TWELVE DEGREES of LATITUDE
Regional Gallery and University Art Collections in Queensland

Secondary School Education Kit
# Contents

**Background Information** .......................... 3  
  About the exhibition. .......................... 3  
  About the title .......................... 3  
  Q150 celebrations .......................... 3  
  Curators .......................... 3  
  Artists .......................... 4  
  Participating galleries and collections .......................... 4

**Exhibition Tour/Itinerary** .......................... 5

**Learning activities for secondary school students** .......................... 6  
  Collections and Collecting .......................... 6  
  The title of the exhibition .......................... 7  
  Q150 - our people, our places, our stories .......................... 8  
  Pre-20th Century Art .......................... 9  
  Landscape and Figures in Landscape .......................... 11  
  Other 20th Century Art (1900-1990) .......................... 13  
  Indigenous Art .......................... 16  
  Art Post-1990 .......................... 18

**Curator interview** .......................... 20

**Acknowledgments** .......................... 21
ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Twelve Degrees of Latitude: Regional Gallery and University Art Collections in Queensland is the first major exhibition of works curated solely from Queensland’s regional gallery and university collections. It represents a rare opportunity for visitors to view and engage with significant artworks as part of the celebrations for Queensland’s 150th year.

Twelve Degrees of Latitude draws on the collections of 27 regional galleries and universities. The exhibition focuses on why and how Queensland’s regional collections began, their historical roles within their communities, the role of patronage and donor support in their growth and development, and the strength of the state-wide regional gallery culture. Twelve Degrees of Latitude represents a significant opportunity to focus on the vital contribution made by Queensland’s regional and public galleries to the state’s cultural landscape.

The exhibition illustrates the diversity, as well as significant linkages, of regional collections through the following themes or groupings:

- **Group 1: Pre-20th Century Art**
- **Group 2: Landscape and Figures in Landscape**
- **Group 3: Other 20th Century Art (1900-1990)**
- **Group 4: Indigenous Art**
- **Group 5: Art Post-1990**

ABOUT THE TITLE

Twelve Degrees of Latitude refers geographically to the approximate distance in degrees of south latitude¹ from the northernmost participating public regional or university gallery in Queensland to the southernmost. This geographic area embraces all of the galleries included in the exhibition. The exhibition title also references the many degrees of latitude artists apply when making artworks; and alludes to the similarities and differences among regional and university galleries, collections, policies, and communities.

Q150 CELEBRATIONS

Queensland celebrates 150 years of independence from New South Wales in 2009. This milestone provides a unique opportunity to celebrate Queensland. The exhibition Twelve Degrees of Latitude was developed with assistance from the Queensland Government’s Q150 Community Funding Program. Q150 community grants were allocated to activities and projects that reflect the unique culture, heritage and aspirations of diverse Queensland communities. The theme for Q150 is our people, our places, our stories… Learn more about Queensland’s 150th celebrations at http://www.q150.qld.gov.au/.

CURATORS

This exhibition was developed with two curators: Bettina MacAulay (Lead Curator) and Brett Adlington.

Bettina MacAulay held senior curatorial positions responsible for Australian Art, and earlier for British and European Art, at the Queensland Art Gallery, where she was also part of the team responsible for formulating the policy and staffing guidelines that helped to shape the Gallery’s development. Since joining the MacAulay Partners consultancy in the mid-1990s, Bettina has undertaken commissions for State, Federal, capital city, university and regional galleries, museums and libraries, and for corporate, legal and private collectors throughout Australia.

Bettina MacAulay has curated and coordinated hundreds of exhibitions, including Singing in the Heart: Music and the Art of Rupert Bunny with Desmond MacAulay (2007). She has researched and authored many articles, art exhibition catalogues and books on the visual arts and individual artists, and her regional and university gallery projects throughout Queensland have given her an extensive knowledge of these Collections. Another major current project is curating Lawrence Daws: The Promised Land, a comprehensive survey exhibition of the senior Australian artist’s works from the 1950s to the present, which opens in 2010 and will tour in three States.

