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Bob Weeks, *Wanda Carpark*, 1962. Photo courtesy of the artist.

SOUTHERN SWELL: AN EXHIBITION ABOUT SURFING IN SOUTHERN SYDNEY FROM THE 1950s TO NOW

A new exhibition, **Southern Swell**, will open at the Hazelhurst Arts Centre in November and will trace the fascinating history of the popularity of surfing in Sydney's south from the 1900's through to now.

This exhibition will include contemporary and historic photographs, surfboards, films, memorabilia and artworks from 15 southern Sydney artists, photographers and filmmakers.

Councillor Carmelo Pesce, Mayor of Sutherland **Shire** Council said *surfing is a major part of our life and a major industry for southern Sydney. Every week thousands of people across all ages and from all over Sydney use the beach as a daily or weekly ritual. Cronulla is one of the first places of modern surfing in Australia and I have no doubt this will be a very popular exhibition for people over the summer holiday season.*



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Lifetime Cronulla surfer and photographer, John Veage has co-curated this exhibition with Carrie Kibbler from Hazelhurst Arts Centre.

Surfing in southern Sydney has been established for over 100 years since Duke Kahanamoku from Hawaii arrived for a demonstration in 1915 then continued in 1956 when the American surfers Greg Noll and Mike Bright paddled out into the waves with Malibu boards in what is now acknowledged as the birth of modern surfing in Australia, John Veage said.

Carrie Kibbler said this exhibition is a celebration of surfing in southern Sydney – the legends, the breaks, the boards, and the photographers, film makers and artists who have documented it. Among the memorabilia is a 1976 Surf Champ pinball machine, iconic Benz bikinis and '70s Holden panel van.

Surfing became a hugely popular pastime in Australia and internationally in the '60s with the rise of American pop culture and the new wave of youth subculture. In Cronulla, Jack Eden and Bob Weeks photographed some of the best local surfers including Garry Birdsall, Frank Latta and world champion Bobby Brown, with the creation of a local surf industry as Brian Jackson opened his iconic factory in 1957.

The evolution of the shortboard in the 1970s, saw a shift in the culture of surfing and the rise in professionalism of the sport where the world's first surfing contest under floodlights was held at Elouera beach in 1984 and the Shark Island Challenge (1997-2006) which was the most celebrated world tour event in bodyboarding.

The exhibition includes a curated selection of vintage, retro and recent surfboards from the 1920s to now. Featured shapers include Jackson Surfboards, Gordon & Smith, Southern Comfort, Peter Clarke, Carverley Surfboards, PCC, Force 9, Mark Riley and Brett Wilson.

The exhibition also includes a number of new and recent works by southern Sydney artists, film makers and photographers. These include Nicole Kelly's landscapes, filmmaker Cameron Staunton's new video work, Adam Oste's paintings examining landscape, history and culture, Kirk Jenkins abstract paintings that explore the experience of moving through water and connecting with nature, Sam Venn's photographs inside the waves, Grant Carverley's installation using resin and foam and Henry Jock Walker's wetsuit painting collaboration with young surfer Jarvis Earle .



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Details:

Southern Swell

23 November to 2 February 2020

10am – 5pm daily

Hazelhurst Arts Centre

782 Kingsway, Gymea NSW

www.hazelhurst.com.au

MEDIA CONTACT:

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