

22 August 2024

Visions of Australia  
Dept of Communications and the Arts

**Re. Support for tour proposal *Christian Thompson – House of Gold***

Wagga Wagga Art Gallery is committed to a program of diversity and inclusion. We champion First Nations voices and leadership in our exhibition, education and public programming.

Under the guidance of Wiradjuri Elder in Residence Aunty Cheryl Penrith, the Gallery delivers First Nations exhibitions, curatorial projects, artist development opportunities and youth engagement activities which seek to strengthen creative practice and positively enhance cross cultural relationships in our community.

The tour proposed by Museums & Galleries NSW, *Christian Thompson – House of Gold* represents an opportunity for Wagga Wagga Art Gallery to present the work of a significant contemporary First Nations Artist. *Christian Thompson – House of Gold* is a consideration of Thompson's Bidjara and Chinese heritage. This work will have resonance in our own community where Wiradjuri are strong advocates for their living cultural heritage, and where Chinese heritage across the Riverina is shared by many but has been little explored. Indeed, *House of Gold* will complement our 2025 programming of Mei Zhao's exhibition *Erased Landscapes* which considers Chinese 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century migration and settlement in the Riverina.

The touring program offered by Museums & Galleries NSW is highly regarded in regional communities. As an organisation it is consultative and works in collaboration with individual galleries to enable the presentation of artists of high calibre rarely seen in the regions. Accompanying exhibition resources are always well considered and assist us to both effectively communicate with our audiences and to lead necessary community conversations on challenging subject matter.

I urge your support of the proposed Exhibition tour *Christian Thompson – House of Gold*.

Sincerely,



**Dr Lee-Anne Hall**  
Director  
Wagga Wagga Art Gallery



**Aunty Cheryl Penrith OAM**  
Elder in Residence  
Wagga Wagga Art Gallery

**Visions of Australia**

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts  
Office for the Arts  
GPO Box 594  
Canberra ACT 2601

Wednesday, September 4, 2024

**RE: Visions of Australia funding**

To Whom It May Concern,

**RE: Support for the Museums & Galleries of NSW and Dr. Christian Thompson AO | House of Gold - Touring Exhibition**

On behalf of the Plimsoll Gallery at the University of Tasmania, I am writing to express our support for MGNSW's funding application for the touring exhibition, **Dr. Christian Thompson AO | House of Gold**.

Upon receiving the proposal for this exhibition, I was enthusiastic about the opportunity to present a high-calibre exhibition featuring one of Australia's foremost contemporary artists. This exhibition aligns exceptionally well with our key strategic objectives, particularly in amplifying Indigenous voices and cultural hybridity.

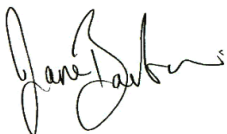
Furthermore, the exhibition highlights significant connections to Chinese migration in Northern Tasmania during early colonial history, which complements UTAS's Family History unit and enhances audience engagement with the content. Through this exhibition, we can provide our audiences with access to exceptional contemporary art, educational opportunities and programs.

It is important to note that Dr. Christian Thompson has a connection to one of our distinguished Indigenous scholars, Professor Greg Lehman, who possesses a strong academic background and ties to the artist. Notably, Professor Lehman was a Roberta Sykes Indigenous Education Scholar who completed a Masters in the History of Art and Visual Cultures at Balliol College, Oxford during the same period that Dr. Thompson attended Oxford. Our previous collaborations with MGNSW have demonstrated their commitment to professionalism within the industry, as they consistently deliver high-quality touring exhibitions. Their dedicated team effectively manages the complexities associated with touring exhibitions and related programs, significantly benefiting our regional gallery. Without MGNSW's programs and support, it would be challenging for the Plimsoll Gallery to develop such engaging and high-calibre exhibitions for our Tasmanian audiences.

At Plimsoll Gallery, we remain committed to exploring innovative approaches to presenting contemporary art. By emphasising innovation, cultural hybridity and diverse voices, we aim to future-proof our exhibitions and programs, broaden our audience, and enrich artistic experiences. This exhibition will further reinforce our dedication to innovation, experimentation, and the enhancement of experiences for both audiences and artists.

I eagerly anticipate the opportunity to support **Dr. Christian Thompson AO | House of Gold** at Plimsoll Gallery in 2028 and firmly believe that this exhibition will resonate profoundly with audiences in Tasmania.

Yours sincerely,



**Jane Barlow**

Exhibitions and Programs Coordinator  
Plimsoll Gallery, Library and Cultural Collections University of Tasman

Our Reference: 11801956  
Your Reference: 19 September 2024  
Contact Officer: Tiffany Shafran  
Telephone: 07 4688 6922

18 September 2024

Visions of Australia  
Office for the Arts  
GPO Box 594  
Canberra ACT 2601

To whom it may concern,

**Re: Support for Museums & Galleries of NSW application for Dr. Christian Thompson AO | House of Gold, touring exhibition.**

Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery is pleased to provide this letter of support for Museums Galleries of NSW's (M&G NSW) application to Visions of Australia, to tour *Dr. Christian Thompson AO | House of Gold* with 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art (4A).

Established in 1937 on Jagera, Giabal and Jarowai Country, Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery is the first public art gallery in regional Queensland. The Gallery contributes to the region's history of inclusion and diversity through an engaging annual program of exhibitions and events and *House of Gold's* themes of identity, cultural hybridity and history would connect directly with our mission as well as with our diverse audiences and communities.

