

# MEDIA RELEASE

24 November 2017



## Cartoonists shine in unstable and disruptive political year

**'Behind the Lines 2017: The Three Ring Circus'** – an exhibition celebrating the role of political cartoonists in Australia – was today unveiled at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House (MoAD).

The exhibition showcases the year's best political cartoons, highlighting themes of freedom of the press and democracy in action, and features work from John Shakespeare, David Rowe, Michael Leunig, Cathy Wilcox and Mark Knight, among others.

"What better way to reflect on the tumultuous political year - from postal votes and citizenship chaos, to penalty rates and constitutional recognition – than through the art form of political cartoons," said MoAD's Director Daryl Karp.

**"Behind the Lines 2017** captures the spirit of Australia's democracy in all its passion, scepticism and humour."

Holly Williams, curator of **Behind the Lines 2017**, said the theme for this year's exhibition captures the fascination the political year attracts.

**"The Three Ring Circus** represents a world where fact and fiction collide and ringmasters, jugglers and acrobats have all stepped into the political big top," said Ms Williams.

"It was a wild, entertaining, confusing and engrossing year that lends itself beautifully to the talents of our cartoonists."

Political cartoonist David Rowe claimed 2017's Political Cartoonist of the Year award as part of the launch of **Behind the Lines 2017**.

"David Rowe has met the events both at home and abroad with a dark intensity and unflinching pen. The figures he draws become lurid, bordering on the grotesque as he gives visual form to our uneasy feelings on the state of the world," Ms Williams said.

An editorial cartoonist for the *Australian Financial Review*, David has captured Australia's political landscape with bold brush strokes and biting humour since the late 80s.

"It is wonderful to be recognised for your work, particularly during such an extraordinary year in politics. The election of Donald Trump and the way local politics has played out in 2017 has given political cartoonists so much material," Mr Rowe said.

**Behind the Lines 2017: The Three Ring Circus** will be open to the public on Saturday 25 November 2017. Entry to the exhibition is free after museum admission. A travelling version of the exhibition will also tour the following regional areas:

- Tamworth Regional Gallery – 15 December 2017 to 4 February 2018
- Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery – 10 February to 29 March 2018
- Parramatta Riverside Theatre – 11 April to 6 June 2018

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- Albury Library Museum – 23 June to 14 August 2018
- Old Treasury Building, Melbourne – 27 August to 15 October 2018
- Bunker Cartoon Gallery, Coffs Harbour – 26 October to 2 December 2018.

The Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House celebrates the spirit of Australian democracy and the power of your voice within it. For more information, visit: [www.moadoph.gov.au](http://www.moadoph.gov.au)

- Ends -

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For further information, interviews or photo opportunities, please contact Alice Brown: [alice.brown@moadoph.gov.au](mailto:alice.brown@moadoph.gov.au), (02) 6270 8120 or 0410 997 741.

## Interview opportunities:

- David Rowe, *Behind the Lines 2017* Political Cartoonist of the Year
- Holly Williams, *Behind the Lines 2017* curator
- Libby Stewart, *Behind the Lines 2017* Executive Producer
- Daryl Karp, Director, Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House
- Ann Telnaes, Pulitzer Prize winning editorial cartoonist for the Washington Post

## Accompanying material:

- A media kit, including details of the exhibition themes, extracts from Cathy Wilcox's foreword and commentary on the curator's top five cartoons, is available to download via Dropbox: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7l4myhm7m4jav1o/AADY79eXGA9Ork7wYPK\\_w9DUa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7l4myhm7m4jav1o/AADY79eXGA9Ork7wYPK_w9DUa?dl=0)
- The curator's top five cartoons are available to download via Dropbox. Images must be used with the credit provided: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/iiyyd0u74zpj7kw/AADc-3QF2hYcjDDNXKxQvjSta?dl=0>
- High res versions of other cartoons in the exhibition can be supplied on request. Please see the media kit for image reference numbers.