Bettina MacAulay’s studies at the University of Queensland, where she graduated in Classics and Art History, include Classical art, Asian and western art, and Classical languages.

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¹ Terminology and latitude details were confirmed by Bill Kitson, historian and recently-retired Senior Curator at the State Government’s Lands, Mapping and Surveying Museum, Woolloongabba, Brisbane. He is the co-author, with Dr Judith McKay, of Surveying Queensland 1839-1945: A Pictorial History, published in 2006.
Brett Adlington has worked in the regional gallery sector since the mid-1990s, largely in Queensland, and has been responsible for the management of the collections of Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville, and Gold Coast City Art Gallery. At this latter Gallery, as Curator, he produced more than 30 exhibitions, many with a collection focus and others examining the particularities of Gold Coast culture. These include *A Place in the sun: historical visions of the Gold Coast and All that Glitters ...contemporary visions of the Gold Coast*. In 2005 he curated the Scott Redford solo exhibition *The content of these paintings is secret, known only to the people of Surfers Paradise*, and in 2002 he curated and toured *6ft + clean: surf + art* to nine venues across the country. He has also curated many exhibitions in a freelance capacity.

Brett Adlington holds a Graduate Diploma in Arts and Cultural Management from the University of South Australia, and completed his Bachelor of Visual Arts, majoring in photography, at Sydney College of the Arts. Since August 2007 he has worked as Curator at Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery, NSW, and has curated a number of projects in that time.

**ARTISTS including**

Brendan Adair-Smith, Tony Albert, Davida Allen, Rick Amor, Richard Bell, Gordon Bennett, Rupert Bunny, John Coburn, Ray Crooke, Lawrence Daws, Marian Drew, Max Dupain, William F. Emery, Fiona Foley, E. Phillips Fox, Joe Furlonger, Rosalie Gascoigne, Miles Hall, Mari Hirata, Samantha Hobson, George Leslie Hunter, Leah King-Smith, Craig Koomeeta, Rosanna Li Wei Han, Alasdair Macintyre, Robert MacPherson, Mandy Martin, Ron McBurnie, Noel McKenna, Rob McQueen, Arone Meeks, Billy Missi, Tracey Moffatt, Rosella Namok, Sidney Nolan, Dennis Nona, Margaret Olley, Patricia Piccinini, Gwyn Hanssen Pigott, Ben Quilty, Scott Redford, Lloyd Rees, William Robinson, Anneke Silver, Jeffrey Smart, Grace Cossington Smith, Arthur Streeton, Ken Thaiday Snr., Alick Tipoti, Christopher Trotter, Judy Watson, Gerry Wedd, Guan Wei, Anne Zahalka, Michael Zavros.

**PARTICIPATING GALLERIES AND COLLECTIONS**

- Artspace Mackay
- Bundaberg Regional Art Gallery
- Caloundra Regional Art Gallery
- Cairns Regional Gallery
- CQUniversity Art Collection
- Dalby Regional Gallery
- Emerald Art Gallery and Central Highlands Regional Collections
- Gallery Hinchinbrook, Ingham
- Gold Coast City Art Gallery
- Gladstone Regional Art Gallery & Museum
- Griffith Artworks: The Griffith University Art Collection & QCA Gallery
- Ipswich Art Gallery/City of Ipswich Collection
- James Cook University Art Collection, Townsville
- KickArts Contemporary Arts, Cairns
- Logan Art Gallery, Logan City
- Moreton Bay Regional Art Collection & Galleries
- Museum of Brisbane/The City of Brisbane Collection
- Outback Regional Gallery, Winton
- Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville
- QUT Art Collection/QUT Art Museum, Brisbane
- Redland Art Gallery, Cleveland
- Rockhampton Art Gallery
- Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery
- The University of Queensland Art Museum
- Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery
- University of Southern Queensland Art Collection, Toowoomba
- University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery, Sippy Downs
This exhibition will tour to venues geographically spread across Queensland from August 2009 to late 2011. In four locations the exhibition will be split across two venues to accommodate their smaller facilities while still providing access to the entire show within the region.

