



Jacopo Amigoni, Italy, c1685-1752, Bacchus and Ariadne, circa 1740-1742, oil on canvas, Gift of James Fairfax AC 1993.  
Photo Diana Panuccio.

## STATE'S MOST IMPORTANT EUROPEAN OLD MASTERS EXHIBITED AT HAZELHURST REGIONAL GALLERY

The state's most important European old masters including magnificent works by some of the leading Italian, French and British artists of the High Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo and Romantic periods are on loan from the Art Gallery of New South Wales to Hazelhurst Regional Gallery for the exhibition ***European Old Masters: 16th – 19th Century.***

Dr Michael Brand, director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales said the exhibition is the first occasion so many of these important European paintings have been shown together outside the 19<sup>th</sup> century grand courts of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, their permanent home.

"We are delighted to collaborate with Hazelhurst Regional Gallery to share some of the finest European works in our collection with their audiences in the Sutherland Shire and further afield," Brand said.

"The Gallery's early ambitions to display paintings by the masters can be seen in the roll-call of European greats inscribed on the building's façade, and I applaud Hazelhurst Regional Gallery for showing works from this glorious tradition that is still relevant today," Brand added.

Belinda Hanrahan, director, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery said leading artists in the exhibition include Thomas Gainsborough, William Hogarth, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Bernardo Strozzi and Frans Snyders.

"Hazelhurst Gallery is thrilled that Michael Brand as director of the Art Gallery of New South Wales has given us this opportunity for people to encounter the state's finest European old masters.

"Paintings such as these remind us of what is constant in human experience and emotion while offering an insight into ages and cultures so different to our own," Belinda said.

Sutherland Shire Mayor and Hazelhurst Gallery Board member, Carmelo Pesce said *this exhibition is another example of our commitment to a culturally rich community. The Sutherland Shire community is the first to see the collection outside its home and showcases Council's commitment to strengthen its community connections through shared cultural experiences.*

Despite its early ambitions to collect works by the European masters, The Art Gallery of New South Wales did not in fact start collecting old masters until the 1950s.

AGNSW curator European prints, drawings and watercolours, Peter Raissis said prior to that time the great masters of the past could only be experienced through copies intended for educational purposes due to the Gallery's earlier focus on acquiring works by living artists.

"Between 1951 and 1976, the Gallery acquired an outstanding group of English 18th-century portraits, including works by three of the leading painters of the age: William Hogarth, Thomas Gainsborough and Joshua Reynolds. During these years the Gallery also purchased landscapes and subject pictures representative of British Neo-Classicism and Romanticism by artists such as Richard Wilson, John Glover, Richard Westall, William Hamilton and Francis Danby.

"Although accessions of non-British painting were rare, three powerful and imposing figural compositions by the Baroque painters Bernardo Strozzi, Jan van Bijlert and Matthias Stomer expanded the scope and ambition of the collection," Raissis said.

The extraordinary donation by James Fairfax AC during the 1990s significantly enriched the Gallery's holdings of European old masters, particularly in the area of 18th-century French and Italian art such as the works by Nicolas de Largillierre and Canaletto. The collection has continued to develop with the acquisition of major Italian Renaissance and Baroque works such as the work of Giulio Cesare Procaccini, also exhibited in ***European Old masters: 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Century.***

## **Details:**

**European Old Masters: 16th – 19th Century**

**28 September – 3 December 2017**

**Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre,**

**782 Kingsway, Gymea NSW**

**[www.hazelhurst.com.au](http://www.hazelhurst.com.au)**

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*Hazelhurst Regional Gallery & Arts Centre is a facility of Sutherland Shire Council.*

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Presented by the  
ART GALLERY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

**Hazelhurst**  
REGIONAL GALLERY & ARTS CENTRE  
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