This exhibition would highlight significant connections to Chinese migration in the Toowoomba region, and in addition we intend to curate a complementary collections exhibition from our diverse holdings of books, decorative arts and prints relating to China and Chinese aesthetics. We look forward to working with Thomson, M&G NSW and 4A to develop bespoke public programs around food, native flora and market gardens. As the Garden City, this type of programming speaks not only to our identity but also our history.

Christian Thompson also has a special connection to the region having completed his undergraduate degree in Visual Arts here and has exhibited in the gallery throughout his career. Indeed, Thompson recommended our Gallery as an important venue to include on this national tour – it would be a pleasure to showcase his exciting new body of work *House of Gold* alongside important *New Gold Mountain* works which incorporate photography, video and the immersive sound work *Burdi (Fire Fire)*, 2021 - a personal exploration and plea to revitalize his Bidjara language and other languages of 'pre-invasion Australia'.

M&G NSW is a highly professional organisation which provides engaging touring exhibitions and supports regional galleries with advice and resources nationally. 4A fosters excellence and innovation in contemporary culture through the commissioning, presentation, documentation and research of contemporary art with a focus on Asia and cross-cultural dialogues. I highly recommend Visions of Australia support this exciting tour that will facilitate greater interaction with regional communities and provide a significant opportunity for audiences to engage with this important body of work.

Yours sincerely,



Tahnee Pearse  
**Manager Library and Cultural Services**

28 August 2024

Dear Visions of Australia,

I am writing to express my strong support for Museums and Galleries of NSW's application to the Visions of Australia regional exhibition touring program for the touring of *House of Gold* by Christian Thompson AO. This exhibition, scheduled to tour nationally from 2025 to 2028, represents a significant contribution to the understanding of Australia's diverse cultural history and the intersections of identity.

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art has a long-standing commitment to championing contemporary Asian and Asian-Australian artists. 4A advances Australia's cultural engagement with Asia and the global Asian diaspora, and since our inception in 1996, 4A has become a pivotal institution in Australia's cultural landscape, recognised for its dynamic and inclusive programming that bridges cultures and communities.

*House of Gold* is a commissioned body of work that centres the unique perspective of Christian Thompson, an artist of Bidjara and Chinese heritage. Thompson's work is renowned for its powerful exploration of identity, history, and the blending of cultures, making this exhibition not only a profound artistic statement but also an important educational tool for audiences across regional Australia.

The tour of *House of Gold* will bring this important narrative to a broader audience, allowing regional communities to engage with the complexities of Australia's multicultural past and present. The exhibition's exploration of the intersections between Bidjara and Chinese identities offers a unique opportunity for reflection and dialogue, particularly in regions where such conversations are often less prominent.

The alignment of *House of Gold* with 4A's mission is clear. This exhibition encapsulates our commitment to presenting stories that resonate with both historical and contemporary relevance, offering a deep dive into the cultural fabric of Australia through the eyes of an artist who embodies the intersection of Indigenous and Chinese identities. By touring this exhibition regionally, we aim to extend the reach and impact of Christian Thompson's work, creating opportunities for broader engagement and deeper understanding of Australia's multicultural heritage.

In alignment with 4A's mission to foster innovation and creative expression within the Asian diaspora and beyond, *House of Gold* will be a cornerstone of our programming from 2025 to 2028. The exhibition will not only enhance our engagement with regional communities but will also contribute to a broader discourse on the intersections of cultural histories in Australia.

We strongly endorse this application to the Visions of Australia regional exhibition touring program and are committed to ensuring the success of the *House of Gold* tour. We look forward to the opportunity to bring this powerful exhibition to audiences across Australia and to continuing our work in promoting cultural diversity and artistic excellence.

Thank you for considering this application. Please feel free to contact me if you require any further information regarding this application.

Yours sincerely,



Thea Baumann  
Artistic Director, CEO  
4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art



The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Global

Visions of Australia  
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development, Communications and the Arts  
Office for the Arts  
GPO Box 594  
Canberra ACT 2601

To the Visions of Australia assessment committee,

**SUPPORT LETTER - TOURING 4A & DR. CHRISTIAN THOMPSON AO'S HOUSE OF GOLD EXHIBITION**

I write this letter in full support of the Museums & Galleries of NSW (M&G NSW) tour of Dr Christian Thompson AO's exhibition *House of Gold* in partnership with 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art.

This exhibition was supported by The Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation Global, through our by-invitation only Arts and Chinese Heritage initiative which has funded projects in the UK, USA, Canada and with 4A being the only recipients of a grant from the initiative in Australia. Our Arts and Chinese Heritage initiative supports arts projects that tell the stories of Chinese diaspora history across the world.

This exhibition *House of Gold* chronicles a personal history of intersectional identity drawn from Dr Christian Thompson's Bidjara and Cantonese family.

Support from Visions of Australia to tour this exhibition to regional and remote venues nationally would amplify the investment already made and increase access to this significant Australian artist and his important work.

- This tour will be highly relevant to a large number of communities across Australia, given the wide diaspora of 19th Century Chinese migration and affords many opportunities for inter-generational and cross-cultural public programs.
- Written and audio resources already developed by 4A and supported by Robert Ho Foundation enhance the touring exhibition and give it a broader reach and multiple opportunities for educational activities and engagement.
- The exhibition has held strong appeal for tour venues, particularly in Chinese Migrant and gold mining communities such as Ballarat and Wagga Wagga, and will also visit the artist's Aboriginal family Country in the region of Longreach QLD.

We hope that this meaningful exhibition is supported by Visions of Australia and we look forward to following the exhibition's tour.

Kind Regards,

Sally Lai, Consulting Program Officer  
Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Global