As part of Q150 celebrations, the exhibition will tour to the following venues:

**2009**

**Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville:**
21 August – 4 October

**QUT Art Museum, Brisbane:**
15 October - 20 December

The regional tour will continue to the following venues:

**2010**

**Logan Art Gallery:**
5 January – 6 February

**Gladstone Regional Art Gallery & Museum:**
5 March – 15 May

**Artspace Mackay:**
28 May – 11 July

**Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery:**
19 July – 5 September

**Caloundra Regional Art Gallery:**
23 September – 7 November (co-presented with)

**University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery:**
7 October - 6 November

**Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery:**
19 November – 21 January (co-presented with)

**Warwick Art Gallery:**
19 November – 21 January

**2011**

**Gold Coast City Art Gallery:**
12 February – 3 April

**Cairns Regional Gallery:**
15 April – 12 June
This exhibition draws together works from 27 Queensland regional gallery and university art collections. It is interesting to focus on the practice of collecting – not just collecting art – and also to consider how collections are developed, stored and displayed.

**DISCUSS**
- Consider the various ways in which art collections may be initiated and developed by regional galleries and universities.
- Discuss the following in relation to art collections: gifts and donations, acquisition policies, art prizes, benefactors and patrons.

**LOOK**
- Choose a regional gallery or university art collection represented in the exhibition. Write down the artist, title, year and medium of all the works from this collection that are on display. Compare the works in this collection – what is similar or different about them? Can you identify any themes or a focus for the collection of this regional gallery or university? Explain your answer.

**ENGAGE**
- Choose an artist featured in the exhibition upon whom to focus. Research their CV and identify in which national collections they are represented. Map the Queensland regional gallery and university art collections that hold their work on [Google Maps](http://maps.google.com.au/maps).
- Many art collections are established through an acquisitive art prize. Imagine the exhibition *Twelve Degrees of Latitude* is not a collections show, rather a display of entries in an art prize. As the official judge of the art prize, you have to choose a winning artwork and write a critical justification of your decision.

Now imagine that you are the judge of the art prize in 1859 (the year in which Queensland became a state). Which work would you judge as the winner at this time in history? How and why is your decision different?

Speculate about what art critics of that day would have said about the contemporary artworks in the exhibition?

Web resources:
DISCUSS
• What is latitude?
• Discuss what expectations are created about what you will see in this exhibition by the title *Twelve Degrees of Latitude: Regional Gallery and University Art Collections in Queensland*.

LOOK
• One of the challenges for the curators of this exhibition was the great range and diversity of artworks represented in Queensland’s regional gallery and university art collections. Based on this, and the geographic spread of participating galleries, they decided to focus on Queensland’s geography as a unifying approach to the exhibition, hence the title *Twelve Degrees of Latitude*.

Look at the works in the exhibition – what references to geography and place can you find? Which works are uniquely Queensland?

ENGAGE
• The exhibition title *Twelve Degrees of Latitude* refers geographically to the approximate distance in degrees of south latitude from the northernmost participating regional gallery or university in Queensland to the southernmost.

Can you identify which regional gallery or university is situated at each of these points?
• Can you think of another title for this exhibition? Why would you call it this?
This exhibition represents a rare opportunity for visitors to view and engage with significant artworks as part of the celebrations for Queensland’s 150th year. The theme of Q150 celebrations - *our people, our places, our stories* - relates to the diverse nature of Queensland’s regional and university art collections represented in this exhibition.

**DISCUSS**

- What are Q150 celebrations about?
- Think about how your local area or school has changed over the years – you may recall these changes from photos or from your own memory. Compare how we do things now to how they were done in the past. Discuss these changes with your class – do you have similar memories?
- Who records these changes and what are some ways in which change is documented?

