

EMBARGO: 6.00PM FRIDAY 23 NOVEMBER 1973:



PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement No. 149

23 November 1973

GRANT TO THE N.S.W. ART GALLERY

The Prime Minister today announced that he had approved a grant of \$20,000 to the Art Gallery of New South Wales to help clear its outstanding debt of \$75,000 on the purchase of the self-portrait by Pierre Bonnard.

The grant is conditional on the Government of New South Wales providing the remaining \$55,000.

The grant was recommended by the Visual Arts Board of the Australian Council for the Arts. The Chairman of the Board, Mr. John Baily, said that the grant was in about the same proportion to the total purchase price as the \$50,000 granted recently to the National Gallery of Victoria towards the purchase of the painting "Val d'Aosta" by J.M.W. Turner.

The Prime Minister also announced approval for a scheme to support living Australian artists by subsidising the purchase of their work on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

In announcing the scheme, the Prime Minister said it was designed to encourage Australian art galleries to acquire contemporary works, and to directly benefit practising artists.

The subsidy scheme, which would operate through the Visual Arts Board, would be available to all public galleries and collections. Dollar-for-dollar grants would be given only for the purchase of works directly from the artist or from his nominated agent. It would not apply to works bought at auction or by resale, where there was no benefit to the artist.

Mr. Whitlam said that the scheme would provide a needed stimulus to the purchase and display of contemporary works, on which relatively little is spent at present. Public galleries and collections enjoying this form of assistance will need to satisfy the Board of wide access to their collections and of their professional competence in the selection of works.

CANBERRA. A.C.T.