



Club Fermoy

Issue 72

A Message from the Chair, Julian Bickersteth AO

10 years ago, on June 3rd 2016 Paul Keating opened The David Roche Foundation. In acknowledging Mr Roche's extraordinary gift of Fermoy House and its collection to the people of South Australia, Mr. Keating mused that in his view such a collection could never again be privately acquired. Mr Roche was able to use his formidable collecting talents and famous 'eye' to seek out museum quality pieces at a time when they were still available on the open market. The treasures that came together to form David Roche Gallery has attracted an ever increasing number of visitors because of its deep quality. But what Mr. Keating did not foresee was the value of staging bespoke small exhibitions in the new gallery that he also opened. The quality of these exhibitions has been nationally acclaimed, the publications that have been created for many of them have become significant reference books and visitation has continued to rise year on year with over 9000 visitors in 2025.

So, it is with a real sense of coming of age and forward momentum that we enter our 10th anniversary year. This is being significantly driven by the physical improvements to our premises which include an in-house café, improved storage conditions for the collection, new back of house workshops and a new shop front. It's a big year, with big changes and to top it off a big exhibition in June, *Making Old New: DRG 10th Anniversary* showcasing the Gallery's collection not just for what it is but also as a source of inspiration for contemporary makers.

The Board sincerely thanks all those that have helped embed David Roche Gallery so successfully in Adelaide's vibrant art scene from members to visitors and

volunteers, and hope you will join us during the year to help celebrate this 10th anniversary milestone.



David Roche Gallery, Courtyard Cafe Render

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

The festival season is upon us and DRG was delighted to have the Adelaide Baroque Quartet performing here last week in our beautiful Roman room sculpture court. We're also thrilled to present the only showing in South Australia of Bundanon's touring exhibition *Fantastic Forms* with its extensive collection of Merric Boyd drawings of family, friends and beautifully rendered landscapes alongside designs and examples of his pottery. These drawings also inspired the accompanying work of Stephen Benwell, Nabilah Nordin and Rubyrose Bancroft. In March you can find out more about Boyd and Benwell in a lecture with John McPhee or join us for a twilight evening Thursday 26 March where you can relax and unwind at DRG after a busy day.

As Julian Bickersteth AO said we're excited to share our 10th anniversary year with you in 2026 through a series of exhibitions and events, and by bringing you new and refreshed facilities, including the much-anticipated central courtyard café. Find out the latest information by following our Socials.

Please keep reading to discover more about our collection, including a Japanese umbrella acquired by David Roche in the 1980s and a beautiful mother-of-pearl box that has revealed a few more secrets.

Best wishes,

Robert Reason,
Director, David Roche Gallery

EXHIBITION



Fantastic Forms

17 Feb - 9 May

Merric Boyd with
Rubyrose Bancroft
Stephen Benwell
Mabilah Nordin

Discover the vibrant, abundant and joyful exhibition *Fantastic Forms*, that captures the energy, movement and colour in the expansive creative practice of Merric Boyd (1888-1959). Now showing until 9 May at David Roche Gallery.

LEARN MORE

BUNDANON

A Bundanon touring exhibition

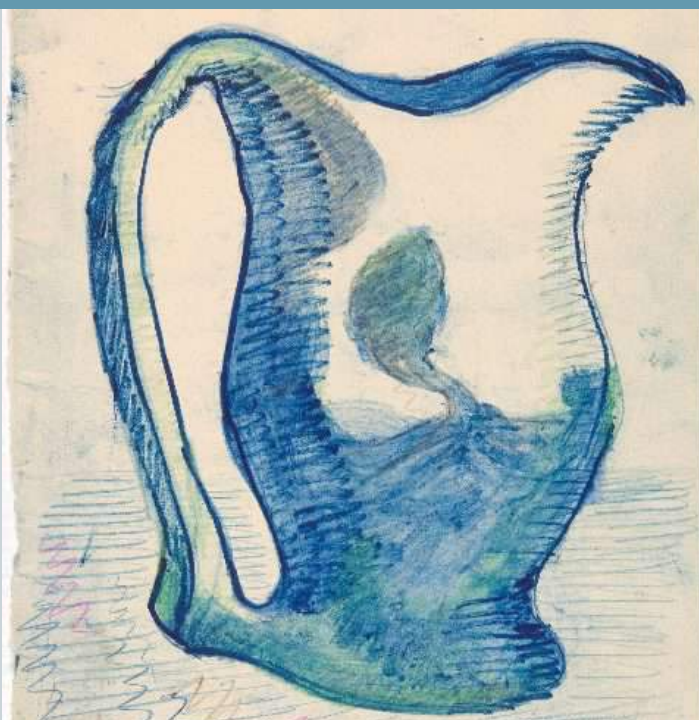


Australian Government
National Collecting Institutions
Touring & Outreach Program

