

Media Release

7 June 2017

## Latrobe Regional Gallery to host world-class Magritte exhibition



René Magritte, *The Giant (Le Géant)*, 1937. Paul Nougé on the Belgian Coast, Private collection, Courtesy Brachot Gallery, Brussels

The \$1.51 million renovations to the Latrobe Regional Gallery in Morwell will be officially opened in August this year with the hosting of a world-class exhibition of photographs and films, never before seen in Australia, by major Belgian Surrealist, René Magritte.

Director of the Latrobe Regional Gallery, Dr Mark Themann, said the Magritte exhibition, **René Magritte: The Revealing Image – Photos and Films**, 19 August – 19 November 2017, was a significant coup for the Gallery.

“This is an exhibition of international standing that puts our newly-renovated Gallery on the global art map.

“Locals and visitors to the region will have the opportunity to experience an impressive artistic event in a facility that is purpose-built to stage exhibitions of the highest calibre.

“The Magritte exhibition raises the bar for art in the region, and is not to be missed,” Dr Themann said.

**René Magritte: The Revealing Image – Photos and Films** will feature 132 original photographs by Magritte, and 8 films. The majority of the works have never been exhibited outside Europe.

Staged in collaboration with the Magritte Foundation Belgium, the exhibition is described by Chief Curator, Xavier Canonne, as a rare cultural treasure.

“The photographs and films were created as works of art by Magritte, one of the signature Western artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

“The works were discovered in the mid-1970s, more than 10 years after the artist’s death, and have contributed significantly to our appreciation of Magritte’s wider oeuvre.

“Magritte used photography and film for a range of purposes, including as exemplars for paintings and commercial work, circumventing the need for live models, improvising scenes with friends, and recording family events and images of other Brussels Surrealists.

“These photographs and films are pervaded by the spirit of Magritte, making them inseparable from his famous paintings,” Mr Canonne said.

In announcing the forthcoming exhibition, the Latrobe City Mayor, Councillor Kellie O'Callaghan, said it was an important step for a community in transition, and would provide a significant boost for the region.

“This exhibition will attract visitors from the region and beyond, including interstate and international art lovers.

“It will not only provide enjoyment locally, it will help raise morale, increase the region’s profile, and bring economic benefits to local businesses through greater visitation.

“The Latrobe City Council is delighted to welcome the Magritte exhibition as the first exciting outcome of the Latrobe Regional Gallery’s successful renovation program, supported by the Council’s vision for a Strength Led Transition,” Cr O’Callaghan said.

The Latrobe City Council contributed \$740,000 towards the Gallery renovation, with a further \$770,000 funded by the Latrobe Valley Authority as part of the State Government's \$266 million transition funding.

The renovations have involved a total revamp of the building, externally and internally, to bring it up to a standard required to host world-class exhibitions.

Aesthetic changes to the building have included a new facade, open foyer and new lighting, with some major works behind the scenes to enable the special handling of valuable art work.

Storage, shelving and climate control systems at the Gallery have been upgraded to accommodate major exhibitions which are expected to attract tens of thousands of new visitors.

It was also announced today that, following the Magritte exhibition, the Latrobe Regional Gallery will stage another major international exhibition, titled **MINE/The Film will always be with you**, 30 September - 3 December 2017. The exhibition, which originated at the Tate Modern Museum, London, and has been expanded will feature contemporary South African video art by a collection of well-known artists, including William Kentridge.

**ENDS**



Rene Magritte, Shunk Kender: René Magritte in front of *Le sens de réalité*, 1960  
Private collection, Courtesy Brachot Gallery, Brussels, Original photograph

**For further information and to request interviews and images please contact:**

Katrina Raymond, MediaLink Productions

T: (03) 9663 3222 M: 0417 303 158 [katrina@medialinkproductions.com](mailto:katrina@medialinkproductions.com)

Lisa Mawson, Coordinator Communications, Latrobe City Council

T: (03) 5128 5458 M: 0408 078 528 [Lisa.Mawson@latrobe.vic.gov.au](mailto:Lisa.Mawson@latrobe.vic.gov.au)

**Available for interview:**

Mark Themann, Director, Latrobe Regional Gallery

Cr Kellie O'Callaghan, Mayor, Latrobe City Council

Xavier Canonne, **Chief curator**, *René Magritte: The Revealing Image* and Director Museum for Photography

Charleroi, Belgium [available by skype + in Australia from 12 August 2017]

**Images available on request.**

**Major Publication: René Magritte: The Revealing Image** by Xavier Canonne is a 263 page publication published by Ludion + distributed globally by Thames & Hudson.

Review copies available upon request.

**Latrobe Regional Gallery**, 138 Commercial Road, Morwell T: +61 3 5128 5700

Extended Opening Hours: Monday to Thursday 10am-5pm; Friday 10am-7pm

Saturday and Sunday 10am-5pm; Public Holidays closed.

