events organised by the Centre.⁵⁴¹ Former staff and students, particularly those who knew Trendall personally, feel a strong connection with the collection. Dr Barclay Lloyd, for example, wrote:

I personally feel a strong connection to the works in the Trendall Collection, having known Professor A.D. Trendall. I often worked in his Library, where some of his collection, and not only the ancient pieces, was displayed. Other pieces were exhibited in the Borchardt Library and in the Art History Department. All this made me feel that La Trobe University acknowledged the international reputation of Professor Trendall, and passed on his fascination for Ancient Greek and South Italian art and culture to the students and staff.⁵⁴²

Current staff are devising various programs and activities to increase public engagement with the collection. The Friends of the Trendall Centre numbers about 300 members, living in Australia and overseas.⁵⁴³ Events are held from time to time, although it can be difficult to draw people to Bundoora, so some events are held in the CBD. There is an annual free public Trendall Lecture, of which the last one was 'Unbeautiful Bodies in Ancient South Italy', at NGV International, delivered by Dr Ted Robinson (University of Sydney).⁵⁴⁴ Dr Shepherd runs the 'La Trobe in the City' seminar series in collaboration with Melbourne City Library. The 2016 program was on the topic of 'History's Mysteries',⁵⁴⁵ while the 2017 program will look at 'Greeks and Romans Behaving Badly: Antisocial Behaviour in Antiquity'.⁵⁴⁶

A new program is 'Tea at the Trendall', for about ten people at a time; visitors enjoy afternoon tea in the Centre, view some of the pots and listen to a talk from the director. Dr McPhee is preparing a highlights publication on the collection.⁵⁴⁷ The Trendall Centre – along with some other parts of La Trobe University – is currently under consideration for inclusion in the 2017 'Open House Melbourne' weekend.⁵⁴⁸

Trendall Centre staff believe that the Centre could do much to help recruit archaeology and classics students to La Trobe, especially at the postgraduate level. It could also attract benefactors. It has already attracted cash donations; in 1995, following Trendall's death, Ian McPhee raised \$100,000 in an appeal to fund the visiting Italian scholar program. Trendall's name carries greater weight in Italy and the USA than it does in Australia.⁵⁴⁹

7.5 The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection: significance

7.5.1 *The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection: historical significance*

Posters were a very important form of communication in the People's Republic of China in the 20th century. Thousands of designs were produced, often in very large print-runs, and sold cheaply, both at home and overseas.⁵⁵⁰ So the posters in this collection are historically significant for their representativeness, rather than their rarity. They are also significant as a reflection of La Trobe University's early and close engagement with the People's Republic of China.

7.5.2 *The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection: artistic/aesthetic significance*

The editor of *The Poster Art Library*, which in 1977 published a volume on the Stewart E. Fraser Collection, summarised the aesthetic values of these Chinese posters:

[The posters] are frequently compelling, the graphics are often vivid, but at the same time they are absolutely frightening in their pervasiveness: They are unremittingly an instrument and reflection of total political control. [...] What saves the day is the brilliance of the colors and very directness of approach: Much of it has the simplicity and boldness of comic art, but much also has embellishments and refinements of design and composition that elevate it, sometimes quite far above the mundane.

The bright colors, often in the richness of clothing or scenery, turn otherwise dull posters into compelling works. And the design, though appearing simplistic at times, is, in fact, quite deliberate and, in many cases, quite effective. [...] The single most critical thing to be said about these posters, from the point of design, is that they are static: there are few dramatic posters [...] even when we are urged to resolutely support the struggle against colonialism, it is a statue – heroic but impotent – which urges us on. The way the Chinese artist gets movement into his posters is by focus: He moves in on the subject and in so doing seems to move it up and towards us.

[...] Another criticism – like the others, no doubt a 'western' criticism – is that too many posters are simply 'cute'. [...] Likewise there is too much happiness in this collection; optimism is one thing, but an exaggerated always-on-camera smile becomes dull and induces cynicism, not to mention disbelief.⁵⁵¹

7.5.3 *The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection: Research and teaching potential*

The Stewart E. Fraser Collection is thought to be 'one of the largest and most important collections of Chinese propaganda posters outside of China'.⁵⁵² As such it has great potential for use in teaching and research. Ms Tracy Spinks, who catalogued the collection for LUMA, wrote (in response to questionnaire):

The quality of these [posters] varied widely but they were donated by an academic who had keen interest in the posters as an educational tool. They present a window into the history of how imagery can, and has been, used for political, social reform and propaganda (of significance when we now consider the explosion of electronic and social

media used in a similar way). If curated well these posters still have a valuable educational role to play as well as offering interest, in terms of their artistic merit, to the viewer.⁵⁵³

The collection has been catalogued onto the La Trobe Art Collection database (running on KE Emu software). This work began after 2011 under the present collection registrar, as (unlike the main art collection) there was no earlier database or card catalogue. Although the text on some of the posters has been translated into English, there is still much work to be done here.⁵⁵⁴

The collection's large size, and broad range of visual styles and subject matter, mean that it has the potential to support research in many areas of inquiry: Chinese history and politics; visual arts and graphic design; educational methods; propaganda studies; history of censorship. But several survey respondents pointed out that to take full advantage of opportunities to use the collections for teaching, the university must provide resources.

There is also potential for comparative research that considers poster collections held by other Australian universities, such as the major holdings of the influential local arts collective Redback Graphix at University of Wollongong,⁵⁵⁵ and the University of Sydney's collection of some 400 posters produced at its Tin Sheds Workshops by Earthworks, Redback, Lucifoil and other poster collectives that were a central force in Sydney's protest movement during the 1970s and 1980s (of which copies are also held in major art museums).⁵⁵⁶ The Tin Sheds posters about nuclear disarmament are claimed to be of international significance.⁵⁵⁷ Murdoch University in Western Australia has a collection of some 6000 posters,⁵⁵⁸ Griffith University is developing its poster collection (founded in 1979)⁵⁵⁹ and the Gerard Herbst collection of more than 2500 20th-century posters at the University of Melbourne (see Appendix I below) would also provide valuable comparisons.

But of greatest relevance is the R.F. Price Collection, held in the East Asian Collection at the University of Melbourne. This comprises not posters but Chinese educational and children's books published from the 1960s to the 1980s – published educational material that is on topics highly relevant to the Stewart E. Fraser Collection. There are more than 1000 titles, and the collection is considered 'unique among western library holdings'.⁵⁶⁰ Interestingly, it was donated (in 2007) by a La Trobe academic: Dr Ronald Francis Price, a scholar of comparative education. Price was born in the UK and worked in various countries before taking up a post in the School of Education at La Trobe in 1971, where he taught until his retirement in 1991.⁵⁶¹ The numerous illustrated school books from the Cultural Revolution period would form a valuable complementary research resource for posters aimed specifically at children in that time, of which hundreds of examples are held in the Stewart E. Fraser Collection.

There seems to be recent interest in Chinese political posters among some Australian and overseas universities. For instance, an exhibition called *China and Revolution: History, Parody and Memory in Contemporary Art* was displayed in Sydney and at RMIT Gallery in 2010–11 as part of an ARC-funded research project, *Posters of the Cultural Revolution*.⁵⁶² Actively researching in this area is the University of Westminster in England; its own collection is much smaller than La Trobe's, comprising only 800 posters from the 1950s to the early 1980s.⁵⁶³ There may be opportunities for collaboration here.

7.5.4 The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection: community significance

There have been a few exhibitions and publications based on this collection: one book written by Fraser and published in the USA in 1977,⁵⁶⁴ and an exhibition at LUMA in 2009.⁵⁶⁵ The most recent was *Exhibit D(emonstration)* of 2015, the fourth in La Trobe's series of exhibitions in which special guests are invited to select works from its collections.⁵⁶⁶ Nevertheless, relatively few people with whom I spoke were aware of the existence of the Stewart E. Fraser Collection. For this reason, its community significance is relatively low. One respondent characterised the Stewart E. Fraser Collection as 'a real gem – undersold.'

7.6 The F.M. Courtis Collection: significance

7.6.1 The F.M. Courtis Collection: historical significance

The history of the F.M. Courtis Collection, as outlined in Section 5.6 above, reveals and reflects the deep and multi-layered connections between the artworks and the community of Bendigo Teachers' College (staff, students, alumni) and the broader Bendigo community (local artists, dealers, businesses and art-loving individuals and families). These links are the basis of much of the **historical significance** of the collection as a whole. In effect, the collection serves as a record of the development of art education, appreciation, teaching, practice, and collecting in that community in the second half of the 20th century and into the early 21st century.

As with the La Trobe University Art Collection, most of the works in the F.M. Courtis Collection are of excellent provenance. Many were donated or sold at discount by artists, dealers of artists, or collectors who purchased on the primary market or who were friends of the artists. This strong provenance contributes much to the works' historical significance. One outstanding example is William Frater's nude oil sketch *Jessica* (for whom the model was a Bendigo pharmacist who sometimes posed for life classes at Bendigo Teachers' College). Frater created this work while giving a demonstration of painting technique for art students at the college in 1970 (Figure 43). At the end of the class, commenting that the college did not have any of his figure works, Frater signed the finished painting and donated it – on the spot – to the collection.⁵⁶⁷ I cannot think of a stronger or more direct provenance than this in any art collection.



Figure 43: William Frater, *Jessica* (1970). F.M. Courtis Collection, gift of the artist, 1970.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

The collection is also historically **representative**, as it also reflects broader, indeed international, trends in the philosophy of education. The historian of the F.M. Courtis Collection, Penelope Collet, describes how the trauma of World War II gave rise to the promotion of all the arts as an important element of education, of the formation of young people, and in the fostering of peace and international understanding. Efforts to achieve these ends included the establishment of cultural bodies such as UNESCO. The concept of education through visual art, particularly as expressed by the English art historian Herbert Read (1893–1968) was enormously influential in Britain, the USA and Australia after the war. In 1954 a UNESCO art seminar on 'The Role of the Visual Arts in Education' was held at the University of Melbourne. Key art history staff at Bendigo Teachers' College had studied or taught at the Melbourne Teachers' College and were exposed to these ideas, subsequently putting them into practice in helping to shape the F.M. Courtis Collection.⁵⁶⁸ The Victorian Educational Department also made efforts to realise this international philosophy, for instance by appointing education officers at regional art galleries (including Bendigo).⁵⁶⁹ From the 1960s onwards, every tertiary education institution in Victoria began to acquire an art collection.⁵⁷⁰

The Australian patriotism and belief that surrounding young people with art would impart desirable cultural values that were part of the philosophy behind the F.M. Courtis Collection also lay behind some other university art collections, such as that donated to the University of Melbourne by Dr Samuel Arthur Ewing in the 1930s. This was intended to be hung in a dedicated gallery in the Student Union, rather than serve as a teaching collection. Its donor 'believed his artworks would play a strong role in public nation building'.⁵⁷¹ Although smaller

than the Courtis and of earlier date (59 works, from between 1862 and 1940), landscapes predominate, and the donor's intention was (in his own words): 'That our youth may be inspired by the beauty as well as the love of their country by the works of our artists'.⁵⁷²

The A.J. Law Collection at the University of Melbourne was also inspired partly by Australian patriotic feeling and love of the landscape. It was founded by Arthur Law, principal of the Melbourne Teachers' College (later named Melbourne State College, then Melbourne College of Advanced Education, then Institute of Education, now part of the University of Melbourne). Law believed it was important for teachers in training to be surrounded by Australian art, both to extend their cultural background, but also because 'teachers graduating from the College, moving out into country regions, should help spread culture in rural communities through the pupils in their care.'⁵⁷³ To this end he placed a five-shilling levy on each student entering the college, to buy art to adorn the rooms and hallways. Acquisitions began in the 1920s, and eventually works were acquired by leading artists including John Glover, Louis Buvelot, Arthur Streeton, Tom Roberts, William Frater, Arthur Boyd, John Perceval, Russell Drysdale, Norman Lindsay, Len Annois, Clifton Pugh, Max Meldrum, Jan Scheltema, Hans Heysen, Sydney Long, Lloyd Rees, Leonard French, Rupert Bunny and others. The University of Melbourne has the policy of continuing to display this collection in the building for which it was created – the former Melbourne Teachers' College (a fine Dutch-style building prominently located on Grattan Street, now known as 'The 1888 Building' after the year in which it was completed), just as the F.M. Courtis Collection is still mostly displayed in Bendigo campus's Education Building.

Like the La Trobe University Art Collection, the F.M. Courtis Collection includes some portraits of individuals associated with the Bendigo institution and these add to its historical significance. One example is the portrait of Professor Max McKay, first director of the merged Bendigo College of Advanced Education, by Sir William Dargie, one of Australia's most acclaimed portraitists, whose first major art prize was the Bendigo Art Prize awarded by the Bendigo Art Gallery.⁵⁷⁴ McKay's portrait has hung for many years in the Health Sciences Building, where the major lecture theatre is called the McKay Lecture Theatre.⁵⁷⁵ Similarly, a portrait of former Anglican Bishop of Bendigo Oliver Heyward, by Peter Wegner, hangs in the entrance of the Heyward Library.⁵⁷⁶



Figure 44: Roger Kemp, *Climax* (1965). F.M. Courtis Collection. Hanging in the Education Building, Bendigo campus.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

7.6.2 The F.M. Courtis Collection: artistic/aesthetic significance

The works that now make up the F.M. Courtis Collection were selected largely by the collection's four first curators: F.M. Courtis (from the 1950s until about 1964), Bryan Clemson (1964–1976), Lyndon Langan (1976–1990) and John Higgs (from 1990 until he retired in 2002).⁵⁷⁷ Each of these four men was professionally involved in art and art education, and their expertise is reflected in the calibre of the works acquired. As outlined in Section 5.6 above, they wanted to gather together works of quality and variety, created by artists whom they felt showed promise or were already achieving recognition, and who through their mastery of technique and their ideas would be useful in educating teachers in training. Although these curators were discerning in their choice of artists, the limited acquisition budget meant that Bendigo could generally not afford their largest or most important or characteristic works.

Nevertheless, artists were keen to be represented in the F.M. Courtis Collection.⁵⁷⁸ Although this was partly due to the fact that their work would be exposed to young teachers who would go on to influence the taste of generations of students, it is also a tribute to the intrinsic quality of the collection. It is also important to note that the collection was largely assembled when high-quality works by established or emerging Australian artists could still be purchased at much lower prices than is generally the case today,⁵⁷⁹ and that many artists reduced their prices even further in order to be represented in this permanent collection. Although it was often necessary to acquire an artist's smaller or lesser works due to relatively limited funds, it is unlikely that a tertiary institution could start creating a collection of this quality today without a very significant source of money.

Doug Hall, former director of the Bendigo Art Gallery (and subsequently director of the Queensland Art Gallery) wrote in 1986 that the F.M. Courtis Collection 'now has works which can be regarded as outstanding examples by some of Australia's best known twentieth century painters'.⁵⁸⁰ A recent report on the collection by collections professional Karen Annett-Thomas states that 'This important and highly regarded resource provides the opportunity for students to have intimate contact with high quality artworks by significant Australian artists including Fred Williams, Grace Cossington-Smith, John Olsen, Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton and Leonard French.'⁵⁸¹

The very first work acquired, Arthur Boyd's *Grampians landscape*, purchased by Courtis from Australian Galleries in December 1958, has been described as 'the outstanding work in the collection' and as its 'lynchpin'.⁵⁸² Castlemaine Gallery director Peter Perry recalled:

Fred [Courtis] showed me what quality was and not just the names of artists. He taught me to see for myself and to analyse a painting by [...] observing the composition, color, tone, arrangement and all those things that make up a great work. [...] The art works which most impressed me at the College are superb examples of the artists' work and they influence[d] me to pursue a career working with art works. [...] This collection is a tribute to an astute collector who had vision at an early period to build a quality collection with a tiny budget so the students could benefit by looking at works of art instead of blank walls as they commuted from lectures. It certainly rubbed off on me.⁵⁸³

Six works that Perry named as being of particular distinction are Arthur Boyd's *Grampians landscape*, Leonard French's *The legend*, Fred William's *Nude*, Grace Cossington-Smith's *The lilies*, Arnold Shore's *Red gum corroborree*, and William Frater's *A dry creek bed* and *Jessica*.⁵⁸⁴ The Dale Hickey painting *Suburbia [Malvern]* was a key work in the seminal exhibition *The Field* that opened the new National Gallery of Victoria in St Kilda Road in 1968; indeed it appeared on the cover of the exhibition catalogue.⁵⁸⁵ Of the Aboriginal works in the collection, the finest is said to be the bark painting *Two rainbow serpents* (c. 1980) by West Arnhem Land artist Fred Didjbarakka Naroldol Dirdi (Kunwinjku), (b. 1920).⁵⁸⁶ Works are regularly requested for loan for various exhibitions, by museums including LUMA, Bendigo

Art Gallery, Bundoora Homestead Art Centre and Wangaratta Art Gallery.⁵⁸⁷ Students and staff feel a sense of pride when works from 'their' collection go out on loan.⁵⁸⁸

Although conservation treatment has been carried out on individual works from time to time, further assessment and preservation are needed. In particular, some works on paper and textiles have been on display for long periods, leading to excessive light exposure. As is normally the case for university campus collections, the buildings in which the works are displayed have only office-standard air conditioning, not full museum-standard temperature and humidity control. The storeroom is rather crowded and college staff have started leaving non-collections items there, turning it into a general store (Figure 45). A large painting with mould on the back of the canvas is also lying in the store.



Figure 45: Collection storeroom, Bendigo campus. ✨

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

A large macrame work by textile artist Mary Clemson (wife of former curator of the collection, Bryan Clemson) has been on open display directly opposite a large window for many years, and is very dusty (Figure 46). The *Phoenix rising* sculpture in the main stairwell is also extremely dusty. To clean this would require a scissor lift or similar due to its high position (Figure 52).



Figure 46: Mary Clemson, *Artuform* (n.d.). F.M. Courtis Collection. Hanging opposite a large window in the Education Building, Bendigo campus.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

7.6.3 The F.M. Courtis Collection: research and teaching potential

The history of the F.M. Courtis Collection as a whole has been well researched in recent years by Penelope Collet, and has led to several journal articles,⁵⁸⁹ various exhibitions including one with a substantial catalogue,⁵⁹⁰ and a book on the history of the collection, based on Collet's dissertation.⁵⁹¹

However, it appears that there has been relatively little research published on individual artworks in the collection. Some have been loaned for exhibitions at other institutions and have presumably been published in accompanying catalogues. But otherwise there seems to be significant scope for research on these works, many of which are by highly regarded Australian artists. Generally the provenance of the works has been recorded, and a recent review found a modest quantity of archival paperwork (about two filing cabinet drawers full), which should be reconciled and recorded on the database.⁵⁹²

Works from the collection are actively used in the 'Art Slice' Program for students undertaking primary school teaching degrees at Bendigo. Students divide into small groups, each choosing an artwork to research: the work itself, the artist, the genre. They must discover some new information. Then they select a small area of the work (the 'slice') and from that generate a new artwork. Over several years this has generated a significant body of research on the art, which could be published online in some form, perhaps as a digital archive linked to an online catalogue. Adding a QR Code (matrix barcode) to the wall label for the artwork would enable visitors to read this information instantaneously. Also, this close examination of a work gives the students an 'almost forensic' knowledge of the work, to the level of close familiarity with brushstrokes, which when they are in the classroom helps them encourage small children to 'really explore art media'.⁵⁹³

Another way the collection could be used is to help teach students 'storyboarding': using thumbnail sketches to plot out an entire narrative. This is also useful in digital media studies.⁵⁹⁴

In discussing works that Bendigo staff find particularly useful for teaching, Simon O'Mallon nominated Elaine Hexton's *Girl with a kite* – when closely examined you can see how she laboured over the painting and changed its composition – overpainted elements are still visible through the paint layers and this is very useful for students to observe. He also nominated James Gleeson's tiny painting *Hercules*, and Arthur Boyd's *The Grampians*, which O'Mallon argues depicts (in an abstracted sense) people nestled into the landscape, revealing Boyd's burgeoning understanding of Indigenous people's close connection to the land.

