

20 May 2021

Felton Bequest gifts ambitious Quilty artwork to NGV

A seven-panel panoramic landscape painting by leading artist Ben Quilty has found a new home at the Ian Potter Centre, NGV Australia. The artwork was gifted to the NGV, which attracts around two million visitors every year, by the Felton Bequest.

The Felton Bequest was established in 1904 and is Australia's first great philanthropic gift. It remains the most valuable bequest ever made to the arts in Australia with the artworks gifted to the NGV from the Bequest now valued at \$2.8billion.

The oil painting, '150 Year, Rorschach' was inspired by a landscape familiar to Mr Quilty and his son from regular bushwalks near their home in the NSW Southern Highlands. Mr Quilty received permission from the traditional owners of the land, the Gundangara people, to create the work. It depicts a waterhole and four introduced species - a cat, toad, fox and goat.

"As an avid art collector, Alfred Felton was passionate about establishing Melbourne as an international centre of the arts," said Sir Andrew Grimwade, Chairman of the Felton Bequests' Committee. "I am sure he would have been delighted to see this fascinating artwork gifted to the NGV, which today boasts one of the finest art collections in the Southern Hemisphere."

Alfred Felton made a fortune as a merchant and manufacturer in a number of sectors, from pharmaceuticals to chemicals and glass. In addition to his love of the arts, he was also known for his association with The Esplanade Hotel in St Kilda, where he lived until his death in 1904. 'The Espy' has a floor named after him – *The Ghost of Alfred Felton* – featuring pictures and paraphernalia of his time there.

The Felton Bequest divides its income between the NGV and charitable causes that support women and children. It is one of more than 650 charitable trusts managed by Equity Trustees, which distributed over \$90 million in grants and bequests last year.

"As the Trustee of the Felton Bequest, we are proud to have guardianship over Alfred Felton's legacy," said Carol Schwartz, Chair of Equity Trustees.

"At almost nine metres wide, this thought-provoking work is one of the largest and most ambitious paintings created by Ben Quilty and we think these terms also apply to the purpose and impact of the Felton Bequest."

Jodi Kennedy, General Manager, Charitable Trusts and Philanthropy, Equity Trustees said: "With the challenges the last year has presented for the arts sector, it is reassuring that we are able to continue delivering to Alfred Felton's wishes to foster a thriving arts culture in Victoria."

'150 Year, Rorschach' is installed at The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, Fed Square.

The [2020 Philanthropy Annual Giving Review](#), which details the impact of grants and funding in the FY20 year, is available online.

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