



Media Release



NSW State Library's landmark photography exhibition now online

30/1/2024

The State Library of NSW is opening its virtual doors to the Library's biggest and most significant photography exhibition to date with today's [Tuesday 30 January] online launch of *Shot*.

The new online version of *Shot* — the exhibition which opened at the State Library in October 2023 — delves into our extraordinary collection of two million images and delivers a visual feast of 400 captivating moments by 200 photographers over three centuries.

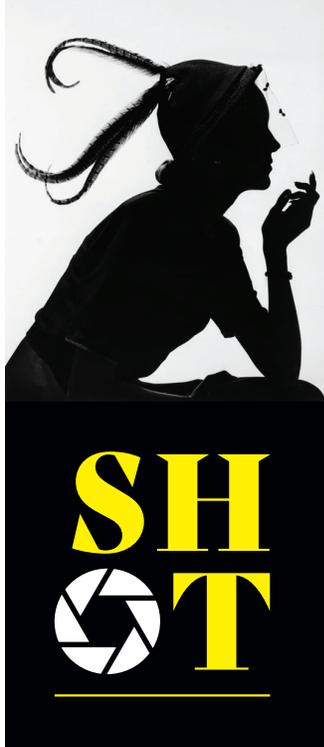
According to State Librarian Dr Caroline Butler-Bowdon: "The State Library is now home to Sydney's largest photography gallery, and if you can't visit us on Macquarie Street, or indeed you want to find out more post-visit, photography lovers across the globe will now be able to view this extraordinary collection of images in their own time."

"Almost every photographic format and every year between 1845 and 2022 is represented, starting with Australia's oldest photograph, an 1845 daguerreotype by George Barron Goodman," says Dr Butler-Bowdon.

Senior Curator Geoff Barker spent two years trawling through the Library's extraordinary collection — one of the largest and most diverse in Australia — and came across images that immediately piqued his interest.

This included a striking photo of two female farmers walking through an opium field in Armidale in 1943. With the outbreak of the Second World War, Australia realised it could be cut off from the supply of morphine needed for its hospitals and on the battlefield. Members of the Women's Agricultural Security Production helped plough and sow this 40-acre plantation.

"The 400 photos are arranged into decades creating a unique visual history of Australia over the last 180 years" says Geoff. "As you scroll through the decades you will see things like fashion, architecture and transport, as well as photographic styles and printing processes, change over time."



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He says, “the Library’s collections are a revelation for the fascinating development of photographic technology, and the impact it had on the way Australians saw themselves. No other collection in the country is so rich in its ability to explore the visual history of the nation.”

Highlights include:

- early examples of colour photography (including rare photo-crayotype prints);
- one of the original Paget plates Frank Hurley saved from Shackleton’s sinking ship *Endurance* in Antarctica in 1915;
- iconic works by some of our most acclaimed photographers, including Max Dupain, Harold Cazneaux, David Moore, Olive Cotton; and
- contemporary images and commentary by over 30 living photographers, including Stephen Dupont, Tony Mott, Anne Zahalka.

To ensure the best possible user experience, the *Shot* online exhibition has been designed to be viewed on computer desktops only so users can easily move through the timeline to view images either by decade, alongside captions or at full screen with zoom capabilities. A mobile view will be developed later.

View the *Shot* online exhibition and learn more about the Library’s photography program and collections here: sl.nsw.gov.au/photography.

The *Shot* onsite exhibition has been extended to 3 November 2024 by popular demand. Presented with the support of the State Library of NSW Foundation.

For more information, interviews and publicity images, please contact:

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