David Beagley teaches children's literature and uses the collection extensively, as it contains some excellent examples of original works reproduced as children's book illustrations by leading illustrators such as Shaun Tan, Colin Lanceley, Terry Denton and Sharon Douglass. David finds these to be very useful as examples when discussing with students the different levels of expectations of the reader of different books. Also, staff in the past have displayed the original framed artworks on the wall, with the books featuring the published versions in a showcase below. Students immediately recognise the artworks because they have been using the published books in their courses. For instance, the mixed media work by Shaun Tan which includes a piece of architectural cast iron was the basis of an illustration for his book *Memorial*, about a boy and his grandfather and Anzac (Figure 47). It is useful when discussing with students the resurgence in Anzac commemoration in the 1990s. In this book Tan was just becoming known as an illustrator, and used a different medium for each illustration, to showcase his abilities. Bendigo campus has regularly hosted a children's literature conference, particularly in the late 1990s and early 2000s, which included an exhibition of illustrations in the Phyllis Palmer Gallery, and from which some works were purchased for the collection. Some of the artists commented that this was the first time their original works

had been acquired for a permanent public collection. These exhibitions have helped Bendigo staff form strong connections with children's book illustrators and David would like to acquire more examples, with a broader range of styles and artists.⁵⁹⁵ There is currently one hallway with some examples on display, but there is scope for improvement (Figure 48).



Figure 47: Shaun Tan, *Orange* (illustration for pages 12–13 of *Memorial*) (1988). F.M. Courtis Collection, purchased from 1998 Children's Literature Festival.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

Simon and David also believe that the students benefit both personally and educationally from the collection. They described the way it expands students' understanding and experience of art as 'monumental'. 'Looking at originals gives you the texture and immediacy that are never found in a reproduction. You can see the process. And also learn when to stop – learn how to know when a work is finished – don't keep fiddling with a painting. These are all important when teaching students'.⁵⁹⁶

David and Simon say that most students appreciate that it is worthwhile as a teacher to engage with art. Most Bendigo education graduates will go on to teach in regional areas, not Melbourne, and as a result of using the F.M. Courtis Collection will use their local regional gallery with their students.



Figure 48: Examples of original artwork for children’s book illustrations (F.M. Courtis Collection), on display in the Education Building, Bendigo campus.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

One impediment to using the F.M. Collection more actively for research and teaching is difficulty of access: the exhibition catalogue is not published online. There are some published exhibition catalogues,⁵⁹⁷ but fully digitising the collection, checking, completing and updating the catalogue data (which runs on the KE Emu platform) and then publishing it online would significantly increase awareness. It is a relatively small collection (fewer than 350 works; the University of Melbourne Art Collection, by comparison, published its catalogue of more than 11,000 works online more than a decade ago), so this would not be an onerous undertaking. And while the project should be managed by professional collections staff, interested tertiary students could be recruited to assist, under supervision, with much of the research and data clean-up, gaining valuable direct experience in collection management and research. Of course, with a collection that is displayed in public buildings that are mostly unsecured during working hours, security must be considered before making information on individual works too widely available. It should be noted that most of the Courtis works on display are the Education Building which has had extra security measures installed.



Figure 49:



David Beagley and Simon O'Mallon would like to involve students in curating displays of works from the collection as part of their coursework, and have identified a space in the Education Building (currently a thoroughfare between Level 2 of the Arts Building and Level 3 of the Education Building, see Figure 50) that they propose converting into a small gallery for this purpose. There are also discussions of teaching curatorial studies at Bendigo; these students could curate themed exhibitions for their placements, to which Education students could respond as part of their coursework. However, they feel that to resource this and other teaching projects would require additional staff, in particular the appointment of a curator responsible for the collection.



Figure 50: Lecturer David Beagley in the thoroughfare that might be suitable for conversion to a small gallery for student-curated exhibitions, drawing on the F.M. Courtis Collection.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

7.6.4 The F.M. Courtis Collection: community significance

The reasons for the F.M. Courtis Collection's historical significance are also relevant to its community significance, given that it developed relatively recently – in the second half of the 20th century. The collection is of community significance to the Bendigo campus's internal community (staff, students, alumni) and to the broader Bendigo public.

A former curator of the collection, Bryan Clemson, neatly summed up in 2000 the concept of the collection's community significance, in a way that is relevant today because works from the collection are displayed for the enjoyment and benefit of the current generation of students, staff and the public:

What the college has done [is to put] in front of people artwork, and it is with them all the time. Now the funny part about it is that people going past it all the time, they own it, you own it. It is part of you. It is part of your life. It is part of the way you will evolve. It is going to be [one of the] things that you take away from here and you are going to have a lot of pride in ownership of it.

[...]

Over time, the students and the staff mentally owned the works of art, and in conversation it was common to hear from staff and students a comment like: 'In our collection we have a Drysdale' or 'Bendigo's Leonard French is much superior to Ballarat's Leonard French'.⁵⁹⁸

Clemson's successor, Lyndon Langan, recalled:

Now the philosophy that I took over as head of art education in a teachers' education area was that if you surround beginning teachers with lovely things, some of that aesthetic will rub off. And we were all very keen to have our beginning teachers teaching art to children because we had a firm belief in what art can do for growing kids. That underlying philosophy⁵⁹⁹ kept the collection out in the halls, and not in staff offices, and kept the collection in the forefront of the public.

Bendigo campus staff mentioned that a group of volunteer gallery guides from the Bendigo Art Gallery recently came on a tour of the collection; although mostly senior in years, some of them had trained at the Bendigo Teachers' College and still remembered some of the works.⁶⁰⁰

The significant number of artworks on display in public areas throughout all levels of the Education Building (and to a lesser degree the Business Building) at Bendigo mean that the F.M. Courtis Collection has a strong presence and contributes significantly to the environment. This is consistent with the intentions of its founder. For instance, the symbol of Bendigo Teachers' College after World War II was a phoenix rising from the ashes (the college magazine was also named *The Phoenix*), and in 1960 a sculpture of an elongated phoenix, by Geelong artist Max Lyle, was commissioned and installed in the college buildings at Osborne Street; it 'was an important symbol for the college for many years'.⁶⁰¹ The sculpture was known colloquially as 'the strangled rooster',⁶⁰² and today hangs in the main stairwell of the Education Building (Figure 52). On the adjacent wall hangs the Leonard French triptych *The Legend* (Figure 51), which was purchased with funds donated by students. It has been recently cleaned. Both these works are seen by virtually everyone using the Education Building.⁶⁰³ But almost every main wall in the Education Building has art: students and staff routinely walk past works by artists of the calibre of Sidney Nolan, Grace Cossington-Smith, Fred Williams, Arthur Boyd, George Bell and Roger Kemp (Figure 44). Simon O'Mallon recalls his first day as a lecturer at Bendigo (in 2007), when he was immediately struck by the quality of the artworks on display as soon as he entered the building.⁶⁰⁴



Figure 51: Leonard French, *The legend* (1954). F.M. Courtis Collection. Shown hanging in the main stairwell of the Education Building, Bendigo campus.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.



Figure 52: Max Lyle, *Phoenix rising* (1963). F.M. Courtis Collection. Shown hanging in the main stairwell of the Education Building, Bendigo campus.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, January 2017.

Strong connections between the F.M. Courtis Collection and the Bendigo Art Gallery were forged from the earliest days of the Bendigo Teachers' College's efforts to acquire works, and this has come full circle with La Trobe University's emphasis on teaching studio art at Bendigo campus and the establishment of the La Trobe Art Institute. When Dale Hickey's historically significant painting *Suburbia [Malvern]* was displayed at La Trobe University Art Museum on the Bundoora campus in 2015, social media responses included several comments to the effect of 'I wondered where that went! Missed it from the halls in Bendigo!'⁶⁰⁵

The exhibition *Landmarks and Milestones: Fifty Years of the FM Courtis Collection*, held at the Bendigo Art Gallery in 2008, drew favourable publicity in both the local and Melbourne media,⁶⁰⁶ and the catalogue sold well. A curator's floor talk attracted many alumni of the Bendigo Teachers' College. Unfortunately, Fred Courtis was unable to attend due to ill health (he died later that year), but many of his family members were present.⁶⁰⁷ Perhaps the community significance of the F.M. Courtis Collection was best summed up in 1986 by Max McKay, director of the Bendigo College of Advanced Education:

Often, in the heat of the daily matters which affect us all, we tend to overlook our closeness to its history and the richness to the culture of our growing traditions for the people of Bendigo and Northern Victoria. [...] Each work of Art in this teaching collection possesses a unique story. [...] We are very proud of our hard won, well-used and well-loved collection.⁶⁰⁸

Staff at Bendigo report that the students feel 'a real sense of ownership' of the collection, that there has never been a theft, and that any damage has been accidental. Even today, the majority of students studying at Bendigo are the first generation in their family to attend university. Working and studying in a milieu surrounded by art by important Australian artists tells the students that these artists are also 'just people'; that this art is 'yours' – it is 'democratising' and brings the making of art within the students' grasp. This is very powerful for teachers. Having the collection on display means that La Trobe is giving these young people the courtesy and respect of offering them original works for their use and enjoyment. Staff also believe that if there were an agreed acquisitions policy and process, and the collection were seen as a working collection and were better promoted, then students, alumni, staff and local businesspeople would contribute funds to buy works, as the collection is 'highly valued in the region'. It is seen on campus by about 1000 students at a time (intake of 250 each year for four-year courses) and so they become very familiar with the art: 'If you ask a student "What is your favourite artwork?" everyone has one. And every staff member would have a favourite'. Former students always ask about the collection: 'Have you still got the artworks?' and visitors are very surprised to find a collection of this calibre on a rural campus. The collection could also help attract international students, who are already intrigued by a campus where kangaroos are in residence on the grounds. One area of the

collection that is relatively weak is the number and quality of outdoor sculptures; some acquisitions of this type could make a great difference to the campus environment.⁶⁰⁹

Another element of community significance is the inclusion of works by Bendigo-region artists, or works depicting the Bendigo region or activities important to it, such as gold mining: S.T. Gill's *Bendigo from road to Eaglehawk*; William Gleeson's *Old gold diggings Bendigo*; G.G. Darvall's *The home of the wombat, Whipstick, Eaglehawk*, William Delecca's *Fosterville landscape*, and Kenneth Jack's paintings of the Coliban River, to name only a few.⁶¹⁰ George Ross Pitkethly (1876–1974) had been head of drawing at the Bendigo School of Mines around the turn of the 20th century. His *Bendigo poppet head* (1920) depicts a recognisable local landmark relating to the founding industry of Bendigo: mining. It was donated in 1992 by the artist's daughter, Lorna Pitkethly, when she was an elderly woman.⁶¹¹

Respondents to a recent survey of university arts infrastructure suggested that the community outreach role is particularly important in Australia's regional areas, partly because our national arts infrastructure is highly centralised (compared, for example, with Europe):

The university [...] interface with the community is incredibly important in Australia, particularly in regions. [...] that is one of the things about Australia that is unusual [...] perhaps it is not research, perhaps it is not teaching, but it is a very particular, valuable, extensive and detailed community service. The interface between the arts and the community. If that wasn't there, the country wouldn't look like that at all.⁶¹²

8 Discussion

As explained throughout this report, the significance of the La Trobe University collections is to a very large extent the result of the collections' multiple and intertwining connections to place: that is, to their respective campuses (Bundoora and Bendigo), and to a lesser extent to their surrounding communities. This web of connections contributes to both their historical and community significance.

These strong connections can be exploited for the benefit of La Trobe, its local and extended communities, and of the collections themselves. All those individuals consulted for this report felt that their involvement with or use of the collections had been worthwhile. They believed that the collections play a part in the public image or reputation of La Trobe University, and that there is further scope for the collections to help attract students, staff, benefactors or others to the university. Dr Joan Barclay Lloyd, for example, wrote:

I believe the collections play a part in the public image and reputation of La Trobe University, showing its commitment to the field of the visual arts and the history of Australian and other cultures. (To make a comparison, I often go to the University of Melbourne to see exhibitions at the Ian Potter Museum of Art and in the Baillieu Library, which enhance my opinion of that university. I believe that if La Trobe retains its commitment to collecting and displaying significant works of art, other people will value the cultural impact of this university in the same way.)

[...]

It seems obvious that staff and students could be attracted to the university by the fact that it takes the trouble to have good art collections. (Some students and scholars come from overseas to study in the Trendall Centre, where that collection is important.) Some works of art have been donated to the university by benefactors and by the artists themselves. To see them displayed is always satisfying to them, and could encourage other people to donate to the university.

[...]

I think that the university could make greater use of the collections by having regular exhibitions of the works of art that are well publicized. As the collections become better known, through exhibitions and publications of various kinds about them, people within and outside the university would wish to make greater use of them.⁶¹³

Similarly, donor Charles Nodrum wrote: 'success breeds success, so the better the collection the more potential donors will respond'.⁶¹⁴ Former curator Dr Alana O'Brien wrote:

The University administrators should make much more of the University Art Collection on the Bundoora/Melbourne campus, through the construction of an art precinct

containing at its core an Art Museum. Such a location would be ideal for entertaining/attracting potential donors to the University and maintaining the interest and support of current donors.

Events/classes organized in a more accessible Art Museum with the nearby schools would raise the profile of the University with a core-audience that the University naturally wishes to engage. A cultural precinct would also contain a theatre in which not only University productions could be held, but that would also be a draw card for the local community – school groups, local theatre and dance schools etc. The engagement of school aged members from the surrounding community with structures on the University grounds would assist in developing essential bonds with young individuals, potentially impacting on their decision regarding later University choice.⁶¹⁵

Lucy Ellem, who was a lecturer, then senior lecturer, in the Art History Department between 1973 and 2003, wrote:

I have used the collections [the Art Collection, Sculpture Park and Trendall Collection] for recreation, enjoyment, teaching. Great joy from this collection, especially the way the collection has been displayed in the Library and around the campus and the development of the Sculpture Park in recent decades. Such a high quality, and publicly accessible collection adds greatly to the richness of intellectual life at La Trobe's Bundoora campus.⁶¹⁶

The multi-layered web of connections that has grown and strengthened over the decades between each collection and its campus of origin is the key to the historical and community significance of the collections now owned by La Trobe University. I believe that these links should be maintained, documented and nurtured, in order to preserve the collections' significance into the future. Severing them by wholesale relocation of a collection is likely to lead to loss of information and corporate memory (and thus of some their research and teaching potential), and of organisational and individual commitment and support. To support these efforts, the large quantity of information about various collection items that is held on early La Trobe administrative files and in exhibition catalogues should be systematically added to the collection database.

This applies equally to the Bundoora and Bendigo campuses. Penelope Collet, the curator and historian of Bendigo's F.M. Curtis Collection, argued along these lines in 2012 (in relation to Bendigo):

With the death of Curtis in 2008, there has been a concern that much of the collection's history might be lost with his passing.

The growing sense of distance between the Bendigo education community and La Trobe University management in Melbourne has also been seen as a threat because management decisions that are made in Melbourne may not involve an awareness of the

particular importance of the collection to the identity and heritage of the Bendigo campus. The opportunity to present and publish papers on the collection research and on the Bendigo Art Gallery/university partnership in Europe as well as Australia has allowed an international dissemination of the research results. It has also firmly established Bendigo as the home of the collection and the Education Faculty Bendigo as the source of the scholarship and authority on the collection. It is hoped that now, when important decisions are to be made about the art collection, this will be the authority to which management will defer.⁶¹⁷

This sense of threat from the Bundoora campus has a long history. Simon O'Mallon (who started working at Bendigo in 2007) and David Beagley (started 1990) stated that for the last 26 years (ever since Bendigo first affiliated with La Trobe in 1991), there has been:

a constant fear of conspiracy and takeover, which in some cases was well founded, especially when decisions were being made at Bundoora. [...] Bendigo has a larger education department than Bundoora, but all decisions are made at Bundoora. There should be recognition that what is done here is of value, and has a much longer history.⁶¹⁸

Local staff at Bendigo worry if they notice that a work in their area has been taken off display, as the paintings are an important feature of their workplace, and staff are not always given any explanation for such moves. They feel that greater transparency is needed: 'who is making decisions about the collection, and on what basis?'⁶¹⁹ However, it is important to note that Bendigo staff are pleased to hear that the F.M. Curtis Collection will receive greater curatorial care and attention now that it is to be actively managed by the La Trobe Art Institute. Showcasing the collection in temporary displays at VAC and through loans to other museums is supported, but staff feel strongly that the collection should continue to be displayed on a permanent basis in its traditional buildings on the Flora Hill campus.

Regarding the Bundoora campus, on the other hand, I found during my consultations that there is suspicion and cynicism about the motives behind recent decisions, reinforced by a perceived lack of genuine consultation and distrust in the process. One informant said:

This consultation seems to be coming after the fact, and I feel that we've not been sufficiently informed about the impact of the move of the collection [...] as a staff member, I have been consulted, but general staff and students have no idea about the impact of closing the gallery and relocating the collection to Bendigo. This is wrong. It is a significant loss to the campus. Past, present and future students should have a say. I feel this consultation will make absolutely no difference.⁶²⁰

Many of the discussions revealed a level of dismay, sometimes anger, at the recent decision to close LUMA and proposals to relocate Bundoora's art collection to Bendigo. Several respondents commented that nearly all other universities have art collections and museums.

For instance, William Nuttall of Niagara Galleries (who has been donating works to La Trobe since the early 1980s) wrote:

I think all collections are significant. They are part of our cultural heritage and all self-respecting universities have a responsibility to be part of that [...] It would be a great shame if the Latrobe University Collection wasn't attached to university campuses in Bendigo and Melbourne. All self-respecting universities in Melbourne have active art collections and art programs.⁶²¹

Mr Nuttall believed that collections 'definitely' play a part in the public image or reputation of La Trobe, and that they already help, or could help, attract students, staff, benefactors or others.⁶²² Similarly, former LUMA curator Dr Alana O'Brien wrote:

Over the last decade, American Universities have increasingly understood the critical importance of the arts – especially art collections and suitable, easily accessible art museums – for developing a critical edge against their competitors in this progressively global world. The La Trobe University Art Collection certainly plays an important role in the public image and reputation of La Trobe University. The University itself uses images of the artworks (both directly and indirectly) in various promotional materials.

The University's future use, misuse, or abandonment of the La Trobe University art collection, or stripping the campuses of artworks could certainly have a negative effect on the University's public image or reputation.

The presence of art around the campus presents students with new ideas, challenges them with alternate perspectives, creates dialogue beyond the discipline in which their studies might be focused. If La Trobe University wants to have students who are creative thinkers, individuals who think outside the box, then art should be made even more prominent on the campuses.⁶²³

Lucy Ellem also noted the reputational potential of the collections:

The collections play a significant part in the public image and reputation of La Trobe University, especially among the arts community.

Definitely believe it attracts benefactions. It would form part of the attraction for art history scholars to work here. But it is not well publicised – students generally don't know about it before they experience it here.

Certainly the University could publicise the collection better. Unfortunately Art History is no longer taught at LTU Bundoora. It could be used as an adjunct to teaching by other Humanities disciplines.⁶²⁴

Ms Sandra Nicholson, President of the Art History Chapter of La Trobe University Alumni, said:

I understand art collections. There might be things that aren't of significance individually, but if it is a donated work, they [staff of La Trobe University] should go back to the donor and ask if they are happy for it to be moved. My dissatisfaction is with the process and the way it has been undertaken. Although they claim the alumni are important to the university, it is as though our thoughts don't matter to the uni.

[...]

For the 50th anniversary [of La Trobe University] we [Art History Alumni] wanted to raise money to digitise the Bundoora Collection [...] to connect to the LUMA website. But this has been knocked on the head. Students and staff had donated works and the digitisation project would also involve research [into provenance]; it would improve access and give information back to donors. We found \$12,500; \$5,000 was coming from ADFAS [Association of Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Societies] but since the closure of LUMA it has been reallocated. \$7,500 was from a private donor – we have advised the donor the project is not going ahead.

[...]

We were also considering commissioning an Ash Keating mural on the LUMA wall. And we wanted to help market LUMA, especially to local schools, many of which are disadvantaged.

[...]

LUMA was our spiritual home – we were integrated into it – we were part of the communications for LUMA – we put forward names of people to curate exhibitions (such as suggesting contributors for the exhibition *E(migrate)*).⁶²⁵

In discussions with various staff, alumni and others with an interest in the collection, several mentions were made of the incongruity of launching the proposed exhibition celebrating the 50th anniversary of La Trobe University at Bendigo, where it has only a recent presence, rather than at its original campus of Bundoora.

