

NEW CONTEMPORARY GALLERIES FEATURING THE JOHN KALDOR FAMILY GALLERY

ART
GALLERY
NSW

Art Gallery of New South Wales
MAY 2011 – JUNE 2012

www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/new-contemporary-galleries

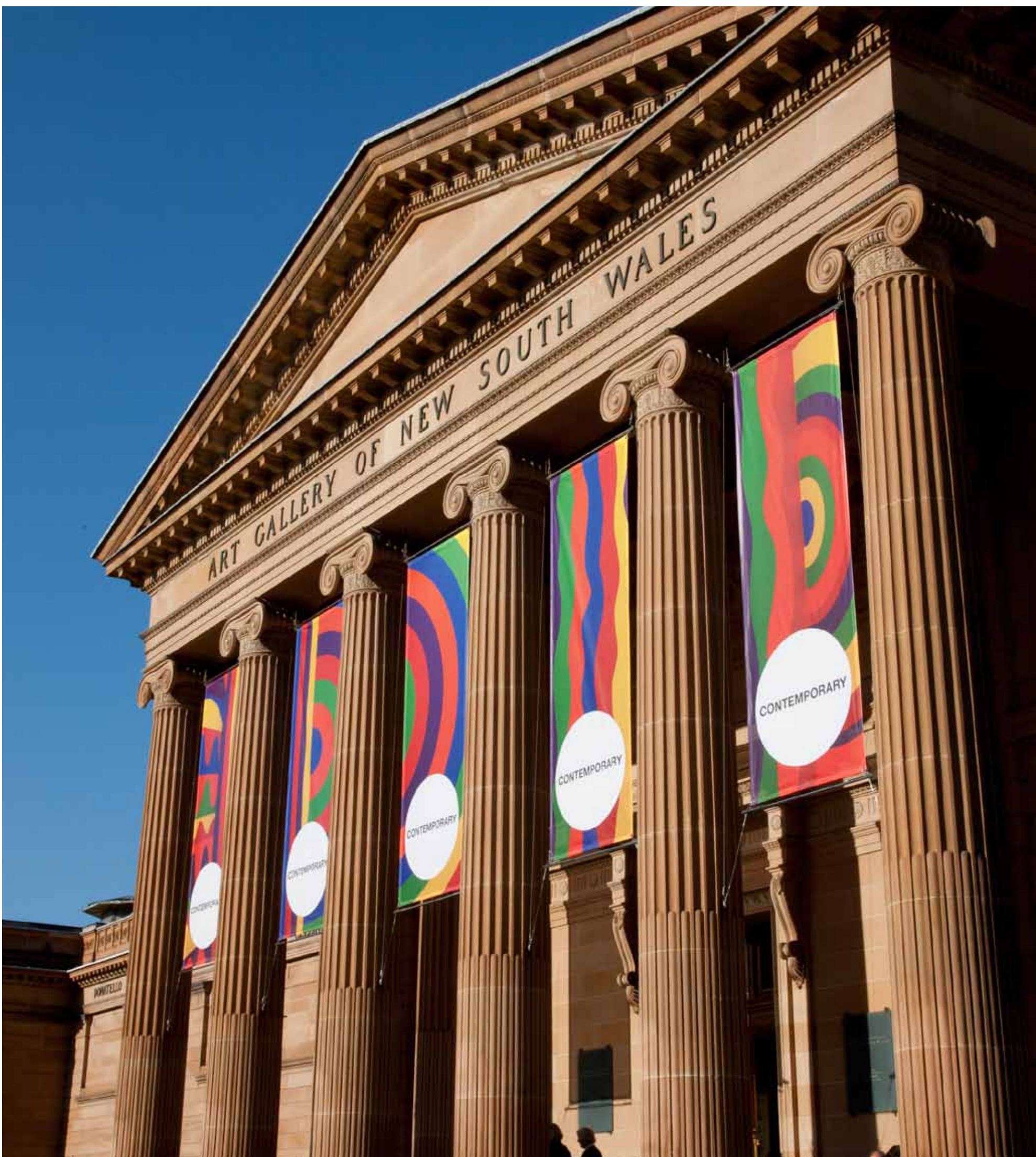
For an institution such as ours, with the aspiration to develop and maintain a distinguished and impressive representation of contemporary art, it would be hard to overestimate the significance of the gift of the John Kaldor Family Collection, a milestone that happens once in a century. It will be a transforming experience for the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Edmund Capon, director, Art Gallery of NSW



