

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 20 November 2020

Behind the Lines: The year in political cartoons 2020 opens at MoAD

Cathy Wilcox named Political Cartoonist of the Year

The latest *Behind the Lines: The year in political cartoons* opened at the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) Old Parliament House in Canberra today, with the theme **2020 A dog's breakfast!**

MoAD Director Daryl Karp noted the disruptive and tumultuous events of 2020 have had an enormous impact on ordinary Australians, and invited visitors to make sense of 'a dog of a year' through political cartoons.

"The cartoonists in this year's exhibition come from across the political spectrum yet each bring their own robust interrogation of the goings-on in Canberra and the rest of the country," said Ms Karp.

"They also shed light on our own shock, fears, and human foibles as we grappled with a very tough year. A humble roll of toilet paper, for example won't look quite the same after *Behind the Lines 2020*.

"Nothing about 2020 has been 'business as usual'. Never has a free and accurate media seemed more important, and never have we needed our cartoonists so much."

Cathy Wilcox, cartoonist for the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age*, received the 2020 Political Cartoonist of the Year award at today's exhibition launch, for the sharp eye she casts over both sides of politics and the ways she captured the momentous events of the year, as seen through the eyes of ordinary people.

"Cathy has pricked people's hearts with her take on events big and small, finding a poignant angle to the summer's bushfire and wildlife disaster and the COVID-centric humour with 'any excuse to leave the house,'" said Ms Karp.

Commenting on what cartoonists bring to news coverage, Ms Wilcox said:

"Cartoonists bring a kind of everyperson's view of what is happening in the news, which might help readers consolidate their own thoughts about issues.

"Cartoonists can act as a counter to the main flow of news, and always have an eye on what's happening on the side. We try to read between the lines of what's said by people in power, examine the threads of vested interest, and un-spin the message. In short, we just call out the BS," said Ms Wilcox.



Museum of
Australian Democracy
Old Parliament House

BEHIND THE LINES

the year in political cartoons

Behind the Lines 2020 includes 104 cartoons from 36 cartoonists published by a broad range of media outlets, including one from the USA, with digital cartoons included for the first time.

Ms Holly Williams, the curator of *Behind the Lines 2020*, said the year's theme - *A dog's breakfast* - evoked the mess and chaos of the year while injecting a lightness into a survey of a very heavy year.

"So many of 2020's cartoons splice together multiple crises and events, such as Andrew Weston's Extreme Social Distancing. In a year like no other, cartoonists borrow a catchphrase here or a visual cue there and weave them, often quite beautifully, into piece of striking satire. It can still be quite jarring to see a Hawaiian shirt pattern from one crisis transform into a COVID-19 blob pattern," Ms Williams said.

MoAD's most popular exhibition, *Behind the Lines* celebrates the role contemporary political cartoons play in Australia's rich tradition of free speech and free expression.

A new section in 2020, *In Focus* looks at how a significant issue has been covered by cartoonists over time. This year, Amy McQuire, a Darumbal and South Sea Islander journalist, has curated a selection of cartoons on the annual *Closing the Gap* reports.

The exhibition includes activities for all the family including dog drawing, a trail, and an interactive game inviting visitors to throw a ball into a dog bowl to find out what kind of year they've had.

Behind the Lines: the year in political cartoons 2020 opens to the public on 21 November for 12 months. Open daily 9am to 5pm.

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For further information and images, please contact media@moadoph.gov.au.

View [Cathy Wilcox](#) talking about her work.

View the exhibition [here](https://behindthelines.moadoph.gov.au/2020) (<https://behindthelines.moadoph.gov.au/2020>)

The Livestream of today's launch can be seen [here](#).

Attachments:

Behind the Lines 2020 Fact Sheet

Curator's Top Ten Cartoons

About the Artists

FACT SHEET

BEHIND THE LINES: THE YEAR IN POLITICAL CARTOONS

2020 A DOG'S BREAKFAST!

MoAD's most popular exhibition, *Behind the Lines* celebrates the role contemporary political cartoons play in Australia's rich tradition of free speech and free expression.

