TMAG and MONA join forces for major exhibition

OPENING ON 23 JUNE at MONA will be Australia’s largest collaboration between a private and public institution. Curated by the internationally renowned French curator, Jean-Hubert Martin, ‘Theatre of the World’ will present more than 160 works from David Walsh’s private collection and around 300 from TMAG’s. The exhibition looks set to rival the blockbuster shows held at major public institutions during winter, and could prove to be just the first of a series of similar major winter exhibitions at MONA.

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the ZooloGy Gallery As you Have never seen it — Watch this Space!

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As TMAG is in the middle of Stage 1 of the reconstruction, the timing of this rare exhibition is perfect. Deputy Director Peter West said: ‘It gives TMAG the opportunity to exhibit from our collection many unusual works that Tasmanians have rarely, if ever, seen. And it’s great to be working again with David, who has been such a generous supporter of TMAG over the years.’

David Walsh’s connection to the TMAG goes back a long way — to his childhood, in fact. Nicole Durling, senior curator at MONA, talked about the early influence TMAG had on him when he was growing up in Hobart. ‘David used to sneak out of Mass to go to the TMAG on Sundays. He says the collection taught him about Hobart and made Hobart his place.’

This exhibition will not be your standard one-topic show. Spread across 16 galleries in MONA will be an array of objects reflecting some 4000 years of human creativity. From ancient Chinese ceramics, Egyptian stone carvings and Aboriginal bark paintings to contemporary art works, Georgian watercolours and teapots, this exhibition will have something for everyone. And — because it’s MONA — there will naturally be a few eyebrow-raisers as well. But rarities such as 80 barkcloths from across the Pacific and First World War ‘trench art’ should also excite comment from local and international visitors.

Here are just a few images from the riches that will be on show from 23 June to 8 April 2013. Free to Tasmanian residents, this is an exhibition not to miss. In years to come, when Jean-Hubert Martin is discussed, it is likely that this MONA/TMAG collaboration will feature along with his ‘Magiciens de la Terre’ at the George Pompidou Centre and his ‘Artempo’ at the 2007 Venice Biennale.

Above: Orbis Terrarum Nova et Accuratissima Tabula, 1658
Nicolaes Visscher (1618-1679) & Nicolaes Berchem (Haarlem, the Netherlands, 1620-1683)
Hand-coloured copperplate engraving, published in Amsterdam
Museum of Old and New Art

Above left: Herpolitha limax (tongue coral) Micronesia
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery

Above right: Untitled, 2006 to 2007
Juul Kraijer (Assen, Netherlands, 1970)
Crayon on blue paper
Museum of Old and New Art

Images courtesy MONA Museum of Old and New Art
THE MAYOR OF Clarence and Clarence City Council extended a generous invitation to the Friends to attend as special guests the preview of the 60th Blake Prize Touring Exhibition in Rosny Barn on 11 May. Some 120 Friends enjoyed the Council’s hospitality at a splendid evening of art and music centred on interpretation of religious art from a variety of cultural standpoints.

Art historian and author of the Blake Book, Sr Rosemary Crumlin OAM, gave a fascinating insight into the development of the competition over the years, and talked with verve and humour about the evolution religious art as seen through the eyes of artists from different cultures.

Hobart musical identity and MONA FOMA director Brian Ritchie led a quartet of superb musicians in their debut performance as Respirae of sacred drone and overtone music. Featuring the Japanese shakuhachi flute, the Brazilian berimbau (a musical one-stringed bow), the Indian mridangam (drums) and a bass singer, the quartet played to a very appreciative audience before and after the formal talks.

The exhibition closes on June 22.
**Director gives good advice**

At our very successful event on 13 June in the Huon Pine Gallery, Bill Bleathman stood in for our advertised speaker, George Burrows, whose fifth attempt at getting his knee operated on happened on the same day! (He's recuperating well.)

In a fascinating talk about this collection and about bequests and acquisitions in general, Bill emphasised how important it was to get in early: 'If you are thinking of making a significant donation to the TMAG at any time in the future, please talk to us as soon as you can. That will allow us to work with you to ensure that your wishes can be best respected in the use of your objects or donations. Just call me or one of our curators and start the discussion. It's as easy as that — and it guarantees a better outcome for everyone.'

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**UPDATE ON THE HERITAGE SHOWCASES**

The Friends (that is you!) have just finished paying for these wonderful 19th and 20th century showcases to be refurbished and brought up to modern Museum standard.

As you know, the Friends had committed $30,000 over two years for work on these neglected treasures. Now that they are looking pristine and beautiful, they are ready to be put on show when the reconstruction is finished and the renovated galleries are open again around the end of the year.

Design Manager Garrett Donnelly is thrilled at the result of the work on the showcases: ‘To replace them would have cost us up to $200,000,’ he says, ‘so we are very grateful to the Friends for their timely and generous support. These will be an added attraction and an important feature in our galleries for years to come.’