



# Media Release

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16 February 2018

## Macaria ready to open as Alan Baker Art Gallery

The largest collection of art by Australian artist, Alan Baker is now on exhibition at the new public art gallery in Camden.

The gallery, known as the Alan Baker Art Gallery, is in the heritage listed building, Macaria (C.1860), which has been renovated to create the dedicated art space.

“We are honoured to exhibit the artworks of Alan Baker who not only created vibrant pieces of work but inspired other residents to pursue their own artistic talents,” Mayor Lara Symkowiak said.

“It was important to us that Macaria was used in a way that would showcase the beautiful building itself but also be home to a unique attraction that would contribute to the prosperity of Camden town centre,” Cr Symkowiak said.

“Whilst the gallery is a dedicated showcase of Mr Baker’s works, it also provides an opportunity to connect local artists, foster future artists and promote art in Camden – to locals and the wider community,” she said.

“Each original design element of Macaria has been respectfully restored to preserve the heritage of the building, while creating a functional public gallery.”

The renovation project has been completed in five months.

Carpets have been removed and the 150 year old original oregon timber floors have been given a traditional bees wax polish. The hand-made nails were also reinstated with care.

The kitchen and reception area have been upgraded and new lighting and air conditioning have been installed to ensure that it meets the requirements of an art gallery space.

Max Tegel and Gary Baker have donated Mr Baker’s artworks to the gallery which are displayed in themes and capture the many years of his work as he travels through the stages of his development as an artist.

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Mr Baker's artworks are displayed in themed rooms including works Early Artworks 1929-1961, Portraiture, Seascape and Landscape, Still Life and Life Painting.

The gallery will be open free to the public from 11am on Thursday 1 March, and will welcome guests from Thursday to Sunday each week from 11am till 4pm daily. Group tours are available by appointment by phoning the Gallery on 4645 5191 during opening hours.

## About Alan Baker (1914-1987)

Alan Baker studied art at the JS Watkins Art School, Sydney from the age of 13 and entered a self-portrait becoming a finalist in the 1936 Archibald Prize at 18 years of age.

Mr Baker made a successful career in commercial art, creating posters for Tooth & Co Brewery producing many iconic paintings that were displayed in prestigious hotels in Sydney.

He served in Papua New Guinea from 1943-45 before marrying his wife Marjorie, living in Moorebank on the Georges River. Tragically, two of their three sons were drowned in a boating accident in 1961. Unable to remain on the river they moved to Belimba Park, in the Macarthur area.

In the 1970-80s, Mr Baker began tutoring an informal art group in Camden, many of whom have become recognised artists, such as Patricia Johnson, Olive McAleer, Nola Tegel and his son, Gary.

His works are hung in the New South Wales Art Gallery, the National Gallery, Canberra, Queensland Institute of Technology, the Hinton collection at Armidale, and in many private collections.

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