A sense of uncertainty about the future of the collection at Bundoora seems to be leading to hesitation among previous supporters to continue their involvement with La Trobe. One of the most generous donors to the collection over many decades, Charles Nodrum, responded to the question 'Do you have plans to use the collections in the future' as follows: 'if possible – once the Bendigo amalgamation has been clarified and resolved, [...] by] continuing to lend and donate where and when appropriate'.⁶²⁶ He originally lent works for the purpose of enriching the campus – there was no gallery at La Trobe at the time – and he still believes this is very important, citing for instance the display of high-value artworks in the Chancellery

area of the David Myers Building: 'It would be terrible to walk into an area like that and not see any pictures [...] it would not enhance the general feel of the place [...] I like works to be on campus, not all locked into a gallery'. However, he noted that the Bendigo space [VAC] is larger and better equipped than the old LUMA and is a good venue for exhibitions.⁶²⁷

William Nuttall, when asked if his involvement with the collection has been worthwhile, replied: 'Yes, my involvement with the collection had been worthwhile but this ended when Vincent Alessi ceased as director'. When asked whether he plans to continue to use the collections in the future he responded 'One can't say – it depends on what direction the collection takes'.⁶²⁸

Some people expressed concern that the new *LTU Art Strategy* seems to be 'all centred on Bendigo', and that 'neglecting Bundoora for the sake of Bendigo is problematic and strategically flawed'. One said that 'LUMA was small and inaccessible but at least it was a presence; there are more artists living in the northern suburbs of Melbourne than any other area in Melbourne. The university should serve this community.' There were other comments along these lines, from different people, such as:

The art collection is what sets us apart from other universities – this art collection is not a teaching one – La Trobe University was meant to enrich the lives of a particular section of the community – La Trobe is the only university to have a charter – the university should stop apologising for being out in Bundoora – the student surveys all comment on how beautiful the campus is.

The closure of LUMA, following the closure of Art History and before that the closure of the Music Department, is all a great loss to the university and its reputation; People respected what LUMA did.

The collections have been hidden under a bushel, under-exploited due to budgetary constraints.

Having an art gallery as part of a network of university galleries is important. Every other university in Melbourne has a gallery. Now we don't. They do intelligent, curated shows. Now we are one asset down in comparison to other universities.

Long-term donors of artworks gave to the Bundoora campus, not to Bendigo, with which they have no association. Donors and collectors are very picky about what they support. Moving the collection is breaking old ties – breaking a contract with donors. They were endowing this campus. It's our students' heritage.

Closing LUMA was a cost-driven decision. They don't understand how it may impoverish the life and experience of the campus. It was asset stripping.

Respondents were not suggesting that there should not be cooperation between the Bundoora and Bendigo campuses, and the other regional campuses. There is a solid history

of lending works and sending touring exhibitions, especially from Bundoora. There have also been joint exhibitions of the Bundoora and F.M. Curtis Collections.⁶²⁹ Such exchanges are beneficial to all sides and should continue. According to Mr Nodrum, some donors have little interest in what happens to works once they have been donated; they would have no objection to a recipient such as La Trobe University moving works between campuses, as long as they are properly managed and cared for. But my discussions revealed that some people feel that each institution's historic sense of 'ownership' over its collections should be acknowledged, respected and taken into account in management decisions. In particular, the long-term home of each collection should not be changed, as this would diminish the community significance of each collection.

However, storage is a problem that must be solved, as identified in the *LTU Art Strategy*.⁶³⁰ On the Bundoora campus, existing storage space for artworks is inadequate, with crowded conditions placing some works at risk of damage. Additional storage space, ideally of museum quality, is required for those works not on display. Constructing and operating stores of this standard is expensive. ✦

Access to information about the collection through better and more easily accessible information will help preserve the collections' historical and community significance, and their potential to support research and teaching. To achieve this, the collection database should be thoroughly reviewed and updated, with a view to accuracy and completeness of data. Information on works, donors, artists, exhibition history and other relevant subjects contained in administrative files, exhibition catalogues and elsewhere should be correlated and added to the database. All works should be illustrated by a high-quality image file (subject to copyright constraints) and the entire database should be made searchable online (subject to security considerations, especially in regard to the F.M. Curtis Collection). A stocktake of the La Trobe University Art Collection, as recommended in the *LTU Art Strategy*, will assist here, although I recommend that the stocktake be done with works across campus remaining on display, with the exception of works required for particular exhibitions or found to be needing conservation attention.

This catalogue upgrade would be a time-consuming project, needing adequate resourcing and expertise. Sources of support should be approached, such as philanthropic groups. Under experienced supervision, a program of internships for students of relevant humanities subjects could be set up to deal with some of this work, such as researching files for provenance, and general fact-checking.

Collections can be great assets for universities:

The hardest audience for university museums to engage is often the one closest at hand – university students. There is much competition for the time of our [...] students. Most work, at least part time, and they live in a large urban area. Studies show that most have not regularly attended a museum before they enter university. [...] our mission is to educate all students, not just those studying art or related disciplines.⁶³¹

Over the past few years, La Trobe University has been developing strategic plans and master plans that include an emphasis on the relationship between each campus and its surrounding community, and the need to provide facilities and amenities that serve both university staff and students, and local neighbours. The collections can support La Trobe in achieving such ambitions. For instance, the university's strategic plan (published 2015) sets out six main objectives, of which the fifth is:

Lively connected campuses

Our campuses will be beacons of research, learning, cultural and sporting activities that make our communities richer for La Trobe's presence.⁶³²

The section 'Our communities and campuses' includes the following statements:

Bundoora and Melbourne's north

Our Bundoora campus is the size of Melbourne's central business district. It makes a significant contribution to the success of Melbourne's North as a centre for employment, recreation, culture and lifelong learning. The Bundoora campus is a lively, active learning environment where students are engaged in a dynamic campus life that offers modern and innovative learning spaces. Under our new Campus Masterplan, we will develop the campus into a University Town.

[...]

Bendigo

La Trobe will play a central role in helping Bendigo realise its potential to become a great university city. [...] Through our cultural and community engagement, and the impact of our graduates and our research, we aim to be an iconic institution that attracts people to Bendigo and promotes the city nationally and internationally. We will continue to work with the region's local government, industry, business, arts organisations and community groups to enhance the attractiveness of Bendigo and contribute to the growth of the Greater Bendigo region.

We will make our facilities accessible to the community to 'blur the boundaries' between the University and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Albury-Wodonga

We will draw on our partnerships with the Wodonga City Council, Wodonga Chamber of Commerce, Hothouse Theatre, Murray United Football Club, Albury Wodonga Health and a range of local partners to enhance the student experience and promote learning opportunities that are unique to Albury-Wodonga.

[...]

We will continue to develop a fully integrated tertiary campus across both institutions with improved facilities, easier access, and more to grow [*sic*] our connections with local community members, including Indigenous communities.

Shepparton

Our campus provides a unique venue for arts and cultural events, building from our partnerships, including the Shepparton Festival. Our research includes research partnerships with the Multicultural Commission, and the Shepparton Art Museum, and our engagement with the strong local Indigenous community creates unique learning and research opportunities for students.

Mildura

Our key local arts and cultural initiatives will be built from our existing partnerships with Arts Mildura, Chances for Children and Cultivator. We will work with SuniTAFE to create shared and complementary facilities that enhance the experience for all students and build on the existing visual arts collaboration to plan the delivery of diploma/degree programs in education, health, business and community services.⁶³³

Consistent with these aims, the *Bendigo Flora Hill Campus Master Plan* (2015) states:

The new Master Plan [...] will see the University reaching out to embrace the community of Bendigo, as well as welcoming community members onto the campus.

Under the Plan, the Bendigo Flora Hill campus will be a place where students, staff and other community members come to study, work, research, live and socialise. It will be a vibrant cultural, sporting and entertainment precinct, open and active during the day and evening, seven days a week.⁶³⁴

La Trobe University will strengthen its presence in the whole of Bendigo, bringing art, performance, knowledge and intellect to the community.⁶³⁵

Arts and culture

The campus hosts the Phyllis Palmer gallery, which has been recently renovated to include high quality lighting. This gallery hosts exhibitions by La Trobe University's current students, graduates and alumni.

Located within the Visual Arts building, it is an introverted space: it has limited foot traffic from the general student population and is difficult to find for visiting members of the community. La Trobe University also has a presence in the cultural district of downtown Bendigo, with the Visual Arts Centre located opposite the popular Bendigo Art Gallery.

CAMPUS LIFE STRATEGY [...] VISION

Over the coming decades the campus will increasingly become a 'sticky campus' with staff, students and members of the community choosing to stay longer on campus to enjoy the cultural, social and sporting amenities. With improved public outdoor spaces, new hospitality offers and increased access to support services and informal study spaces, staff and students can experience a rich campus life.

[...]

DIRECTIONS

Arts and culture

- Consider relocating the Phyllis Palmer gallery to a more easily accessible location.
- Introduce an art and sculpture walk on campus to put student and alumni work on display.
- Consider introducing a display area in the library to bring student and alumni work to a larger audience.
- Improve connections between the campus and the Visual Arts Centre. Consider introducing a biennale between both sites.⁶³⁶

Greater use of the collections could help create the rich cultural environments that these documents envision, while also preserving the collections' link with their respective communities of origin. Staff at Bendigo commented on the need for more outdoor sculpture; the creation of the proposed 'art and sculpture walk' would help here. Display opportunities offered by these campus developments would also encourage greater use of the collections for research and teaching.

The use of the collections should be informed by a solid understanding of their history. Physical changes to the campuses can have implications for the significance of the collections. For instance, a few years ago the entrance to the Borchardt Library was relocated from the upper-level walkway to the ground level. The glass screen by Allen David was reconfigured and is now part of a wall in the Charles La Trobe Lounge (Figure 53). So, although this important artwork is still in place, its original context of greeting library visitors has been lost. As a consequence, its aesthetic and community significance have been diminished.

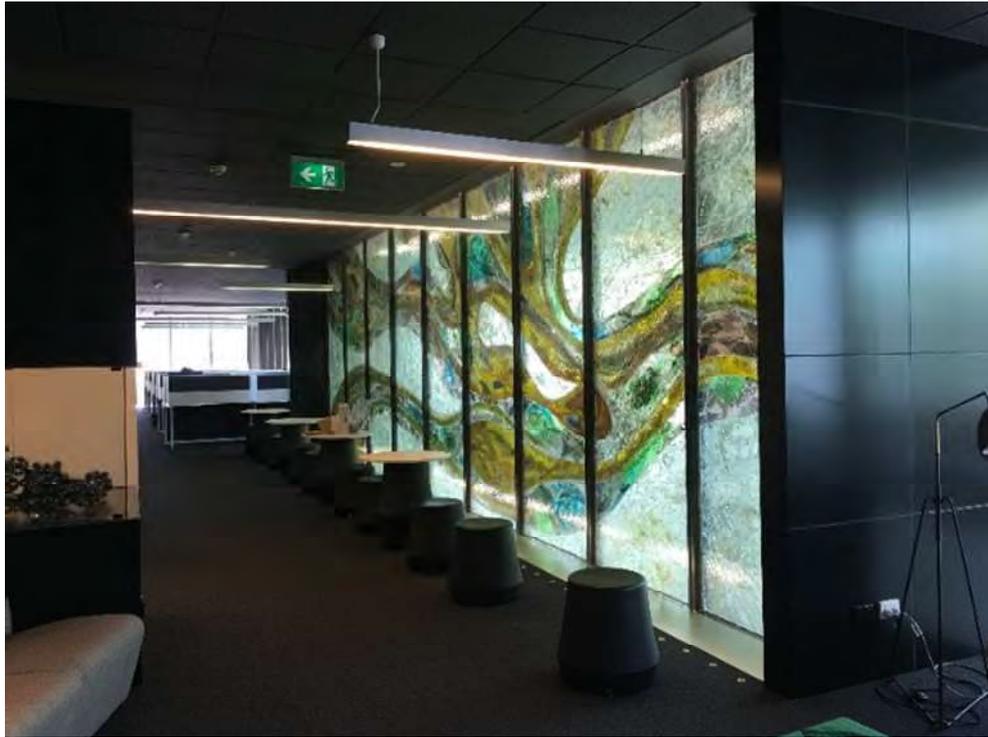


Figure 53: Allen David, *Untitled* (La Trobe University Library glass screen, 1967), now incorporated into the Charles La Trobe Lounge, Borchardt Library.

Photograph by B. Nemeč, December 2016.

Dr Caroline Jordan, who is researching mid-20th-century Australian university campus architecture and design, feels that this new layout for the glass screen was a mistake:

You no longer have the sense of moving past the screen – it had experiential intent, a bodily relationship with the work – this is lost now. I thought at the time that this was a real shame. This sort of thing is why we are doing our current project. As La Trobe is updated there needs to be an understanding of why the art is here, its history – it is all part of a particular vision of the first vice-chancellor and the master planner. La Trobe's layout was deliberately self-effacing. It doesn't announce itself to the outside. The centre (the Agora) is deliberately intimate. The original main entrance was a huge blank entry wall – this is why the Leonard French *Four seasons* windows and the sculpture of *Sofia* were installed – to humanise it.⁶³⁷

Dr Jordan expressed concern that this lack of understanding of a major artwork reflects a broader ignorance of the history of the campus and the intentions of its founders and designers:

La Trobe was a 'brown brick' university of the post-war period, expressing an ethos of widening access to education. University was not just for the ten per cent, but for the 80 per cent. For instance, women coming to university later in life – a wave of talent. There was a great expansion and these were the good years; money flowed and, for many, education was free. It was a time of Aboriginal rights, women's liberation, and

La Trobe is strongly linked with that. Democratisation is expressed in the architecture, as well as the use of native plants. La Trobe is proud of its Leftist political legacy but less understanding of how this is expressed in its art and architecture. Dale Trendall was harking back to ancient Greek democratic ideals when he named the Agora, Peribolos, etc. Artworks also were idealistic in this Cold War period, emphasising personal freedom, Western Enlightenment values. But this is unappreciated now – it's seen as too daggy and earnest. Changing the Allen David glass screen was a mistake that should not recur. We should celebrate the early public art of this campus, such as the Leonard French panels and the Inge King. There is not much of it, but this is all the more reason to treat it with respect.⁶³⁸

9 Recommendations

This report is not a management plan for the collections. However, some actions will serve to preserve, or increase, the significance of the collections, and so the following recommendations are included. Some of these are endorsements of particular actions that were proposed in July 2016 in the *LTU Art Strategy*, while others have arisen from my consultations and research while preparing this report.

9.1 Location

It is recommended that the La Trobe University Art Collection, the Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection, the Trendall Collection, the Ethnographic Collection and the Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection remain primarily on the Bundoora campus, and that the university continue to display artworks in buildings throughout the campus.

It is recommended that the F.M. Courtis Collection remain primarily on the Bendigo (Flora Hill) campus, and that it continue to be displayed in suitable buildings on campus.

9.2 Display

The proposal in the *LTU Art Strategy* to 'investigate the possibilities for a suitable location for an exhibition gallery at the Bundoora campus'⁶³⁹ is endorsed. Reviving gallery exhibitions will help to preserve the collections' community significance and exploit their potential for research and teaching. A permanent gallery space would also act as a hub for teaching, research and community involvement.

The proposal in the *LTU Art Strategy* to 'develop a proposal for an outdoor sculpture trail (aligned with the Bundoora campus Masterplan)'⁶⁴⁰ is endorsed. The trail was launched ten years ago as part of the university's 40th anniversary celebrations. The 50th anniversary is a good opportunity to update the current publication,⁶⁴¹ particularly given some significant acquisitions in recent years.

Exchanges and loans of individual artworks between all of La Trobe's campuses for the purposes of display should be encouraged.

9.3 Accessioning

Any works that have been accepted for the collection but not yet formally accessioned (for instance, remaining unaccessioned ceramics donated by Ms Anne Rutland and by the family of Etta Hirsh) should be numbered, catalogued, photographed and stored. Uncatalogued works may be vulnerable to loss or damage through poor location tracking and care, and cannot be found by catalogue users wishing to find items for research, teaching or display. Their significance is therefore at risk.

To help preserve the **integrity** of the Trendall Collection, original chattels in the apartment of Professor Dale Trendall, such as furniture, rugs and silverware, should be accessioned. These should remain in the apartment, preferably in their original locations within the apartment if this can be done while preserving their condition. However, items likely to suffer damage from regular use (e.g. chairs from sitting, rugs from walking), could be put aside to rooms or areas where they will not be regularly used. For special events and tours they could be put back into their original locations.

As mentioned in Section 4 above, it appears that La Trobe University holds other cultural material that is not part of any formal collection. It is possible that some of these items may be significant and should be managed by collection professionals, or could at least benefit from professional collection management advice. It is therefore recommended that the La Trobe Art Institute initiate an audit of all departments on all La Trobe campuses (initially by questionnaire) to identify and locate any such material, and then discuss with custodians the best way to proceed. It is possible that some items should be accessioned into the collection but remain in situ, such as the door painted by Mirka Mora located in the Chisholm College Art Centre.⁶⁴²

It is recommended that the negatives of the photographs by Wolfgang Sievers of the Bundoora site and subsequent construction, commissioned by architects Yuncken Freeman in 1965, be accessioned into the La Trobe University Art Collection and stored in secure museum storage.

9.4 Collection care

The proposal in the *LTU Art Strategy* to 'resolve collection storage requirements'⁶⁴³ is endorsed. 

The proposal in the *LTU Art Strategy* to 'ensure that the storage care and conservation for the Ethnographic Collection is consistent and ongoing and that consideration is given to its access and display within the University's programs'⁶⁴⁴ is endorsed.

For the F.M. Courtis Collection, implementing the recommendations of the report completed in 2016 by Dr Karen Annett-Thomas (see Appendix VI) would preserve and even increase the significance of the collection, through better conservation, documentation, display, interpretation, and use for teaching and research.⁶⁴⁵ It is therefore recommended that Dr Annett-Thomas' recommendations be implemented (although resourcing and staff arrangements would presumably need to be reviewed in light of the advent of the LAI and the *LTU Art Strategy*).

9.5 Documentation

Complete information is important to preserving the historical significance of collections, and to taking full advantage of their teaching and research potential. It is recommended that the collection database be thoroughly reviewed and updated, with a view to accuracy and completeness, and made available online (subject to security considerations). A stocktake, as recommended in the *LTU Art Strategy*, will contribute to this task, although I recommend that works across campus be left on display, except for those needed for particular exhibitions or needing conservation attention.

10 Coda

As described earlier in this report, the La Trobe University Art Collection was conceived not as a teaching collection, nor as a museum or gallery collection, but as a campus collection. The most eloquent explication of this that I have been able to find was written by Dr Christopher Heathcote.

After studying painting at Prahran CAE, completing his undergraduate degree (BA Hons 1987) at the University of Melbourne, then his PhD at La Trobe University (1992), Dr Heathcote has gone on to become a respected art critic, writer and curator.⁶⁴⁶ I quote at some length his praise for the art collection at La Trobe (and the contrast with other universities), written in 2004 (although it should be noted that some of his comments about other universities not displaying their collections may be less true today):

The university experience involves much more than a routine of lectures and tutorials. [For many Australians] it is when they begin to think independently, enter into mature social and emotional relationships, decide what sort of future they want, start to consider the world of human affairs; in short, it is when they 'grow up'. [...] One of my own most vivid student memories [at the University of Melbourne] is of the wall behind my literature tutor's desk, for it was hung with a serene abstraction by a major artist, its joyous colours almost throbbing in the soft afternoon light as we mused over Elizabethan verse. We never discussed that painting; I can't recall us ever referring to it in tutes. But looking at it each week, really looking, soaking it up, an essential part of my education most definitely took place.

I should explain that my undergraduate years were spent at a university [the University of Melbourne] which locked away its art collection. The works were considered too valuable to be shown outside the campus gallery and the rooms of a few favoured academics. It was a very grand collection, we were assured, but there might as well have been no art collection at all, because much of it was deposited in vaults. Benefactors would donate works to the university; yet, after a token showing in its gallery these splendid objects were spirited off never to be seen again by the *hoi polloi*. Not that anyone thought this odd, because there was a dungeon crammed with art beneath nearly every so-called ivory tower in Australia.

Imagine my delight when I arrived at La Trobe University (where I had landed a gig as a part-time tutor) and the museum staff got in touch to ask if I would like a work of art in the office. Of course I would. Soon a superb geometric painting by George Johnson and a remarkable early John Olsen [...] were gracing my wall. And I used them when teaching, too, much to the delight of my art history students.

In the following weeks, as I got to know the layout of the campus, I found works of art all over the place [...] There seemed to be art everywhere – even the main bus stop was blessed with a suite of stained glass abstractions by Len French!

John Waterhouse and Rhonda Noble, the successive directors of La Trobe University's Art Museum [...] both resolutely believed that a university should do its utmost to put works of art where they would be daily seen by all who use the campus [...] – they believed it their duty to place original works directly before students, staff and visitors [...] to make art an inseparable part of the university experience: accessibility was the watchword.

[...] Like books, it is pointless possessing works of art if you are not going to use them, to learn from them and grow. Many universities loudly boast of their fine collections, although for the most part they mindlessly hoard art, depositing it in storerooms for decades rather than intelligently using the works on an ongoing basis. [...]

One thing I have realised about La Trobe as I have criss-crossed the country working as a critic, curator and historian, is that it is unique among Victoria's universities in what it does with its art collection. It alone recognises that if works of art are to stimulate and enrich the intellectual, imaginative and cultural life of the university, they must be seen by students, and staff, and visitors. They must be used.