I have shared my love of contemporary art with the Australian public for more than 40 years through Kaldor Public Art Projects. My collection, on the other hand, has remained private. Donating it to the Art Gallery of New South Wales is a natural extension of my aim to share art with the public. It is also my largest-ever art project.

John Kaldor



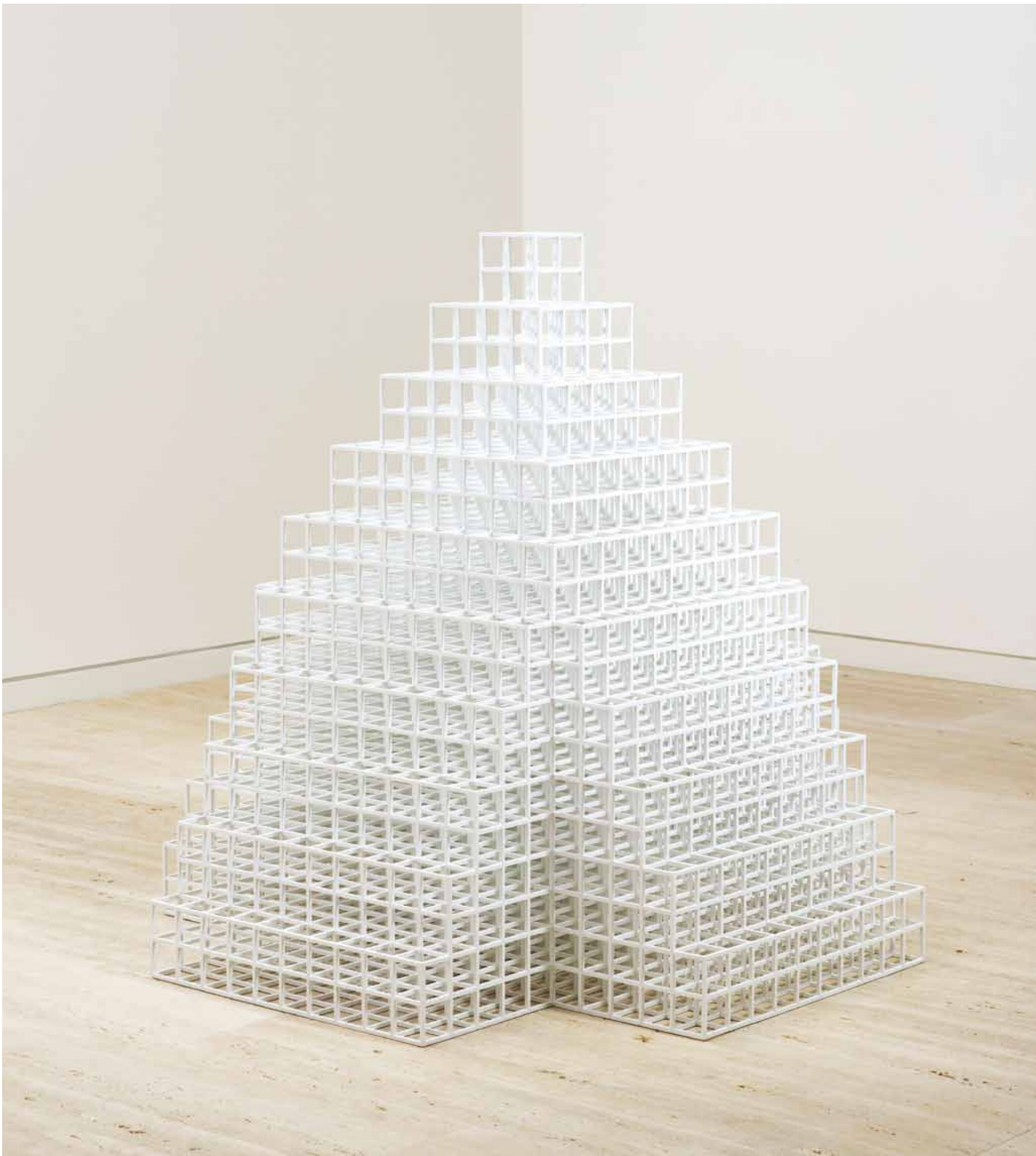
In 1979, the Art Gallery of New South Wales was the first Australian art museum to appoint a curator specifically for contemporary art, although the Gallery did not begin acquiring international contemporary works until 1984 with the Mervyn Horton Bequest. Initially representing Australian artists, the contemporary collection today is truly international, encompassing work in all media from more than 400 artists. With the inclusion of the John Kaldor Family Collection, the Gallery now holds Australia's most comprehensive representation of contemporary art from the 1960s to the present day.



