

# MEDIA RELEASE

13 FEBRUARY 2015

## COMPOSER NAMED NATIONAL LIBRARY'S FIRST CREATIVE ARTS FELLOW

Acclaimed composer Chris Williams has been named the Friends of the National Library of Australia's inaugural Creative Arts Fellow.

The announcement was made by Friends Chair, Robyn Oates, at a special event at the National Library on 13 February to mark the Friends' 25<sup>th</sup> year.

Mr Williams, who recently completed a Masters degree at the University of Oxford, is a graduate of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. In 2012, he was one of only six composers worldwide to be selected by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Master of the Queen's Music, to attend his Advanced Composition course in the UK. His work has been performed in Australia and internationally by ensembles such as The Song Company and the BBC Singers.

Senior Curator at the National Library and Secretary to the NLA's Fellowship Advisory Committee, Robyn Holmes, said although the committee had been overwhelmed by the calibre of the applicants from across many art-forms, Mr Williams' project was outstanding.

Applicants were invited to create a new artistic work using or inspired by the Library's collection.

'Chris's project is *Discovering 'The Desolate Kingdom': exploring the imaginary cultural space of Nigel Butterley's 'lost opera'*,' Ms Holmes said.

'He plans to compose a musical response to this incomplete opera held in Butterley's manuscript papers in our collection for a workshop performance by the Sydney Chamber Opera Company.

'Butterley is amongst the most significant composers of his generation and the opera was originally conceived for the Australian Opera around 1970. Chris's Fellowship project will celebrate the composer's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.'

As the 2015 Creative Arts Fellow, Mr Williams will undertake a four-week residency at the National Library in Canberra and receive \$10,000.

Mr Williams is currently working as a composer in the UK but is expected to take up his fellowship in April. He will give a public presentation on the development of his composition while in Canberra.

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