**Ticketing:**

Tickets from \$10 - \$18 and available online [Eventbrite.com.au](http://Eventbrite.com.au) or at the LRG door.

Group bookings welcome but for 10 or more please book direct with Latrobe Regional Gallery on 03 5128 5700.

**Principal Partners:**

Latrobe City Council in collaboration with the Magritte Foundation Belgium



**Principal Producer:**



**Major Partners:**



**BACKGROUND: RENÉ MAGRITTE**

René Magritte (1898–1967) is closely linked to the surrealist movement, which was founded in Paris by French writer André Breton in 1924. Surrealism was shaped by emerging theories of perception, including Sigmund Freud's theories (though Magritte always denied any Freudian interpretations of his work), such as the psychoanalytic concept of the uncanny—a sense of disquietude provoked by particular objects and situations. The movement's primary aim was to resolve the contradictory conditions of dream and reality into an absolute reality—a super-reality—and to revolutionize human existence by freeing people from what the surrealists saw as false rationality and restrictive social customs.

Initially influenced by Italian painter Giorgio de Chirico, Magritte was one of the founders of Belgian surrealism in 1926. His work from this period frequently places objects in unusual contexts or with unusual words or phrases, thus giving them new and surprising meanings. In 1929, Magritte moved to Paris in order to collaborate with Breton's group. However, the idiosyncratic Magritte grew tired of their rigidity.

In 1933, he broke from them by stating that the primary aim of his work from that point on would be to reveal the hidden and often personal affinities between objects, rather than juxtaposing unrelated objects. Nevertheless, he would remain associated with surrealism in general throughout his career.

Magritte's philosophical approach to images and language interested many post-war artists. In 1954, Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg saw a ground-breaking exhibition of Magritte's word-and-image paintings at the Sidney Janis Gallery in New York, and later acquired examples of these works. Magritte's interests also foreshadowed other post-war artistic pursuits: a generation before the artists involved in pop art began working with images from popular culture, Magritte himself turned to this source. And before his death in 1967, Magritte even lived to see the impact of his own works on advertisements, popular culture, and television [internationally].

From: <http://www.lacma.org/magritte-index> (Los Angeles Museum of Art)

## **BACKGROUND: LATROBE REGIONAL GALLERY [LRG]**

Established in 1971, LRG is one of the largest public galleries in eastern Victoria, Australia, presenting exhibitions and curated projects across contemporary art and design, experimental and interdisciplinary practices, curated collections of note, works by regional artists and national touring exhibitions.

Current renovations of the seven gallery spaces has elevated LRG to international museum standards, with archival storage facilities, hosting significant collections such as the Allan Aldous Collection (Asian Art), a substantial collection of handcrafted glass objects and perfume bottles, and a range of modernist, impressionist and recent post-war art.

LRG has ambitious plans for presenting a diversity of exhibitions from exhibitions of high quality art historical merit with intellectual heft alongside more populist art exhibitions. LRG is also the custodian and manager of collections of regional and national significance hosting more than 1400 works of art across all media and historical periods.

## **COMING UP AT LATROBE REGIONAL GALLERY [LRG]**

### **GALLERY RE-OPENING**

**Saturday July 15, 2017 – 11am to 4pm – free entry**

LRG reopens with three diverse and dynamic exhibitions:

- **'Bound by Time'** brings together three major installations not seen together before created between 2011 and 2017 by mid-career internationally active Sydney artist Denis Beaubois;
- **'Presentiment'** is contemporary photo-based exhibition by Morwell artist Manfred Krautschneider
- **'No-one told me there'd be days like these'** by Gail Smith, winner 2017 Dick Bishop Memorial Prize. The exhibition forms part of the artist's ongoing research into the coping strategies in the loss of a parent and changing bonds between aging mother and the adult child.

Opening hours will be Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm, Saturday and Sunday 11am to 4pm

NOTE: The opening hours for Magritte are extended.

### ***René Magritte: The Revealing Image***

**Saturday August 19, to Sunday November 19, 2017**

An exhibition of works by one of the world's most influential Surrealists, and the most important artist of the 20th century. A collection of photos and film-works never before seen in Australia, and many never seen outside Europe presented in collaboration with the world-renowned Magritte Foundation, with Latrobe Regional Gallery being the only Australian venue and the first venue in a world tour.

### ***MINE/The Film will always be with you***

**Saturday September 30, to Sunday December 3, 2017**

An exhibition which originated from the TATE Modern Museum, London and which has been expanded comes "MINE" a major international exhibition of new video art from South Africa by a collection of well-known artists including William Kentridge. Never before seen in Australia, Latrobe Regional Gallery is the only Australia and New Zealand venue to show this exhibition marking the beginning of a new annual exhibition series featuring important international video and new media based works.