EVENT

Merric Boyd and Stephen Benwell: Two exceptional artists

A talk by John McPhee



Thursday 19 March

Working a century apart, Merric Boyd (1888-1959) and Stephen Benwell

About the speaker

(born 1953) are two of Australia's remarkable ceramic artists. John McPhee will discuss these two exceptional artists, exploring how their highly individual work broke away from popular traditions and fashions of their time. An insightful talk for all art enthusiasts, ceramicists, and lovers of pottery alike.

John McPhee was appointed the founding Curator of Australian decorative arts at the National Gallery of Australia in 1980 and later became the Senior Curator of Australian art. In 1992 he was appointed Deputy Director at the National Gallery of Victoria. Since 1997 he has worked as an independent historian and curator.

DETAILS AND TICKETS

EVENT



Twilight Evening

viewing of
Fantastic Forms

Thursday 26 March

Whether you are unable to visit the Gallery during the day, or you love unique experiences to share with friends or family, our Twilight Evening is not to be missed. Gather your friends and view *Fantastic Forms*, celebrating the beautiful creativity of the human imagination.

You may pre-purchase your ticket online, or register your attendance now and pay at the door when you arrive. Ticket also includes a glass of wine or soft drink on arrival.

DETAILS AND TICKETS

Japanese Umbrella c. 1920



During the recent Art Deco exhibition, DRG curator Tim Roberts delved into the archives to discover new information about a Japanese umbrella acquired by David Roche in the 1980s. Purchased at London retailer Swaine Adeney Brigg, this finely made umbrella with black silk canopy and a distinctive celluloid cover was catalogued as being manufactured in Japan, with no further supporting information.

Investigation into the stamped inscriptions on the celluloid cover's metal fasteners led Tim to the Japanese Patents office online search facility, which described a Utility Model registration lodged by Kitaro Yamaguchi in Tokyo. Yamaguchi's invention for a telescopic umbrella cover was originally registered in 1915, with the improved design seen on this umbrella registered in 1918.

The umbrella's manufacturer, identifiable by their trademark of a M within a diamond, still awaits rediscovery, but a stamped logo of retailers Fox & Co can be observed on the leather strap. Very few examples of Yamaguchi's celluloid covers survive today, making this a most interesting example of early 20th century design history.



Mother-of-pearl Box

Balthazar Wigand,
c. 1825



This striking mother-of-pearl box was created around 1825 and features a lid fitted with a gouache on paper veduta (view) by Austrian painter Balthazar Wigand. Wigand was extremely skilled at painting these panoramic views on a tiny scale; the panel in this box is only 4.0 x 10.0cm. These small paintings would then be inset into finely decorated boxes as beautiful but useful objects for wealthy women, many of these boxes contain sewing kits.

The view on this box was previously thought to have depicted the Palais Royale in Paris. Reanalysis of this miniature scene shows that it is a view from the original hunting palace, or Jagdschloss, of Russian ambassador Prince Dmitri Mikhailovich Gallitzin, on the eastern slopes of the Gallitzinberg, a prominent hill on the outskirts of Vienna. The estate became famous for its social events and would eventually become known as 'Schloss Wilhelminenberg'. Wigand's veduta shows finely dressed couples walking through the gardens of the estate in the foreground, and from the schloss' vantage point atop the hill, the viewer sees the small village of Ottakring below, and the tall buildings of Vienna in the distance.



