



Hon. George Souris M.P
Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing
Minister for the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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POTTER AND PICASSO BREAK LONG STANDING RECORD

Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts, George Souris, has congratulated the Art Gallery of NSW and the Powerhouse Museum for both breaking a long standing record for a special paid exhibition.

Mr Souris said the current attendance record for the two world class cultural institutions has stood for more than 20 years after 323,300 people flocked to the Art Gallery of NSW in 1988 for *Gold of the Pharaohs*.

“It’s Potter versus Picasso - as of Sunday afternoon (March 18) *Harry Potter: The Exhibition* which is showing at the Powerhouse Museum has smashed that record with total admissions and pre sales of 339,368,” Mr Souris said.

“An impressive 331,112 visitors have already been through the museum doors to experience the magical world of the famous boy wizard.

“These figures are significantly up on the Powerhouse’s previous highest attendance for a special paid exhibition of 216,594 visitors for *Star Wars: Where Science Meets Imagination* in 2008-09.

“Over at the Art Gallery of NSW, *Picasso: masterpieces from the Musée National Picasso, Paris* has eclipsed its 1988 record with a total 339,321 tickets sold and 331,021 people through the gallery’s gates to see the exhibition.

“Due to Harry Potter’s popularity with young and old alike, the Powerhouse Museum recently extended its Australian run to April 9 while Picasso finishes on Sunday (March 25).

“It should prove an exciting countdown to the closing of each of the exhibitions to see which one will take the top spot as the highest attended special paid exhibition of all time at the two cultural institutions.

“Both these world class shows have been a major tourist drawcard for Sydney with more than 176,000 interstate and international visitors estimated to have taken in Harry Potter and Picasso to date”.

Spread across 1,400 square metres of the museum’s newly refurbished touring exhibition gallery, *Harry Potter: The Exhibition* features hundreds of original film artefacts from what is the world’s highest grossing films series.

It is also the exclusive Asia/Pacific venue for the show and the only venue for the exhibition in the Southern Hemisphere.

“Part of the Sydney International Art Series, the Art Gallery of NSW is the only Australian gallery showing *Picasso: masterpieces from the Musée National Picasso, Paris*.

“The exhibition showcases 150 masterpieces by one of the most influential artists of the 20th century.

“It includes paintings, sculptures, prints and drawings reflecting his various artistic styles over an incredible career spanning seven decades.

“This Saturday night (March 24) the Gallery will stay open until midnight with late viewings of the exhibition and a host of free events.

“I urge those who haven’t yet seen *Harry Potter: The Exhibition* or *Picasso: masterpieces from the Musée National Picasso, Paris* to take advantage of this rare opportunity.

“I congratulate both the Powerhouse Museum and Art Gallery of NSW on their success.”