The 2020 exhibition includes 104 cartoons from 36 cartoonists from across the political spectrum as published by a broad range of media outlets, including one from the USA.

The exhibition opens at the Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) on 21 November 2020 for 12 months.

This year's theme – 2020 A dog's breakfast!

Each year, *Behind the Lines* is framed by a new theme and the phrase 'a dog's breakfast' sums up a mess of a year in light-hearted way.

The year's key events – the bushfires, the pandemic's arrival and the political and human response, economic and leadership issues, political scandals and other issues – are all explored through a dog-hued lens.

What's new in 2020

In Focus is a new element of *Behind the Lines* in 2020, which looks at how an issue has been covered by cartoonists over time. The first iteration of *In Focus* this year, curated by Darumbal and South Sea Islander journalist Amy McGuire, looks at the annual *Closing the Gap* report and how six cartoonists have responded since 2012.

The first time in 2020, the exhibition includes **digital cartoons** with four of Glen Le Lievre's GIFS reflecting the new ways cartoonists work.

The section *Stuck in the Kennel* features works that are not strictly 'political' but focus on everyday people as they grappled with the impact of the pandemic – reflecting the work that political cartoonists were doing this year.

Oh, and there's a whole section dedicated to toilet paper! That's a first.

Political Cartoonist of the Year

Cathy Wilcox, a Sydney-based cartoonist for the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Melbourne Age* takes out the Cartoonist of the Year Award for 2020, with the sharp eye she casts over both sides of politics.

The judging panel was struck by her unique voice and the way she captured the momentous events of the year as seen through the eyes of ordinary people.

She has pricked people's hearts with her take on events big and small, finding a poignant angle to the summer's wildlife disaster and COVID-centric humour with 'any excuse to leave the house.' Yet it is the sharp eye she casts across both sides of politics that has made her such a deserving recipient of our Political Cartoonist of the Year award.

This is the third time Cathy Wilcox has won the award. She also took out the Cartoonist of the Year prize in 2016 and in 2009, when the exhibition ran at the National Museum of Australia.

The judging panel in 2020 comprised a number of external judges including Laureate Professor Peter Doherty, Patron of the Doherty Institute, who contributed a *Foreword* to the exhibition catalogue. The other judges were: Professor Richard Scully: Associate Professor in Modern European History University of New England; Lindsay Foyle: Eminent Cartoonist and honorary historian for Australian Cartoonist Association; Holly Williams: Director, The Curators' Department and BTL 2020 Curator; Marcus Hughes, Director of Indigenous Engagement at the National Library of Australia; Daryl Karp AM: Director, Museum of Australian Democracy; and Nanette Louchart-Fletcher: Head Content, Research and Learning Museum of Australian Democracy.

Something for all the family

While the grown-ups will grin and grimace at the political cartoons, a range of family activities will delight young visitors. These include:

- The 'Who's your dog?' Whoosh machine at the exhibition entrance. The interactive game invites visitors to throw a ball into a dog bowl and find out what kind of year they've had. (COVID-safe measures are in place.)
- A family trail activity
- A dog drawing activity.

Visitors can vote for the People's Choice Award as in previous years.

In Focus – Closing the Gap

A new section in this year's *Behind the Lines* exhibition, *In Focus* is a chance to see how a significant issue has been portrayed over time. The yearly *Closing the Gap* reports have generated some of the most impactful cartoons over the past decade or so.

Six cartoons in this section have been selected by Amy McQuire, a Darumbal and South Sea Islander journalist, who has reported extensively on the lack of meaningful progress detailed in the reports.

Closing the Gap was rolled out in 2008 and replaced in 2020 by the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. It was intended to achieve equality in health and life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

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FACT SHEET

CURATOR'S TOP TEN CARTOONS – AVAILABLE FOR MEDIA USE

Exhibition curator, Holly Williams, sets out her Top Ten Picks from *Behind the Lines: the year in political cartoons 2020*, which appear below in no particular order.

Supplied credits must accompany publication. High-resolution images are available from MoAD.

