

MOSMAN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

Community Development

PO Box 211

SPIT JUNCTION NSW 2088

Telephone No. (02) 9978 4000 Facsimile No. (02) 9978 4132

E-mail: council@mosman.nsw.gov.au

PRESS RELEASE

Date:	21 November 2011
Subject:	Mosman Art Gallery wins major national award
Date of Release:	For immediate release
Further Enquiries To:	Julie Petersen 9978 4186 j.petersen@mosman.nsw.gov.au www.mosmanartgallery.org.au

Mosman Art Gallery receives major national award.

Museums Australia has awarded Mosman Art Gallery a MAGNA (Museums and Galleries National Award) for the 2010 exhibition *Australian Accent: the Designs of Annan Fabrics and Vande Pottery in the 40s and 50s*. The exhibition was jointly curated by Julie Petersen of Mosman Art Gallery and Donna Braye, the local studies librarian at Mosman Library.

Mosman Art Gallery was in rare company with the Art Gallery of NSW being the only other NSW recipient of an award for exhibitions which were announced on Thursday 17 November at the Museums Australian Annual Conference in Perth. The award was accepted on behalf of Mosman Council by Sarah-Jane Rennie of Museums and Galleries NSW.

"This is a big win for Mosman" says Mosman Gallery Director, John Cheeseman. "It not only shows how important Mosman artists have been in the development of Australian design and but also provides contemporary recognition of this community's importance in the development of issues of national identity and arts practice. This has been our first design based exhibition and this award clearly demonstrates the critical nature of our work and the dedication and professionalism of our staff."

Australian Accent was acknowledged by the judges as being of national significance and presenting a cohesive and comprehensive story about an aspect of Australia's design history. The exhibition reignited interest from the design sector, redefining objects and materials usually associated with the craft and souvenir genres in the context of a public art gallery. The exhibition showcased two Mosman businesses which featured distinctive 'Australian' designs using native flora, fauna and Aboriginal motifs. It included examples of the bold silk screen prints produced by *Annan Fabrics*, popular as modern furnishings for the international and domestic marketplace and the handcrafted ceramic pieces by Vande Pottery produced for the thriving tourism scene of the 1950s.

The Judges commented that "this exhibition was elegantly presented with a wonderful retro sensibility underpinned by thoughtful and accessible research."

The MAGNAs recognise excellent work nationally in the categories of exhibition, public programs and sustainability projects and are open to all Australian and New Zealand cultural collecting institutions. They are intended to; encourage the continuous improvement and development of Australian museums and galleries, inspire and recognise best practice and innovation in the collecting sector and enhance the profile of museums and galleries in local and wider communities.

Please note all information is correct at time of release

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In an important post-script to the exhibition, the designs of Nance Mackenzie of *Annan Fabrics* have inspired a contemporary fabric design company which participated in the textile symposium for the exhibition, to currently investigate the possibility of reproducing the designs in a similar way to the successful rejuvenation of the work of Florence Broadhurst.

For more image references and information go to :

[Mosman Art Gallery: Australian Accent: the Designs of Annan Fabrics and Vande Pottery of the '40s and '50s](#)

<http://mosmanartgallery.org.au/exhibitions/australian-accent>