UTS is pleased to announce the launch of *The Watters Gift*, a digital and print publication celebrating the largest single donation to the UTS Art Collection in its thirty-year history.

In 2018, Watters Gallery, one of Australia’s longest-running, most influential and respected commercial galleries, closed its doors after 54 years. Established by Frank Watters, along with co-directors Geoffrey and Alexandra Legge in 1964, Watters Gallery supported the careers of some of Australia’s most exciting artists.

The donation includes 67 works by 27 Australian artists, collected by Frank Watters over five decades, and displayed in his garden apartment above Watters Gallery. Works in the gift provide a vibrant snapshot of Australian artistic practice across five decades and stand as a testament to Watters Gallery’s support of Australian artistic practice.

A digital publication and series of online events will bring these vibrant works into the homes of our audiences. The publication features reminiscences from a selection of artists in the donation, a foreword by Sonia Legge, and a catalogue essay by curator Tania Creighton.

"Walking into Frank’s apartment…was like entering his imagination; so many graceful and wild artworks gleaned together into a mildly unruly, delightfully unfettered and beguiling whole. Frank was not driven by arcane encyclopaedic ambition or, like many collectors, the incentive of investment. Art fed his soul and he simply loved living amongst it.”

- Tania Creighton, *The Watters Gift* curator

To coincide with the launch of *The Watters Gift*, UTS Ensemble in Residence, the Australia Piano Quartet, will produce *Soundscapes*, a sonic response to artworks in the gift that "celebrate landscapes and the transcendent beauty of the Australian natural environment." Members of the quartet will connect from their separate locations in London, Adelaide and from UTS Gallery, to perform celebrated works by Australian composers. *Soundscapes* will be scheduled weekly and will be
Media Release – For Immediate Release
The Watters Gift
Launching online 20 May 2020
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available on the UTS Gallery and Art Collection website and social media channels.

“This compendium of artworks both visual and musical, presents an overview of aspects of APQ’s commissioning and collaborative history, while providing a reflective and poignant selection of works that offer solace and calm during the unsettling and precarious age of COVID-19.” - Thomas Rann, founding member, Australia Piano Quartet

UTS Curator Stella Rosa McDonald states, “For over 50 years Frank Watters gave the artists he worked with a most important gift – time. Time to experiment, time to make mistakes, time to find the courage to protest and discover new modes of expression. Many of the artists included in Frank Watters’ gift to UTS went on to become some of Australia’s most critically acclaimed, while Watters Gallery paved the way for the arts scene in Sydney as we know it today.

At a time that is deeply troubling for the livelihoods of artists and arts workers, and during a period of uncertain change for the galleries and institutions that employ them, Frank Watters’ legacy and that of Watters Gallery feels particularly poignant. It reminds us that art – sometimes difficult and always humanising – is the deepest expression of our culture and is worth protecting.”

Artists in The Watters Gift

About the UTS Art Collection
Established in 1988, the UTS Art Collection contains over 850 permanent works of art in a diverse range of media; from site-specific installations and sculptures, to more intimate paintings, prints and drawings and a growing collection of digital and new-media works. With a focus on contemporary Australian art since the 1960s, artworks from the collection are on display in every building of the university and are a rich resource for teaching and learning.

“When I see artworks across the campus, I am struck by how they foster a dynamic environment of thought and critique. Every artwork tells a story that stimulates the creative and critical minds we foster, contributing to the diversity and
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“Richness of the UTS experience. Just as important, art also brings alternative perspectives into the daily lives of our staff, students and visitors.” - Attila Brungs, UTS Vice-Chancellor and President


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