	<p>The New Casual, Cathy Wilcox, <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i>, 29 July 2020</p> <p>“Not surprisingly many cartoons in 2020 featured the grim reaper, this one stands out though. Wilcox has been so succinct here in a cartoon that is very simple but very powerful – she manages to draw in the whole issue of privatisation and workforce casualisation and still pull at the heartstrings.” Holly Williams, Curator</p>
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	<p>So Much for New Year's Resolution to Quit Smoking, Bill Bramhall, <i>New York Daily News</i>, 1 February 2020</p> <p>“This is perhaps one of the rare times that Australia has made it into global cartoons in a big way. There were several outstanding cartoons published in Europe, the United States and even India dealing with Australia's bushfires. We were living through it but the rest of the world were too far and this cartoon captures that really well I think.” Holly Williams, Curator</p>
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	<p>Roast Pork, Jon Kudelka, <i>The Saturday Paper</i>, 25 January 2020</p> <p>“Barrels of pork ablaze! What more can I add!!”. Holly Williams, Curator</p> <p>In between the bushfires and the emerging pandemic, the so-called ‘sports rorts’ affair grabbed the headlines. It embroiled former Sports Minister Bridget McKenzie and the Prime Minister's office in much bad press. Though questions of legal authority and controversial decisions in favour of clubs in marginal seats raised eyebrows, ultimately it was a perceived conflict of interest that was McKenzie's undoing. She quit Cabinet and resigned as deputy Nationals leader.</p>
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Stopping the Australian Spread, Matt Golding, *The Sydney Morning Herald/The Age*, 2 April 2020

When one of America's best-loved actors, Tom Hanks, was diagnosed with COVID-19 on Queensland's Gold Coast in March, it brought the reality of the pandemic home to many. Twitter exploded after Hanks posted an image from quarantine featuring toast thickly spread with Vegemite: 'Cripes, we've given him coronavirus *and* Vegemite.' Many were shocked that he'd used 'waaaaaaay too much vegemite', though one noted that 'killing coronavirus with nuclear levels of vegemite might be our only hope'.



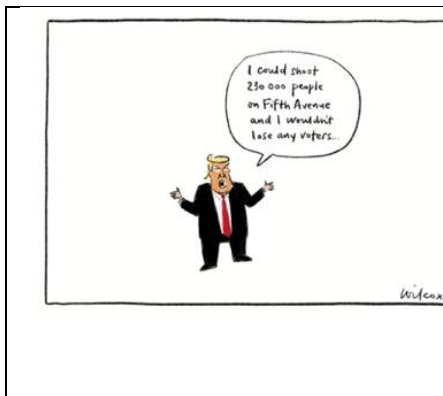
COVID City Circle, David Rowe, *The Australian Financial Review*, 4 August 2020

"There is a tremendous disquieting atmosphere in this cartoon which captures so much of the uneasiness the pandemic has brought into our lives. We can almost hear the muted sounds and the slightly cool foggy air that this cartoon seems to contain." Holly Williams, Curator



The Apocalypse Handicap, Andrew Dyson, *The Sydney Morning Herald/The Age*, 4 March 2020

'Stop doing it. It's ridiculous. It's unAustralian, and it must stop,' Prime Minister Scott Morrison scolded the nation in the face of Australia's panic buying frenzy. By August researchers had found that we led the world in pandemic-induced panic buying. As retailers imposed purchase limits in March, one local Twitter user responded: 'A "restriction" of 12 bottles of wine per person ...? WTF?! That's not a restriction, that's a liver transplant!'



Impunity, Cathy Wilcox, *The Sydney Morning Herald/The Age*, 4 November 2020

Trump boasted before the 2016 election that his followers were so loyal, he could "shoot somebody in the middle of Fifth Avenue" and his faithful would still vote for him. It occurred to me that the deaths of 230,000 Americans from COVID-19 under his watch was a genuine test of loyalty — that somehow, no matter how high that number went, his rusted-on fans would dismiss it. The number of votes he received [in 2020] suggests this is true.' - Cathy Wilcox



Extreme Social Distancing, Andrew Weldon, *The Big Issue*, 3 May 2020

Like so many of 2020’s cartoons, this one by Weldon splices together multiple crises and events. He places the startling figures from the Closing the Gap Report 2020 against the backdrop of both the pandemic and America’s Black Lives Matter protests. Around the world, experts are signalling that COVID-19 risks further entrenching poverty and disadvantage in vulnerable communities. His unconventional approach brings detailed statistics to a wider audience.



