

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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# idlehours

On **11 December 2009** the **National Portrait Gallery** will open its Summer exhibition, **Idle Hours**. Curated by National Portrait Gallery Historian, Dr Sarah Engledow, *Idle Hours* is comprised of works by Australian artists, made in Australia, and depicting Australian subjects. The exhibition is drawn from public and private collections and shows well-known and some anonymous sitters, with works from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present. *Idle Hours* features a range of paintings, prints and drawings, some that are well-loved favourites, and some that have rarely been exhibited. Some of the artists featured in *Idle Hours* include: Thea Proctor, Brett Whiteley, Grace Cossington Smith, Davida Allen, Rick Amor, Cressida Campbell, John Brack and more.

*Idle Hours* will take visitors on a deliciously lazy stroll through a full day and night of quiet moods and situations – reading, drawing, snoozing, bathing, sewing, gardening, ironing, cooking, cleaning, sitting, looking, making love and spending tranquil time with companions.

The first room of *Idle hours* contains pictures of people waking up, breakfasting, dressing and tending babies. By the entrance to the second room, the first person has fallen into an after-lunch siesta; others work through a basket of ironing, pick up their embroidery, or prepare afternoon tea. As the afternoon lengthens, people enjoy a beer, ease into a bath, water the garden and watch television. In the last room, as night falls and deepens, people prepare dinner, put on a record or settle in for some serious talking.

*Idle Hours* is balm for increasing numbers of us who wonder why we work longer hours than our parents and grandparents; why we seldom finish reading the books piled by our beds; why we spend so much time in the shopping mall. It invites us to ask when we began to accelerate; to become little more than a tangle of traits, habits and needs that we don't admire in others. It offers us a delightful opportunity to stop and contemplate what's really important in the short, inexorable progress of our days.

"We are often told that this is no time for complacency. But imagine if, for a short time, in the communal privacy of the art gallery space, the caution were overthrown? What a surprise and a relief it would be to be assured that this is precisely the time, the place, and the occasion for complacency", said Dr Sarah Engledow.

<b>What:</b>	<b>Idle Hours</b>
<b>Where:</b>	<b>National Portrait Gallery, King Edward Terrace, Parkes, Canberra</b>
<b>When:</b>	<b>11 December 2009 to 21 February 2010</b>
<b>Entry:</b>	<b>Free</b>
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