

Media Release

23 November 2022

Kelly Gellatly to Chair Sheila Foundation



John Cruthers



Kelly Gellatly

Longstanding Sheila Foundation Chairperson John Cruthers this week announced the appointment of preeminent arts industry leader Kelly Gellatly as his replacement as head of the organisation.

John has led Sheila Foundation as it transitioned from the private Cruthers Art Foundation to a public foundation in 2017. Under John's guidance, Sheila Foundation has developed and implemented far-reaching and impactful programs for women in the visual arts and has led the way in advocating for and actioning equality for Australian women artists, past and present. John will remain on the board but has decided to step back as Chairperson to allow him to focus on his gallery, 16albermarle Project Space, in Sydney.

'I am delighted Kelly has agreed to become Chairperson of Sheila Foundation. It is fitting that Sheila will be led by a woman of Kelly's standing. Kelly brings the professional experience, leadership qualities and passion to ensure Sheila continues to transform the landscape for Australian women artists and overturn decades of gender bias.'

It has been satisfying and exciting to lead Sheila. Our progress since launch in 2019 has been steadily upwards. Even with Covid we've managed to implement new projects – the Michela & Adrian Fini Fellowship, the Sheila Invitational, which will launch at the Art Gallery of WA in 2024, and the Sheila Network. Plus, we have an increasing public profile and a level of respect which shows that the vision and care we apply to our activities hasn't gone unnoticed.'

Kelly Gellatly has been a director of Sheila Foundation since 2021. She is a senior executive with over 25 years' arts leadership, curatorial and collection development experience in national, state and university-based art museums. Her leadership roles include director of the Ian Potter Museum of Art at the University of Melbourne from 2013 to 2020, and Curator of Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Victoria. Kelly has curated more than 50 exhibitions of leading Australian and international artists, has an extensive publishing and fundraising history, and is experienced in

the management and delivery of major museum infrastructure projects. She is the founding director of AGENCY UNTITLED.

'In the last few years, it has been heartening to see the increasing number of exhibitions and programs dedicated to highlighting the extraordinary work of Australian women artists from both our past and our present, and the growing profile and prices achieved for women's work in the secondary market. However, overall, contemporary women artists still struggle to make a living wage and we are a long way from gender parity. While acknowledging and celebrating progress, it is important that we ensure that these initiatives are more than simply tick-box exercises that once done, then revert to the status quo. This is why the advocacy and work of Sheila is so vital.', said Kelly.

'John has been a crusader for women artists, showing a vision and dedication that is inspiring. I am grateful for the foundations he has laid for the Sheila board to continue to work towards a brighter and more sustainable future for women artists.'

Sheila Foundation's focus is to support Australian women artists past, present and future. Its current programs include the Michela & Adrian Fini Artist Fellowship; the Sheila Invitational in collaboration with the Art Gallery of WA; the Sheila Network; support for The Countess Report, and the significant national research project Into the Light: Recovering Australia's lost women artists 1870-1960. The Foundation also provides funding and support to the Cruthers Collection of Women's Art at the University of Western Australia, the largest stand-alone collection of Australian women's art and a national treasure.

CONTACT

Kelly Gellatly

E: kelly@agency-untitled.com.au

M: +61 417 410 511

John Cruthers

E: johncruthers@sheila.org.au

M: +61 (0)433 020 237

ABOUT SHEILA FOUNDATION

<https://sheila.org.au/>

Sheila is a national philanthropic foundation with a mission to overturn decades of gender bias by writing Australian women artists back into our art history and ensuring equality for today's women artists.

Sheila will have succeeded when a visit to a state or national gallery shows equally the art, lives, stories and ideas of women and men, when students learn about our great women artists in equal measure to the great male artists, and when the women graduates from our art schools are equally represented in the art community.

Sheila has three strategic focus areas:

- Contemporary Women – Providing opportunities and support for living Australian women artists;
- Into the Light – Painting women back into Australia's art history, and
- Going Global – Supporting the unique Cruthers Collection of Women's Art, the largest standalone collection of Australian women's art.

The foundation is named after Lady Sheila Cruthers, a trailblazer in supporting and collecting Australian women artists. Sheila Foundation honours Lady Sheila in name, and in mission.