For the last 50 years, John Kaldor has been Australia's most passionate collector of international contemporary art, developing lasting relationships with some of the most important artists of our time. In 2008, the announcement of a gift from John Kaldor and his family of over 200 works led the NSW government to fund a state-of-the-art offsite storage facility to allow space within the Gallery to display the collection. Together with funds donated by the Belgiorno-Nettis family, this enabled the redevelopment of the Gallery's old storage area and display space to create an entire new floor of 3300 square metres of exhibition space, bringing the Gallery's total display area to 11 000 square metres.

MINIMALISM AND CONCEPTUAL ART

Minimalism and the conceptual art movement of the 1960s and 1970s completely transformed our understanding of space and materials. Based primarily in New York, the artists involved started creating objects out of raw materials that consisted of basic geometric forms. The goal was to eliminate any kind of reference to the outside world in order to create works that referred only to themselves. For the conceptual artists, this meant that the idea itself could be the work of art. It's easy to imagine how radical these new pared-back artworks would have been against the background of abstract expressionism – the dominant art movement of the 1940s and 1950s – which prized self-expression and European traditions.



In 1953 Sol LeWitt moved to New York where he worked as a graphic artist and, in 1955–56, as a designer in the office of the architect IM Pei – an experience he later identified as having helped him separate the idea of a design from its fabrication as an object.¹

Anthony Bond, head of international art,
Art Gallery of NSW

ACTION AND LOCATION

In the 1950s, a new generation of artists began to differentiate their practice from the abstract painting that was dominant in the United States and Europe. They did this through an emphasis on action and time, and by working ‘performatively’ in the studio or outdoors. Their experimentations introduced new kinds of interactions between the artist, location, audience and artwork, and there are numerous works in the contemporary galleries that make us aware of the importance of these elements in helping define a work of art.



I like simple, practical, emotional,
quiet, vigorous art. I like the simplicity
of walking, the simplicity of stones.²

Richard Long

POP ART

The pop art movement began in the 1950s when artists began to use images from popular culture to describe an increasingly industrialised and media-saturated society. Pop artists challenged fine art traditions through this new approach to subject matter. Mass media and advertising were favourite subjects for witty celebrations of consumer culture.



... so fresh, exciting and different – it was incredible, revolutionary. It was so direct, it was really art of the new world.³

John Kaldor, describing his first impressions of American pop art

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Although photography and video art are closely related art forms that revolve around the use of a lens to capture an image from life, there are significant differences in how the two are experienced. Photographs are still images that freeze a moment in time, whereas video art centres on the moving image, which allows the artist to evoke the passage of time and the sensation of movement, as well as explore ideas of change.

Both photographic and video artworks may suggest a documented reality; however, artists recognise the ability of the lens to create rather than simply record.

