

Contemporary Collectors: launching a new era in art benefaction

A new era for contemporary art begins with the launch of **Contemporary Collectors**: a group of benefactors with a contemporary focus at the Art Gallery of South Australia.

The Contemporary Collectors group has been established to encourage a deeper understanding of contemporary art in South Australia and to develop the permanent collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia. **It is the Gallery's only group of benefactors devoted to a specific area of art, and is one of only three of its kind in Australia today.** More than fifty members have already registered.

Chairman of Contemporary Collectors, **Richard Frolich** says "a lot of people in Adelaide want to learn more about contemporary art and they want to develop a collection. They want to become involved but they don't know where to start."

Gallery Director, Ron Radford explains that "nearly ninety percent of the Gallery's collection has been acquired through private benefactors... today, benefaction is more important than ever to Australia's public art museums and particularly when it comes to contemporary art."

Contemporary Collectors raise funds to enable the Gallery to purchase art produced over the past decade in Australia and internationally. Contemporary acquisitions made with the assistance of the group will help to invigorate the Gallery's collection and ensure it remains one of the country's most balanced. **It is anticipated that the first acquisition by the Contemporary Collectors will be made by the end of 2003.**

The group will enable members to access the very latest in contemporary art through an annual program of activities and events. These will include visits to private collections and meeting established collectors, private viewings of Art Gallery exhibitions, talks by contemporary artists and curators, and organised tours of contemporary collectors' homes, art fairs and festivals interstate and overseas.

The Contemporary Collectors is managed by a committee made up of established Adelaide art collectors together with the Gallery's respective curators of Australian Art and European Art: **Sarah Thomas** and **Adam Free**, making it the first such group to benefit directly from curatorial expertise.

Contemporary Collectors will be launched Wednesday 11 June at the Art Gallery of South Australia. Special guest speaker will be John Kaldor AM, one of Australia's most important figures in contemporary art and whose private collection is on display at the Gallery in the *Journey to Now* exhibition.