**LOOK**

- Identify artworks that reveal something about the history of Queensland over the last 150 years. Choose one to discuss further. Looking at this artwork, how would you describe how Queensland has changed from then to the present day? What clues did you find in the artwork to help you identify these changes?
- The theme for Q150 celebrations is *our people, our places, our stories*. Choose three artworks – one that connects with Queensland ‘people’, one with Queensland ‘places’ and one with Queensland ‘stories’. Write down what each artwork tells us about that particular aspect.

**ENGAGE**

- Start a collection of images, news articles and objects that reflect Queensland – they may be historical or contemporary depictions. Create a display of them in your classroom.
- Alternatively, visit the [Picture Queensland](http://pictureqld.slq.qld.gov.au/) website and research images of Queensland. You could also research images of Queensland on [Flickr](http://www.flickr.com/) and create a collection of your ‘favourites’.

Web resources:
http://www.flickr.com/
There are a modest number of works dated pre-20th Century in the exhibition, however the included artworks are diverse ‘gems’ of historical importance. This group focuses on portraits and works dealing with views, topography and natural history.

*Look at the works and consider why they were collected by each institution.*

**Sub-themes:** Portraits, Mapping.
DISCUSS
• Why are portraits collected by institutions? What significance might they hold for regional gallery and university art collections?
• It is not known who has painted some of these portraits. Why is it important to remember the identity of the creator of an artwork?
• Discuss the practice of mapping. Why would old maps* be collected by an art gallery?
• Consider the ‘look’ of maps – how might maps be source material for artists? How would artists apply mapping to different artforms eg ceramics, textiles, painting, photography?
• Discuss topographical painting in relation to mapping.

LOOK
• Look at the historical portraits in the exhibition. How are they similar or different in style, composition and colour?
• Write down the main differences you can identify between these historical maps and maps that we use today.
• Choose a topographical scene and record the perspective taken by the artist. Write down some reasons why you think this is a topographical view and not simply a landscape painting?

ENGAGE
• Find a contemporary painted portrait in the exhibition to compare with an historical one. What are the differences in the artists’ approach to rendering their subjects? Does the contemporary portrait tell us more about the subject – how?
• Find an historical photographic portrait in the exhibition and consider how the subject(s) has been presented. How is this similar or different to the historical painted portraits?
• Find an artwork that references mapping in the exhibition. What do you think this artwork is about?
• Research other artists that use maps as source material or reference mapping in their artistic approach.

*Teachers should be aware that not all venues will be able to display these maps; however mapping as a theme, especially as source material for other works in the exhibition, could still be explored.
This group of works presents a diverse range of styles and responses to landscapes and cityscapes. Look at the ways in which artists approach these Queensland and Australian scenes and views, as well as the presence of humans in the environment.

*Can you identify some unexpected or unusual depictions of the figure in the landscape?*

**Sub-themes:** Ned Kelly, mapping (see Pre-20th Century)
DISCUSS

- Think about the genre of 'figures in landscape'. Can human presence be implied in a landscape without actual figures being depicted? Discuss.
- Why do you think Ned Kelly is a subject of interest for Australian artists?
- Find other examples of artworks related to Ned Kelly – historical and contemporary. What is similar and different about these representations?

LOOK

- Choose 4 artworks that deal with the landscape. Identify the perspective taken by the artist in each work. What feeling does this give you about each landscape?

Are there any human figures present in the landscape artworks you have chosen? Why do you think the artist has or has not included a human presence?

- Watch the short DVD about Ned Kelly by Derek Kreckler. Compare this representation of the bushranger with another work about Ned Kelly in the exhibition. What do you think the artist might be trying to communicate about Ned Kelly in each work? How would you describe each artist’s approach to their subject?