La Trobe University has put that belief into daily action. I can think of no greater reason to praise this collection, the generous Benefactors who have contributed to it, and the various staff who have supervised it, since its inception four decades ago.⁶⁴⁷

To close, I quote the vice-chancellor of La Trobe University, Professor John Dewar, who wrote in 2012:

The founders of La Trobe University believed it important that students be surrounded by art. They believed that art should be accessible and understood its role in enriching the student experience. Today I feel so grateful that our founders had the wisdom and foresight to establish this fine art collection. It is our duty to ensure their legacy prevails for future generations of La Trobe students.⁶⁴⁸

Appendix I: Other Australian university museums and collections⁶⁴⁹

University art collections

National

Australian Catholic University

Seven campuses across Australia; galleries in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne: number of works not known as collection not fully catalogued, but encompasses 'religious art, sacred art, Indigenous art, historical art, contemporary art, decorative art, sculpture, paintings and works on paper'.⁶⁵⁰

University of Notre Dame

Fremantle, Broome and Sydney campuses: number of works not known; Indigenous art collection includes at least 35 Aboriginal painting from the Kimberley;⁶⁵¹ also public artworks on Christian themes.⁶⁵²

ACT

Australian National University Art Collection

Founded in 1949 and now containing 'more than 2,400 paintings, sculptures, drawings, limited edition prints, ceramic and glass objects by significant artists'.⁶⁵³ Significant items include icons of Australian art and monumental sculptures.⁶⁵⁴ Displays around campus (including a sculpture walk) and in the Drill Hall Gallery.

University of Canberra

Founded (as collection of Canberra CAE) in 1969; now contains approximately 700 works, focusing on Australian artists with connections to Canberra region and Australian Indigenous artists. Media include painting, photography, textiles, sculpture, ceramics, prints, drawings.⁶⁵⁵

New South Wales

Charles Sturt University Art Collection

2575 works;⁶⁵⁶ established in 1996, by bringing together artworks collected over decades by the university's precursor educational institutions (the earliest part going back to 1950).⁶⁵⁷ Focus is 20th-century Australian prints, but there are other works, including commissioned portraits of office-bearers. Of particular significance are works by Frank Hinder, Julie Dowling and Rah Fizzelle.⁶⁵⁸ Works are displayed in public areas across the university's many campuses.⁶⁵⁹

Macquarie University Art Gallery

Number of works not stated recently but was about 500 in 1998.⁶⁶⁰ Established in 1967; includes Australian and international modernist works but emphasises contemporary

Australian art practice, with artists such as Bronwyn Bancroft, Marion Borgelt, Arthur Boyd, John Brack, Lawrence Daws, William Dobell, Ian Fairweather, Rah Fizelle, Leonard French, Sidney Nolan, Robert Rooney, Billy Thomas, Tony Tuckson, Fred Williams, Roland Wakelin, Rosemary Valadon and many more. Media range from painting, photography, video, prints and drawings to glassware, ceramics and textiles. Displayed throughout the campus.

Includes a sculpture park (established in 1995; 33 sculptures in 1998) with works by contemporary Australian sculptors, media including sandstone, stainless steel, ceramics, steel, bronze and copper.⁶⁶¹

Southern Cross University Art Collection

Could find no current information online other than references that it exists. In 1998 it was reported to have been established as a teaching and research collection of 102 objects, supporting changing exhibitions and a dedicated gallery area.⁶⁶²

University of New South Wales Art Collection

Established 1956; now has more than 1000 works of Australian art produced since the mid-20th century.⁶⁶³ Media include paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, and ceramics. There are more than 100 Aboriginal bark paintings, a number of American and European prints from the 1960s to the 1980s, a small group of 19th-century Japanese prints and some ethnographic artefacts. Significant works by Weaver Hawkins, Sidney Nolan, Hessian, Marralwanga, Hodgkinson, Douglas Annand, Emily Kngwarreye, Artatyeye Awelye, Aida Tomescu, Gwyn Hanssen Pigott, Frik, Max Ernst, Vasarely, Edouardo Paolozzi, David Hockney, Francis, and ten ceramics by Hamada.⁶⁶⁴

Works are displayed throughout the campuses in secure public spaces, as well as in the libraries and main offices of the university's administration, faculties and schools.⁶⁶⁵ There is a self-guided tour of the public sculptures.⁶⁶⁶

University of Newcastle Art Collection

Established in the 1960s; now has more than 1000 works, both regional and national, with artists including Charles Blackman, John Coburn, Margaret Preston, Judy Cassab, and John Olsen and Margaret Olley. Collecting focus now is art of the local region and of the university's staff and students, as well as national contemporary artists who intersect with the University of Newcastle Community, and Indigenous Australian art. There is a university gallery but most of the collection works are displayed across the university's campuses.⁶⁶⁷

University of New England Art Collection

Founded in 1938, and now has more than 1000 works including paintings, drawings, watercolours and prints in various genres and styles. Focuses on regional artists, and works reflecting themes of importance and of significance to the university. Works are displayed

throughout the campus in both public and private areas, with themed selections regularly exhibited in the main library.⁶⁶⁸

University of Sydney Art Collections, and Museum of Contemporary Art

The University Art Collection contains 7000 works⁶⁶⁹ including some 1000 by Australian expatriate artist John W. Power.⁶⁷⁰ The art collection includes paintings, sculptures, works on paper, textiles, photography, decorative arts and ceramics by Australian, Asian and European artists.⁶⁷¹ There are works by many Sydney artists who were students or teachers at the university, as a result of recent mergers with art institutions and the Student Union.⁶⁷²

The university (Australia's first, founded in 1850) had been acquiring artworks since the 1860s, although there was no gallery until the War Memorial Art Gallery opened in 1959.⁶⁷³ The portrait collection dates back to 1850, with portraits of professors and other office bearers by eminent artists including William Dobell and Louis Kahan. Other artists represented include James Gleeson, Margaret Preston, Ian Feathweather, Justin O'Brien, Dorrit Black, Donald Friend, Grace Cossington-Smith and Sidney Nolan.⁶⁷⁴

In 1989 the university's contemporary art collection, based on the bequest of expatriate Australian painter John Power (1881–1943) which came to the university in 1967, became the Museum of Contemporary Art, located very prominently on Sydney's Circular Quay. It is separated from the campus and is more akin to a public museum than a university one, receiving annual financial support from the NSW State Government and the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council.⁶⁷⁵

The collection includes Australian and international art since the late 1960s. Works of particular significance include John Power's paintings; bark paintings and carved objects from Ramingining; women's weavings from Maningrida; Australian and international works from the 1960s using light; works by Mike Parr, Juan Davila, Imants Tillers, Peter Tyndall, Yirawala, Rebecca Horn, Colin McCahon, Robert Longo, Narelle Jubelin, George Baselitz, Jean Tinguely, Joseph Beuys, Helen Frankenthaler and Gilbert and George.⁶⁷⁶

The university also has the Tin Sheds Poster Collection of some 400 posters made in the university's Tin Sheds Workshop, illustrating art history and political action.⁶⁷⁷

UTS Art Collection, University of Technology Sydney

The collection was established in 1990⁶⁷⁸ and comprises 'works by 500 artists'.⁶⁷⁹ mostly 20th-century Australian art, including painting, prints, drawings, digital media work and sculpture. Notable artists include Bill Henson, Arthur Boyd, Pat Brassington, Johnny Bulunbulun, John Firth-Smith, Richard Goodwin, Margel Hinder, Janet Laurence, Tracey Moffatt, Ada Bird Petyarre, Margaret Preston, Thea Proctor, imants Tillers and John Mwurndjul.⁶⁸⁰

University of Wollongong Art Collection

Founded in the late 1970s, now has more than 4000 works, spread across all campuses.⁶⁸¹ Originally it concentrated on interesting works by graduating students, but later expanded to acquire works by established Australian artists.⁶⁸² Today it focuses on works of regional significance by artists who live or work in the Illawarra or who have connections to the region and the university; representative works of excellence by contemporary Australian and New Zealand artists; and development of particular specialisations.⁶⁸³ Includes paintings, prints, ceramics, textiles and sculptures by Australian artists such as Lloyd Rees, Arthur Boyd, Judy Watson and Emily Kngwarreye, as well as sculptures in the grounds and many works on paper by Aboriginal artists.⁶⁸⁴

Western Sydney University Art Collection

Approximately 1400 works, formed mostly from the holdings of its predecessor organisations at Hawkesbury, Macarthur and Nepean. Most are by 20th-century Australian artists, including local artists, Indigenous artists, staff of the university from the fine arts program, undergraduate and postgraduate fine arts students, and international artists who were artists-in-residence.⁶⁸⁵ There is also a sculpture walk on the Parramatta campus.⁶⁸⁶

Northern Territory

Charles Darwin University Art Collection and Art Gallery (formerly the Northern Territory University)

The collection was established 1989 through the merger of the collections of the Darwin Institute of Technology and the University College of the Northern Territory; it is located at Casuarina campus, northern suburbs of Darwin. It comprises 2000 works, mostly works on paper and works of mixed media by Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian artists; sculpture and ceramics; Indigenous material culture items; sculptures and bark paintings; and important print studio archives, described as 'one of the largest Australian Indigenous print archives in the world',⁶⁸⁷ which includes offset multi-coloured lithographs, stone lithographs, and etchings, by artists such as Rover Thomas, Paddy Carlton, Tommy Bung Bung, Lily and Rosie Karedada, Queenie McKenzie and Peggy Griffith.⁶⁸⁸

Queensland

Bond University

Holds 'Australia's largest private collection of Indigenous art on public display', assembled by Dr Patrick Corrigan AM, art collector and patron.⁶⁸⁹

Central Queensland University Art Collection

Almost 900 works. The collection began in the 1970s with the collection of the university's predecessor, the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education, with more active collecting taking place since 2010. Today it comprises mostly Australian art since 1970, plus small groups of historical Australian art and international prints since the 1980s. It includes paintings, sculpture, ceramics, works on paper, and craft works. There is an emphasis of

Indigenous art of Australia, and to a lesser extent of the Pacific region, as well as a strong representation of women artists. Significant Australian works by artists including John Coburn, Lloyd Rees, Arthur Boyd, Judy Cassab, and John Gould. In 2016 some 500 works from the collection were on display across the university's eight campuses. The university has plans to establish an art museum.⁶⁹⁰

Griffith Artworks

Manages Griffith University Art Gallery and Griffith University Art Collection, which now totals 4500 works plus some public art.⁶⁹¹ Collection founded 1973; works by contemporary Australian artists, particularly works that are interdisciplinary and that address debates within the artform and wider society. The collection is displayed in university buildings in thematic exhibitions, primarily in high-traffic zones; between 600 and 650 works are out across campus at any one time.⁶⁹² There are works by Howard Arkley, Ian Burn, Scott Redford, Luke Roberts and Eugene Carchesio, a large painting by Michael Nelson Jagamara, and the most of significant holding anywhere of works on paper by Gordon Bennett.⁶⁹³

James Cook University Art Collection (Townsville)

600 artworks. James Cook University (JCU) was gazetted as a university college in 1960 and during that decade founded its art collection, one of Queensland's first public collections outside Queensland.⁶⁹⁴ It first acquired works by established and emerging Australian artists. In 1970 the College was proclaimed as James Cook University of North Queensland (shortened to James Cook University in 1997).⁶⁹⁵ As well as representing many local artists, the collection includes works by Ray Crooke, Sam Fullbrook, Guy Grey-Smith, Margaret Olley, Clifton Pugh, Grace Cossington-Smith and Roland Wakelin.⁶⁹⁶

QUT Art Museum, Queensland University of Technology

Now containing more than 2000 works, the collection was established in 1945 from those of predecessor institutions, particularly works acquired in the 1960s and 1970s, and were consolidated in the present management arrangement in 1990. It includes paintings, sculptures, decorative arts and works on paper, chiefly by Australian artists, plus a small group of international works (mostly ceramics and prints). The aim is to have a collection of modest size but excellent standard, focusing on Queensland art, contemporary Australian prints, new technology, and Indigenous art.⁶⁹⁷ There are major holdings of early 20th-century Australian art; post-1965 Australian paintings; post-1960 Australian prints; post-1970 Australian ceramics; contemporary Queensland art. Significant artists represented include Grace Cossington-Smith, Ian Fairweather, John Olsen and Alun Leach-Jones.⁶⁹⁸

University of Queensland Art Museum

Established in 1976,⁶⁹⁹ the collection now has more than 3700 works, covering Australian art from colonial times to the present day, as well as a significant collection of Chinese antiquities and, since 2004, a collection of self-portraits. Works are displayed at the UQ Art Museum and around campus.⁷⁰⁰ Important works include those by Robert Dowling, Paul

Partos, Sidney Nolan, Peter Booth, Rosalie Gascoigne, Joy Hester, Robert Macpherson, Bill Robinsonn, Tony Tuckson, Fred Williams, Gordon Bennett, John Nixon, Bill Henson and Clifford Possum.⁷⁰¹

University of Southern Queensland Art Collection

Established in around 1972 and distributed throughout the campus, it is primarily a teaching collection, but there is also a dedicated gallery area.⁷⁰² Now has 700 works, mostly contemporary Australian art featuring works on paper, painting, sculpture, photography, ceramics and textiles.⁷⁰³ Artists include Sidney Nolan, Edward Fristrom, Violet Teague, Fred Cress, Justin O'Brien and Charles Conder.⁷⁰⁴

University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery

The collection claims to be 'the most significant public art collection in the region' and focuses on contemporary Australian art, especially Queensland artists, and an important collection of Western and Central Desert Art. There is a sculpture walk and many other works are displayed around campus.⁷⁰⁵

South Australia

Flinders University Art Collection

More than 8000 works, making it one of Australia's largest university art collections. The works have been acquired since 1966. Its four major strengths are Indigenous Australian art from all regions, European prints, post-object and documentation art, and Australian political posters. There are also Indigenous works from Papua New Guinea, North America and Africa, as well as examples of colonial and 20th-century Australian art and Japanese woodblock prints.⁷⁰⁶ Items of particular significance are a large collection of early Papunya boards and an extensive collection of Australian post-object art.⁷⁰⁷

University of Adelaide Visual Art Collection

The University of Adelaide is Australia's third-oldest university and has some 40 cultural collections, including the Visual Arts Collection (which incorporated the collection of the South Australian CAE in 1991)⁷⁰⁸ and the Adelaide University Union Visual Art Collection. In the 1960s a Works of Art Fund was established by university staff who wished to contribute money to buy works of art. Mostly Australian contemporary work was acquired, forming the core of the collection.⁷⁰⁹ In 1998 the collection had 495 works distributed across the university's four campuses with changing biannual exhibitions at three display venues. Items considered of particular significance were a historic silver candelabrum, Arthur Boyd's *The judges* and *Australian letters* series and a sculpture by Henry Moore.⁷¹⁰

University of South Australia Art Collection

Managed by the Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art, Adelaide. Collection established in the early 20th century. It includes works by predominantly South Australian artists from the 1970s onwards; the Max Hart Collection of 56 Aboriginal bark paintings; the Chamberlain

and Lyons Collections of South Australian ceramics (Chamberlain alone has 1000 items);⁷¹¹ and the Samstag Collection – featuring works by alumni of the Anne & Gordon Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarship. Works are displayed throughout the buildings and grounds of the university’s campuses, many of them commissioned as public works of art. The University also supports South Australian artists through the commissioning of public works of art that are strategically placed in key sites to enrich the University environment and stimulate its community.⁷¹² When responding to requests for works of art to be placed around campus, the museum gives due consideration of the provenance, noting that certain works have been associated with a particular campus, school or organisational unit.⁷¹³

Tasmania

University of Tasmania Fine Art Collection

This collection was established in 1965 for the purpose of display across the campus, but also has gallery spaces.⁷¹⁴ Today it comprises some 2500 works,⁷¹⁵ including examples by Robert Rooney, Fiona Hall, Tracey Moffatt, John Wolseley, Andrew Spiers and John Neeson. There are also works by Tasmanian and overseas artists who studied at the Tasmanian School of Art, as well as by past and present staff. There are many portraits, and collections of ceramics and photographs. Works are displayed in three UTAS galleries in Hobart, Launceston and the Cradle Coast.⁷¹⁶

Victoria

Australian Catholic University

The Australian Catholic University has seven Australian campuses: Ballarat, Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, North Sydney, Strathfield (Sydney) and Adelaide. Its first art curator was appointed in October 2016; she works across all the campuses and it appears that the collection has never been catalogued, so it is not possible to comment here on its size and quality, although it does include a 14th- or 15th-century painting by Taddeo di Bartolo, located in Melbourne.⁷¹⁷ Its acquisition policy is closely aligned with the Catholic philosophy and identity of the institution, which is a distinction from other Australian and Victorian university art collections. There is also an annual acquisition award open to graduating students completing a visual arts or design major.⁷¹⁸

Deakin University

The Deakin University Art Collection today comprises more than 1700 works, mostly contemporary, which are displayed across all campuses, and at the Deakin University Art Gallery, which is located on the university’s largest campus, at Burwood. The collection includes paintings, prints, drawings, ceramics, artist’s books, photographs and sculpture, by leading Australian artists, current Deakin students and alumni. Artists represented include Gordon Bennett, George Baldessin, Arthur Boyd, Stephen Bram, Vicki Couzens, Sam Fullbrook, Simyrn Gill, Elizabeth Gower, Inge King, Robert Klippel, Sidney Nolan, Lin Onus, John Olsen, Robert Rooney, Mike Parr, Kerrie Poliness, Mick Tjapaltjarri, Jenny Watson, Ron

Robertson-Swann and Fred Williams, among many others.⁷¹⁹ Deakin was the fourth university established in Victoria (in 1974, after Melbourne, Monash and La Trobe).⁷²⁰ However, its art collection goes back to the mid-1950s⁷²¹ as Deakin resulted from a merger of older teacher training and technical colleges: State College Victoria – Geelong, the Gordon Institute of Technology, later the teachers colleges of Toora, Burwood, Rusden, Prahran, and Warrnambool.⁷²²

Federation University Australia Art Collection

Federation University (with campuses at Ballarat, Gippsland, Stawell and Horsham) was formed in 2014 by the amalgamation of the University of Ballarat and the Gippsland campus of Monash University. Its numerous predecessor institutions include the Ballarat School of Mines (founded 1870), Ballarat Teachers College (1926), Yallourn Technical School (1928), the Stawell School of Design (1882) and the Horsham Working Men's College (1891).⁷²³ Their history is reflected in the collection today, of which the earliest works are associated with the Ballarat Technical Art School, although a coordinated approach to collecting was initiated by the Ballarat Teachers' College. Collection has continued over the decades, and has benefitted by generous gifts under the Cultural Gifts Program.⁷²⁴

The collection of more than 1000 works⁷²⁵ covers most periods of Australian Art, and while most media are found in the collection, it is predominantly Australian painting, printmaking and sculpture.

Monash University

The Monash University Art Collection comprises about 2000 works in different media by more than 330 artists.⁷²⁶

Victoria's second tertiary educational institution to be founded as a university (rather than evolving from earlier teaching institutions) was Monash University, established in Clayton in 1958 and accepting its first students in 1961.⁷²⁷ The Monash University Art Collection was inaugurated that same year, with the establishment of a small annual acquisition fund to buy works by living Australian artists.⁷²⁸ The innovative decision to adorn the campus with contemporary Australian art complemented the decision to plant only native flora across the campus;⁷²⁹ both were 'part of a conscious effort to reimagine the modern Australian university'.⁷³⁰ As was the case at the University of Melbourne, initially there was no curator and no dedicated display space. But by 1968 Monash had hired its first (part-time) curator and its first curatorial adviser (Patrick McCaughey).⁷³¹ In 1975 McCaughey (as foundation professor of visual arts) established Monash University Gallery, which was an exhibition space on the seventh floor of the Menzies Building. He also appointed the university's first full-time curator.