Going Out Like a Lamb ..., Christopher Downes, *The Mercury*, 31 March 2020

News headlines in early 2020 detailed natural disasters, impending famine (caused by locust plagues in dozens of countries) and pestilence (the novel coronavirus and an outbreak of the bubonic plague). Each week left one wondering what was coming next. Even highly rational people began to wonder whether the ‘Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse’ were about to show up.



Hotel Quarantina, Mark Knight, *Herald Sun*, 18 August 2020

Mark Knight has managed to make an earworm of one of the biggest failures of the year. An official inquiry into the Melbourne hotel quarantine debacle heard that 99 per cent of Victorian COVID-19 cases could be traced back to returned travellers at these hotels. Poorly trained security guards, a failure to observe social distancing, inadequate cleaning and a general lack of oversight were just some of the problems singled out for criticism.

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FACT SHEET - About the Artists

Dean Alston

Dean Alston is an editorial cartoonist for *The West Australian*. A past Walkley Award winner for best cartoon, Alston has also worked as a cartographer and publican.

Bill Bramhall

Bill Bramhall is an American illustrator and is the editorial cartoonist for the *New York Post*.

Peter Broelman

Peter Broelman is a nationally syndicated editorial cartoonist based in Adelaide. He has won three Stanley Awards for his editorial cartoons and, in 2005 and 2009, was awarded the prestigious Gold Stanley for Cartoonist of the Year. His work appears in regional newspapers, including *The Geelong Advertiser* and the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, and on his website.

Warren Brown

Warren Brown is the editorial cartoonist for *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney), for which he also writes a weekly motoring column. Brown has won three Stanley Awards for best editorial cartoon.

Mark David

Mark David is a Queensland-based cartoonist who has previously worked for *The Australian Financial Review*, *The Bulletin*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and several other publications around the world. He currently produces political cartoons for the online news journal *Independent Australia*.

John Ditchburn

John Ditchburn has been the cartoonist for *The Courier* (Ballarat) since 1990. He is also regularly published in *The Farmer*. His work has featured in numerous international educational books. He won the Quill Award for Best Cartoon in 2006 and 2013, and has been shortlisted six times.

Christopher Downes

Christopher Downes draws two cartoons a week for the *Hobart Mercury*. He has also drawn many works for the Museum of Australian Democracy, Canberra and the Lore podcast. He also works at Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, where his mind is being slowly corrupted.

Andrew Dyson

Andrew Dyson is a dual Walkley Award-winning cartoonist and illustrator for *The Age* in Melbourne.

Danny Eastwood

Danny Eastwood is a member of the Ngemba Tribe of western New South Wales. For more than two decades, Eastwood has made his living as an artist doing commercial work, including cartoons, for the *Koori Mail* and for companies such as Coca-Cola. He has also created various pieces of public art and murals around Sydney. He has won numerous awards for his artwork, including NAIDOC Artist of the Year, the NAIDOC Poster Competition and the Parliament of New South Wales Aboriginal Art Prize.

First Dog on the Moon

'First Dog on the Moon' is the pseudonym for Andrew Marlton, the Walkley Award-winning political cartoonist for *Guardian Australia*. He has written and illustrated various books, illustrated numerous others, performed live on stage in a number of shows and is currently working on 'more exciting projects than you can poke a stick at', including another book. He was the MoAD Political Cartoonist of the Year in 2011.

Lindsay Foyle

Lindsay Foyle has been drawing cartoons professionally since 1975. His work has appeared in *The Bulletin* and *The Australian*. He is a past president of the Australian Cartoonists' Association

John Frith

John Frith (1906–2000) was one of Australia's most prominent and prolific cartoonists for more than four decades years. His work was printed in *The Bulletin*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and Melbourne's *Herald* over his long career. He was also a sculptor and potter, and many of his cartoons and ceramic works are held in the Museum of Australian Democracy's collection.

