



# Museums and the Public Sphere

Thursday 29 July 2004

VENUE: CONFERENCE ROOM, OLD CANBERRA HOUSE  
HUMANITIES RESEARCH CENTRE  
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

## PROGRAM

Contemporary museums are increasingly engaged in work which contributes to the deliberations of a diverse public sphere, often acting as sites and catalysts for debate on matters of public interest. This work, while tempered with a will to social justice and social inclusion, is equally regulated by the interests of a new managerialisation, government-generated corporatisation and a market-centred cultural identity. This conference seeks to explore the intersections of civil and state interests in museums.

Papers will investigate the influence of governmentality, managerialisation and professionalism in museums; case studies of relationships outside the museum; and exhibitions that have been the subject of public dispute.

8.00am – 9.00am      Registration  
A light breakfast and coffee/tea will be served from 8.00 to 9.00am.

**Please be on time as we will start promptly at 9.00 am.**

9.00am                      Welcome by Professor Ian Donaldson, Director, HRC

### **Session 1:**

### **Managing Knowledge**

Chair: Caroline Turner, Deputy Director, HRC, ANU

9.15am – 9.45am      Jennifer Barrett, Director, Museum Studies, School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, University of Sydney, HRC Conference Visitor  
***Situating the public museum: between the state and the people***

9.45am – 10.15am      Stephen Foster, Museum Studies, Heritage and Collections, National Museum of Australia and Australian National University  
***Two cultures and the management of museums***

10.15am – 10.45am      Amareswar Galla, Graduate Studies in Sustainable Heritage Development, RSPAS, ANU, HRC Visiting Fellow  
***Is the museum public a mosaic or a fabric?***

10.45am – 11.00am Morning Tea

**Session 2:** **Commerce, knowledge and the exhibition culture**

Chair: Bernice Murphy, HRC, ANU

11.00am – 11.30am Guy Hansen, Senior Curator, National Museum of Australia  
***About the House: politics and history at Old Parliament House***

11.30am – 12.00noon Chris Blackall, HRC, ANU  
***Harvesting the public domain ['back door' commercialisation of museum resources and Creative Commons licences]***

12.00noon – 12.30pm Dianne McGowan, CCR, ANU  
***The greatest show on earth. Or so it was billed. Have museums become the contemporary circus? What is the agenda of today's museums? Who are they representing?***

12.30pm - 1.30pm Lunch (Lunch will be provided in Old Canberra House.)

**Session 3:** **Unsafe Ideas**

Chair: Angela Philp, HRC, ANU

1.30pm – 2.15pm Bernice Murphy, HRC, ANU  
**Moments with Mapplethorpe: museums, controversy, integrity, rights and the public domain**

2.15pm – 2.45pm Michael Desmond, Powerhouse Museum, HRC Conference Visitor  
***'Sensation' and its non-appearance at the NGA***

2.45pm – 3.30pm Afternoon Tea

**Session 4:** **Shock tactics**

Chair: Paul Pickering, Research Fellow, HRC, ANU

3.30pm – 4.00pm Edward Colless, Victorian College of the Arts, HRC Conference Visitor  
***Shock and awe: the aesthetics of 9/11***

4.00pm – 4.30pm Jason Smith, National Gallery of Victoria, HRC Conference Visitor  
***Dangerous Tastes: sex, subversion and social responsibility in the art museum***

4.30pm – 5.00 pm **Discussion**

5.00pm **Close**

**Convener:** Angela Philp, HRC, ANU  
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