

**Rare New Von Guérard Celebrates 60 Years of Hamilton Gallery Trust**



Eugene von Guérard, *Mount Arapiles towards the Grampians*, 1870, oil on board. Purchased by the Hamilton Gallery Trust Fund 2022, to mark the 60th Anniversary of the Hamilton Gallery Trust Fund. Hamilton Gallery Collection.

A remarkable new addition to the Hamilton Gallery collection has been acquired to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Hamilton Gallery Trust.

Eugene von Guérard's *'Mount Arapiles towards the Grampians'* has not been on public view for the past 152 years.

Audiences were astounded by the unveiling of this major new acquisition, which was revealed to Hamilton Gallery Trustees and Friends on Friday evening in a special gallery event.

Artistic Director, Joshua White conveyed his pride in the new acquisition, and said that the work has an unparalleled local and historical significance.

"This painting will be a jewel of our collection. It is not only our first von Guérard painting, adding to the standing of the Hamilton Gallery collection, but it's a fascinating work capturing an interesting locale, displayed here for the community to admire," said Mr White.

"The Trust and Directors have actively targeted and acquired works to illuminate the unique culture of the Western District, and this is a striking example. This collection is of national and international standing due to the trust's munificence, and we are beyond grateful for their support."

The painting is considered to be one of the artist's most important, depicting the striking rocky outcrop and the plains of what Major Mitchell termed *Australia Felix* stretching out towards the Greater Hamilton region.

Hamilton Gallery Trustee, Dr Sue Robertson said that the work is a treasure for the gallery and will attract locals and tourists alike.

"The Trust is very pleased to support this acquisition to mark our 60th anniversary. Eugene von Guérard is well known as an important early artist in Australia, and we are excited to have our first painting by him added to the Hamilton Gallery collection. It fits well with our other early colonial paintings, such as Chevalier's Mt Abrupt."

"This is an important work for us as it depicts our region, from the rugged Grampians stony outcrops to the flatter plains. A decade ago, the Trust's 50th anniversary was celebrated with the commission of a tapestry which explored the environment and creatures of the volcanic plains. This new work extends our collection back in time to see the Grampians and surrounds through early European eyes," said Dr Robertson.

In an article written for the Trust's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary publication, art historian and curator, Dr Ruth Pullin revealed the fascinating story behind the painting of Mt Arapiles, known as Dyuritte to Traditional Owners of Gariwerd landscapes.

The artist sketched the view that became the subject of the painting after a 2-hour hand-climb up "broken and fissured rocks", sheltering from the rain in a rock gorge but noting delight at "mountainside eagles, butterflies [and] flowers" in his diary alongside studies and descriptive notes. "He worked 'till 6 o'clock' and was guided back to the station, in darkness, by shots fired by his 'worried' host," revealed Dr Pullin.

The work was painted in January 1870 for The Hon. John Alexander MacPherson, during his brief term as the seventh Premier of Victoria.

"The return of von Guérard's *'Mount Arapiles towards the Grampians'* to the public arena brings with it new insights into the life of this politically significant patron, and his own remarkable career as the most adventurous and, arguably, the greatest landscape painter to work in Australia in the nineteenth century," said Dr Pullin.

The painting has now been added to the Trust's 60th anniversary exhibition, ***Trust: A Generous Legacy*** on display at Hamilton Gallery until Sunday 6 November.

One of the oldest and most successful Trusts in Australia, since 1962 the Hamilton Gallery Trust has contributed over 600 works of art valued at over \$4.3 million to the gallery's internationally renowned collection.

Visitors can see the new painting alongside 10 major acquisitions per decade of the Trust's history, spanning paintings, glassware, sculpture, ceramics, metalwork, textiles and works on paper.

For more information on '***Trust: A Generous Legacy***' and upcoming events, see [www.hamiltongallery.org](http://www.hamiltongallery.org), @hamiltongalleryvic on social media or [join the mailing list](#).

**IMAGE LIBRARY:** Please [CLICK HERE](#) for captioned images of the artwork and exhibition.

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#### **ABOUT HAMILTON GALLERY TRUST:**

As one of Australia's most important and longstanding trusts, the City of Hamilton Art Gallery Trust Fund Deed was signed on July 26, 1962 by the three founding Trustees: Mr Ronald Lowenstern, Dr Samuel Charles Fitzpatrick CBE, and Mr Walter Raymond Swaby. The fund's purpose is to acquire artworks for the permanent collection. Six decades later, the Trust has seen a total of eleven trustees, who have all dedicated time, knowledge and skill to developing the gallery's important collection and ensuring the ongoing collecting future of Hamilton Gallery.

**ABOUT HAMILTON GALLERY:**

Hamilton Gallery has been the heart of visual arts in the Southern Grampians for over 60 years. Visitors can discover touring exhibitions, curated highlights from the permanent collection and engaging public programs and events that stimulate understanding, awareness and enjoyment of visual arts. Hamilton Gallery's internationally significant 9000+ object collection boasts unique strengths in decorative arts, European, Australian and Asian Art. Alongside regular opportunities for all ages to create and learn, the gallery also has a shop stocking goods by local and national artisans.

FREE ENTRY | OPEN 7 days | Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat & Sun: 10am-2pm

**MEDIA ENQUIRIES:**

Stacey Barnes | [marketing@hamiltongallery.org](mailto:marketing@hamiltongallery.org) | 0429 499 373

<b>HG HAMILTON GALLERY</b>	HAMILTONGALLERY.ORG (03) 5573 0460 INFO@HAMILTONGALLERY.ORG 107 BROWN STREET HAMILTON VIC 3300
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