ENGAGE

- Choose two artists from the group to research further*: William Robinson; William Bustard; Arthur Streeton; Rick Amor; Grace Cossington Smith; Rosalie Gascoigne; Lawrence Daws.

Compare their approaches to painting landscape – what are their similarities and differences? Is their work in the exhibition a good example of their wider practice? Explain your answer.

- Create a series of artworks about landscapes or cityscapes. If possible, create at least one artwork en plein air (outdoors, in the environment) and another work using a photograph/postcard or imagine your own ‘scape’. You may choose to include figures in your artworks or imply human presence. What visual clues would you use to suggest a human presence in the landscape?

You may wish to create a series to reflect human development of a landscape – for example, the first artwork depicts a natural landscape, the second work suggests development ‘creeping in’ and the last work depicts how a cityscape can replace a natural environment.

*It would be useful for students to select artists that have works on display at the venue they are visiting (in the case of venues co-presenting the exhibition).
Numerous artworks in the exhibition were created during the 20th Century. Most of the artworks in this group fall into three categories — war and war-related art, still lifes and portraits.

_When viewing this group of artworks, decide which category listed here best describes each one._

**Sub-themes:** War and war-related art, still lifes, portraits
Some venues will be fortunate to display two important works from the late Belle Époque (‘Beautiful Era’) by two of Australia’s most famous expatriate artists, Rupert Bunny and Emanuel Phillips Fox. However these artworks can only tour to limited venues.

*The Rupert Bunny and E. Phillips Fox works are illustrated in this kit – compare with the original paintings if you are able to see them on display.*
DISCUSS

- What is the Belle Époque? Discuss what influence this period may have had on art created during the period 1900-1990.
- Identify and discuss art movements that were established during the 20th Century.
- Discuss ways in which war photographs are different to war paintings.
- Discuss what a ceramicist’s ‘still life’ would look like.

LOOK

- Several artworks in this exhibition could be interpreted as ‘non-traditional’ still lifes. Make a list of the artworks that you would describe in this way.
  
  Next to each title, write down why you consider them to belong to the still life genre.

ENGAGE

- Research if any of the artists represented in this exhibition were appointed official war artists. Start by visiting the website of the Australian War Memorial.
  Write down the war or peacekeeping effort to which they were appointed.
- If you were to create a still life using common domestic objects of contemporary life, what objects would you choose to include?
  Assemble these objects into an arrangement that you draw or paint. Think about the form, line, texture and colour of your composition.
  Compare the aesthetic appeal of your ‘contemporary’ still life with the more traditional still lifes in the exhibition.

Web resource:
Indigenous Art

Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander works in *Twelve Degrees of Latitude* display a variety of cultural, social and artistic concerns. Some focus on country and culture; some on the artefacts and cultural minutiae of Indigenous living; some on Indigenous-European settlement history; and others on black-white experience and relationships.

*When viewing this group of artworks, write down the various types of media used by these artists.*

**Sub-themes:** Indigenous culture, storytelling, printmaking

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**Indigenous Art**

**Gordon BENNETT**

*The Selector: This is how land ownership is determined*, 1992

- Synthetic polymer paint and oil on canvas 162.0 x 130.0 cm
- Collection: University of Southern Queensland

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**Dennis NONA**

*Sessaree A/P*, 2004

- Hand coloured linocut on fabric 112.5 x 200.0 cm
- Collection: Griffith University Art Collection
DISCUSS

- Discuss ‘traditional’ media used by Indigenous artists.
- Discuss ways in which ‘traditional’ Indigenous art is different to contemporary ‘urban’ Indigenous art - in terms of media and storytelling.
- Consider how art can help focus attention on social issues. Discuss.

LOOK

- Choose an artwork that you consider to be telling an Indigenous story in a ‘traditional’ way. What do you think the story is about? Write down some of the key elements to this story that have been described visually in the artwork.
- Choose an artwork that you consider to be telling a ‘contemporary’ Indigenous story? What do you think the story is about? What do you think is the artist’s message in this artwork?
- Identify one artwork that comments on historical settlement issues and one artwork that comments on current social issues.
  What comments do you think are being made in these artworks?