DRG Members enable us to maintain David Roche's exquisite collection, present world-class exhibitions, program lectures with expert guest speakers and to fulfil our vision as a centre of excellence and a leader in decorative arts in Australia. By becoming a DRG Member, you will meet like-minded enthusiasts who share your passion for art and history, and receive many great benefits including:

- **25% discount** off full price house tour ticket (4 times per year) and full price exhibition entry fee

- **10% discount** off full price purchases in the **Gallery shop** (excluding the online shop)
- **10% off** full price DRG Lecture Series tickets
- Invitations to **exclusive tours** and **special events**
- **Members only** events & trips.



SIGN UP TODAY

DRG Shop Online



Gift Card

Give the gift of a memorable experience with a DRG Gift Card, redeemable for house tours, exhibition tickets, and Gallery Shop treasures. Available from \$20 to \$100.

New Merch

Fantastic Forms merchandise has just arrived in the Gallery shop, including beautifully designed cards, magnets, and a catalogue offering rich insight into this inspiring exhibition. Available to purchase in-store only.

SHOP ONLINE TODAY

HIGHLIGHTS AT OTHER HOUSE MUSEUMS



THE CEDARS

2026 Workshops at The Cedars | Zinia King and Sandra Johnston

Join Sandra Johnston and Zinia King for their 2026 art workshops at The Cedars, home of two of Australia's most celebrated artists, Hans and Nora Heysen. Talented artist Zinia King will be hosting her *Birds of The Cedars* Painting workshop in August and *Spring Flowers* Painting Course in October. Each workshop will be held over four Saturdays as a 4-part painting workshop series where you will discover the joy of capturing the vibrant beauty of flowers and birds. Join renowned botanical artist Sandra Johnston for a delightful series of Sunday workshops where she will guide you through creating your own botanical masterpiece inspired by nature.

CARRICK HILL

Out of the Archive | Celebrating 40 Years of Carrick Hill

Carrick Hill marks 40 years as a historic house museum, art gallery, and garden. Officially opened in March 1986 by Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, the estate has since welcomed generations of visitors to explore its remarkable collections and grounds. *Out of the Archive* brings rarely seen objects and artworks into view, including fragile pieces, unusual items, and works with complex or sensitive histories. Drawn largely from the Haywards' 1983 bequest, alongside later donations, this exhibition celebrates the depth of the collection and the enduring legacy of Sir Edward and Lady Ursula Hayward.

LEARN MORE

LEARN MORE

YOUR GIFT HELPS US DO MORE



Your donation will help David Roche Gallery reach its full potential to acquire works of art and present innovative exhibitions that will add to the cultural life of South Australia. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

No matter how large or small, your gift will help us do more.

DONATE TODAY

Images in this newsletter: **Club Fermoy Banner:** Rex Wood, *Geelong Grammar graduation portrait of David J Roche* c. 1948, oil on canvas. The David Roche Collection. **Exhibition:** Merric Boyd, *Trees*, 1950, pencil, coloured pencil and watercolour on paper. Bundanon Collection. Photo: Rob Little. Merric Boyd at Open Country pottery, Murrumbidgee, c. 1914, Bundanon Archives. David Roche Gallery, *Fantastic Forms*, Image: Sam Roberts. **Talk by John McPhee:** Merric Boyd, *Jug with tree decorations*, no date, coloured pencil on paper. Bundanon collection. Photo: Rob Little. **DRG Membership banner:** Germany, *Armchair (Fauteuil)* c. 1750, oak, pine, gilt, replacement silk upholstery. The David Roche Collection. **DRG Shop banner:** George Bullock, *Specimen table* c. 1815, Brazilian rosewood, brass, gilt bronze, hardstones. The David Roche Collection. **Giving:** Hubley Manufacturing Company (manufacturer), Daniel Cooke (inventor) 'Trick Dog' mechanical money box, designed 1888. The David Roche Collection.



David Roche Gallery continues the work of The David Roche Foundation, established in 1999 by David J Roche AM (1930–2013).

DAVID ROCHE GALLERY

241 MELBOURNE ST
NORTH ADELAIDE,
SOUTH AUSTRALIA 5006

FERMOY HOUSE TOURS
TUESDAY – SATURDAY
10AM – 12PM – 2PM

GALLERY OPEN
TUESDAY – SATURDAY
10AM – 4PM

DRG acknowledges the Kaurna people as the traditional owners of the Adelaide region. We recognise and respect Kaurna heritage, beliefs and spiritual relationship with Country, and we pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



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