

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## A culturally ambitious Chair: the remarkable tenure of Rupert Myer AO

Rupert Myer AO's unwavering conviction about the power of the arts and his commitment to fostering Australia's cultural ambitions are both a life's work and a mark of his term as Australia Council Chair.

Australia Council CEO Tony Grybowski said the Australia Council had greatly benefitted from Mr Myer's deep arts knowledge, leadership and vision during his six years as Chair.

"Rupert's chairmanship has spanned one of the most momentous periods for the Australia Council, following the 2012 Australia Council Review and the introduction of the *Australia Council Act* in 2013. This period has seen the most significant transformation of the Council in 50 years, and its new strategic plan, *A Culturally Ambitious Nation*, launched in 2014.

"Among the major successes achieved in this time were a transformation of the Council's governance model to a skills-based Board; a new peer assessment model drawing on diverse expertise across the country; the major transformation of the Australia Council's grants funding program to a streamlined and accessible model to support the creation and presentation of diverse and ambitious work; a suite of strategic programs designed to develop and support the arts in Australia and internationally; and a new approach to Council's research, knowledge management and advocacy which has seen a growing body of evidence and knowledge about arts and culture now publicly available through the online Arts Nation research hub.

"Rupert has provided steady leadership through a period of significant change across arts policy and practice, as well as major shifts in the broader creative industries and digital economy that have also impacted the arts," said Mr Grybowski.

"The Council's growing co-investment program has also been a key priority for Rupert. He has taken an active role in encouraging the private and philanthropic sectors to invest with the Council in the arts which has led to transformative creative experiences for audiences and vital support for Australian artists. A major co-investment achievement was the highly successful campaign for the new Australian pavilion at the Venice Biennale, with the building opened in 2015.

"Rupert's deep commitment to First Nations arts has made him a passionate advocate for initiatives which increase opportunities for First Nations artists, including the celebration of artistic and cultural leadership through our National Indigenous Arts Awards.

"Rupert was deeply engaged with the arts community and regularly participated and spoke at a range of fora across the nation. This included many meetings with Chairs of arts organisations small and large, as part of his vision to support and strengthen the governance of the arts in Australia.

“At a personal level Rupert has been an unfailingly generous and committed colleague and Chair, warmly regarded by the entire Australia Council staff and so many in the arts sector. On behalf of the Australia Council, I wish to thank Rupert Myer for his exceptional service as Chair and wish him the very best for his next chapter of public life.”

Mr Myer was appointed Chair of the Australia Council for the Arts in 2012, following a long and distinguished connection with arts and culture.

He is succeeded by Sam Walsh AO, who will commence his term as Chair from 1 July 2018.

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