

MEDIA STATEMENT

18 May 2015

**NATIONAL
PORTRAIT
GALLERY**

Foundation members announced

The newly-established National Portrait Gallery Foundation met for its inaugural meeting last Friday 15 May in Canberra

National Portrait Gallery Board Chairman, Dr Helen Nugent AO said the establishment of the Foundation was another important milestone in the Gallery's history and welcomed the appointment of Mr Sid Myer AM as the inaugural President of the body.

Mr Myer is honoured to be invited to lead the new entity and paid tribute to the Foundation members: Mrs Marilyn Darling AC, Mr Tim Fairfax AC, Mr John Liangis, Dr Helen Nugent AO and Mr David Smorgon OAM.

'The Gallery has been extraordinarily fortunate to have had the remarkable support of private individuals who have provided the pillars for the Gallery's growth. The Foundation will continue to build and expand on this philanthropic support,' Mr Myer said.

'The Foundation's role is to encourage gifts, donations and bequests to the Gallery that will assist with ongoing funding for collection development, educational, learning and outreach programs, publications, scholarships as well as many other initiatives.

'Each member has been invited to join the Foundation based on their outstanding individual philanthropic contributions to Australian society and the visual arts.'

The Foundation expects to appoint a further two or three members to reflect the national reach of the Gallery.

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National Portrait Gallery Foundation members

Mr Sid Myer AM joined the National Portrait Gallery Board in August 2013 and was appointed to the position of President of the Portrait Gallery Foundation on 12 March 2015.

Founding Patron, **Mrs Marilyn Darling AC** is a member of the inaugural body. Mrs Darling was Chair of the Portrait Gallery Board from 2000 to 2008. Under her leadership the Gallery grew from a small space in Old Parliament House to a significant cultural institution in its own purpose-built building. Together with her husband, Mr L Gordon Darling AC CMG, they provided a combination of idealism, practical support and persuasive lobbying which brought the institution into being.

Another member, **Mr Tim Fairfax AC**, is also part of the early and continuing history of the Portrait Gallery. Mr Fairfax is a Founding Benefactor and past Chair of the Gallery. He is a company director and philanthropist and was awarded the Companion to the Order of Australia in 2014 for his eminent services to the community. He is an advocate for philanthropy and a major supporter of the visual arts, also promoting higher education opportunities and rural and regional development programs.

The Foundation also welcomes local Canberra resident, **Mr John Liangis**. John and his mother, Mrs Sotiria Liangis OAM have been part of the Portrait Gallery since the construction of the new building and are Founding Benefactors of the Gallery. John is a graduate of the Canberra School of Art (BA (VA), Painting) and has an in-depth knowledge and passion for the arts.

The National Portrait Gallery Board is represented by Chairman **Dr Helen Nugent AO**. Dr Nugent has a long and sustained commitment to the arts and education, currently heading up the National Opera Review. She is also Chancellor of Bond University and President of Cranbrook School.

Melbourne businessman **Mr David Smorgon OAM** is also welcomed to the Foundation. Mr Smorgon brings a wealth of business experience and his contributions to improving education, social welfare and health.

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