**Inner worlds: portraits and psychology**

18 April to 22 July 2012

*Albert Tucker, Despairing head* 1942, pastel on paper Australian War Memorial, Canberra. Purchased 1990 © Courtesy Barbara Tucker

*[Inner worlds: portraits and psychology]* at the Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne, explores key connections between portraiture and psychology in Australia since the early twentieth century. Artists include Judy Cassab, Anne Ferran, Dale Frank, Joy Hester, Sidney Nolan, Mike Parr, Albert Tucker and Danila Vassilieff.

Portraits of Australia’s pioneers of psychology from World War I to the 1950s will be presented, alongside works by modernist and contemporary artists whose artistic practices have been highly influenced and strongly informed by their interest in psychology, the subconscious mind and intense mental states.

‘This exhibition shines a light on the valuable work of leading figures associated with psychological research and psychoanalysis in Australia, and provides a fascinating exploration of social history, biography and visual art,” said Christopher Menz, Acting Director, the Ian Potter Museum of Art.

Highlights include portraits and depictions of faces and figures created in the 1940s by Albert Tucker, Sidney Nolan and Joy Hester that reflect psychological trauma, an interest they shared with psychologist Reginald Spencer Ellery.

The exhibition includes portraits and imaginary faces created by mental health patients from the 1950s and 1960s. These works of art which reveal unique experiences of the mind were collected by Dr Eric Cunningham Dax. As these images are legally considered to be
medical records, the artist-patients’ names are withheld and the works cannot be reproduced but are granted exemption for exhibition in this context.

Contemporary works which explore highly intense mental states date from 1980s and 1990s are seen in experimental self portraits and figure studies by Dale Frank, Anne Ferran and Mike Parr.

Guest curator Christopher Chapman says ‘This portraiture exhibition provides a framework in which to examine the influence of psychology on the work of particular artists who are fascinated by the subconscious mind and extreme mental states.’

A major publication accompanies the exhibition with essays by scholars reflecting on the history of psychology and trauma in Australia, the influence of psychology on artists and art, and the state of psychology in contemporary Australian culture.

ENDS

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The Ian Potter Museum of Art The University of Melbourne, Swanston Street (between Elgin and Faraday streets), Parkville, 3010. T: 03 8344 5148 W: www.art-museum.unimelb.edu.au
Hours: Tuesday to Friday 10am - 5pm: Saturday and Sunday 12 - 5pm (Free admission

Symposium: the psychology of portraiture
Saturday 28 April 2012

The Ian Potter Museum of Art, during the exhibition Inner worlds, in conjunction with the Dax Centre and their exhibition Hide and Seek, are co-presenting a symposium on psychology and portraiture.

This half-day event will elaborate on themes raised by the exhibitions and draw on a number of frameworks including the psychanalytical, psychological, artistic and creative, in addition to historical and cultural perspectives.

12pm    Registration, the Ian Potter Museum, Swanston Street, Parkville
12:30–1:30pm    Viewing of the exhibitions
                Inner worlds (The Potter) and
                Hide and Seek (The Dax Centre)
1:30–4:30pm    Symposium, Kenneth Myer Auditorium
                The Kenneth Myer Building,
                Genetics Lane off Royal Parade

Curatorial presentations:
Juliette Hanson and Anna Takács, curators of Hide and Seek: self-portraits from the Cunningham Dax Collection <http://www.daxcentre.org/future-exhibitions>

Panel discussion:
Dr Eugen Koh, Director, The Dax Centre <http://www.daxcentre.org/board>,


Bookings essential:
Cost: $25 e-cart: www.art-museum.unimelb.edu.au by Friday 20 April
E: potter events@unimelb.edu.au, T: 03 8344 0327

Inner worlds: portraits & psychology is supported by the National Collecting Institutions Touring and Outreach Program, an Australian Government program aiming to improve access to the national collections for all Australians.