Matt Golding

Matt Golding is a political cartoonist with the *Melbourne Age* and *Sunday Age*. He draws weekly cartoons for the *Melbourne Times*, *The Melbourne Weekly Magazine* and *The Sunday Age*. He also contributes to *The Sydney Morning Herald* and a range of other publications and corporate clients. He has won a Walkley Award and seven Stanley Awards. He was MoAD Political Cartoonist of the Year in 2018.

Judy Horacek

Judy Horacek is a freelance cartoonist and picture book creator. Her cartoons have been published widely in newspapers and magazines, including *The Australian*, *The Canberra Times* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*. They currently appear regularly in the *Melbourne Age*. She has published nine collections of her cartoons.

Fiona Katauskas

Fiona Katauskas is a freelance cartoonist based in Sydney. Her political work has been published in a wide range of newspapers and magazines, including the *Melbourne Age*, *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Bulletin*, and currently appears regularly in *Eureka Street*.



Simon Kneebone

Simon Kneebone is an Adelaide-based freelance cartoonist and illustrator. His work has appeared in the *New Internationalist*, the website *Pro Bono*, and the journal *Australian Options*.

Mark Knight

Mark Knight is an editorial cartoonist for the Melbourne *Herald Sun* and *Sunday Herald Sun*. Knight previously worked for the *Australian Financial Review* and the *Melbourne Herald*. He won the Gold Quill Award in 2005 for the best cartoon of the year and has also won several Walkley Awards. He was MoAD's Political Cartoonist of the Year in 2014.

Jon Kudelka

Jon Kudelka is a freelance cartoonist based in Hobart. His work appears in the Hobart *Mercury*, *The Saturday Paper* and on his website. Until recently his work also appeared in *The Australian*, but he has moved on to spend more time on his new gallery, The Kudelka Shop, in Salamanca Place, Hobart. In 2008 Kudelka won the Walkley Award for best cartoon and the Stanley Award for best political cartoonist. He won the Walkley again in 2018 and the Kennedy Award for best cartoon in 2019. He was MoAD's Political Cartoonist of the Year for 2019.

Sean Leahy

Sean Leahy is a political cartoonist for the Brisbane *Courier-Mail*. He also writes and draws the comic strip *Beyond the Black Stump*. He was previously cartoonist for Brisbane's *Sunday Mail*, *Sunday Sun* and *Daily Sun*, as well as Perth's *Sunday Times* and *The West Australian*. In 2000 Leahy was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to undertake research into cartooning overseas.

Johannes Leak

Johannes Leak is an illustrator based just north of Sydney. After formal art training at the Julian Ashton Art School, he explored figurative painting for some years before switching to both natural media and digital illustration. He has been working as a freelancer ever since, specialising in cartooning, caricature, storyboarding and commercial art. He contributes regularly to *The Australian* and *Tracks* surfing magazine. He is also the illustrator of Claire Garth's *Grover McBane*, *Rescue Dog* children's book series.

Brett Lethbridge

Brett Lethbridge is the editorial cartoonist for the Brisbane *Courier-Mail*. He has also been published in the *Sunday Mail* and *West Australian*.

Michael Leunig

Michael Leunig is an Australian cartoonist, writer, painter, philosopher and poet. His commentary on political, cultural and emotional life spans more than 50 years. He often explores the idea of an innocent and sacred personal world and the fragile ecosystem of human nature and its relationship to the wider natural world. His newspaper work appears regularly in *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

Glen Le Lievre

Glen Le Lievre's drawings have appeared in the Melbourne *Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *MAD*, *Private Eye*, *Reader's Digest*, *The New Yorker*, *Time* and the *Wall Street Journal*.



