

# Media Release

## State Library's collection comes out of lockdown!

27/11/2020

While many things came to a halt due to lockdowns this year, the State Library of NSW has been busier than ever adding to its collection of more than six million items. Some of these amazing new additions will go on public display for the first time from this Saturday 28 November 2020.

The *New to the Collection* exhibition features over 20 newly acquired items, including a visual diary by 99 year-old artist Guy Warren recording his time in lockdown in Sydney, the first printed star chart of the Southern Hemisphere (1515) and one of the earliest books of modern zoology (1551-58).

According to NSW State Librarian John Vallance: "Spanning centuries and collected from all over the world, *New to the collection* represents some of the most interesting and significant additions to the Library's collection this year."

"The exhibition reminds us of all the work that continued behind-the-scenes even when our doors were forced to close. Libraries continue to build their collections and serve the public even in the most difficult of circumstances."

Collection highlights on display include:

- One of **the newest** chapters in history from one of **the oldest** contributors: [COVID-19 isolation notebooks, 2020](#) by artist [Guy Warren](#)  
As he turned 99 in April 2020, Guy Warren began to create daily drawings of his time in lockdown in Sydney. These volumes detail his observations as he moved into his 100th year.
- **The first** European record of southern skies: [Imagines coeli meridionales, 1515](#)  
Created by Albrecht Dürer, cartographer Johannes Stabius and astronomer Conrad Heinfogel in 1515, there are only 10 known examples of the first printed European star chart of the southern hemisphere. The Library's copy is equally rare as it was printed from the original.
- **The most famous** 'who's who in the zoo': [Historia Animalium, 1551-58](#)  
Considered the start of modern zoology, this Renaissance encyclopedia by Conrad Gessner was one of the most popular scientific books at the time. Alongside extinct and 'newly discovered' animals, you find fantastic creatures like unicorns and mermaid-like beasts.

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“What many people may not realise is that we are always collecting,” said Maggie Patton, the State Library’s head curator. “We are acquiring everything we can that’s published in NSW, we are documenting history as it happens in our cities and regions, and we are going back in time to fill in the gaps, ensuring we develop a collection which provides a rich and balanced view of our history.

*New to the Collection* is a free exhibition at the State Library of NSW, Macquarie St, Sydney. On show until 3 January 2021. [www.sl.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au)

**Maggie Patton is available for interviews.**

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