In 1987 the gallery moved to the Multi-Discipline Centre, which became known as the Gallery Building,⁷³² and in 2002 the gallery became known as Monash University Museum of Art (MUMA). In 2010 MUMA relocated from Clayton to the Caulfield campus, which is closer to the city and is the location of the Art, Design and Architecture department.⁷³³

The initial aim of the collection was 'to support culture, to embellish the new buildings and environments, and to inspire and engage students and staff through contemporary art'.⁷³⁴ Its focus is on contemporary art since the 1960s. It ranges across traditional and new media, from painting sculpture and photography to video and installation. As at the University of Melbourne, works are displayed in prominent public spaces. Artists represented include Brook Andrew, Howard Arkley, Gordon Bennett, Vivienne Binns, Arthur Boyd, Ian Burn, Mutlu Çerkez, Juan Davila, Destiny Deacon, Mikala Dwyer, Bonita Ely, Emily Floyd, Fiona Foley, Simyrn Gill, Elizabeth Gower, Dale Hickey, Bill Henson, Robert Hunter, Raafat Ishak, Maria Kozic, Lindy Lee, Geoff Lowe, Linda Marrinon, Tracey Moffatt, Callum Morton, Nicholas Mangan, Susan Norrie, Raquel Ormella, Mike Parr, Patricia Piccinnini, Stuart Ringholt, Ricky Swallow, Christian Thompson, Garawan Wanambi, Jenny Watson and Fred Williams.⁷³⁵

RMIT University

RMIT University grew out of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, which officially opened in 1887 as the Working Men's College.⁷³⁶ Although it was not officially dubbed a university until 1992, the institution collected art from its early years. In the 1970s it recognised the need for a collection of quality and, under the leadership of Lindsay Edward,⁷³⁷ head of the RMIT Art Department, decided to make contemporary Australian art accessible to staff and students by purchasing works by leading artists including John Brack, Leonard French and Roger Kemp. These acquisitions are the core of the collection.⁷³⁸ Amalgamations with other educational institutions that had accumulated their own collections (Phillip Institute of Technology, which in 1992 became RMIT's Bundoora campus;⁷³⁹ Coburg Teachers College; and Emily McPherson College of Domestic Economy), as well as some noteworthy donations, added to the holdings.

Today the collection comprises more than 1500 works, including painting, sculpture, photography, prints, drawings, gold- and silver-smithing, and works in new media. Many are displayed across RMIT's campuses, and are used in exhibitions at the RMIT Gallery on Swanston Street.⁷⁴⁰ Highlights include works by Rubert Bunny, Hugh Ramsay, Danila Vassilieff, Fred Williams, Bill Henson, Rosalie Gascoigne, Howard Arkley, Ah Xian. There are works by leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, some large commissioned works such as Alexander Knox's painted steel wall sculpture *We love this life* (2011) and Simon Perry's *The pattern table* (2011), as well as formal portraits of staff by artists such as L. Scott Pendlebury and William Dargie. Recently RMIT has established a Sonic Arts Collections, allied to its research work in sound art.⁷⁴¹

The sculpture collection reflects RMIT's strength in this artform since the 1880s, with works by teachers and eminent graduates, while the strong representation of works on paper is partly the result of RMIT's running a printmaking studio. There is a relatively small collection of international art, focusing in particular on Asian and German works.⁷⁴²

Swinburne Art Collection

Like RMIT, Swinburne University began as a technical college in the 19th century, and its art school was established by founder George Swinburne (1861–1928). It has a small art collection, of approximately 200 works, many created or donated by staff, students and alumni. Most works are on display in public areas of the university's three campuses.⁷⁴³ It was founded in 1985 and includes prints, paintings, sketches, sculptures and photographs.⁷⁴⁴

University of Melbourne

The oldest university in Victoria is the University of Melbourne (founded 1853) and this is also the location of the State's oldest, largest, and most diverse and comprehensive university art collection, which has developed over the years through donations, purchases and commissions. The first recorded acquisition dates from 1881 – a commissioned portrait of the university's first chancellor, Sir Redmond Barry. Initially, works such as portrait paintings and busts were displayed in ceremonial and other public areas; there was no museum or gallery space, and little control over or management of the collection. The first curator was appointed in 1970 and the first dedicated exhibition area was established in the new John Medley Building in 1972. In 1975 the first University Gallery opened in the Old Physics Building. After 1984 the University of Melbourne Museum of Art opened. A major expansion was the move into the purpose-designed new Ian Potter Museum of Art in 1998. This museum faces the main thoroughfare of Swanston Street, making a statement that it aims to serve the general public as well as the university.⁷⁴⁵

In the University of Melbourne Art Collection, Australian art predominates.⁷⁴⁶ An artist-in-residence program in the 1970s–80s led to significant acquisitions. There is also a substantial collection of public art across the Parkville and other campuses, including freestanding sculptures, murals, reliefs, and architectural fragments from demolished buildings.

The University of Melbourne Art Collection today comprises about 20,000 works (depending on the way they are counted),⁷⁴⁷ including:

- Australian art in all media from the early 19th century to the present. Nineteenth-century works include those by Louis Buvelot, Conrad Martens, Nicholas Chevalier and Samuel Prout. Many of these are in the highly significant Sir Russell and Lady Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Collection, which came to the University in 1973 and includes the collection's best-known work, William Strutt's painting *Bushrangers, Victoria, Australia, 1852* (1877).

- From the early 20th century are Frederick McCubbin, Rupert Bunny, E. Phillip Fox, Bernard Hall, Hans Heysen, Hugh Ramsay, Arthur Streeton and Norman Lindsay. Mid- and later 20th century artists represented include Ludwig Hirschfeld-Mack, Ian Fairweather, John Perceval, Margaret Preston, Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd, John Brack, Fred Williams, Peter Booth, Inge King, and Robert Klippel.
- Non-Australian works include a painting by Pieter Brueghel III, a Turner watercolour, and a drawing by Henry Moore.
- Contemporary Australian Indigenous art includes works by Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Butcher Chereil, Rusty Peters and Destiny Deacon.
- The A.J. Law Collection was founded by Arthur Law, principal of the Melbourne Teachers' College (later named Melbourne State College, then Melbourne College of Advanced Education, then Institute of Education, now part of the University of Melbourne). Law believed it was important for teachers in training to be surrounded by Australian art, both to extend their cultural background, but also because 'teachers graduating from the College, moving out into country regions, should help spread culture in rural communities through the pupils in their care.'⁷⁴⁸ To this end he placed a five-shilling levy on each student entering the college, to buy art adorn the rooms and hallways. Acquisitions began in the 1920s, and eventually works were acquired by leading artists including Conrad Martens, John Glover, Louis Buvelot, Arthur Streeton, Tom Roberts, William Frater, Roland Wakelin, Arthur Boyd, Noel Counihan, John Perceval, Penleigh Boyd, Russell Drysdale, Norman Lindsay, Len Annois, Clifton Pugh, Max Meldrum, Jan Scheltema, Hans Heysen, Sydney Long, Lloyd Rees, John Passmore, Leonard French, Sali Herman, Rupert Bunny and others.
- The Dr Samuel Arthur Ewing Collection was created by a Melbourne medical doctor who 'believed his artworks would play a strong role in public nation building'.⁷⁴⁹ Dr Ewing donated the collection in 1938 to the University of Melbourne for display in the Student Union. The 59 works date from between 1862 and 1940, with landscapes predominating. The artists are a 'who's who' of the late-19th and early-20th-century Melbourne art scene, including Arthur Streeton, E. Phillips Fox, Frederick McCubbin and Bernard Hall. His intention was (in his own words): 'That our youth may be inspired by the beauty as well as the love of their country by the works of our artists'.⁷⁵⁰

The Ian Potter Museum of Art not only has a major annual program of exhibitions in its various gallery spaces, but also manages a program of campus loans, whereby artworks are displayed in foyers, lecture theatres, meeting rooms and some offices across the Parkville and other campuses.

There are also art collections elsewhere in the university of Melbourne:

- The Baillieu Library Print Collection has more than 8,000 prints (etchings, engravings, woodcuts, lithographs, linocuts) dating from the 16th century to the present day.⁷⁵¹ It is one of the largest Old Master print collections in Australia, comparable in rarity and quality (although smaller in size) to those at the National Gallery of Australia and the National Gallery of Victoria.⁷⁵²
- The Ernst Matthaei Memorial Collection of Early Glass at University House (the staff club)⁷⁵³
- artworks in the collection of the Grainger Museum (founded in the 1930s by musician Percy Grainger)
- The Victorian College of the Arts Art Collection, which spans the entire history of the VCA and its predecessors, including the National Gallery School of Art, and the Victoria College Prahran Faculty of Art and Design.⁷⁵⁴ Comprising painting, sculpture, photography and works on paper, most works are by students, staff or alumni. There are also many life paintings and drawings from the National Gallery School of Art by prominent alumni including Hugh Ramsay, Charles Wheeler and Constance Stokes.

Victoria University

Victoria University in Melbourne's western suburbs began in 1916 as Footscray Technical School,⁷⁵⁵ taking on its current name in 1991.⁷⁵⁶ The Victoria University Art Collection, established in 1981,⁷⁵⁷ is very small, comprising just 170 works by Australian artists, and is managed by the University Library.⁷⁵⁸

Western Australia

Curtin University Art Collection

Established in 1968 (when still the Western Australian Institute of Technology, founded 1966) and now managed by John Curtin Gallery; collection of 2200 works (in 2006) including paintings, sculpture, works on paper, video and installations.⁷⁵⁹

Edith Cowan University Art Collection

Established in 1948,⁷⁶⁰ today the collection has more than 2600 works spread across four campuses, focusing on three areas: visual arts (sculpture, prints, drawings, paintings); Aboriginal art; and performing arts (stage sets and costume designs).⁷⁶¹ Works of particular significance include Western Australian Aboriginal artefacts; the performing arts holdings; and works by post-war artists such as Howard Taylor, Robert Juniper, Guy Grey-Smith, Sidney Nolan and Arthur Boyd.⁷⁶²

Murdoch University Art Collection

Currently has almost 2000 works, displayed across the university's three campuses. The collection began in 1974 and represents mostly Australian artists, including Ian Fairweather,

Leonard French, Lloyd Rees, Charles Blackman, Sidney Nolan, Tjapaltjarri Tim Leura, Sali Herman, Julie Dowling, Janet Laurence and Fiona Foley.⁷⁶³ Murdoch University also holds a collection of some 6000 posters.⁷⁶⁴

University of Western Australia Art Collection

The Cruthers Collection of Women's Art (managed by Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia): the permanent collection had more than 2600 works in 2006, chiefly by Australian artists including Charles Blackman, Rupert Bunny, Ian Fairweather, Sidney Nolan, Tony Tuckson and Fred Williams. Features works by Western Australian artists.⁷⁶⁵ Australian art from the 1940s–1960s is a particular focus, plus there is a small collection of major sculptures and an extensive purpose-built gallery.⁷⁶⁶

University collections of archaeology and antiquities

In 1996 or 1998 the following Australian university collections of archaeology, classics or antiquities were recorded:

ACT

Australian National University Classics Museum

Established in 1962, it now has 589 objects illustrating everyday life in the ancient worlds of Greece and Rome, particularly domestic items, writing and commemoration, southern Italian pottery, and drama. Significant items include 20 terracotta vases from one tomb painted by 'the Menzies painter'.⁷⁶⁷ The museum has an active friends group that holds a regular program of events.⁷⁶⁸ Dale Trendall was involved with the collection during his time at ANU.

New South Wales

Macquarie University: Museum of Ancient Cultures

5,500 objects in 1998. Objects from the ancient Mediterranean world (Egypt, Greece, Cyprus, Israel, Palestine, Rome, Mesopotamia, Jordan, and Jericho); largest collection of papyri in Australia, decorated mummy covers; coins. Claims to have the following items of international significance: Boeotian black-figured cup; Attic red-figured cup; Samian-ware bowl; Egyptian mummy and sarcophagus; three sculptural fragments of Egyptian Governor Memi; papyrus collection including the oldest known fragment of the Acts of the Apostles and fragments of Homeric text; Latin and Greek stone inscriptions.⁷⁶⁹

University of New England Antiquities Museum

A teaching and research collection, established in 1959 and with more than 1000 objects in 1998, at which time it claimed to be 'the only antiquity collection away from the capital Australian cities; Southern Italian and Mediterranean domestic ceramics; the Cypriot collection is the best in Australia.'⁷⁷⁰

University of Sydney: Nicholson Museum

Established in 1860 with the bequest of Sir Charles Nicholson, founder of the university, the Nicholson Museum at the University of Sydney is Australia's oldest university museum, Australia's largest university collection of archaeology,⁷⁷¹ and claims to hold 'the largest and most important collection of antiquities in Australia' with several items of international significance. It now has 30,000 items, representing every major area of the Eastern Mediterranean: works of art and objects of daily life from Egypt, the Near East, Greece, Italy and Northern Europe.⁷⁷² A.D. Trendall was honorary curator from 1939 to 1954; he did much to expand the collection,⁷⁷³ especially by writing 'countless letters to museums and government agencies around the world requesting representative samples of artefacts to ensure the Nicholson Museum's holdings reflected the diversity of this expansive region'.⁷⁷⁴

University of Queensland Antiquities Museum

Teaching and research collection of 5700 objects (estimated in 1998), established in 1963.⁷⁷⁵

South Australia

University of Adelaide: Museum of Classical Archaeology

A museum for teaching and research which is also open to the public, established in 1983 and by 1998 had 784 artefacts and more than 1100 coins. Significant works include a terracotta sarcophagus from the Roman Republican period, Palaeolithic and Neolithic artefacts from the Near East; 18th-century Dynasty Egyptian texts; Egyptian and Mesopotamian ceramics; Roman artefacts from the late Republican and Imperial periods; a rare funerary mosaic from Edessa; papyrus texts; and Attic marble lekythos fragment; South Italian pottery and rare Ptolemaic glass inlays from Alexandria.⁷⁷⁶

Tasmania

University of Tasmania: John Elliott Classics Museum

Began as a teaching collection in the 1950s with the acquisition by Professor of Classics, John Elliott, of two ancient Greek pots; opened to the public as a museum in 1967. Now includes artefacts from ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome.⁷⁷⁷

Victoria

The 10,000-piece collection of the Australian Institute of Archaeology, which since 2008 has been housed in the Terraces (the heritage buildings that were formerly part of the Mont Park psychiatric hospital) in space leased from La Trobe,⁷⁷⁸ is not owned by La Trobe.⁷⁷⁹ The institute runs seminars and lectures and other public events, and lends items to other organisations, such as exhibitions at the Ian Potter Museum of Art at the University of Melbourne. The University of Melbourne purchased outright the major part of the Institute's Cypriot collection in 1987.⁷⁸⁰

Monash University Archaeology Collection

This small teaching collection was established in 1968 by the Department of Classics and Archaeology and Clayton. It comprised 98 objects in 1998.⁷⁸¹

University of Melbourne Classics and Archaeology Collection

The University of Melbourne's Classics and Archaeology Collection began as a teaching collection and is actively used for this purpose today, as well as for research, publishing and exhibitions. Although the university acquired some Egyptian papyri in 1901, the real impetus came in 1925 with a bequest in memory of a brilliant young Classics student, John Hugh Sutton. An initial purchase of 13 Greek pots, nine figurines and 100 Greek coins led to further acquisitions over the decades, including divisions from architectural excavations and the Jessie Webb Collection of coins.⁷⁸² In the late 1980s the departments of Classics and Middle Eastern Studies merged and a large collection of Cypriot material was purchased, to bring the collection into the state in which exists today.⁷⁸³ It is now managed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, numbers approximately 2400 items,⁷⁸⁴ focusing on three areas: Classics, Cypriot and Middle Eastern materials.⁷⁸⁵

University of Melbourne Classics and Archaeology Library

This departmental library, formally established in 1969, totals almost 20,000 volumes relating to the cultures of the ancient Mediterranean and near east. It features the primary works of ancient authors, critical commentaries, monographs, textbooks, dictionaries and grammar books, encyclopedias and other reference works, maps, site plans, periodicals and academic theses.⁷⁸⁶ The catalogue is not integrated with the university's main library catalogue, and for conservation and security reasons the relatively small number of rare books and journals have been relocated to the Rare Books area of the Baillieu Library.

University collections of ethnography and anthropology

ACT

Australian National University: Stanner Ethnographic Collection

More than 163 objects (in 1998).⁷⁸⁷ Named after anthropologist William Edward Hanley 'Bill' Stanner (1905–1981) who worked extensively among Indigenous Australian communities and was an academic at the ANU from 1949 until his death.

New South Wales

Macquarie University Aboriginal Technology and Bio-resources Collection

Established 1960s; contains 50,000 specimens, including many stone tools from 250 locations, wooden artefacts including boomerangs, spears, woomeras, coolamons and clubs from most states of Australia, including prehistoric artefacts from NSW. Mostly a reference collection for teaching and research.⁷⁸⁸

University of Newcastle: The Senta Taft-Hendry Museum

Opened in 2011 in a dedicated space under the university gallery; houses collection of artefacts from Papua New Guinea, West Papua, Micronesia, Polynesia and remote Australian communities, mostly collected by Senta Taft Hendry since the 1950s.⁷⁸⁹

University of Sydney: Macleay Museum

The Macleay Museum was established in 1888–90 when it received the collections assembled by several generations of Sydney's prominent Macleay family.⁷⁹⁰ By 1998 it reported 500,000 specimens (although this figure includes insects, which can give a misleading impression). It is a historical collection of zoology, Australian and Pacific anthropology/ethnography, scientific instruments and photographs, primarily a research collection with strong exhibition potential. Some of the ethnography holdings are considered to be of international significance, including the earliest known Aboriginal bark paintings.⁷⁹¹ A dedicated museum building opened in 1888.⁷⁹²

Queensland

James Cook University Museum of Tropical Anthropology

Established in 1975 as a teaching and research collection. In 1998 it had 7000 objects, including significant rainforest Aboriginal material, Yirrkala carvings and bark paintings, stone tools from north-eastern Queensland, Torres Strait Islander material, collection from Telefomin in Papua New Guinea, Javanese batiks, African Bushman material and a contemporary Cook Islands collection.⁷⁹³

University of Queensland Anthropology Museum

A teaching and research collection of 25,000 objects, established in 1948.⁷⁹⁴ This is the largest collection owned by the University of Queensland, and claims to be 'the largest university collection of ethnographic material culture in Australia'.⁷⁹⁵ The museum began in 1948 with a gift of 1000 objects by Dr Lindsey Page Winterbotham, a medical practitioner and lecturer in medical ethics, who was appointed as honorary curator. Items are from Indigenous cultures across Australia and the Pacific. The museum moved to its current purpose-built facilities in 1972.⁷⁹⁶

Victoria

La Trobe University Ethnographic Collection

See Section 4.4 above.

University of Melbourne: The Donald Thomson Collection

Owned by the University of Melbourne, although held on long-term loan by Museum Victoria, this is 'one of the most comprehensive and significant collections of Aboriginal cultural heritage material in the world'.⁷⁹⁷ Assembled by University of Melbourne anthropologist, zoologist and Aboriginal rights activist Donald Thomson OBE (1901–1970) between the 1920s and the 1960s, the collection includes ethnographic, archive, image and

sound material, primarily from Arnhem Land, Cape York Peninsula in Queensland, the Great Sandy and Tanami deserts, although there is also material from Victoria, the Solomon Islands and West Papua. Cultural material is supported by biological specimens and material relating to Thomson's academic career as an anthropologist and biologist, and his social justice work.⁷⁹⁸

The collection provides a unique record of the diversity of Indigenous knowledge in Aboriginal Australia: a focus on material culture and technology together with a visual record of ritual, economic and domestic life at critical points in Australia's frontier history.

The 7200 artefacts represent ritual, economic and domestic pursuits, as well as technologies (such as raw materials and tools). These are supported by some 11,000 pages of transcriptions, 5300 pages of filed notes, 10,580 photographs, 7600 metres of colour film, and sound recordings on reel-to-reel tape, 2000 natural history specimens, 400 maps and 300 scientific illustrations by various illustrators.⁷⁹⁹ The objects and images are annotated by Thomson with details of language, kinship and cultural information.

Only the 7200 artefacts are owned by the University of Melbourne (and have been held on loan by Museum Victoria since 1973). Thomson's field notes, diaries, drawings, photographs, film and recordings (which have been inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World Register)⁸⁰⁰ remain the personal property of Thomson's widow, Mrs Dorita Thomson.⁸⁰¹

The collection has been the basis of numerous scholarly articles and books, both by Thomson himself and subsequent researchers, and exhibitions, such as *Ancestral Power and the Aesthetic: Arnhem Land Paintings and Objects from the Donald Thomson Collection*, which toured Victoria in 2011–12.⁸⁰² The acclaimed film *Ten Canoes* (2006) drew upon source material in the Thomson Collection.

University of Melbourne: The Leonhard Adam Collection of International Indigenous Cultures

This collection, managed by the Ian Potter Museum, University of Melbourne, includes more than 1300 items from Australia, the Pacific, Asia, the Americas and Africa. It was formed largely between 1942 and 1960 by Dr Leonhard Adam (1891–1960), a distinguished Berlin-born scholar and lecturer in the Department of History at the University of Melbourne during the 1940s and 1950s. His intention was to build up a comparative ethnographic collection similar to those in his native Germany.⁸⁰³ A group of 36 bark paintings from Groote Eylandt, collected in 1945 for an exhibition in Melbourne and given to the university in 1946, is of particular significance.⁸⁰⁴

The collection was used in Adam's day for teaching in history, art history and ethnography subjects. Today it is used largely for research and exhibitions. Staff of the Ian Potter Museum of Art are also endeavouring to reconnect descendants of the Aboriginal artists with the works.

