

MidNAG Poetry Posters

Mildura Arts Centre Collection

The MidNAG Poetry Poster collection was first initiated by former Mildura Arts Centre Director Tom McCullough, while on a British Council sponsored visit to Northumberland in 1970.

'The British Council often circulated exhibitions of UK graphic art overseas, but I'd never seen anything so original from a group of combined artists and poets before then. I also saw that it would be cheaper to subscribe directly to buying examples of these posters annually, instead of negotiating for an exhibition to be mounted and toured overseas.'

The idea of combining different art forms appealed to McCullough, and the regional origins of the Mid-Northumberland Arts Group seemed a good model for possible emulation around north-west Victoria in the 1970s.

Many of the annual issues of the MidNAG posters were mailed directly to Mildura from 1970 onwards. McCullough attended the 1970 MidNAG arts festival and other northern cultural events. Opportunities for cultural exchanges between UK based arts administrators and artists with their Australian counterparts.

McCullough was successful in obtaining British Council and Visual Arts Board Australia grants to have performance artists such as DDart's Raym Richards and Dennis DeGroot,¹ and later Stuart Brisley make official visits to Australia in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

'It was widely recognised in the seventies that Mildura Arts Centre was very active in developing overseas cultural links to support its Sculpture Triennials, and the MidNAG poster collection is just a part of the record of such efforts. The Mildura region was firmly established on a growing international circuit among state and regional galleries and arts centres around Australia. By the look of your recent programs of events, I am delighted to see that this pattern still grows vigorously in strength and quality.'

McCullough has chosen in recent years of retirement, to pursue combinations of his own poetry, sculptural forms and historiographic publications on the Mornington Peninsula where he now resides.²

Some information in this text panel has been supplied in email correspondence with Tom McCullough, June 2020.

¹ DDart Performance Art, UK, 1972–1984.

² McCullough, Tom. 2018. *Rambles and rhymes along Safety Beach foreshore*. Dromana, Victoria: Safety Beach Foreshore Landscape Committee Inc.