Nam June Paik was one of the first artists to work with television and video, transforming both forms of popular media into art.⁴

Wayne Tunnicliffe, senior curator of contemporary art,
Art Gallery of NSW



Nam June Paik
TV Buddha 1976
television monitor, video camera, painted
wooden Buddha, tripod, plinth, installation
dimensions variable, Buddha 75 x 36 x 36 cm,
TV monitor 32 x 32 x 32 cm
John Kaldor Family Collection, Art Gallery of NSW
© Nam June Paik Estate

HISTORY AND MEMORY

In recent years, artists have taken up the subjects of time, place, history and memory in interesting and often moving ways, motivated perhaps by the need to preserve personal and cultural stories in the age of globalisation. Many of these artworks have been shaped by the artist's own memories of the cultures they grew up with, as well as the history and contemporary reality of the country in which they now live.



My sense of myself was formed
very much in the presence
of lushness and decay of its
equatorial climate. Who I was
then could be described
through the supporting plants.⁵

Simryn Gill

Simryn Gill
Forest 1996–98
#e, part of a series #a–p
16 gelatin silver photographs, 120 x 95 cm each
Purchased with funds provided by the Art Gallery Society of NSW Contempo Group 2003,
Art Gallery of NSW collection
© Simryn Gill

BACK TO THE FUTURE

The single defining feature of contemporary art practice is that it resists easy characterisation. No longer restricted to working in either traditional genres or the mediums commonly associated with them, contemporary artists actively seek out new materials and methods and work across a range of styles. Enabled by new technologies, artists are able to move across global boundaries and ignore or combine historical traditions as they choose.

While we can diagnose the contemporary condition by looking at the art that is being made now, it remains impossible to predict the future from the standpoint of the present.⁶

Macushla Robinson, curatorial assistant, Art Gallery of NSW



Ricky Swallow
Killing time 2003-04
laminated Jelutong, maple, 108 x 184 x 118 cm
Rudy Komon Memorial Fund and the Contemporary
Collection Benefactors 2004, Art Gallery of NSW collection
© Ricky Swallow, courtesy Darren Knight Gallery