Eric Löbbecke

Eric Löbbecke is an award-winning illustrator and cartoonist for books, newspapers, magazines and advertising since 1988. He has worked for News Limited on *The Australian* and the Sydney *Sunday Telegraph* and *Daily Telegraph*. He has won Walkley and Stanley awards for illustration and two Bald Archy Prizes for satirical portraiture.

Will Mahony

Francis William 'Will' Mahony (1905–1989) was an Australian cartoonist and printmaker, most widely associated with Sydney's *Daily News*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Mirror*.

Syd Miller

In a long career, Syd Miller (1901–1983) drew cartoons for many publications, including *The Bulletin*, *Smith's Weekly*, the *Sydney Sun*, the *Melbourne Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph*. In 1938 he helped devise the iconic 'Chesty Bond' figure for the Bond's clothing company, and in the 1950s created the 'A Little Bear Will Fix It' comic to advertise Behr-Manning's brand of adhesive tape.

Alan Moir

Alan Moir is an editorial cartoonist for *The Sydney Morning Herald*. He has also worked for *The Bulletin* and the Brisbane *Courier-Mail*. He has won three Stanley Awards, two Walkley Awards and the prestigious Gold Stanley Award.

Jim Pavlidis

Jim Pavlidis is an award-winning painter and illustrator. He has been at the *Melbourne Age* for 30 years. He won a Melbourne Press Club Quill Award for best artwork in 2015 and for best cartoon in 2019. His most recent publication, *Kitchen Sink Drama*, features his illustrations accompanying Paul Connolly's 100-word vignettes.

David Pope

David Pope worked as a freelance cartoonist and illustrator for many years, including at the *Sydney Sun-Herald*, before joining *The Canberra Times* as a staff artist in 2008 after the retirement of local cartooning legend Geoff Pryor. His cartoons have appeared in range of publications, including *AEU News*, *Arena*, *Common Cause*, *The Diplomat*, *Hard Hat*, *The New Doctor*, the *Northern Rivers Echo*, *Overland*, *The Queensland Nurse* and *The Republican*. He was MoAD's Political Cartoonist of the Year in 2012.

David Rowe

David Rowe is a daily editorial cartoonist for the *Australian Financial Review*. Rowe has won numerous awards for his political cartooning, including being named MoAD's Political Cartoonist of the Year in 2013 and 2017.

John Shakespeare

John Shakespeare is a Walkley Award-winning illustrator and cartoonist for *The Sydney Morning Herald*. He has previously worked for the Brisbane *Courier-Mail* and the *Sydney Sun*.

Greg ‘Smithy’ Smith

‘Smithy’ was born in Perth, Western Australia. He started his cartooning life at Perth’s *Daily News* and is now editorial cartoonist for the Perth *Sunday Times* and *Seven West Media*.

John Spooner

John Spooner was cartoonist and editorial illustrator for *The Age*, where he worked for 42 years until his redundancy in 2016. As well as being widely published, Spooner has won five Stanley awards, four Walkley awards, the Graeme Perkin award in 2002 and the Fremantle Print Prize (shared) in 1986.

Chris ‘Roy’ Taylor

Chris ‘Roy’ Taylor has been a professional cartoonist and illustrator for over 25 years and his work also appears in the Melbourne *Herald Sun*. He creates daily cartoons and illustrations and, in 2014, also published a children’s book, *The Great Big Book of Aussie Inventions*.

Andrew Weldon

Andrew Weldon is a freelance cartoonist whose work appears regularly in the Melbourne *Age* and *The Big Issue*. His work has also appeared in *Private Eye*, *The Spectator* and *The New Yorker*. Weldon has published several children’s books, including the *Don’t Look Now* series with Paul Jennings, as well as two collections of his cartoons.

Cathy Wilcox

Cathy Wilcox is a Sydney-based cartoonist for *The Sydney Morning Herald* and the Melbourne *Age*. She has published two collections of her cartoons, and has illustrated numerous children’s books. Wilcox has won three Walkley Awards for cartooning and several Stanley Awards for single-gag and political cartoons. In 2020 and 2016, she was MoAD’s Political Cartoonist of the Year, as she also was in 2009 when the exhibition ran at the National Museum of Australia.