

7.1 MONASH GALLERY OF ART COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2017 - 2018

(JR: ARTS13)

Responsible Committee: Monash Gallery of Art Committee of Management

RECOMMENDATION*That Council:*

- 1. Notes the 2017 – 2018 Annual Report presented by the Monash Gallery of Art Committee of Management.*
- 2. Acknowledges the leadership of the Committee of Management in the achievement of Monash Gallery of Art's strategic vision.*
- 3. Thanks departing COM members for their contribution to the success of MGA.*

INTRODUCTION

On an annual basis, the Monash Gallery of Art (MGA) Committee of Management (COM) submits to Council its report on MGA activity over the past year. This report presents the MGA Annual Report 2017 – 2018 in **Attachment 1**. It is not formatted as the forthcoming published version.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of 29 September 2017, Council adopted the revised Terms of Reference for the MGA Committee of Management. The Terms of Reference state the purpose of the COM as 'to oversee the proper and efficient operation of the Gallery'. Its functions are to:

- 3.1 develop, acquire, preserve, maintain, promote and provide access to an art collection consisting primarily of photographs;
- 3.2 develop and engage a local, national and international audience in relation to that collection including through exhibitions, education, research, publications and public and online programs;
- 3.3 develop a fundraising strategy for the Gallery in accordance with the Strategic Plan and the annual budget and oversee its implementation by the Director;
- 3.4 form a strategic partnership with the MGA Foundation to promote the objectives of the MGA Foundation and to support fundraising and promotional events for the Gallery, including

agreeing with the MGA Foundation the terms of any such partnership activity or event;

- 3.5 oversee the development and delivery of the exhibition and program schedule for the Gallery in accordance with the objectives of the Strategic Plan;
- 3.6 provide business and management advice and guidance to the Director and Council in relation to the management and operation of the Gallery;
- 3.7 prepare, prior to the end of each financial year, an annual business plan for the next financial year having regard to the Strategic Plan, review the Gallery budget for the next financial year and Council's Council Plan;
- 3.8 report to Council annually on the activities of the Committee and the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the annual business plan; and
- 3.9 assist Council in the appointment of a Director should a vacancy arise and provide a recommendation on such appointment.

DISCUSSION

The 2017-2018 year has witnessed a high level of planning and achievement of positive change at MGA. Following the commencement of Anouska Phizacklea as Gallery Director in August 2017, MGA embarked on a review of its strategic plan, culminating in Council's adoption of the Monash Gallery of Art Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022 in June 2018. The new Plan provides a framework for the development and the implementation of the MGA vision as the *Australian Home of Photography*.

During the year, MGA staffing and membership of the COM have experienced considerable change. With Council's endorsement, a revised COM Terms of Reference has been introduced. Subcommittees have been reviewed to create a framework drawing on the skills of COM members, taking best advantage of their expertise and expanding industry knowledge to benefit MGA. A new Senior Curator has been appointed to commence shortly. Essential to the achievement of MGA's success has been the commitment of retiring COM members David Rosenthal, Godfrey Clay and Phil Virgo. New COM members Val Brown and Kirsty Grant bring highly valued skills and industry knowledge for future planning. The MGA Foundation was pleased to welcome Kallie Blauhorn back to MGA, Kallie has assumed the Chair of the Foundation from Foundation member Geoff Lake during the year.

These changes have underpinned the pursuit of new opportunities, notably a heightened focus on the establishment of partnerships and sponsorship opportunities, the recognition and retention of past donors and supporters with the aim of developing a sustainable financial and support network for MGA.

In late 2017, MGA COM and Council commissioned MGS Architects to conduct a scoping study, eliciting future ideas for the MGA and Wheelers Hill Library site. This concept document is providing a valuable reference for longer term planning potential and advocacy.

MGA's strong exhibition program marked a milestone with the *John Gollings: The history of the built world* exhibition, which achieved record attendance and media coverage. Twelve exhibitions have been held in the main galleries during 2017–2018, nine of these have been curated by MGA. Three exhibitions have broadened the national reach and influence of MGA as part of the MGA travelling exhibitions program. Eight exhibitions have been held in the community gallery spaces. The MGA public programs have been a very active space this year, with 4951 people attending and 1869 students attending education tours. 32 works have been purchased and donated to the MGA Collection this year.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Activities conducted during 2017-2018 were based in the creative and diligent aspiration of the MGA Strategic Plan to achieve the development and implementation of its vision as the *Australian Home of Photography*. The MGA Strategic Plan 2018-2022 supports the delivery of the Council Plan 2017-2021. In particular, it meets the aspiration of:

Strategic Objective - An inclusive community: Our people and communities are healthy, connected and engaged.

The MGA Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022 includes a three year annual action plan, capturing current activities for MGA COM and staff to identify, assess and address the priorities of the Plan. The fourth year actions of the Plan will be developed during its first three years to support Plan development.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

MGA has a unique role in the cultural and community life of Monash. Over the past year, it has welcomed to the gallery and café over 90,000 people to exhibitions, collections and public programs that inspire, inform, confront and provoke discussion. It is an important local destination for social and cultural connection, for creative and intellectual wellbeing. This is typified by the MGA volunteer program, which provides vital support to MGA and an inclusive opportunity for volunteer participation, manifested by over 2000 hours of support annually.

A priority for COM is the development of activities and business support that represent and reflect the city's demographic diversity, to sustain relevance and ownership by the community. In addition to its public programs, MGA has introduced activities for children in the gallery spaces as a key aspect of the exhibition experience for families. Further development of children and youth activities are planned.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The Monash Gallery of Art exhibition and activities programs accord with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities act 2006 and in particular the following rights: (vii) freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief; (viii) freedom of expression; (ix) peaceful assembly and freedom of association; (xi) taking part in public life; (xii) cultural rights.

CONSULTATION

Through the year, consultation has occurred with visitors to MGA by the medium of a visitor survey. This is intended to become a regular feature of MGA's connection with the community and an essential part of its framework for future planning.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

For the financial year 2017 – 2018 MGA focused on establishing strategies to develop a diversified and strong financial base. This resulted in an increase in philanthropic and sponsorship opportunities and strategies.

During 2017 – 2018, MGA secured sponsorship by Sotheby's Australia, Ray White, Design by Pigeon, Bright Brewery, Chain of Ponds, Gomersal Wines and Haymes Paint. Exhibition Sponsorship was provided by Colour Factory, Thames & Hudson, Icebreaker, Konica Minolta and Sofitel Melbourne on Collins. Further sponsors have been secured for the coming year.

CONCLUSION

In 2017-18, Monash Gallery of Art has escalated its vision as the Australian Home of Photography with high quality exhibition programming, public programs and partnership development. This has been supported by a focus on renewal, sustainability, network development and good governance by the COM. This positive change marks a new phase in the life of MGA as an exceptional public gallery.