NEW CONTEMPORARY GALLERIES

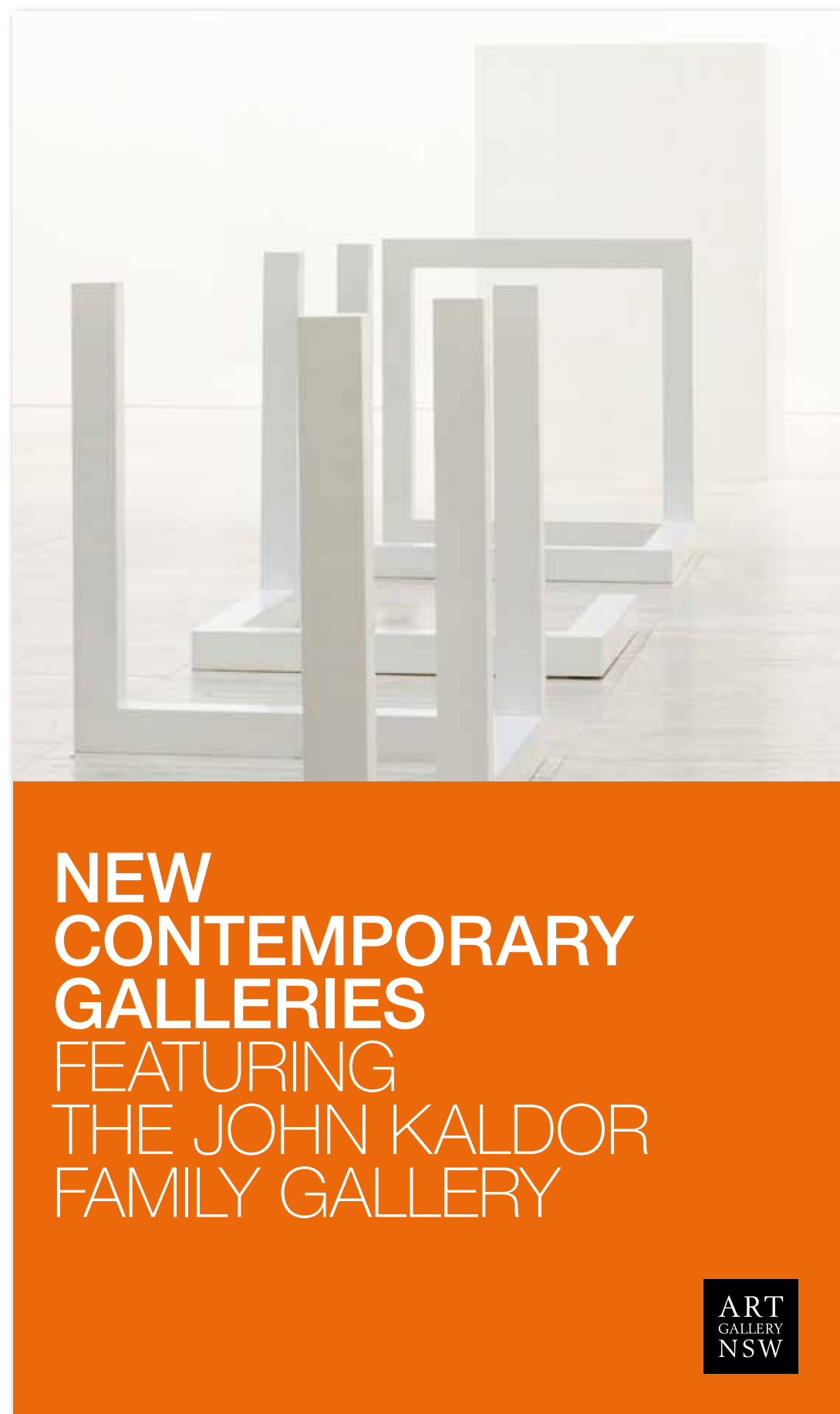
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Web resources

<http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/new-contemporary-galleries>

The website is rich in resources for interactive classroom technology

- Themes
- Featured artists and works
- What's on display
- Events
- Education
- Explore the Kaldor Family collection
- Curators insights – Anthony Bond and Wayne Tunncliffe
- Videos on Youtube



