**Citation – Elizabeth Ann Macgregor AM OBE**

Tuesday, 11 October 2022 – 2.30pm

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Elizabeth Ann Macgregor AM OBE to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) for her outstanding contribution as a world leader of Museums and to contemporary art in Australia and internationally.

Liz Ann holds a Master of Arts in History of Arts Honours from the University of Edinburgh and began her career as curator and driver for the Scottish Arts Council’s travelling gallery. Using a converted bus to take exhibitions to local villages, inner city estates, schools, hospitals and prisons, she discovered her love for introducing new audiences to the work of living artists. After working with the Arts Council of Great Britain, in 1989 she became director of one of the UK’s leading contemporary art galleries, the Ikon Gallery

In 1999, Liz Ann moved to Sydney to take up the directorship of the Museum of Contemporary Art at a time when the Museum was facing great challenges. She held the role until 2021 and transformed the museum into a thriving public gallery with a solid financial foundation, dramatically increased patronage and with artists at its heart. In 2020, the MCA was acknowledged as the highest attended museum of contemporary art in the world, and she was included in the Art Review Power List of the top 100 most influential people in the artworld – the first Australian to be so named.

The 2012 redevelopment of the museum was a crucial part of Liz Ann’s vision of connecting audiences with artists. As well as new galleries for the collection and exhibitions, a series of new commissions put artists centre stage in the building. The MCA’s National Centre for Creative Learning and its continued commitment to outreach programs are critical to her concern for future generations. Her passion for bringing artists work into the wider public arena led her to establish programs not only at Circular Quay but also in Western Sydney and across the state.

Liz Ann has also spearheaded the campaign to develop the MCA’s national and international profile, including a joint acquisition initiative with Tate Modern which has seen many Australian artists, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, not only acquired but exhibited at Tate Modern in London.

Sydney College of the Arts has always enjoyed a very strong connection to the MCA with many academic staff being given major survey exhibitions and included in education programmes. The MCA has also provided opportunities for students to work as preparators and guides as part of their work experience as well as internships. The Institution’s long association with the Power Collection of the University of Sydney saw aspects of that collection curated alongside contemporary art exhibitions at the MCA and collaborations on public programmes.

Liz Ann has received numerous awards for her contribution to the visual arts and was recognised with an Order of the British Empire in the Queen’s 2011 birthday honour list; the Australia Council Visual Arts Medal; the IMAGINE Museums and Galleries NSW Individual Achievement Award, in 2019 was named by the Australian Financial Review as one of Australia’s top 100 Women of Influence and in 2022 was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for her significant service to museums and galleries through leadership roles with arts institutions.

Chancellor, I present Elizabeth Ann Macgregor AM OBE for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) in recognition of her immense contribution to the arts on a global stage.