

For immediate release:

## 42,000 Koreans come Face to Face with Australian art



*Face to Face: Portraiture in a digital age* was launched on Anzac Day 2011 (25 April) at the prestigious Seoul Museum of Art (SMA) KOREA with much anticipation and excitement by the Hon Julia Gillard MP, Prime Minister of Australia.

Five weeks in to the exhibition and the excitement remains – with an incredible 42,000 visitors streaming through the Museum doors – equating to 1,200 people per day! And it ain't over yet folks - as the exhibition ends 26 June.

According to Asialink's Visual Arts Director, Sarah Bond, "this is by far the highest single venue attendance we have ever experienced in what has been a colourful 21-year history of touring exhibitions in Asia."

"*Face to Face* presents an intriguing alternative to the traditional ideas of Australian portraiture to new audiences in Asia, and its success is reflected in the incredible attendance," says Bond.

Such is the success, that Asialink is sending participating artist Rachel Scott to Korea next week to conduct artist talks and digital media workshops with local audiences.

After already touring to Bangkok, Singapore and Manila, the record-breaking *Face to Face* has provided an incredible opportunity for the 14 Australian artists participating.

*Face to Face* explores the ways in which the traditional art form of portraiture can be translated into new media. Video, digital photographs and interactive installations all feature in this innovative exhibition, which provides a unique perspective on how new technology is reshaping our identities.

Using popular technology such as photo booths and mobile phones, the artists address our dependence on these new technologies and how they affect our identities.

Exhibition curator Kathy Cleland says that “In addition to painted portraits and drawings, over the last 150 years new imaging and media technologies such as photography, video and digital media have initiated many new ways of representing the human face as a visual image.”

The exhibition at Seoul Art Museum runs until 26 June 2011. *Face to Face: portraiture in a digital age* is presented in Seoul as part of the Korea-Australia Exchange Exhibition for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations

This exhibition has been developed by Asialink and d/Lux/MediaArts and is supported the Australian Government through the Australian Visual Arts Touring Program of the Australia International Cultural Council, an initiative of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Australia Council, the Australian Government’s arts funding and advisory body and The Visual Arts and crafts strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

**Artist Rachel Scott and curator Kathy Cleland are both available for comment.**

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**Image:** Seoul Art Museum crowds immersed in the work by Rachel Scott ‘Hot Not’ 2006

Further images of the exhibition are available at the following address:

[http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/our\\_work/arts/visual\\_arts/crafts/visual\\_arts\\_exhibition\\_program/face\\_to\\_face\\_portraiture\\_in\\_digital\\_age](http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/our_work/arts/visual_arts/crafts/visual_arts_exhibition_program/face_to_face_portraiture_in_digital_age)