Western Australia

University of Western Australia: Berndt Museum of Anthropology

Established in 1976 by anthropologists Catherine and Ronald Berndt, the Berndt Museum holds one of the world's most significant collections of Australian Indigenous cultural materials, especially from Western Australian, South Australia and Northern Territory locations.

The Museum aims to ethically conserve, protect, contextualise and promote Australian Aboriginal cultural material (paintings, artefacts, archives, photographs and audio-visual recordings) by way of exhibition, research, teaching, publication and community engagement.⁸⁰⁵ The collection comprises more than 11,500 items, 35,000 photographs, film and sound and multiple archives.⁸⁰⁶ It also includes art and artefacts from Melanesia, Asia, South-East Asia, and elsewhere. Works from the collection are exhibited in the Janet Holmes à Court Gallery, within the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery.⁸⁰⁷

University collections of ceramics

The 1996 and 1998 surveys of Australian university collections did not specifically list collections of ceramics. Many university art collections include ceramic items, and it is beyond the scope of this project to identify all of them. In Victoria, however, the collection most relevant to the Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection is:

University of Melbourne, Victorian College of the Arts: The Margaret Lawrence Australian Ceramics Collection

Philanthropist and collector Margaret Lawrence (1914–2005)⁸⁰⁸ collected more than 2000 pieces of Australian ceramics, dating from the 1920s until 2005. She was very eclectic in taste, acquiring functional and sculptural pieces in a wide variety of styles and techniques, as well as commercially manufactured ceramics. Artists represented include William Merric Boyd, Harold Hughan, Peter Rushforth, Reg Preston, Gladys Reynell and Klytie Pate.⁸⁰⁹ Margaret Lawrence bequeathed the collection to the Victorian College of the Arts (which subsequently became part of the University of Melbourne),⁸¹⁰ the gallery on its Southbank campus is named in her honour.

University collections of posters

The 1996 survey did not specifically list collections of posters. However, a few universities collect posters. Dedicated poster collections known to exist include:

New South Wales

The Tin Sheds Poster Collection

The Tin Sheds Poster Collection was established during the 1970s by artists working within the Tin Sheds Art Collective, Lucifoil Collective and the EarthWorks Poster Collective. These

three poster collectives were associated with the Tin Sheds Art Workshops between 1976 and 1988.

The collection includes hand-printed, silkscreen posters donated by artists or later purchased by the University. The Tin Sheds Poster Collection includes approximately 1,000 hand-printed original posters, covering a broad range of themes of social and political importance, including land rights; women's liberation; contraception and sex; gay rights; politics - particularly the politics of prime minister Malcom Fraser; prison reform; anti-authoritarian movements; and advertisements for bands and dance groups that were significant during this period.

Since 2012 the collection has been located into the Wilkinson Building at the University of Sydney, and is managed by the Tin Sheds Gallery, Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning at the University of Sydney.

Duplicates of the majority of the posters are held in the National Gallery of Art collections in Canberra.⁸¹¹

University of Wollongong

The University of Wollongong Art Collection includes posters, which are actively collected, particularly those of the Illawarra area, such as Redback Graphix.

Queensland

Griffith University

Poster collection was founded in 1979, when the Queensland Film and Drama Centre (now Griffith Artworks), established an archive of posters, many of which were produced in the centre. It now numbers 400 works.⁸¹²

Victoria

University of Melbourne

The Gerard Herbst Poster Collection (managed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art as part of the University of Melbourne Art Collection) comprises 2581 posters assembled by German-born graphic designer and lecturer Gerard Herbst (1911–2011). These 20th-century posters are mostly from central and eastern Europe, the UK and Australia, although there are also examples from the Americas and Japan. They include advertisements for films, commercial products, health and safety campaigns and other government programs, consumer goods and artistic endeavours. Herbst originally used the collection when he was head lecturer of industrial design at RMIT in the 1960s and 1970s. He donated the collection to the Ian Potter Museum of Art at the University of Melbourne in 1996.⁸¹³

Western Australia

Murdoch University

Collection of some 6000 posters.⁸¹⁴

Appendix II: List of exhibitions generated or hosted by La Trobe University Museum of Art

This list was prepared by Cameron Wood, Collections Registrar, La Trobe Art Institute (Bundoora campus) in March 2017.

Details of exhibition spaces:

- VAC – La Trobe University Visual Arts Centre, 121 View Street, Bendigo
- LUMA – La Trobe University Museum of Art, ground floor, Glenn College, La Trobe University Bundoora campus
- Phyllis Palmer Gallery – Visual Arts Building, La Trobe University Bendigo (Flora Hill) campus
- Borchardt Library, La Trobe University Bundoora campus:
 - glass wall, Level 1 stairwell
 - Writers Block Café, ground floor, front section of library

LUMA staff also curated a significant number of exhibitions for display at the Bundoora Homestead Art Centre, as part of a sponsorship program between La Trobe University and the City of Darebin. This Federation-era house, at 7 Prospect Hill Drive, Bundoora, is the public art gallery for the City of Darebin.⁸¹⁵

Works were initially displayed and stored in the Borchardt Library. In 1983 a gallery space was created in a redesigned section of the undercroft of the David Myers Building; this became known as the La Trobe University Gallery (and Collection), or simply the University Gallery. In 1991–92 the gallery and collection moved to Glenn College (into the converted ground-floor undercroft at the front of the building), which was already being used as a museum of prehistory (archaeology) and anthropology. In about 1994 it became known as the La Trobe University Art Museum. In about 2009 it was renamed the La Trobe University Museum of Art or LUMA. LUMA closed to the public in December 2016.

This list does not include exhibitions held on campus by other organisations, such as the La Trobe University Union or the Chisolm College Arts Centre.

This list has been compiled from exhibition catalogues, posters, electronic documents and other sources. There are a few gaps, particularly for earlier years, as records for some early exhibitions are not readily available. LUMA holds a chronological archive of exhibition catalogues.

2016

Chris Bond: Tormentor

LUMA

5 October – 9 December 2016



Exhibit E(migrate)

(works from the La Trobe University Art Collection,
selected by La Trobe University alumni)

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, and LUMA

3 December 2016 – March 2017

Ceramics

(response to Etta Hirsh ceramics collection by art
students at La Trobe University Bendigo campus)

Phillis Palmer Gallery, Bendigo campus

3–26 October 2016

Simon Finn: Beyond the Frustum

(LUMA touring exhibition)

LUMA

20 July – 23 September 2016

VAC, Bendigo

10 November 2016 – 19 February 2017



Lifeskills: Pets of La Trobe

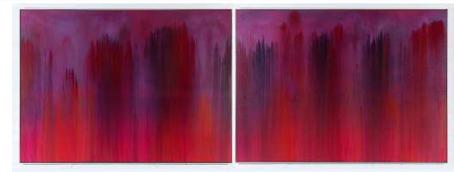
Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus

July – October 2016

Ash Keating: Response Paintings

VAC, Bendigo

2 June – 17 July 2016



Michael Cook: Stickman Series

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus
(part of Reconciliation and Naidoc Week 2016)

23 May – 14 July 2016



Fiona McMonagle: Do I Look Like I Care

LUMA

4 May – 8 July 2016



OTARC: Olga Tension Autism Research Centre

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus
4 April – 20 May 2016

Claudia Terstappen: A Language of the Vanishing
(LUMA touring exhibition)

LUMA

22 February – 22 April 2016

VAC, Bendigo

28 September – 6 November 2016

Murray Art Museum Albury
5 January – 12 February 2017



Recent Acquisitions (from the La Trobe University Art Collection)

LUMA

11 January – 12 February 2016

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus
February – 24 March 2016

Baby Guerrilla: Falling Man 2016

(#6 in series of LUMA library commissions)

Glass window, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus
2016

2015

Christopher Köller: Crossing the Line: From Pollywogs to Shellbacks

LUMA
9 September – 6 November 2015



Informed Dissent
(La Trobe Art Institute and Bachelor of Creative Arts staff exhibition)

Phyllis Palmer Gallery, Bendigo campus
2–25 September 2015

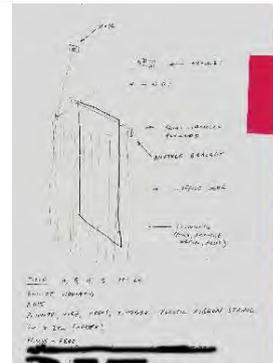
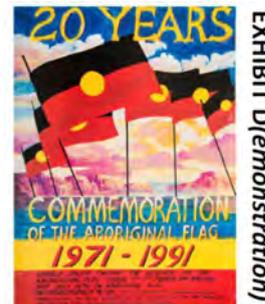


Exhibit D(emonstration)
(works chosen by La Trobe University alumni)

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus
5 August – 17 September 2015
Phyllis Palmer Gallery, Bendigo campus
1 October – 1 November 2015



Reduced: Minimalist and Reductive Works from the La Trobe University Collection

LUMA
1 July – 28 August 2015



Lin Onus: Experimental Prints

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus
22 May – 16 July 2015



Hannah Bertram: The Global Dust Project: Aisles of the Dead

LUMA

15 April – 19 June 2015

Mildura Palimpsest Biennale #10

1–5 October 2015



Frame of Mind: The Figure and Beyond – OTARC: Olga Tension Autism Research Centre

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus

2 April – 29 May 2015

Together: A Portrait Exhibition by Artists from Lifeskills

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus

2 April – 29 May 2015



Octoroon

LUMA

23 February – 3 April 2015

VAC, Bendigo

3 June – 18 July 2015

Ateneo Art Gallery, Philippines

27 January – 26 March 2016



Paul Batt: Service Station Portraits

VAC, Bendigo

12 January – 27 March 2015

2014

Michael Cook: Australian Landscapes

LUMA

17 November 2014– 13 February 2015

Phyllis Palmer Gallery, Bendigo campus

22 June – 2 July 2015



Katherine Hattam: Backwaters

LUMA

22 September – 7 November 2014

VAC, Bendigo

12 August – 19 September 2015



La Trobe Lifeskills

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus

15 September – 17 October 2014



Exhibit C(hina)

VAC, Bendigo

4 September – 5 October 2014



The 30/30 Project by Vincent Fantauzzo

(presented by Wonderment Walk Victoria with La Trobe University Museum of Art)

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus

28 July – 12 September 2014



Natalie Ryan: Mortem in Imagine

LUMA

14 July – 5 September 2014

VAC, Bendigo

7 January – 21 February 2015



NATALIE RYAN: MORTEM IN IMAGINE
14 July - 5 September 2014
Made from latex, 2011, pigment print on archival paper

Jon Campbell (Relax)

Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus

May 2014 – May 2015



The Medium is the Message

LUMA

30 April – 27 June 2014



THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE
30 April - 27 June 2014
LUMA | La Trobe University Museum of Art

Recent Acquisitions 2012–2013
(from the La Trobe University Art Collection)

LUMA

24 February – 17 April 2014



RECENT ACQUISITIONS 2012-2013
24 February - 17 April 2014
LUMA | La Trobe University Museum of Art

2013

Vali Myers: Between the Dusk and Dawn
(LUMA touring exhibition)

LUMA

11 September – 22 November 2013

VAC, Bendigo

4 January – 23 February 2014

Maitland Regional Gallery, NSW

11 April – 6 July 2014



Vali Myers
BETWEEN THE DUSK AND DAWN
11 September - 22 November
LUMA | La Trobe University Museum of Art

Tim Handfield: Plenty

LUMA

8 July – 30 August 2013

VAC, Bendigo

28 February – 27 April 2014



Modes of Impact: Contemporary Philippines Video Practice from the Ateneo Art Collection

LUMA

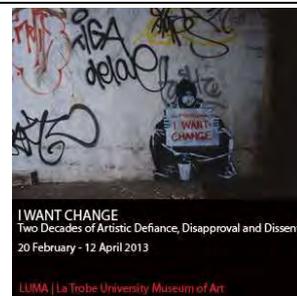
24 April – 21 June 2013



I Want Change: Two Decades of Artistic Defiance, Disapproval and Dissent

LUMA

20 February – 12 April 2013



2012

Revealed: Highlights from the FM Courtis Collection

LUMA

5 November – 21 December 2012



Brendan Lee: One of the Blokes

LUMA

3 September – 26 October 2012



Vivienne Binns: Art & Life

LUMA

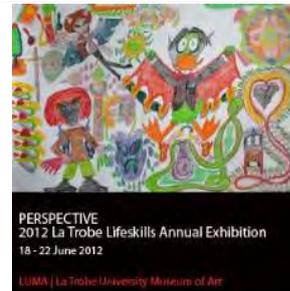
2 July – 24 August 2012



Perspective: 2012 La Trobe Lifeskills Annual Exhibition

LUMA

18 –22 June 2012



Juan Ford: Lord of the Canopy

(La Trobe University Museum of Art touring exhibition)

VAC, Bendigo

19 May – 24 June 2012

McClelland Gallery and Sculpture Park, Frankston

16 February – 27 April 2014



Exhibit A(lumni)

(works chosen by La Trobe University alumni)

LUMA

16 April – 15 June 2012



2011

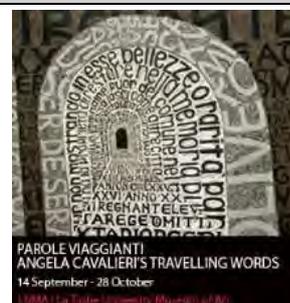
Parole Viaggiante: Angela Cavalieri's Travelling Words

Maroondah Art Gallery, Box Hill

1 April – 14 May 2011

LUMA and Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus

14 September – 28 October 2011



Wendy Stavrianos: Fragments of Memories

LUMA

20 July – 2 September 2011



Me Here Now: Identity and Place in Contemporary Australian Art

Ateneo Art Gallery, Ateneo de Manila University,
Manila, Philippines

22 June – 5 August 2011



After: Vernacular Cultures & Contemporary Art from Australia, India and The Philippines

LUMA

3 May – 17 June 2011



Gosia Wlodarczak: Frost Drawing

Borchardt Library glass commission (stairwell level 1)
The artist created the work over four days (21–24 March 2011). It remained on display for twelve months



Arlo Mountford: The Vanishing Point of History

LUMA

21 February – 21 April 2011



2010

Formed: Selected works from the Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection

FORMED

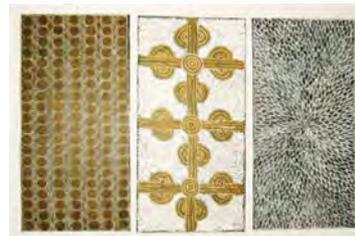
Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
22 October – 28 November 2010

(second version of this exhibition)



Mbantua: Indigenous Art from Alice Springs

Writers Block Café, Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus
29 September – 22 October 2010



Lyn Plummer: Through the Cypher's Interval
(LUMA touring exhibition) *WHAT WERE OTHER VENUES?*

LUMA
8 September – 31 October 2010



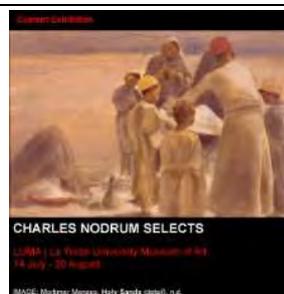
Unearthed: 50 Years of Australian Landscape Painting from the Charles Nodrum Collection

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
16 July – 29 August 2010



Charles Nodrum Selects: Selected Works from the La Trobe University Art Collection

LUMA
14 July – 20 August 2010



Load Ya Brushes: Works by La Trobe Lifeskills Participants

LUMA

28 June – 2 July 2010



Snapshot: Contemporary Photography from the La Trobe University Art Collection

LUMA

21 April – 11 June 2010



Intimate Encounters: Sculpture from the La Trobe University Art Collection

VAC, Bendigo

31 March – 9 May 2010



2009

Recent Acquisitions 2008–2009

LUMA

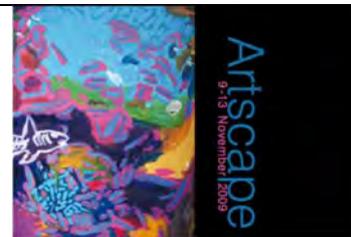
23 November 2009 – 5 February 2010



La Trobe Lifeskills: Artscape

LUMA

9–13 November 2009



In Search of the Spiritual: Murray Griffin's View of the Supersensible World
 (La Trobe University Museum of Art touring exhibition)

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
 6 November – 13 December 2009



*In Search of the Spiritual:
 Murray Griffin's View of the Supersensible World*

Formed: Selected works from the Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection of La Trobe University

(LUMA exhibition: first version of two exhibitions of same title)

Jewish Museum of Australia
 15 September – 25 October 2009

FORMED



Three Degrees of Change

LUMA

12 August – 28 October 2009 (three separate installations: Ken and Julia Yonetani (12 August – 2 September); Lauren Berkowitz (7–20 September); Ash Keating (5–28 October))



Fractions of an Intangible Whole: Philippine Social Realism Art, History and Unfolding Present
 (touring exhibition from Ateneo Museum, Philippines)

LUMA

30 June – 31 July 2009

Fractions of an Intangible Whole
 Philippine Social Realism Art, History and the Unfolding Present
 30 JUNE - 31 JULY 2009



LUMA | La Trobe University Museum of Art
 196 La Trobe Street, Melbourne VIC 3046
 Tel: +61 3 9347 3111
 www.luma.la.trobe.edu.au

DLAP 2009: City of Darebin and La Trobe University Acquisitive Art Prize

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
 26 June – 1 August 2009



**CITY OF DAREBIN
 LA TROBE UNIVERSITY ART PRIZE**

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre, Bundoora
 26 June - 1 August

The Brilliant Light of the Red Sun: Images of Childhood and Youth in Chinese Political Posters from the Stewart E Fraser Collection

LUMA

28 April – 13 June 2009



THE BRILLIANT LIGHT OF THE RED SUN
LUMA | La Trobe University Museum of Art
28 April - 13 June 2009
IMAGE: Long Live the Victory of the Revolutionary Cultural Line of Chairman Mao (1968), offset lithograph.

Between the Lines: Philip Hunter Drawings
(LUMA touring exhibition)

Stefano's Gallery 25, Mildura – Palimpsest #7

3 April – 6 May 2009

LUMA

22 February – 9 April 2010

VAC, Bendigo

23 June – 1 August 2010



BETWEEN THE LINES: PHILIP HUNTER DRAWINGS
Stefano's Gallery 25, Mildura
3 April - 6 May 2009
IMAGE: Philip Hunter: (Untitled) detail 1997, charcoal and pencil on paper

Northlands: DAMP (Collective)
(outdoor installation)

LUMA (outside gallery)



A Modern Grand Tour: Grahame King's European Drawings, 1947 – 1949

LUMA

24 February – 10 April 2009



A MODERN GRAND TOUR
Grahame King's European Drawings 1947 - 1949
24 February - 10 April
Image: Grahame King: (Untitled) 1947, oil on paper, 21 x 21.5 cm, mounted on card.

