

## Russell Drysdale: *Defining the Modern Australian Landscape*

19 October 2013 to 9 February 2013



Russell Drysdale, *The cricketers* 1948, oil on composition board  
76.2 x 101.5 cm Private collection, © Estate of Russell Drysdale

TarraWarra Museum of Art (TWMA) is proud to present a significant exhibition of the work of one of Australia's most iconic landscape artists, Sir Russell Drysdale AC, (1912 - 1981).

The curator of *Russell Drysdale: Defining the Modern Australian Landscape*, is art historian and critic Dr Christopher Heathcote, an acknowledged authority on the artist's oeuvre who has worked for several years to bring this exhibition to fruition with the support of Lynne Clark, daughter of Russell Drysdale, and the Estate of Russell Drysdale.

The exhibition will provide a unique opportunity to reassess Drysdale, an artist whose work has shaped the development of Australian art, within the context of broader questions of modernism in art and the continuing depiction of the Australian landscape today.

It will also present a number of the artist's works which have not previously been seen in public before and iconic paintings such as *The Cricketers*, 1948 which have not been exhibited regularly for many years. Over 35 paintings from private collections and major public collections including the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Carrick Hill Trust, National Gallery of Australia, National Gallery of Victoria, Queensland Art Gallery and TarraWarra Museum of Art's own collection will be shown alongside a selection of the artist's drawings and almost 100 of the artist's own photos of the Australian landscape and figures in the landscape. The paintings and photographs selected for the exhibition are connected to the artist's many journeys into the Australian interior yet also show the artist's deep concern for Aboriginal peoples, and his positioning of Indigenous figures within the paintings to convey his distress at their dispossession.

Drysdale was born in Sussex, England in 1912 and came to Australia at the age of 11. After working in country Victoria as a jackaroo a chance encounter in 1932 with artist Daryl Lindsay led him to study as an artist. Over the next five decades he went on to establish a reputation as one of Australia's most important artists whose works grew to define the Australian outback landscape within the national consciousness and to define how the country's 'interior' was 'imagined', which, even today is referenced by the many contemporary artists who have been influenced by his work.

The new Wakefield Press publication *Russell Drysdale: Defining the Modern Australian Landscape*, written by Dr Christopher Heathcote, in which he aims to explore Drysdale's distinctively modern approach to landscape imagery and demonstrate his connections with developments in International art from 1940 onwards, will also be launched when the exhibition begins.

TWMA Director Victoria Lynn says "Drysdale's works raise many questions to do with how we live in a landscape as harsh as the drought-stricken environment of Australia. They powerfully convey his abiding fascination with the resilience of people and their connection to land".

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