

**The Spread of Time:
The photography of David Moore**
25 January – 25 May 2003



David Moore, Australia's most renowned and widely travelled photojournalist, died aged 75 on 23 January 2003, two days before the opening of his retrospective at the National Gallery of Australia. His extraordinary and meticulously catalogued archive covers both his homeland and the many countries and subjects he has visited over a sixty year career.

The Spread of Time: The photography of David Moore opened at the Gallery on the Australia Day long weekend and celebrates Moore's achievements and rich legacy. The exhibition includes never before exhibited images and vintage prints, including his earliest self portrait as a school boy as well as one of his last major works - a powerful suite of six black and white prints called *Moon writing* which he made in 2001 by using the moon as the 'torch' to form a script of calligraphic lines of light as he moved his camera across the night sky above his second home in Tasmania.



David Moore at his McMahon's Point home
in 1983
courtesy Heide Smith

Despite ill health Moore spent the latter half of 2002 printing up and assisting in the selection of additional works to bring his already extensive holdings at the Gallery up to date for his first major show at the Gallery. David Moore is one of only a few contemporary photographers represented in the permanent collection by such extensive holdings.

David Moore first became a dedicated and talented teenage photographer courtesy of a box camera given to him when he was eleven by his father, the architect and painter John D. Moore. After service in the navy at the end of World War II, he gained his first professional experience in a commercial advertising studio in Sydney run by Russell Roberts. Then in 1947 Moore gained the placement he had originally hoped for with his preferred mentor Max Dupain who had established his stylish advertising and illustration work studio in Sydney in the mid-1930s and was in the late 1940s re-establishing his practise after service in New Guinea in W.W. II.

Out of hours while working at both his first professional jobs the young David Moore took time to develop his personal documentary work by roaming the city and harbourside in search of a substance and significance not found in studio work and advertising. His best known image from these years is his 1947 photograph of a struggling family in a Redfern slum which was later included in Edward Steichen's famous *Family of Man* photography blockbuster exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1955 (the show came to Australia in 1959).

In 1951 Moore took the brave step of turning down an offer of a junior partnership with Dupain to seek a career in photojournalism