



Michael Rush



## Media Release

# Keeping it real – museums and their collections?

Samstag Museum of Art, University of South Australia  
24 February 2010

What are the responsibilities of museums and art galleries when they accept gifts?

Michael Rush, former director of the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University, Boston, Massachusetts, will examine the responsibilities of museums and galleries as the custodians of our cultural heritage in light of Brandeis' decision to sell off their extremely valuable and important collection of contemporary art.

Michael will discuss the central role of the university art museum within the cultural and intellectual life of its host university and the relationship of the university museum with the university at large and to the public outside the university. At a time of economic constraint the importance of maintaining professionalism and the ethical values of a professional institution on the university campus as a teaching opportunity and experiential opportunity for students is vital.

In particular Michael will explore the lessons from the Rose Art Museum experience and the vulnerability of university collections; the danger of monetising art; the importance of developing and sustaining clear documents that refer to the sale of art, donor restrictions, and other issues central to the life of a collection and the museum itself.

Michael Rush took up the role of Director at the Rose Art Museum in 2005 after running the Palm Beach Institute of Contemporary Art since 1999. His writings have appeared in *The New York Times* and *Art in America*, and he has written three books: *New Media in Art*, *New Media in Late 20th-Century Art* and *Video Art*. He also founded the New Haven Artists' Theatre as well as Seated Man in New York. Michael Rush holds a doctorate in theology and psychology from Harvard.

This is the inaugural *Nick Waterlow Memorial Oration*, presented by University Art Museums Australia and is free and open to the public.

### Event details

Wednesday 24 February @ 5pm  
Bradley Forum, Hawke Building, UniSA  
University Art Museums Australia

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