

KEN WHISSON

Born in Lilydale, outside Melbourne, in 1927, Ken Whisson studied at Swinburne Technical College between 1944 and 1945. He received tuition from Danilla Vassilieff in the years 1945 and 1946, providing him with direct contact and influence from the seminal generation of Melbourne expressionists. He takes seriously Albert Tucker's words: 'Painting is, for me, a means of expressing philosophical ideas.'

In 1977 Ken moved permanently to Perugia, Italy, however he has continued to exhibit regularly in Australia, building a significant reputation. In 1987 he was recipient of the Visual Arts Board Emeritus Award for his substantial contribution to Australian Art. His work is represented in all major Australian public collections as well as the British Museum, London and the Chartwell Collection, New Zealand.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2011 Ken Whisson *Paintings and Drawings*, Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 2010 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 2008 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
Ken Whisson, The Australian Club, Melbourne
- 2007 Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 2006 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 2005 Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 2004 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 2003 Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 2002 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 2000 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 1999 Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 1998 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 1997 Richard Salmon Gallery, London
Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 1996 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 1995 Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 1994 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 1993 Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 1992 Pinacotheca, Melbourne
- 1991 Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 1990 *Ken Whisson: A survey*, Pinacotheca, Melbourne and touring
Ken Whisson, 20 Drawings from 1973 to 1993, Cannibal Pierce Galerie Australienne, St. Denis, France
- 1989 Watters Gallery, Sydney
Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1987 *Ken Whisson Paintings 1957–1985*, Broken Hill Art Gallery and touring
- 1986 Watters Gallery, Sydney
312 Lennox Street, Melbourne
- 1985 Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1984 *The Paintings and Drawings of Ken Whisson*, Contemporary Art Society Gallery,
Watters Gallery, Sydney
Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
- 1983 Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane
Pinacotheca, Melbourne
Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 1981 Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 1980 Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane
Watters Gallery, Sydney
Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane
Ken Whisson: Selected Paintings, RMIT Gallery, Melbourne
- 1977 *Ken Whisson*, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery

- 1976 Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane
Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
- 1974 Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
Macquarie Galleries, Canberra
- 1973 Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane
Latrobe Valley Arts Centre, Morwell
- 1972 Gallery A, Melbourne
Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
- 1968 Strines, Melbourne
Chester Beatty Research Institute, London
- 1967 Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
- 1966 Gallery A, Melbourne
- 1965 Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
- 1963 South Yarra Gallery, Melbourne
- 1962 Barry Stern Galleries, Sydney
- 1961 Victorian Artists Society, Melbourne
- 1960 Victorian Artists Society, Melbourne
- 1957 Victorian Artists Society, Melbourne
- 1956 Victorian Artists Society, Melbourne
- 1952 Lower Kozminsky Gallery, Melbourne

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2012 *Blue Chip XIV: The Collectors' Exhibition*, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 2011 *Korea International Art Fair*, Niagara Galleries, COEX, Seoul, Korea
Out of Australia: Prints and Drawings from Sidney Nolan to Rover Thomas, British Museum, London
Heads, Utopia Art Sydney, Sydney
Blue Chip XIII: The Collectors' Exhibition, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 2010 *Freehand: Recent Australian Drawing*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
Korea International Art Fair, COEX, Seoul, Korea
Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne
Blue Chip XII: The Collectors' Exhibition, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 2009 *Making It New: Focus on Contemporary Australian Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
Auckland Art Fair, New Zealand
Step Right Up!, Albury City Art Gallery, New South Wales and The Arts Centre, Melbourne
- 2008 *Order & Dissent: Works from the Heide Collection*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
Rimbaud/Rambo, Neon Park, Melbourne
Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne
- 2007 *Bloodlines: Art and the Horse*, Hawkesbury Regional Gallery, New South Wales and touring
- 2006 *The Fleurieu Art Prize Exhibition*, McLaren Vale, South Australia
Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne
- 2005 *Aerial View: The Reconfiguring of Painting*, Hayward Gallery, London
- 2004 *Artists for Kids Culture: 2005 Annual Art Exhibition and Auction*, Melbourne
Home Sweet Home: Works from the Peter Fay Collection, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
2004 Drawing Biennale, ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra
Penetralia: Art and Psychoanalysis in Melbourne, 1940–2004, RMIT Gallery, Melbourne
- 2003 *Blue Chip V: The Collectors' Exhibition*, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
- 2002 *Melbourne Art Fair*, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne
- 2001 *Blue Chip IV: The Collectors' Exhibition*, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne

- The Sense We Make: Australian Art from the Orica Collection*, The Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne
- Octane: Celebrating 80 Years of the Royal Australian Air Force*, Global Arts Link, Ipswich, Queensland
- 2000 *Melbourne Art Fair*, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne
- 1999 *On the Road: The Car in Australian Art*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
- 1998 *The Laverty Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
- 1997 *The Urban Edge: Historical and Contemporary Works from the Queensland Art Gallery Collection*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
- A Face in the Crowd*, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
- 1996 *Hidden Treasures 11: Art in Corporate Collections*, S H Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 1995 *Summer 95–96*, Watters Gallery, Sydney
- 1994 *Drawing on Inspiration*, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney
- 1993 *Works from the Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Brisbane
- 1992 *Contemporary Australian Drawings from the Collection*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney and touring
- 1991 *Cross Currents: Contemporary New Zealand and Australian Art in the Chartwell Collection*, Waikato Museum of Art & History, Hamilton, New Zealand
- Her Story: Images of Domestic Labour in Australian Art*, S H Ervin Gallery, Sydney
- 1990 *Harbour Hymns, City Songs; Visions of Sydney from the Collection*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Art on the Campus*, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, Sydney
- Gallery 5, Vidal, Venice, Italy
- 1989 *Prints and Australia: Pre-settlement to Present*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- Joseph Brown Collection*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1988 *Creating Australia: 200 Years of Art*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide and ICCA
- Seventeen Australian Artists*, Gallery 5, Vidal, Venice, Italy
- The Great Australian Art Exhibition 1788–1988*, touring all state galleries
- Drawing in Australia from 1770s to 1980s*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
- 1987 *Painters and Sculptors: Diversity in Contemporary Art*, Queensland Art Gallery and Museum of Modern Art, Saitama, Japan
- Contemporary Art in Australia – A Review*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Brisbane
- 1984 *The Australians*, CDS Gallery, New York
- 1983 *Twelve Australian Painters*, Western Australian Art Gallery, Perth and Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
- Some Recent Australian Works on Paper*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Recent Australian Painting: A Survey, 1970–1983*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
- 1982 *Australian Painting and Sculpture 1956–1981*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of the National Australia Bank*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
- 1981 *Australian Perspecta 1981*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- Some Australian Drawings 1880–1980*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
- 1978 *Pemandangan alam dan Khayal/Landscape and Image: A Selection of Australian Art of the 1970s*, touring Indonesia

COLLECTIONS

Allen Allen & Hemsley, Sydney
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
 Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Victoria
 Bathurst Art Gallery, New South Wales
 British Museum, London
 Broken Hill Art Gallery, New South Wales
 Burnie Art Gallery, Tasmania
 Centre for Contemporary Art, New Zealand
 Chartwell Collection, Auckland Art Gallery, Toi o Tamaki, Auckland, New Zealand

Dalby Regional Art Gallery, Queensland
Kedumba Gallery, New South Wales
Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria
Heide Museum of Modern Art, Victoria
Latrobe Valley Arts Centre, Victoria
Leeuwin Estate, Western Australia
McClelland Art Gallery, Victoria
Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney
Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre, New South Wales
National Australia Bank, Sydney
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales
NRMA, Sydney
Orange Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales
Parliament House, Canberra
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane
Singleton Municipality, Queensland
Southern Cross University Art Museum, Queensland
State Bank
Sydney College of Advanced Education, New South Wales
Sydney University, New South Wales
Te Papa Tangarewa, Museum of New Zealand, Wellington
University Art Museum, Queensland
University of New England, New South Wales
University of New South Wales, Sydney
Warrnambool Art Gallery, Victoria
Private collections, Australia and overseas

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

CATALOGUES/BOOKS

Blue Chip XIV: The Collectors' Exhibition, exhibition catalogue, Niagara Publishing, 2012
Ken Whisson: Paintings and Drawings, exhibition catalogue, Watters Gallery, 2011
Linda Michael, *Freehand: Recent Australian Drawing*, exhibition catalogue, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2010
Stephen Coppel, *Out of Australia: Prints and Drawings from Sidney Nolan to Rover Thomas*, exhibition catalogue, British Museum, London
Blue Chip XIII: The Collectors' Exhibition, exhibition catalogue, Niagara Publishing, 2011
Ken Whisson, exhibition catalogue, Niagara Publishing, 2010
John McDonald, 'Ken Whisson' *The Australian Club Exhibitions Volume 1*, The Australian Club, Melbourne, 2010
Blue Chip XII: The Collectors' Exhibition, exhibition catalogue, Niagara Publishing, 2010
Bettina MacAulay and Brett Adlington, *Twelve Degrees of Latitude: Regional Gallery and University Art Collections in Queensland*, exhibition catalogue, Museum and Gallery Services Queensland Limited, Brisbane 2009
Glen Barkley, *Making it New: Focus on Contemporary Australian Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2009
Greg O'Brien, 'This thing the brush does', *Making it New: Focus on Contemporary Australian Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2009
Step Right Up!, exhibition catalogue, Albury City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 2009
Order & Dissent, exhibition catalogue, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2008
The John McCaughey Memorial Prize: 50 Years, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2008
Peter Fay, 'Freshly dropped dung', and Glenn Barkley, 'A Game of dreams within dreams', *Bloodlines: Art and the Horse*, Hawkesbury Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 2007
Barbara Flynn (ed.), *Emerge and Review: A Look into the UBS Australian Art Collection*, UBS,