ENGAGE

- Choose two artists from the group to research further*: Tony Albert; Richard Bell; Tracey Moffatt; Dennis Nona; Alick Tipoti; Gordon Bennett; Rosella Namok; Judy Watson.
  Find out what you can about each artist’s heritage. Consider how this has informed their art practice.
  Compare the artistic practice of your chosen artists – what is similar or different about their artistic approach, use of media, messages or stories in their artwork?
- Write a critical review about the Indigenous collection of works in this exhibition. Your review should reveal the artworks that you consider to be the most important in the collection and why they are significant.

*It would be useful for students to select artists that have works on display at the venue they are visiting (in the case of venues co-presenting the exhibition).
*Teachers may wish to direct students to select one Aboriginal and one Torres Strait Islander artist, where possible, or one male and one female artist to encourage further comparison.
This group of recent works deals with a number of interrelated themes about contemporary society. The artists employ a range of approaches and mediums to explore humour, popular culture, escapism and daily life.

*Can you identify some unusual materials used by these artists to create their work? Make a list of these materials and record their ‘normal’ purpose or function.*

**Sub-themes:** Asian art and culture*, groupings or multiples, post-modernism, pop culture
DISCUSS

- What is ‘postmodernism’? List some characteristics of postmodern art.
- What is appropriation?
- Source images of installation artworks that use multiples or groupings of objects (repetition) and discuss them with your class.

Where has the installation been created? How does this contribute to the impact of the artwork?

LOOK

- Make a list of all the artworks that use text in this exhibition. Do most of them come from this group of recent contemporary works or not?

Describe how text has been used in each work and comment on how important the use of this text is in conveying the message of the artwork.

- Choose the artwork that you consider to be the strangest in this group and write a critical review about it. Remember to consider not only how the work makes you feel but also what the artist was trying to achieve by creating the work.

ENGAGE

- Research artists that are historically renowned for using appropriation in their art.

Then focus your research on Australian artists that use appropriation. Identify which artists featured in this exhibition are known for appropriation.

*Teachers should ensure that there are examples on display to explore the sub-theme of Asian art and culture (in the case of venues co-presenting the exhibition).

*This Look activity is provided as an alternative to the first activity, which may not be relevant to the works on display (in the case of venues co-presenting the exhibition).
Exhibition Development Coordinator for Museum and Gallery Services Queensland, Jodi Ferrari, asked the Lead Curator of Twelve Degrees of Latitude, Bettina MacAulay, some questions about her role and the process of curating this landmark exhibition.

**JF: Bettina, could you please tell us what the role of a curator is?**

**BM:** The term comes from ancient Rome, where the Latin word *curare* meant ‘to take care of’. Originally, the meaning was broad, and later was applied to the care of children. Gradually this changed to mean the keeper or carer of a museum or other collection.

Today, the word ‘curator’ is applied even more widely. As well as referring to someone who is responsible for artworks or artefacts, it is applied to an individual curator or group of curators who plan and develop exhibitions, research collections and write art catalogues. Curators work with many other professionals, such as conservators, and in very large public galleries or art museums they may have specialised roles, such as researching particular sections of a collection or art period. The term ‘curator’ is also now widely used outside art galleries, for example, in music programs and collections and where people have responsibility for cultural materials, in botanical gardens, and at sporting events.