2008

Emblems: La Trobe University Visual Arts and Design 2008 Honours Exhibition

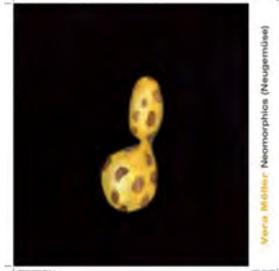
La Trobe University Art Museum

dates tbc



Vera Moller: Neomorphics (Neugemuse)

La Trobe University Art Museum
16 September – 31 October 2008



Bug (La Trobe Lifeskills)

La Trobe University Art Museum
1–5 September 2008



Eddie Kneebone: Bones of Contention

(collaborative project between La Trobe University Art Museum, Wodonga TAFE and Albury Art Gallery)

La Trobe University Art Museum
1 July – 31 August 2008



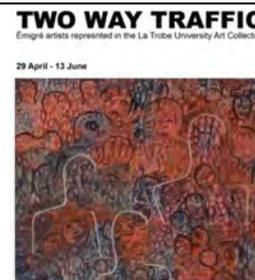
This way up: Abstract works from the La Trobe University Art Collection

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
30 May – 2 July 2008



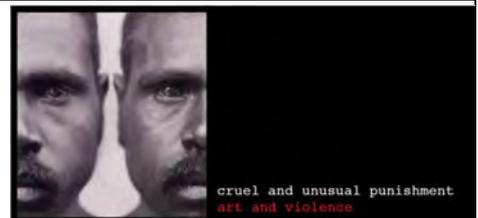
Two Way Traffic: Emigré Artists Represented in the La Trobe University Art Collection

La Trobe University Art Museum
29 April – 13 June 2008



Cruel and Unusual Punishment: Art and Violence

La Trobe University Art Museum
26 February – 11 April 2008



Murray Griffin: The Journey Series from the La Trobe University Art Collection
(La Trobe University Art Museum touring exhibition)

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
2008 (dates tbc)

2007

Clifton Pugh: Printmaker
(La Trobe University Art Museum touring exhibition,
part of La Trobe University's 40th anniversary
celebration program)

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
7 December 2007 – February 2008

Shepparton Art Gallery
20 June – 3 August 2008

La Trobe Regional Art Gallery
8 November 2008 – 14 January 2009

Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum
24 January – 1 March 2009

QUT Art Museum, Brisbane
20 August – 25 October 2009



CLIFTON PUGH: PRINTMAKER
ALLUMA | La Trobe University Touring Exhibition
QUT Art Museum, Brisbane
20 August - 25 October
IMAGE: Clifton Pugh, Black Cockatoo in Arnhem Land, 1980



Clifton Pugh
PRINTMAKER

New Works
(La Trobe University Art Collection acquisitions
2006–07)

La Trobe University Art Museum
19 November 2007 – February 2008

Kite: Mike Brown and the Sydney Twelve

La Trobe University Art Museum
17 September – 2 November 2007

Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery
20 March – 26 April 2009

Wangaratta Exhibitions Gallery
6 December 2008 – 25 January 2009

McClelland Art Gallery and Sculpture Park
18 May – 10 August 2008

Macquarie University, Sydney
25 August – 17 October 2008

KITE

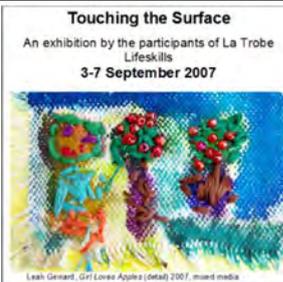
Mike Brown and the Sydney 12

17 September – 2 November 2007



Touching the Surface: An Exhibition by the Participants of La Trobe Lifeskills

La Trobe University Art Museum
3 – 7 September 2007



DLAP 2007: City of Darebin and La Trobe University Acquisitive Art Prize

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
10 August – 9 September 2007



Not Just Dots: Aboriginal Art from the La Trobe Art Collection

(La Trobe University Art Museum touring exhibition)

Wangaratta Exhibitions Gallery
6–21 May 2007

Mark Schaller: Drawing with Chainsaws

La Trobe University Art Museum

1 May – 15 June 2007



Mark Schaller
Drawing with Chainsaws

1 May – 15 June 2007

To be opened by Ashley Crawford

Wednesday 9 May, 5.30 – 7.30pm
RSVP Monday 7 May

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM
Bundoora Campus, Bundoora Campus
La Trobe University, Victoria, 3086
Bundoora 19, Campus 7
Exhibition hours: Tue – Fri, 12 – 4pm or by appointment
Tel: 03 9479 2111 Fax: 03 9479 5568
Email: artmuseum@latrobe.edu.au www.latrobe.edu.au/artmuseum

Often Spotted, Rarely Seen: Celebrating 40 years of Collecting at La Trobe University

(La Trobe University Art Museum touring exhibition, part of La Trobe University's 40th anniversary celebration program)

Mildura Arts Centre

1 March – 15 April 2007

Phyllis Palmer Gallery, Bendigo campus

28 May – 22 June 2007

La Trobe University Art Museum

3 July – 26 August 2007:

Shepparton Art Gallery

15 November – 16 December 2007



Often Spotted, Rarely Seen:

Celebrating 40 years of Collecting at La Trobe University



Curious Forms: Selected Works from the La Trobe University and City of Banyule Art Collections

La Trobe University Art Museum

20 February – 13 April 2007



CURIOUS FORMS

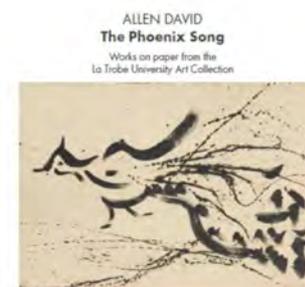
20 FEBRUARY – 13 APRIL 2007

Allen David: The Phoenix Song: Works on Paper from the La Trobe University Art Collection

(La Trobe University Art Museum touring exhibition)

Jewish Museum of Australia

14 January – 18 February 2007



ALLEN DAVID
The Phoenix Song
Works on paper from the
La Trobe University Art Collection

La Trobe University Sculpture Park
(part of La Trobe University's 40th anniversary celebration program)

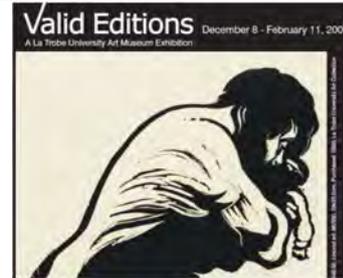
Permanent display around campus



2006

Valid Editions

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
8 December 2006 – 11 February 2007



Junction 2006: Recent Works by John Waller, Artist in Residence

La Trobe University Art Museum
7 November – 15 December 2006 [or 2 February 2007?]

JUNCTION 2006:
RECENT WORKS BY JOHN WALLER,
ARTIST IN RESIDENCE



Draw the Line: A Survey of Drawings: Eleanor Hart, Daniel Moynihan

(La Trobe University Art Museum touring exhibition)

La Trobe University Art Museum
19 September – 27 October 2006

Albury Regional Art Gallery
5 January – 4 February 2007

Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery
6 July – 19 August 2007



The Nature of Pattern: An Exhibition of Artwork by La Trobe Lifeskills

La Trobe University Art Museum
4–8 September 2006

The Nature of Pattern – an exhibition of artwork by La Trobe Lifeskills



Charles Joseph La Trobe: A Sketcher of No Mean Pretensions
(National Trust of Australia (Victoria) touring exhibition)

La Trobe University Art Museum
24 July – 25 August 2006

A Sketcher of No Mean Pretensions
Charles Joseph La Trobe, The Governor c
24 July - 27 August 2006
La Trobe University Art Museum



The Print World of P. Neville Barnett

La Trobe University Art Museum
6 June – 14 July 2006



Between the Covers: Printmakers, Books and Narrative

La Trobe University Art Museum
6 June – 14 July 2006

Recent Acquisitions: 2004–2005
(La Trobe University Art Collection)

La Trobe University Art Museum
18 April – 26 May 2006



Ex(posed): Photographic Images of the Body

La Trobe University Art Museum
21 February – 7 April 2006



Common Ground

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre

19 May – 25 June 2006



2005

*Futures: Recent works by Department of Visual Arts
Graduates – Mildura and Bendigo Campuses La Trobe
University*

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre

7 December 2005 – 5 February 2006

*My Country: Abstract Interpretations of the Australian
Landscape*

(La Trobe University Art Museum / VAC touring
exhibition, initially staged in 2005, then toured to Manila
as part of La Trobe University's 40th anniversary
celebration program in 2007)



La Trobe University Art Museum [tbc]

Bendigo Art Gallery

[29 October – 30 November 2005]

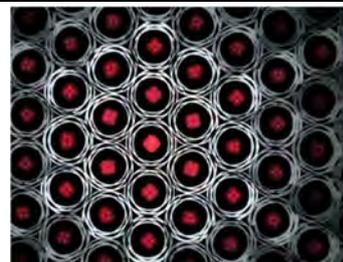
Ateneo Art Gallery, Ateneo de Manila University,
Philippines

June – July 2007 (tbc)

*Miniature: Recent Works by Visual Arts Department Staff,
Mildura and Bendigo Campuses La Trobe University*

La Trobe University Art Museum

7 December 2005 – 3 February 2006



John Waller: Artist in Residence

La Trobe University Art Museum and Collections
11 October – 18 November 2005

John Waller: Artist in Residence
11 October – 18 November 2005



Extraordinary Elements: La Trobe Lifeskills

La Trobe University Art Museum
20–29 September 2005



The Art of War: Shields from New Guinea

La Trobe University Art Museum
28 July – 8 September 2005



*City of Darebin – La Trobe University Acquisitive Art Prize
2005*

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
8 July – 14 August 2005

Judy Holding: Place

La Trobe University Art Museum
9 June – 20 July 2005

JUDY HOLDING — PLACE

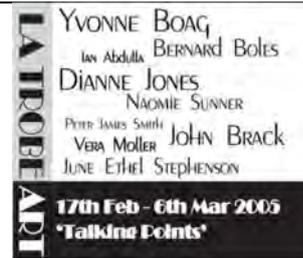


*Black + White: Monochromatic Works on Paper from the
La Trobe University Art Collection*

La Trobe University Art Museum
14 April – 26 May 2005

Talking Points: A selection of Works Drawn from Art Collections Held at La Trobe University

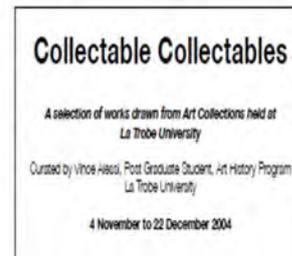
La Trobe University Art Museum
17 February – 6 April 2005



2004

Collectable Collectables: A Selection of Works Drawn From Art Collections Held at La Trobe University

La Trobe University Art Museum
4 November – 24 December 2004



Bernard Boles: Surrealism and Beyond
(La Trobe University Art Museum touring exhibition)

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
22 October – 28 November 2004

Mildura Arts Centre
25 August – 9 October 2005

Bernard Boles: Surrealism and Beyond

25 August - 9 October 2005



John Waller: Recent Works

La Trobe University Art Museum
21 September – 21 October 2004



Site + Vision 2: La Trobe University Art Collection (recent commissions and acquisitions)

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
23 July – 12 September 2004

La Trobe University Art Museum
10 August – 10 September 2004



Lifeskills: Identity

La Trobe University Art Museum
13–16 July 2004



The Meaning of Things

(still life genre represented in the La Trobe University
Art Collection)

La Trobe University Art Museum
18 May – 1 July 2004



Eleanor Hart: Paintings 1999–2004

La Trobe University Art Museum
7 April – 6 May 2004



Surreal La Trobe

(the influence of French Surrealism on late 20th-century
art, as represented by the La Trobe University Art
Collection)

La Trobe University Art Museum
26 February – 1 April 2004

2003

*New Acquisitions: A selection of Works from the La Trobe
University Art Collection*

La Trobe University Art Museum
21 October – 24 December 2003

From the Fringe to the Centre
(landscape images from the La Trobe University Art Collection)

La Trobe University Art Museum
9 September – 9 October 2003



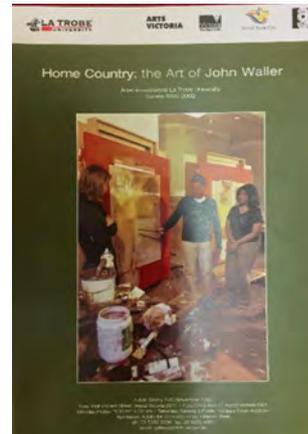
Home Country: The Art of John Waller: Artist in Residence
La Trobe University, Survey 1999–2003

Shepparton Art Gallery
12 June – 20 July 2003

La Trobe University Art Museum
29 July – 28 August 2003

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
3 October – 2 November 2003

Ararat Gallery
2–30 November 2003



Darebin – La Trobe University Acquisitive Prize 2003

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
24 July – 28 September 2003

Lifeskills: Childhood

La Trobe University Art Museum
17–25 July 2003

North: Art From the Other Side of the Yarra

Bundoora Homestead and Art Centre
6 June – 13 July 2003

Phiction: Lies, Illusion and the Phantasm in Photography
(photographic works from the Horsham Regional Art Gallery)

La Trobe University Art Museum
8 April – 15 May 2003

An(other) Mallee History: Neil Fetting
(artist was head of visual arts at La Trobe University,
Mildura)

Mildura Arts Centre, 2003

La Trobe University Art Museum
22 May – 26 June 2003

2002

A Tribute to Dunmoochin and Clifton Pugh
(selected paintings by Clifton Pugh, from the
Dunmoochin Foundation Art Collection held at La Trobe
University)

Ararat Gallery
15 December 2002 – 9 February 2003

La Trobe University Art Museum
18 February – 27 March 2003

Mildura Arts Centre
December 2003 – 15 February 2004

*Off the Wall and Grounded: Tricks in Visual Perception,
Found Objects and Imagination*

La Trobe University Art Museum
November 2002

*Birds Bees Flowers and Trees: Emblematic Motifs Inspired
by Nature in Contemporary Australian Art*

La Trobe University Art Museum
1 August – 19 September 2002

Lifeskills: Insight

La Trobe University Art Museum
13–27 June 2002

John Waller

La Trobe University Art Museum

31 May – 1 July 2002

Expressions: Australian Aboriginal Art

Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre

23 May – 7 July 2002

My Country: Abstract Interpretations of the Australian Landscape from the La Trobe University Art Collection
(La Trobe University Art Museum touring exhibition)

La Trobe University Art Museum

3 May – 6 June 2002

Bendigo Art Gallery

29 October – 30 November 2005



Behind the Mask: Tribal Art and Contemporary Art from the University's Collection

La Trobe University Art Museum

5 March – 18 April 2002

A Tribute to Dunmoochin and Clifton Pugh

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre

16 January – 17 February 2002

2001

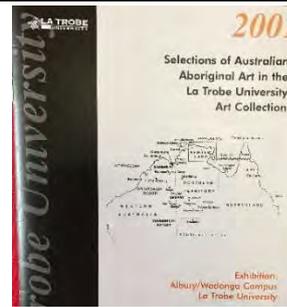
2001 Darebin La Trobe Acquisitive Art Prize

Bundoora Homestead Art Centre

15 September – 18 October 2001

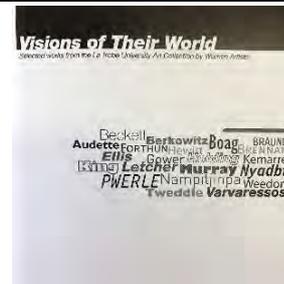
Selections of Australian Aboriginal Art in the La Trobe University Art Collection

La Trobe University Albury-Wodonga campus
15–18 March 2001



Visions of Their World: Selected Works from the La Trobe University Art Collection by Women Artists

La Trobe University Art Museum
27 February – 12 April 2001



2000

Why Does It Have to be Landscape?

Bundoora and Mildura campuses
7 – 31 August 2000 (venues and exact dates tbc)

Banyule Young Artists Awards

La Trobe University Art Museum
3 August 2000

Identities: Exploring Portraiture in the La Trobe University Collection of Contemporary Art

La Trobe University Art Museum
8 May – 1 June 2000

Phyllis Palmer Gallery, Bendigo campus
11–31 October 2000



Art in the Service of Memory and the Collective Consciousness

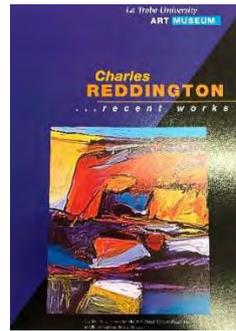
(in conjunction with International Art Therapy conference)

La Trobe University Art Museum
12–20 March 2000

1999

Charles Reddington: Recent Works

La Trobe University Art Museum
October 1999



1999 Darebin – La Trobe Acquisitive Art Prize

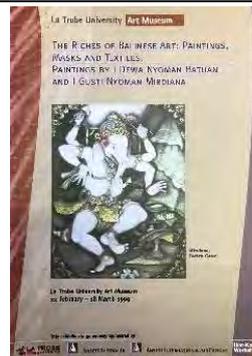
Bundoora Homestead Art Centre
19 August – 5 September 1999

To the Scale of an Irish Mile: Ruth Johnstone

La Trobe University Art Museum
1999 (exact dates tbc)

The Riches of Balinese Art: Paintings, Masks and Textiles

La Trobe University Art Museum
22 February – 18 March 1999



1998

Anne Marie Graham, A Garden for All Seasons: An Artist's View of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne
(La Trobe University Art Museum touring exhibition)

Gallery 101, Collins Street, Melbourne
25 June – 5 July 1998

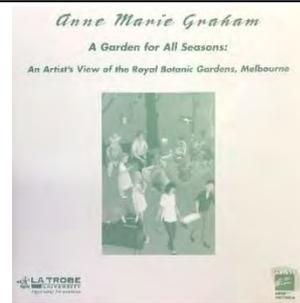
La Trobe University Art Museum
10 – 31 July 1998

Horsham Regional Art Gallery
11 August – 13 September 1998

Shepparton Art Gallery
28 September – 30 October 1998

Swan Hill Regional Gallery
18 December 1998 – 7 February 1999

Hamilton Art Gallery
16 February – 28 March 1999



Shipwreck: Works on Paper by Jennifer Marshall

La Trobe University Art Museum
10–26 March 1998



Our Land Abounds: Selections from the La Trobe University Art Collections

Albury Regional Art Gallery
6–29 March 1998

La Trobe University Art Museum
19–28 May 1998

Chris Dyson Paintings 1984–1998

La Trobe University Art Museum
dates tbc



1997

Allen David: Painter and Sculptor – The Melbourne Years

La Trobe University Art Museum
July – August 1997

Charles Reddington: Artist in Residence, The Dunmoochin Foundation – Australian Paintings 1996–1997

La Trobe University Art Museum
6–27 March 1997



The First Darebin – La Trobe Acquisitive Art Prize Exhibition

Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre, Preston
(exact dates tbc)



1996

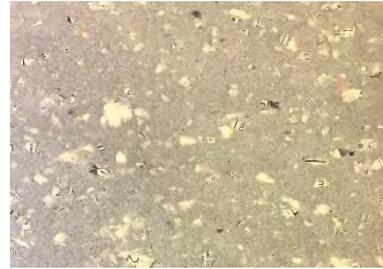
By Kind Permission: A Selection of Paintings and Other Works of Art on Loan to La Trobe University

La Trobe University Art Museum
20 August – 5 September 1996

1995

The Situation Now: A Survey of Local Non-Objective Art

La Trobe University Art Museum
5 June – 20 July 1995



1994

Clifton Pugh and Friends at Dunmoochin: Selections from the Dunmoochin Foundation Art Collection Held at La Trobe University

La Trobe University Gallery, then toured to selected Victorian, New South Wales and South Australian regional galleries throughout 1995–96 (no further venue details available)



c. 1990 – 1993

John Farmer Intaglio Prints 1940 – 1960

La Trobe University Gallery
4 July – 7 August (year tbc)

Lawrence Daws: Retrospective

La Trobe University Gallery
20 May – 3 June (year tbc)

Snowden: 10 Years of Post Card Design

La Trobe University Gallery
15– 24 March (year tbc)

The Stewart Fraser Collection of Posters

La Trobe University Gallery
dates tbc

1992

Koori Art Exhibition

La Trobe University Gallery
21 July – 2 August 1992

Sculpture: Dr David Hayes

La Trobe University Gallery
February – March 1992

Pre-Columbian Artefacts: An Introduction to the Christensen Fund Collection Held at La Trobe University
(collaboration with Institute of Latin American Studies and Spanish Department, La Trobe University)

La Trobe University Gallery
dates tbc



1991

From Bali to Timor (Dari Bali Sampai Ke Timur)
(exhibition of Indonesian textiles)

La Trobe University Gallery
23 July – 15 August 1991

RMIT Faculty of Art Gallery
23 September – 4 October 1991

Portraits of Joseph Brown: From 1940 to 1991

La Trobe University Gallery
27 June – 11 July 1991



Declan: A Tiwi Artist

(collection of Lord McAlpine: contemporary art and artefacts from Bathurst and Melville Islands – part of NETS touring program)

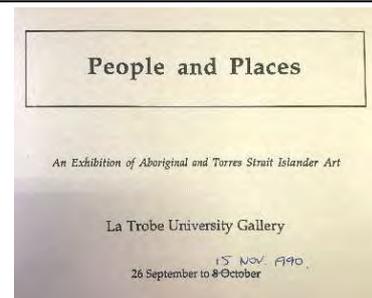
La Trobe University Gallery
9 April – 16 May 1991

1990

People and Places: An exhibition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art

(presented by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission)

La Trobe University Gallery
26 September – 15 November 1990



The City and Beyond

(from the Australian Touring Exhibitions Agency)

La Trobe University Gallery
18 July – 26 August 1990

plus six other venues

1989

La Trobe University Art Collection: A Selection from Recent Acquisitions

La Trobe University Gallery
dates tbc

1988

Triptych II: This Exhibition Presents in Unison the Work of Sonny Dalimore, Phillip Doggett-Williams and Bart Sanciolo