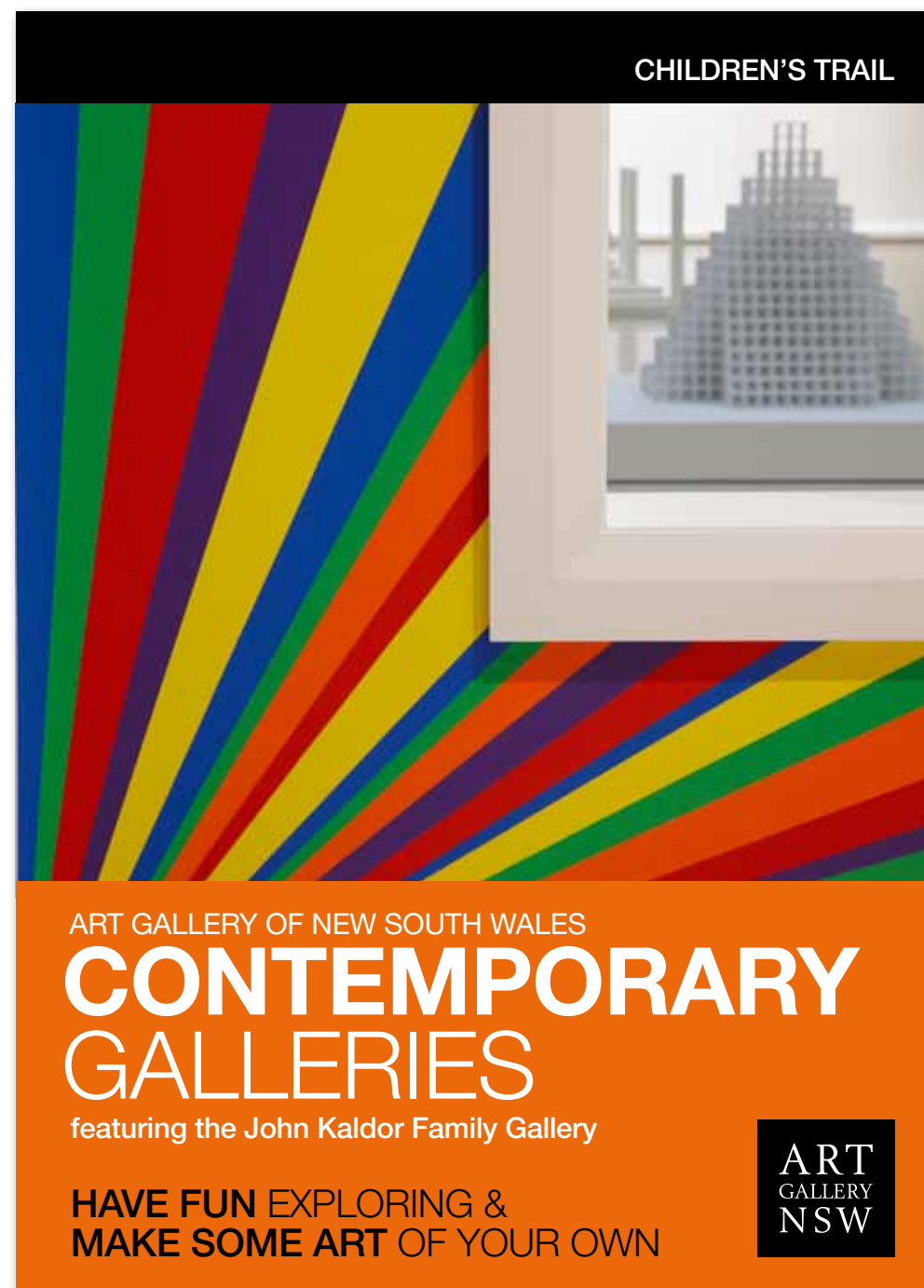
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Education kit

This slide show is based on the *New contemporary galleries featuring the John Kaldor Family Gallery* education kit available in print and online. The education kit refers to themes that can be explored through these galleries. **Printed kits are available at the Gallery or download online from the Gallery's website.**

[www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/
new-contemporary-galleries/education-programs](http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/new-contemporary-galleries/education-programs)



Children's trail

Have fun exploring contemporary art in the collection and make some art of your own

Our childrens trails are free booklets designed to engage young children aged 6–12 with selected objects and images in exhibitions. They combine looking and interpreting, drawing and writing activities to enable children to explore key themes and ideas while in front of the artworks. Extension ideas for activities at home and in the classroom are also included to extend children's experience beyond the Gallery and to encourage and develop a love of art. **Printed kits are available at the Gallery or download online from the Gallery's website.**

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Acknowledgements

Slide show

Produced by the Public Programs Department

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Art Gallery of New South Wales
Art Gallery Road, The Domain,
Sydney 2000, Australia
pp@ag.nsw.gov.au
www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/education

NOTES

- 1 Tunncliffe, Wayne (ed), John Kaldor Family Collection:
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney 2011, p 101
- 2 Five six pick up sticks, artists book, Anthony D'Offay Gallery, London 1980, reprinted in R H Fuchs,
Richard Long, Solomon R Guggenheim Foundation, New York 1986, p 236
- 3 Tunncliffe, Wayne (ed), John Kaldor Family Collection:
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney 2011, p 195
- 4 Tunncliffe, Wayne (ed), John Kaldor Family Collection:
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney 2011, p 160
- 5 S Gill, 'Self seeding', Self seeds, exh cat, Kiasma, Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki 1998, p 15
- 6 Tunncliffe, Wayne (ed), John Kaldor Family Collection:
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney 2011, p 301



CONTEMPORARY ART WITH UBS