Sydney, 2007
 Gael Ramsay and Gordon Morrison, *Ballarat Fine Art Gallery: Highlights from the Collection*, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Victoria, 2006
 Jingzhe Li, *Australian Contemporary Painting: The Classic Work of 42 Excellent Artists*, Shanghai People's Fine Arts Publishing House, China, 2006
 Gina Lee, 'Ken Whisson', *2004 Drawing Biennale*, ANU Drill Hall Gallery, Canberra, 2004
Ken Whisson: Paintings 1947–1999 with Writings and Talks by the Artist, Niagara Publishing, 2001
 Laura Murray Cree and Nevill Drury, *Australian Painting Now*, Craftsman House, 2000
 Christopher Allen, *Art in Australia from Colonization to Post-modernism*, Thames & Hudson, 1997
 Alan McCulloch, revised by Susan McCulloch, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Art*, Allen & Unwin, 1994
 Nevill Drury, *Images 2: Contemporary Australian Painting*, Craftsman House, 1994
 Mary Eagle and John Jones, *A Story of Australian Painting*, Macmillan, 1994
 Peter and Susan Ward, *A Different Light: Australian Artists Working in Italy*, University of Queensland Press, 1991
 John McDonald, 'Ken Whisson and the life of forms', *Ken Whisson: A Survey*, Pinacotheca, 1990
 K Shepherd, 'A soldier at war with the picture', *Ken Whisson, 20 Drawings from 1973–1989*, Cannibal Pierce Galerie Australienne, St Denis, France, 1990
 Daniel Thomas, *Creating Australia: 200 Years of Art 1788–1988*, ICCA and Art Gallery of South Australia, 1988
 Tony Bond, 'Ken Whisson', *Twelve Australian Painters*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, 1983
 Robert Lindsay, 'Notes on the artists and their works', *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, National Gallery of Victoria, 1982
 Richard Haese, *An Introduction to the Core Collection*, Heide Park and Art Gallery, 1981
 Kym Bonython, *Modern Australian Painting 1950–1975*, Rigby, 1980
 Rosalie Gasgoigne, *Ken Whisson: Selected Paintings*, RMIT Gallery, 1978

ARTICLES/REVIEWS

John McDonald, 'Asian Contemporary Artists: Ken Whisson', *Art in Asia: 2010 KIAF Preview*, September – October, 2010
 John McDonald, 'Collector's dossier: Ken Whisson's cult status', *Australian Art Collector*, issue 54, October – December 2010
 Joe Frost, 'Ken Whisson, Between psyche and spirit', *Artist Profile*, issue 10, 2010
 John McDonald, 'Stitch in time for imagination' *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2009
 Courtney Kidd, 'A disciplined eye', *Australian Art Collector*, issue 47, January – March 2009
 Michael Reid, 'The Art Oracle', *The Age*, 14 June 2008
 Ashley Crawford, '50 of Australia's most collectable artists', *Australian Art Collector*, issue 43, January – March 2008
 Ian Findlay, 'Ken Whisson at Niagara Galleries', *Asian Art News*, November 2004
 Sebastian Smee, 'Don't fence me in', *The Weekend Australian*, 6 November 2004
 Jeff Makin, 'Click age... bits, bytes and beauties', *The Herald Sun*, 18 October 2004
 Sasha Grishin, 'Exciting but is it drawing?', *The Canberra Times*, 26 July 2004
 Joe Frost and John Bokor, 'Artist's questionnaire – Ken Whisson', *A Public of Individuals*, November-December 2002
 Jeff Makin, 'Images picking up pace', *The Herald Sun*, 18 November 2002
 Timothy Morrell, '50 most collectable artists', *Australian Art Collector*, Issue 19, March 2002
 Steve Tonkin, 'The edge of recognition', *Artonview*, Issue 23, Spring 2000
 Peter Timms, 'Portraits and pleasure', *The Age*, 4 November 1998
 John McDonald, 'Along the path to understanding', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 October, 1995
 Robert Rooney, 'Abstractions of a political landscape', *The Australian*, 29 October 1994
 Christopher Heathcote, 'Following a bright vanguard', *The Age*, 26 October 1994
 Sonia Harford, 'Reflections from happy exile', *The Age*, 26 October 1994
 John Barbour, 'Ken Whisson', *Art Monthly*, June 1987
 Carolyn Barnes, 'Ken Whisson – Paintings 1957–85', *Art & Australia*, vol.25, no.2 1987
 Michael Wardell, 'Ken Whisson: St. Kilda to Perugia', *Art & Australia*, vol.22, no.2 1984
 Elwyn Lynne, 'Letter from Australia', *Art International*, vol. XXV/3–34, 1982
 Gary Catalano, *The Years of Hope: Australian Art & Criticism 1959–1968*, Oxford University Press, 1980

Gary Catalano, 'Ken Whisson and His World', *Aspect*, vol.3, no.4 1978
James Mollison, 'The Australian Collection', *Art & Australia*, vol.14, nos 3,4 1977
Keith Looby, 'Ken Whisson', *Art & Australia*, vol.13, no.4 1976
Alan McCulloch, 'Scream in the Space Age', *The Herald*, Melbourne, 31 August 1966
Robert Hughes, 'Troublesome Melbourne', *Nation*, 2 June 1962