**JF: The exhibition Twelve Degrees of Latitude was developed with a lead curator and a co-curator, Brett Adlington. Could you talk about the differences between these roles and how you collaborated on the curatorial process?**

**BM:** In this kind of context, the lead curator has a primary responsibility to guide the overall conception and development of an exhibition project, in collaboration with the co-curator, who offers advice and undertakes particular tasks. Sometimes, it may be that the lead curator is more experienced, or has special knowledge that is relevant to a given exhibition or has requisite project management skills. With Twelve Degrees, because Brett and I now live in different States, we collaborated using various means—emails, telephone calls, and several face-to-face meetings. The curatorial process worked because we discussed critical ideas extensively, and had largely agreed early in the project on our modus operandi. We decided that we didn’t want to adopt a ‘Treasures’ approach—one that only picked out a few ‘jewels’—but rather to choose certain works which said something about the scope, direction and intent of collecting in individual galleries, and gave some idea of the differences and similarities of approach across such a vast State as Queensland. We also wanted to demonstrate, through the works exhibited, something of the nascent status of collecting in regional and university galleries—the successes, the gaps and what remains to be done in terms of building Collections and revising policies. When further detailed discussions were required, we were able to work fruitfully within an agreed framework.

**JF: Why do art galleries and universities collect artwork?**

**BM:** Public galleries which collect art (some do not) do so for many reasons. Regional gallery Collections, like most Australian State Gallery Collections, often began for cultural and moral reasons that came from earlier times, when art was thought to be civilising, or perhaps indicated that a local community had reached a certain level of civic importance. Sometimes public figures were themselves interested in collecting art privately, and so encouraged public collecting. More recently, benefactors have gifted artworks to regions in which they have special interests. Town, city and Shire Councils have adopted policies that importantly support the telling of local stories through artworks, and see the collecting of artworks in regional public galleries as supporting tourism and regional development, as well as local artists as the public gallery may also provides exhibiting opportunities. University galleries see their art collections as positive indicators of cultural commitment within educational settings. Many Australian universities teach fine arts courses and art history, and their collections thus have a directly educative function for students. University collections also support fund raising activities, and provide cultured settings for university events involving visiting dignitaries.

**JF: Do Queensland regional galleries and universities only collect work by Queensland artists?**

**BM:** No, most collect more widely than that, but many have detailed collection policies which are targeted to their own special interests. Some, for example, focus on art of their own regions and this can be quite successful when there is a significant and diverse body of works and periods on which to draw. Sub-sets of collections can be important too—Perc Tucker in Townsville, located for example in a
region with a lengthy connection with the Army and RAAF, collects a sub-set of military art. Regional galleries usually follow the interests of their communities (car culture at Ipswich or beach culture at Gold Coast, for example), while a few have heritage Collections of some depth. The exhibition catalogue for Twelve Degrees gives a flavour of how a number of different galleries have devised their collection policies. But the overall collecting experience is of acquiring Australian works, especially contemporary works and works from the 20th Century. Galleries with smaller collecting budgets may focus on less expensive media, for example works on paper. By contrast some university galleries are relatively well endowed, and are more likely to be able to afford large art works, especially paintings and sculpture, than the smaller regional galleries.

JF: What are some of the ways in which Queensland regional gallery and university art Collections have been developed? How are the artworks acquired?

BM: Collections grow through gifts, art prizes, acquisition from galleries or at auction, and transfers from other institutions. Another way of acquiring artworks is through the Australian Government’s Cultural Gifts Program, established in 1978, through which donor of artworks receive a tax deduction. Directors of 27 exhibiting regional and university galleries have written essays for the exhibition catalogue which offer insights into how their collections have developed.

JF: As the lead curator of Twelve Degrees of Latitude, why do you feel it is important to showcase what is in regional gallery and university art collections in Queensland?

BM: None of these collections has existed for longer than a human lifetime, and Twelve Degrees may be the first exhibition to survey this youthful sector. It is the first opportunity for many viewers to see even a tiny proportion of the holdings of these institutions together in a single show. As such, we are able to see hints of the strengths and weaknesses of this sector—to glimpse what has been achieved in so short a time, and to make some initial assessment of what remains to be done. This exhibition offers a unique measure of the status of art collections in the State’s regions and universities. The exhibition is a kind of ‘document of record’, a guide to collections, and it may also encourage viewers to visit less-familiar or far-flung regional or university galleries.