La Trobe University Gallery
7 – 23 June 1998

David Wiggs: Neo-Primitive Works

La Trobe University Gallery

6–28 April 1988

Murray Griffin: Landscapes 1935–1985

La Trobe University Gallery

February 1988

Shepparton Art Gallery

March 1988

Geelong Art Gallery

April 1988

Benalla Art Gallery

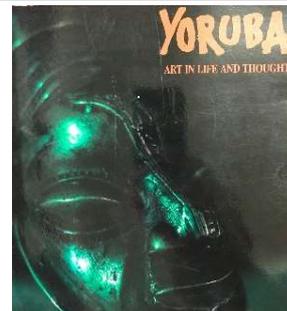
June 1988

plus ten other venues in Victoria

Yoruba: Art in Life and Thought

(exhibition presented by the African Research Institute,
La Trobe University)

venue and dates tbc



1987

Images of Italo–Australians

(curated by Ethnic Affairs Commission)

La Trobe University Gallery

6 – 22 October 1987

Phillip Institute of Technology School of Art and Design

Post Graduate Exhibition

La Trobe University Gallery

20 February – 11 March 1987

La Trobe University Gallery and Collection

(regular displays of selected works from the La Trobe University Art Collection, established before September 1987 and continuing to the present)

Borchardt Library, Bundoora campus

Catalogue published 1987

1986

Noel Counihan: Prints

(including 50 prints from National Gallery of Victoria retrospective exhibition)

La Trobe University Gallery

8 April – 8 May 1986

1985

A Tribute to Victor Cobb 1876–1945

La Trobe University Gallery

11 August – 19 September 1985

Benalla Art Gallery

October – November 1985

Shepparton Art Centre

December 1985 – January 1986

McClelland Art Gallery

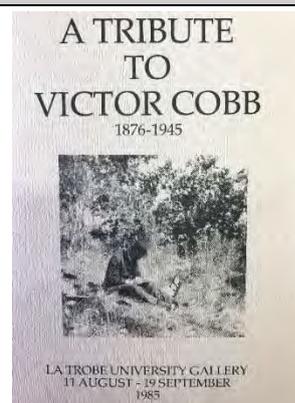
March – April 1986

State Library of Victoria

May 1986

Montrichard Galleries, South Australia

July – August 1986



Stephen Davidson: Breaks

La Trobe University Gallery

?–25 July 1985

Goya and Picasso: La Tauromaquia
(on loan from the Spanish Embassy)

La Trobe University Gallery

22 April – 24 May 1985

1984

Murray Griffin: The Journey

La Trobe University Gallery

3–25 October 1984

1983

Aspects of the Unreal: Australian Surrealism 1930–1950s

Touring exhibition curated by Joe Pascoe (La Trobe
alumnus – BA 1980) for Geelong Art Gallery

La Trobe University Gallery

November – December 1983

Display of works by Sydney painters Peter Powditch,
Colin Lanceley, James Willebrant, Ian Grant and Robin
Wallace-Crabbe

Curated by David Ellis from Golden Age Gallery, Ballarat

La Trobe University Gallery

exact dates tbc

*Early Italian Migration in Australia: Photographs from
University of Sydney's Frederick May Collection*

Organised by Professor Giovanni Carsaniga, Chairman
of the Department of Italian, La Trobe University's

La Trobe University Gallery
7 – 29 September 1983

Works from the University Collection

(including works by contemporary artists Charles
Blackman, John Coburn and Leonard French, and earlier
painters William Frater and Tom Roberts)

La Trobe University Gallery – undercroft of David Myers
Building, Bundoora campus
31 August 1983 (first exhibition for new gallery space)

Appendix III: Individuals consulted or who provided information

Many thanks to all those alumni, current and former staff, donors, and other supporters of La Trobe University who kindly contributed information for this report:

Dr Vincent **Alessi**, former artistic director, La Trobe University Museum of Art; now Senior Lecturer, Course Coordinator and Higher Degree by Research Coordinator, Visual Arts and Design; Department of Creative Arts and English, La Trobe University.

Dr Julie **Andrews**, Lecturer and Convenor of Aboriginal Studies, Department of Social Inquiry, La Trobe University.

Dr Karen **Annett-Thomas**, Public Programs Coordinator, La Trobe Art Institute (alumna of La Trobe University Bendigo campus, BA and PhD).

Dr Joan **Barclay Lloyd** (Associate Professor in Art History, 1980–2006); now an Honorary Research Associate, Department of Archaeology and History, La Trobe University.

Mr David **Beagley**, Lecturer in Children's Literature and Literacy, and Co-ordinator of Honours Study Program; School of Education, La Trobe University.

Dr Lisa **Beaven**, Lecturer in Art History, Department of Archaeology and History, La Trobe University.

Ms Sandra **Bruce**, Assistant Director, La Trobe Art Institute.

Ms Lucy **Ellem**, a foundation member of the La Trobe University Art History Department, holding positions of lecturer then senior lecturer between 1973 and 2003 (now an Honorary Research Associate, Department of Archaeology and History, La Trobe University).

Dr Caroline **Jordan**, formerly Lecturer in Art History, La Trobe University, 2008–12 (now an Honorary Research Associate, Department of Archaeology and History, La Trobe University).

Professor Christopher **Mackie**, Professor of Public Scholarship and of Greek Studies, Department of Language and Linguistics, La Trobe University.

Dr Ian **McPhee** (former director of the Trendall Centre and lecturer in Greek and Roman Art in the Department of Art History); now Honorary Research Associate, Department of Archaeology and History, La Trobe University.

Ms Sandra T. **Nicholson**, BA (Art History, 1982), now president of La Trobe University Alumni Art History Chapter since 2012; former Deputy Commissioner of Victoria Police.

Mr Charles **Nodrum**, art dealer and long-time donor to the collection; La Trobe University alumnus (BA in philosophy, 1982).

Mr William **Nuttall**, art dealer and long-time donor to the collection.

Dr Alana **O'Brien** (former curator, LUMA); now Research Associate in Art History and History; School of Historical and European Studies, La Trobe University.

Mr Simon **O'Mallon**, Lecturer in Design & Technology; Visual & Performing Arts Education, School of Education La Trobe University.

Professor Karen **Quinlan**, Director and Professor of Practice, La Trobe Art Institute, and Director, Bendigo Art Gallery.

Dr Gillian **Shepherd**, director of the A.D. Trendall Research Centre for Ancient Mediterranean Studies, and Lecturer in Ancient Mediterranean Studies and School of Humanities and Social Sciences, La Trobe University, since 2012.

Ms Tracy **Spinks**, curator and cataloguer at LUMA for about three years, c. 2012–14, involved in installing works around the campus, and cataloguing the Stewart Fraser Collection (now Managing Art Curator, Epworth HealthCare).

Ms Catherine **Thomson**, alumna (BA Hons 2007); member of La Trobe Alumni Art History Chapter.

Ms Lorraine **Wallis**, BA (major in Art History, 1981); Secretary to Dean of Humanities 1982–94; Administrative Officer in the Department of Art History 1994–2007; member of La Trobe Alumni Art History Chapter.

Mr Cameron **Wood**, Collections Registrar, La Trobe University Museum of Art, since 2010.

Appendix IV: Questions used as basis for discussion/response

**La Trobe Art Institute: Art Collections Project
Significance Assessment Report
Suggested discussion points**

**Prepared by Belinda Nemec, November 2016
belinda@belindanemec.com
Tel (03) 9419 8484
Mobile 0448 196 004**

By La Trobe University Art Collections we mean:

- The La Trobe University Art Collection (including works displayed in various buildings around campus)
- The La Trobe University Sculpture Park
- The F.M. Courtis Collection (at Bendigo)
- The Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection
- The Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection
- The Ethnographic Collection
- The Trendall Collection

With which of La Trobe University's collections are you familiar?

How have you used or been involved with this collection (these collections) in the past? For example:

- recreation/enjoyment (e.g. viewing exhibitions in the gallery or works displayed around campus)
- as a teaching tool
- for my own research and publishing
- for use by my students in their research – undergraduate? postgraduate?
- as a curator, registrar or other collections staff member
- as a donor or a representative of donors
- as a sponsor or supporter in some other way
- other

For how long have you had any involvement with the collections?

Do you feel your use of/involvement with the collections has been worthwhile?

Do you have plans to use the collections in the future? If so in what way?

Do you believe the collections are significant in any way? If so, how and to what degree?

Do you believe any particular item or group of items is of particular significance? If so, in what way?

Do you feel a strong personal connection to any of the collections or to individual collection items? If so, could you please describe this?

Do you believe the collections play a part in the public image or reputation of La Trobe University?

Do you believe the collections already help, or could help, attract students, staff, benefactors or others to La Trobe University?

Are there ways in which the university as a whole, or individual departments, could be making greater use of the collections?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Would you agree to any of your comments being cited and attributed to you by name in the significance assessment? **YES/NO.**

Appendix V: Response from Dr Alana O'Brien

La Trobe Art Institute: Art Collections Project

Significance Assessment Report: Dr Alana O'Brien (La Trobe University curator 2006–2011)

My professional involvement with the La Trobe University extended from January 2006 to November 2011 when I was the fulltime curator under the directorship of Vincent Alessi. Nevertheless, my initial engagement with the La Trobe University collections extends back to 1990 when I first began to frequent La Trobe University as a student. My primary awareness of the La Trobe University Art Collection, as a student, was through those works displayed around the campus grounds and in the buildings that I used (library, departments in which I studied, the Union building). Inge King's *Dialogue of Circles*, reaching majestically above the Moat Theatre, is one of the works that is perhaps best impressed on my mind from my earliest student days – but then so is Len French's *Four Seasons*, which I would see as I arrived for a new day of study, or as I waited for the bus in all sorts of weather. And there in the garden, nearby, knelt Herman Hohaus' *Sofia* – her name alluding to the knowledge and wisdom that we were all there to seek. Another work that looms large in my memory is Allen David's untitled (though if I remember correctly, representing a massive phoenix). When I began studying at La Trobe, the entrance to the library was on the upper level of the Agora, and one could not help but pass by it. Allen's massive glass screen was born with the foundation of the university.

In the library, there was a display of beautiful Greek vases – I can only presume that they were a part of the Trendall collection – and as a first year art history exercise we had to do a visual analysis of one of the vases. Perhaps one of my favourite works at the time, though, was Fred Williams' painting: *Scrub, Lysterfield* 1967, which hung in the office of the administrative officer of the Art History Department. The work had a particular significance for the department, as Fred Williams' family had donated it to the Art History Department in memory of a student who had been studying the artist. In the Art History visual librarian's office, we also had the fortune of one of Charles Blackman's 'School Girls' paintings: *Hide and Seek*.

I enjoyed glimpsing, or examining, many other works as a student (indigenous bark paintings; Sydney Ball, Bernard Boles, Mike Brown) – and although I now cannot remember which precise works I saw, when, and where, on some level it was the overall impression of art as an essential part of the university environment which remains with me. It was only many years later, as a curator, that I came to understand that this was exactly the intention of the founders of La Trobe University, and of the University's Master Architect –Roy

Simpson— that art should form a significant part of the University's cultural and intellectual environment. They established an art collection that was to be available across the campus for the enjoyment, engagement and education of the attending students, although potentially also to challenge the students. The pamphlet/catalogue to the exhibition *Often Spotted: Rarely Seen*, celebrating 40 years of La Trobe University and the collection, talks briefly about the intentions behind the initial establishment of the La Trobe University Art Collection.

As a curator, I had varying degrees of involvement with all the La Trobe University Art Collections. In regards to the main collection – I was occupied with assisting the campus displays curator to install works, bringing them back into storage to allow them to rest, and conduct rolling stock-takes. I conceived exhibitions, either using exclusively works from the main collection, or focusing on an artist in the collection (ie: Wendy Stavrianos, Lauren Berkowitz, Angela Cavaliere) to create exhibitions that also included works to be loaned from the artist and collectors. I also developed 'collection based' exhibitions and catalogues for the FM Curtis Collection and one for the Etta Hirsh Ceramics Collection. Every catalogue and exhibition became a labour of love, as the more I explored a particular theme within the collections, the more art works I would find that I loved, admired or became fascinated by [some of these include, in no particular order: Wendy Stavrianos' *Running Horse*, 1990; Len French's *Legend of Sinbad the sailor*, Asher Bilu's *Untitled*, 1962; Leah King Smith's photograph from *Patterns of Connections* series 1991; Mark Schaller's *Small Factory*, 1982; Roger Kemp's *Horizontal Twelve*, 1975; Gloria Petyarre's *Leaves on the Ground*, 1989; Dorothy Napangardi's *Mina Mina*, 2002; Peter Tyndall's *Detail: 'A Person looks at a Work of Art/Someone looks at Something 1974-1991'*, 1974-1991; Yvonne Audette's *Study for Large Oil*, 1988-9; George Johnston, *Canto*, (FM Curtis Collection), 1965].

I had little to do with the Stewart E. Fraser Poster Collection (apart from helping to transport it to the art museum storage facilities). I did have the pleasure of looking over Ewa Kozlowski's shoulder as she registered them, and to assist Hannah Elliot in hanging the show dedicated to them.

As curator, I also gave tours of the sculpture park. On several occasions, I gave talks in Italian on *Dante's Inferno*, before the sculpture of the same subject by Bart Sanciolo. The talks were especially arranged for students studying Italian at one of Melbourne's High Schools and were intended (by marketing) to encourage the students to consider the possibility of taking up study at La Trobe. I still get an email annually from marketing (and by extension, the teacher who brought them to the university) requesting repeats of the talk.

I feel a particular fondness for the Ethnographic collection. Unfortunately, due to space limitations (and then later staffing shortages), when I was working there, it was hidden away in a small storeroom. From the time that I first arrived, the director (Vincent Alessi) hoped to

provide better storage and perhaps to engage ethnographic or archaeology students/staff to utilize this collection. Obviously, the small storage space meant this was impossible. Vincent Alessi finally managed to organize for this collection to be transferred to a more suitable storage situation together with its being properly catalogued as part of the process.

In my time at LUMA, we were certainly working with individual departments to encourage their use and interaction with the Art Collection and Museum. Members of several departments contributed essays to our catalogue for the exhibition *Three Degrees of Change*, which included the works of Ken Yonetani, Lauren Berkowitz and Ash Keating. The central theme of the exhibition was climate change, a topic, which in subsequent years, has gained growing significance both within certain disciplines at La Trobe University and in its general policies.

Vera Möller's exhibition *NEOMORPHICS (NEUGEMÜSE)* held at the La Trobe University Art Museum in 2008, gave us the opportunity to engage with the La Trobe University Department of Zoology. Vera Möller had originally trained in biology and microbiology, and we arranged for her to do a presentation for the Zoology Seminar Series. It was very enthusiastically received.

Members of the LUMA team were often approached for lectures, floor talks, sculpture walks and other activities by members of the Art History Department. While I also provided a talk on European art, more pertinent to the current discussion was a lecture that I gave on Aboriginal Art. For this paper, I drew into the discussion various works from the La Trobe University Art Collection, including: Gloria Petyarre's *Leaves on the ground*, Minnie Pwerle's *Awelye Atnmengerrp*; Fiona Omeenyo's *Awu Man, Awu Woman*; Ian Abdulla's *Sunday's Drive*; Leah King Smith's haunting image from the 1991 series *Patterns of Connections*; and a photograph from Fiona Foley's HHH series.

I absolutely feel that my use and involvement with the collection has been worthwhile, both during my time as a student and as a curator. I very much enjoyed working with the collections to construct exhibitions, write up the catalogue essays and develop the layouts of the catalogues. Then, at the end of this process, I loved to engage with our audiences, to talk to them about the artworks, know what challenged them, what appealed to them. I have a particularly fond memory of going to Wangaratta with one of the exhibitions and doing curatorial talks with school groups. The children's enthusiasm and interest in the exhibition art works was inspiring (and immensely satisfying).

I am currently living overseas and so don't know if an opportunity will arise for me to use the collection in the future. Nevertheless, when I visit Melbourne I generally go to La Trobe University, and on those occasions, I enjoy viewing favourites from the sculpture park, seeing any current exhibition, or checking what new works are up – particularly around the library.

All the collections have their own intrinsic significance – for example, the Etta Hirsh, Trendall, Ethnographic and Stewart F Fraser collections, beyond the value of the objects that they contain, are also relics of the taste and interests of the collectors themselves. The La Trobe University Art Collection provides an overview (albeit selective) of Australian art history during the period covering the life of the university.

The La Trobe University Art Collection (that displayed around campus) has numerous works of great significance within themselves (ie: historically/financially/aesthetic/ or for the challenge they offer) – but it is its presence around the University’s campuses, the role that it has in university life, that makes it special, and where its true importance lies. The La Trobe University Art Collection was conceived as an intrinsic part of the University environment. Even prior to the University’s opening a small committee was established to acquire, display, rotate and attend to the preservation of artworks on campus.

Over the last decade, American Universities have increasingly understood the critical importance of the arts – especially art collections and suitable, easily accessible art museums – for developing a critical edge against their competitors in this progressively global world. The La Trobe University Art Collection certainly plays an important role in the public image and reputation of La Trobe University. The University itself uses images of the artworks (both directly and indirectly) in various promotional materials.

The University’s future use, misuse, or abandonment of the La Trobe University art collection, or stripping the campuses of artworks could certainly have a negative effect on the University’s public image or reputation.

The presence of art around the campus presents students with new ideas, challenges them with alternate perspectives, creates dialogue beyond the discipline in which their studies might be focused. If La Trobe University wants to have students who are creative thinkers, individuals who think outside the box, then art should be made even more prominent on the campuses.

While I was a member of the curatorial staff at LUMA, it was clear that the Art Collection helped in attracting benefactors to the University, although my knowledge specifically pertains to those who were donating artworks. Nevertheless, University art collections are frequently used by central administrations as a tool for attracting benefactors. The campus display policies that we had, in fact, inspired the donation of numerous works by artists. Critical to LUMA’s success in attracting benefactors was the good relationships that Vincent Alessi and Ewa Kozlowski developed with collectors, dealers, art galleries and artists. Charles Robb, for instance, was inspired by the presence of the sculpture park, and an exhibition of his work that we held, to donate his sculpture *Landmark* (Upside-down Charles La Trobe).

Following its installation, it immediately became one of the most popular features of the sculpture park (Figure 34).

The University administrators should make much more of the University Art Collection on the Bundoora/Melbourne campus, through the construction of an art precinct containing at its core an Art Museum. Such a location would be ideal for entertaining/attracting potential donors to the University and maintaining the interest and support of current donors.

Events/classes organized in a more accessible Art Museum with the nearby schools would raise the profile of the University with a core-audience that the University naturally wishes to engage. A cultural precinct would also contain a theatre in which not only University productions could be held, but that would also be a draw card for the local community – school groups, local theatre and dance schools etc. The engagement of school aged members from the surrounding community with structures on the University grounds would assist in developing essential bonds with young individuals, potentially impacting on their decision regarding later University choice.

I agree that my comments may be cited and attributed to me by name in the La Trobe University Art Collections Significance Assessment Report, with the condition that I can review the context in which my words/comments are used and that the full text be included as an appendix.

Dr Alana O'Brien

Appendix VI: Recommendations for the management of the F.M. Courtis Collection

Prepared by Dr Karen Annett-Thomas for the La Trobe University Bendigo campus directorate, 2016.

It is recommended that an F.M. Courtis curator/registrar (part-time 0.2) be appointed to oversee:

1. Systematic data validation (artist and artwork titles, dates and mediums need to be checked and corrected where necessary)
2. A valuation and condition assessment on all works in the collection
3. The rotation of artworks in offices and those requiring urgent resting into the store
4. A curated re-hang of the works in the education building including a temporary exhibition space
5. The production of durable artwork labels and wall didactics that should be on display or stored with the artworks in a logical manner
6. Updated data fully migrated to the EMu database and made accessible to the curator/registrar based in Bendigo
7. 
8. A collection management policy that encompasses artwork movement procedures, data management, conservation, security audits, valuation and acquisitions
9. The accession of works by John Robinson, Jennifer Marshall and Caroline Dew that are currently listed in the School of Visual Art and Design art collection
10. The development of digital resources and a more comprehensive website.⁸¹⁶

Notes

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- ¹²⁴ Gregory, 'Qui cherche, trouve', 10–11; Glenn, 'The planning phase', 28.
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³⁴¹ Russell and Winkworth, *Significance 2.0*, 10.

³⁴² In my experience, people unfamiliar with *Significance 2.0* often confuse 'scientific potential' with collections of a scientific nature (e.g. a herbarium) or relating to the history of science (e.g. a collection of early microscopes). In the case of art collections such as those under discussion here, I believe 'research' rather than 'scientific' is the most relevant term. Further, *Significance 2.0* has 'research potential' but not 'teaching potential' as one of its criteria, I believe that for a university collection, teaching potential must also be considered.

³⁴³ Again, I have found that people confuse 'social significance' with 'social history'. The latter is covered under the criterion 'historical significance'. Spiritual significance may well apply to art collections, particularly those of Indigenous art or ecclesiastical art. But for clarity I use the term 'community significance' – meaning the importance of the collection to individuals or communities of people who are alive today.

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