

GALLERY TALK

News

Hot on the heels of Edmund Capon announcing his retirement from the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the Director of the National Gallery of Victoria, Gerard Vaughan, has said that he will step down from the position in July 2012.

by Kim Butterworth

After thirteen years heading up the **National Gallery of Victoria**, Dr Vaughan said that he

believed it was "the right time to bow out". Surprising many, the decision to retire comes at the end of a busy year for the NGV, who have had a packed program of exhibitions as part of their 150th anniversary celebrations. While there may be speculation about the timing of Dr Vaughan's decision the discussion continues to return to who will make the all important shortlists for the two top jobs.

In September, the biennial **Melbourne Art Fair Awards** for the Visual Arts were announced at a gala dinner held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Fiona Hall, who



Fiona Hall, *Castles in the Air of the Cave-Dwellers*, 2008, (detail), resin, dimensions variable. Image courtesy of Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery.

regularly collaborates with scientists and historians as part of her extensive research and fieldwork, received the Artist Award while the Visionary Award went to Mark and Eva Besen AO. The Besen family are well known for their contribution to the visual arts over many years, including establishing **TarraWarra Museum of Art**, Australia's first privately funded public museum. TarraWarra has recently announced that they will welcome a new director with independent curator and writer Victoria Lynn taking up the position at the beginning of April 2012.

In Hobart, work has finally begun in earnest on the redevelopment of the **Tasmania Museum and Art Gallery**. Stage One will focus on the restoration and refurbishment of the heritage buildings to create new exhibition spaces and improve access and facilities. During the renovation period the visitor entrance to the smaller museum will be located through the doors at 5 Argyle Street.

Hobart's other big drawcard, the **Museum of Old and New Art (MONA)**, will shortly celebrate its first birthday. The nifty little iPod that helps direct people around the museum has revealed that Belgian artist Wim Delvoye's *Cloaca Professional* is the work visitors hate the most. So, in true MONA style they have announced that they will be showing a retrospective exhibition of works by Delvoye from 10 December.

Melbourne has seen a number of new commercial galleries enter the scene in recent months including **Lowrise Projects** in Richmond, a new project space

established by Melanie Flynn (previously gallery manager at Karen Woodbury Gallery) and Jeremy Smart. The gallery will exhibit mostly unrepresented artists from Melbourne and interstate.

Langford 120 has been opened by artists Irene Barbaris and Wilma Tabacco and is exhibiting established artists with a plan to show a variety of experimental works as well.

Photographer Glenn Gibson has opened a photography gallery and studio called **Eleven40**. Located in the Melbourne suburb of Malvern, the gallery will represent both local and international fine-art photographers, operate a rotating program of exhibitions, with plans to support other photography genres such as press, fashion, commercial and student works.

In Sydney, the much-anticipated **New Albion Gallery** opened in September with a solo show of works by hyper-realist sculptor Sam Jinks. New Albion is currently situated on Oxford Street but they have recently announced plans to take over the Sherman Foundation premises from January 2013.

After more than 10 years the directors of **Grantpirrie Gallery**, Stephen Grant and Bridget Pirrie, closed the gallery space in October but they have said that **Grantpirrie | Project** will continue, with future plans including a number of off-site and international projects.

Perth has recently gained two new art spaces, filling a gap for young, emerging artists to exhibit. **OK Gallery** in Northbridge has been established by Jamie Macchiusi, Andrew Varano and Gemma Weston to provide an avenue for early-career artists to exhibit in a commercial gallery. They currently have five artists on their books and hope to extend opportunities for local artists to show overseas and interstate.

Perth also has a new artist-run space, **The Museum of Natural Mystery**, run by David Egan and Patrick Miller. Operating from their garage in North Perth, the space aims to provide a platform for contemporary art that isn't being publicly exhibited in Perth. Shows are brief, generally for one night and one day only, so it's a case of keeping a close eye on what's coming up.