JF: What is the first thing you did to start the process of curating this exhibition?

BM: I was fortunate in having a fairly extensive knowledge of these collections derived from working with many of them over a number of years. Brett Adlington, the co-curator, was also familiar with several collections and with a number of the issues which emerged in curating the exhibition. From the outset, Gallery Directors were very interested in the exhibition and willing to offer their views about works they would like to see included. The curators also had their own ‘wish’ lists and through negotiations, an exhibition rationale—the reasons for mounting such an exhibition—was developed and refined.

JF: What were some of the major considerations curating an exhibition of this nature?

BM: Exhibitions of the work of a single artist are usually relatively easy to organise. There might be a single theme, or perhaps a focus on a narrowly identified section of the artist’s work. But in this exhibition there are 132 works by 108 artists, living and dead. With a large number of works from many periods and styles, an obvious preliminary problem, the chief problem in fact, was to consider how to make the exhibition coherent. It had to tell multiple stories in a variety of ways, but still hold together. Another major consideration was the installation and hanging of the exhibition, which will probably vary greatly from one gallery to the next, because their spaces differ so much.

JF: There are five themes for this exhibition. Why was it important to break the exhibition into these groupings?

BM: It allowed the curators to organise many disparate artworks into coherent groups for hanging. It also facilitated artworks ‘talking’ to each other, i.e. to provide some complementarity and to enlarge the contexts of individual works. On a macro scale, the groups overall then ‘talked’ to each other as well, providing additional historical and cultural perspectives.

JF: This exhibition contains a lot more than just paintings. Why did you include a range of artforms in this exhibition and how does this reflect what is in regional gallery and university art Collections?

BM: Many of the galleries have artworks in different media, though the extent of this range differs from one gallery to another. It gives an indication of what is important to individual collections, and being an exhibition for
the Queensland Sesquicentenary, it was important to recognise the diversity of the State’s collections and they presently exist.

**JF:** *Some of the artworks are only on display at certain venues along the exhibition tour. Why is this?*

**BM:** The forward schedules of most galleries extend well beyond the present, at times to a few years beyond the present date. It takes time to obtain loans and organise the curatorial and administrative work necessary in mounting large exhibitions. The prior lending and exhibiting commitments of galleries have to be taken into account, and whether works are too fragile to travel (especially on a long tour). Some works may only be available for a limited period before their return to the lending gallery is required. Others may be particularly light sensitive, so can only be shown under low light (controlled lux levels), or for brief periods. There are some excellent works which we really wanted to include in the exhibition, but were unable to because of such reasons.

**JF:** *What aspects of the exhibition Twelve Degrees of Latitude do you think will surprise visitors?*

**BM:** We think visitors may be surprised by the range and depth of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander works in the exhibition, and also by a number of the Pre-20th Century works.

**JF:** *Finally, Bettina, do you have a favourite artwork in this exhibition? Why is it your favourite?*

**BM:** As a curator, I look at an artwork for many different reasons—for example, why I would acquire a given work for a public collection, whether it fits into the gallery’s collection policy, is a significant work in the artist’s oeuvre, isn’t too similar to other works by the artist (unless it’s part of a series or for some other curatorial reason), and whether it is such an important and wonderful work that it would justify including, even though it might not fit Collection policy. A curator needs to consider how the acquisition of a work can be funded.

One of Australia’s best-known painters once said to me: ‘There are no great artists, just great artworks.’ Sometimes a favourite work, or a striking work, can encourage the viewer to explore the artist’s work further. I do have many favourite artworks, if I take off my curator’s hat and replace it with the hat of a person simply viewing artworks in a gallery. There are many great artworks in this exhibition, and as you walk around it, and learn about the stories behind the works, I hope you too will find artworks which interest, entertain and inspire you, offer you moments of reflection, and connect with you emotionally.
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