

ARTS

Gallery joint venture boosts contemporary art

Monash University has joined forces with the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) in South Yarra in a new joint management initiative that will boost Australian contemporary art.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mal Logan, who also is Chairman of the Board of ACCA, described the move as exciting.

"The agreement is based on the recognition of existing common interests between the two galleries, and can only stand to benefit Australian contemporary art," he said.

Professor Logan will continue as chairman, but the Board will remain independent.

The Director of the Monash University Gallery, Ms Jennifer Duncan, will retain her current position, while also becoming director of ACCA. Monash Gallery staff will divide their time between ACCA and the Monash Gallery.

"This move will stabilise the future of ACCA as a national institution. ACCA will continue to provide a forum for ideas about contemporary art in Australia," said Ms Duncan.

The two galleries would retain their own identities, programs and contributions. "It is important to emphasise that the exhibition programs are quite separate - ACCA is not functioning as an extension of Monash Gallery," said Ms Duncan.

Part of her work at the gallery will be to consolidate the directions set up by former director, Grazia Gunn.

Although both galleries are aimed at the general public, Monash Gallery also has more of an educational role, as well as contributing role to art documentation.

"ACCA is more about providing artists with opportunities not given elsewhere. It focuses on experimental art and a freedom to move both conceptually and formally," she said.

Some of the ancillary events at the Monash Gallery, such as public lectures, screenings and forums, may also be held at ACCA.

"The joint initiative demonstrates Monash's continuing commitment to the development of Australian arts," said Ms Duncan, citing Playbox Theatre as another example of the university's involvement in the area.

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