

**Media Release**

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## **Sports legend joins \$100,000 Basil Sellers Art Prize 2012 Judging Panel**

One of Australia's most celebrated sportspeople, rugby great Nick Farr-Jones AM, has joined the judging panel for the third biennial Basil Sellers Art Prize.

Mr Farr-Jones said "I'm delighted to be involved with such a prestigious award that brings together two such inspiring pursuits as sport and art.

"This is one of the richest and most prestigious awards in Australian art, focusing on art that relates to sport—a topic very dear to many Australians.

"I know the Basil Sellers Art Prize 2012 is going to be a fascinating journey for all those involved—the artists, the judges, and the art loving public," Mr Farr-Jones said.

Other newcomers to the judging panel are Erica Green, Director of the Samstag Museum at the University of South Australia, and Lisa Havilah, CEO of CarriageWorks, Sydney.

Meanwhile, the Director of the Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, Dr Chris McAuliffe, has officially launched the call for entries, saying "The \$100,000 Basil Sellers Art Prize is like a World Cup of art prizes. It represents an enormous opportunity for Australian artists."

"Previous entrants and winners from earlier years have applauded this prize as instrumental in furthering their careers. We are expecting even greater success with this third Basil Sellers Art Prize.

"We are seeking entries from all over Australia. And we've made the prize as open as possible: we want to present a broad range of artists working in diverse mediums and styles. We definitely encourage previous entrants and exhibitors to run the race again.

"The prize seeks to encourage artists to develop their practice. We don't expect artists to deviate from their usual interests or to make a 'one-off' work to match the prize theme. We are keen to see artists challenge our perceptions of sport and sports culture," Dr McAuliffe said

Shortlisted artists will be announced in August this year, with submission of works by June 2012, for exhibition at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, from August to November 2012.

The winner's prize is supplemented by a \$5,000 People's Choice Award, the finalists' exhibition with catalogue, education program, and capacity to be selected for the \$50,000 Basil Sellers Creative Fellowship at the National Sports Museum in 2013.

A \$3,000 participation fee is provided for each finalist. This acquisitive prize is awarded to one artwork but the exhibition allows the display of 12-14 works in a group exhibition curated by the leading curators of the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne.

**ENDS**

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## **BACKGROUND** [www.sellersartprize.com.au](http://www.sellersartprize.com.au)

As one of Australia's newest and richest art prizes, the Basil Sellers Art Prize breaks with tradition, developing a substantial prize that concentrates entirely on sport. Not the Archibald in a footy jumper, the prize is a fresh take on the theme, encouraging artists to boldly ask the questions, rattle our preconceptions and explore sporting culture—perhaps luring art and sports supporters from their strongly held positions on opposite sides of the ring.

The prize, initiated and generously supported by Basil Sellers AM. Basil, businessman and philanthropist and recognised art collector who divides his time between Europe and Australia (or wherever the Sydney Swans are playing that weekend).

Director of the Potter, Dr Chris McAuliffe, says, "Basil and I both share a passion for sport, but we are also aware that artists can bring a fresh and critical eye to contemporary life. So, whether 'sport' is interpreted as two-up or tiddlywinks, or references are made more obliquely to obsession, or 'winning at all costs', we are encouraging artists to ask pointed questions and to explore the murkier backwaters of sporting culture. With this in mind, I say "let the games begin"!"

Basil says, 'My hope is that this prize will take lovers of sport and art into what may be uncharted, but ultimately rewarding, territory, leading to an engagement that will enhance their enjoyment of each other's loves'.

The Basil Sellers Art Prize is a long-term project, involving 5 biennial awards from 2008 to 2016 staged at The Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, aimed at changing Australians' perception and enjoyment of art and sport.



**Tarryn Gill and Pilar Mata Dupont**, *Gymnasium* 2010, single-channel HD video, B & W, sound, 4:07 minutes  
Courtesy the artists and Goddard de Fiddes Gallery, Perth, (Photograph: Kim Tran & Pilar Mata Dupont)  
Winner, Basil Sellers Art Prize 2010.