

Media Release

**MOSMAN
ART
GALLERY**

18 August 2025

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\$80,000 fellowship launched in Mosman for artistic innovation

Mosman Art Gallery and The Balnaves Foundation are proud to announce the launch of The Neil Balnaves Fellowship in honour of the late Neil Balnaves AO; A major initiative providing \$80,000 biennially to support the development of a significant piece of research or creative endeavour over a one-year period. Offered in 2025 and again in 2027, each winning project must engage with Mosman's artistic heritage and/or The Balnaves Gift to be selected and will go on to be included in the Mosman Art Gallery program.

Applications open for six weeks from Monday 18 August, with the first Fellowship to be awarded late 2025. The second Fellowship will be awarded in 2027 with application dates to be announced. Open to artists, curators, historians and writers, the Fellowship encourages a range of projects to be submitted including artwork, exhibition, research project or text.

The Neil Balnaves Fellowship offers a unique and critical opportunity for creative practitioners to work closely alongside Mosman Art Gallery. Designed to deepen understanding of Mosman's cultural legacy and contemporary discourse in the visual arts, the Fellowship supports works that are ambitious, thoughtful and resonate with locals.

Mosman Art Gallery Director, Steven Alderton said: "The Neil Balnaves Fellowship is an exciting opportunity to unite artist practitioners with the community of Mosman to celebrate its rich history and heritage.

Neil Balnaves was an extraordinary man, whose ongoing passion and contribution to the arts has greatly benefitted Australians. This Fellowship will continue his legacy, celebrating the suburb he called home for many years."

CEO of The Balnaves Foundation, Hamish Balnaves said: "The Balnaves family and Foundation are proud to support Mosman Art Gallery in this exciting initiative, to showcase the impact of Mosman's artistic culture.

As a long-term resident who greatly admired the area, Neil's personal art collection showcased the natural beauty of Mosman. These works were later donated to the Gallery for the public to enjoy and this Fellowship builds on that gift by connecting it to Mosman's heritage. It's a tribute to my father's passion for visual arts and his contributions to make art accessible to all."

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Honouring the legacy of Neil Balnaves AO and his longstanding commitment to Mosman's place in Australian art history, The Neil Balnaves Fellowship continues the fruitful partnership between the Gallery, the Balnaves family and The Balnaves Foundation. Together they have fostered a rich legacy of collections, commissions, research, education and public engagement.

To apply and learn more visit mosmanartgallery.org.au

About Neil Balnaves AO 1944 – 2022

In 2006, Neil Balnaves AO founded The Balnaves Foundation. Already an established philanthropist, Neil wanted to create a pathway for intergenerational giving, bringing his family together to help create a better Australia through the arts, education and medicine.

Prior to establishing the Foundation, Neil had a long and successful career in the media industry, including founding the Southern Star Group in 1988. As a film and TV executive, Neil was proud to have been involved in bringing many popular shows to Australian screens, including Water Rats, Blue Heelers, Big Brother, The Secret Life of Us, McLeod's Daughters and Bananas in Pyjamas.

Neil was the Chairman of Ardent Leisure Group, one of Australia's most successful owners and operators of premium leisure assets, from 2003 until 2016. Other former directorships include Hanna-Barbara Australia, Reed Consolidated Industries, Hamlyn Group, Taft Hardie, Southern Star Group and Southern Cross Broadcasting.

He was the Chancellor of Charles Darwin University, and a former Director and Trustee Member of Bond University, receiving an Honorary Doctorate of the Bond University in 2009. In addition, Neil was a Board Member of the Art Gallery of South Australia from 2013 to 2019, was a former member of the Advisory Council and Dean's Circle at the University of New South Wales Faculty of Medicine, and in 2010 received an Honorary Doctorate of the University of New South Wales.

Neil was immensely proud to be appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 2010, for his services to the community through philanthropic support for the arts, education, medical research and Indigenous programs, and to business.

Neil sadly passed away in February 2022 and is greatly missed by his family who honour his legacy, ensuring Neil's vision for the Foundation, to create a better Australia, will continue. To find out more about The Balnaves Foundation, www.balnavesfoundation.com

About The Balnaves Foundation

The Balnaves Foundation is a private philanthropic organisation established in 2006 by Neil Balnaves AO. The Foundation disperses \$5 million annually to eligible organisations that aim to create a better Australia through education, medicine and the arts with a focus on young people, the disadvantaged and Indigenous Australia.

About Mosman Art Gallery

Mosman Art Gallery is a regional art gallery, serving the community of Mosman. The exhibition program is focused on celebrating and supporting local artists; interpreting and exhibiting the Mosman Art Collection which includes the past winners of the Mosman Art Prize and the Balnaves Gift; telling stories of Mosman through art, including the 60,000 years of the Boregagal and Cammeraygal People of the

Eora Nation, the First Nations inhabitants of this land; and bringing the work of the most thoughtful and rigorous artists to Mosman.

On 11 December 1998 Mosman Art Gallery was officially opened by the Australian Governor-General, Sir William Dean. In its previous life the building had been a Methodist Church designed by Burcham Clamp and Walter Burley Griffin and was built in 1915.



Neil Balnaves AO, 2021

Media Contacts

For more information see mosmanartgallery.org.au

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