

# The Rembrandt Connection

*Dutch/Australian artists pay homage to the master painter*

IN MAY OF 1995, my father heard a rumour that some of Rembrandt's greatest works were to go on tour. Specifically, that they would be on display in the National Gallery of Victoria in late 1997. Dad's excitement knew no bounds and his response was immediate and typical. He decided that the Dutch/Australian artistic community would have to mark this extraordinary event in some significant way. After all, Rembrandt was a great painter to whom these artists owe a cultural debt. A debt that flows in their veins, so to speak. As the president of the Erasmus Foundation, he felt that it was up to him to ensure that they were given the opportunity to meet this challenge.

Dad was in full flight. Sympathetic supporters were recruited. Sponsors were found. A venue was decided on. And then dad searched high and low for artists. Some responded to advertisements, some he knew from the Foundations previous exhibition, some he tracked down by searching through registers of artists for Dutch sounding names, some he heard about simply through word of mouth. All were contacted and given the brief - to create a work in homage to the master painter.

Given free reign to draw their inspiration from such a great painter, the artists submitted concepts that were as varied as they were fascinating. They worked in oils, watercolours, acrylics, clay, textiles, marble, paper, glass, photographs. They planned self portraits (something Rembrandt did many times), images dominated by chiaroscuro (a technique of light and shade as used by Rembrandt), studied the commonplace scenes in their daily lives (a theme of many of Rembrandt's greatest works). All reflected on their practise as artists and interpreted the brief in their own way.

And just when it all looked like falling into place, dad lost his battle with cancer. Sick in hospital, he asked me to help finish what he had started. How could I refuse? As a Dutch born Australian citizen I did it with a sense of pride. And as a daughter I did it with love, to cherish his memory.

The new President of the Erasmus Foundation, Thea Winoto and the rest of the Executive Committee fully supported the continuation of the project so that all of the work done by my father would not be in vain. We received much needed expert assistance from Christine Hubay and Mark Rogerson and generous financial support from our sponsors - OCE Australia, Hartman Pacific, the

Consulate-General of the Netherlands, Lease Plan Australia and Jan and Margreet Boer. Working together we have succeeded in realising my fathers vision - to showcase the works of contemporary Dutch Australian artists to coincide with the major exhibition of paintings and drawings by a universally recognised Dutch master painter named Rembrandt. We believe this exhibition demonstrates some of the practical and cultural benefits of multiculturalism at a time when these are increasingly being questioned.

The Erasmus Foundation is pleased to welcome you to 'The Rembrandt Connection'. We thank you for coming and hope that you find the works on display as stimulating, challenging, surprising and moving as we do.

Wilhelmina Stracke, Project Coordinator

## *Artists*

- |                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Bernadine Alting  | 18. Petra Reece           |
| 2. Corrie Ancone     | 19. Peter Schipperheyn    |
| 3. Rene Bolton       | 20. Anneke Silver         |
| 4. Alfred Calkoen    | 21. John Spies            |
| 5. Yolande Calkoen   | 22. Theo Strasser         |
| 6. Rosalie Cogan     | 23. Nel Ten Wolde         |
| 7. Johanna Dijkgraaf | 24. Ingeborg Tyssen       |
| 8. Frances Fussell   | 25. Nico Van Dalen        |
| 9. Erik Gunzel       | 26. Alex Van den Berg     |
| 10. Irena Hesterman  | 27. Rose Van der Waag     |
| 11. Kees Hos         | 28. Monique Van Nieuwland |
| 12. Marijke Inei     | 29. Henk Van Vliet        |
| 13. Dineke McLean    | 30. Hans Versluis         |
| 14. Adrian Mauriks   | 31. John Windus           |
| 15. Willy Nysten     | 32. Richard Woldendorp    |
| 16. Marijke Owen     | 33. Rudy Zeeman           |
| 17. Paul Procee      |                           |