

LIST OF WORKS AND CATALOGUE NOTES

RICK AMOR (born 1948)

Rick Amor studied at the Caulfield Institute of Art and the National Gallery School in Melbourne. Amor's first solo exhibition of paintings was with Joseph Brown Gallery in 1974 and he has continued to exhibit annually since then. Widely acknowledged as perhaps the best figurative artist working in Australia at this time, his work is keenly sought by collectors and institutions. In 2004, the National Gallery of Australia acquired a major bronze sculpture, *The dog* 2004, which is now sited in the sculpture garden. Amor's outstanding success as a contemporary artist is testament to his ability to combine painting, sculpture and printmaking in a continuous exploration of his themes. In 2005, the McClelland Gallery held a significant survey of Amor's works which was accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue and a retrospective exhibition is currently being organised by Heide Museum of Modern Art in Melbourne. A major monograph, *Rick Amor: The Solitary Watcher*, published in 2001 by the Miengunyah Press has sold out and a new monograph by Gavin Fry is expected in 2008.

Literature/Further reading

Ashley Crawford, '50 Most Collectable Artists', *Australian Art Collector*, iss.39, 2006
Robert Lindsay, *Rick Amor: Standing in the Shadows*, McClelland Art Gallery, Melbourne, 2005
Rodney James, *Rick Amor: The Sea*, Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Victoria, 2002
Gary Catalano, *The Solitary Watcher: Rick Amor and his Art*, The Miengunyah Press, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2001
Gary Catalano, *Building a Picture: Interviews with Australian Artists*, McGraw Hill, Melbourne, 1997

6 **The silent east II** 2006

oil on canvas
81 x 162cm
signed lower left: Rick Amor 06
inscribed verso: The silent east II/ 81 x 162/ May 06

Provenance

The artist

8 **Maquette I for Relic** 2006

bronze, edition of 3 plus 1 AP
50 x 17.5 x 15.5cm
inscribed: R. Amor 06 AP

9 **Maquette II for Relic** 2006

bronze, edition of 3 plus 1 AP
50.5 x 16 x 15cm
inscribed: R. Amor 06 AP

Provenance

The artist

Exhibited

The full-scale version of this work was first exhibited at Niagara Galleries, Melbourne in September 2006.

These most recent sculptures by Amor exemplify the artist's concerns with the decay of civilisation or vanitas; that beauty and life is fleeting and when man has passed, the earth will remain. *Relic* is fashioned after a figure from antiquity. Part-man, part-beast, the canine features draw parallels to several ancient mythologies, yet remain resolutely of our own time. Amor's expressive modelling of the clay shows the touch of the artist, like a brush stroke in oil paint, but instead the gouging marks of the thumb. The first maquette was cast from an original clay model, but when the mould was removed, the clay model had broken down from the pressure of the mould-making process. The result was a damaged version of the original which so intrigued the artist that he had another mould made of this decayed model. Thus we have *Maquette I* and *Maquette II* essentially cast from the same original. In what some may have seen as a ruined model, Amor saw an indication of the human condition. Individually they are strong pieces, but together, it could be said that they gain exponential strength.

RALPH BALSON (1890–1964)

Ralph Balson was born in England and migrated to Australia in 1913. From the age of twelve he made his living as a house painter, work he continued in Australia and throughout his career as an artist. He first studied art around 1922, undertaking night classes at the Julian Ashton School. He met Grace Crowley and became involved with the Crowley-Fizelle School as well as the Modern Art Centre in Sydney during the 1930s. In 1960, Balson travelled to New York, London and Paris, his first time outside Australia since migrating in 1913. In Paris a show of his paintings was organised for Galerie R. Creuze. Balson's legacy to abstraction lives on in the collections of all major state galleries.

Literature/Further reading

Bruce Adams, *Ralph Balson: A Retrospective*, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, 1989
Ralph Balson 1890–1964, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, 1989

40 **(Non-objective painting)** 1955

oil on composition board
62.5 x 75cm
signed and dated lower right: R Balson/55
inscribed verso: TOP

Provenance

Gallery A, Sydney
Peter Powditch, Sydney
Private collection, Sydney

Related works

This is an early work from Balson's *Non-objective* series of paintings. Important related works from the series include *Non-objective painting* 1958 in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, *Non-objective painting* 1959 in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia and *Painting no.9* 1959 in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Notes

An abandoned painting is visible on the reverse side.

CLARICE BECKETT (1887–1935)

Born in Melbourne in 1887, Clarice Beckett is renowned for her atmospheric paintings of dawn and dusk. Studying under Max Meldrum, she quickly gained a reputation as a spirited and independent artist, eschewing the standard studio practice in favour of plein air painting. She held ten solo exhibitions at the Atheneum Gallery, Melbourne yet received little acclaim for her unique views of modern Melbourne, and her reputation lay dormant for many years after her death in 1935. In 1999, a significant touring retrospective *Clarice Beckett: Politically Incorrect*, curated by biographer Ros Hollinrake at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, re-ignited considerable interest in her practice. Her work is held in all major state and regional gallery collections including the National Gallery of Australia.

Literature/Further reading

Clarice Beckett 1887–1935, Niagara Publishing, Melbourne, 2000

Clarice Beckett: *Politically Incorrect*, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, 1999
Rosalind Hollinrake, *Clarice Beckett: The Artist and Her Circle*, Macmillan, Melbourne, 1979

19 **Across the cliff** c.1928

oil on board
29 x 39cm
inscribed verso: Across the cliff/ £8 8/-

Provenance

HR Mangan
Rosalind Humphries Gallery, Melbourne
Private collection, Melbourne

20 **Across the water, Beaumaris** c.1930

oil on board
29 x 39cm
label of authenticity verso, signed by HR Mangan, sister of the artist

Provenance

HR Mangan
Rosalind Humphries Gallery, Melbourne
Private collection, Melbourne

PADDY BEDFORD (born c.1922)

(Represented by Jirrawun Arts, Western Australia)

Growing up and working on the Bedford Downs station in the Eastern Kimberley, Paddy Bedford only began painting on canvas in 1997. As a senior law man in his community, he has had a very long and active involvement with the visual and spiritual culture of his people. He paints the turkey, emu, cockatoo dreamings of his mother's and father's country and the land where he lives. In recent years, his style has become more minimal but often painted with a startling palette of contrasting, strident colours. A major solo exhibition and monograph was organised by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney in 2006 and he was commissioned by the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris to produce works for their inauguration.

Literature/Further reading

Paddy Bedford, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2006

Paddy Bedford: *Walking the Line*, Kununurra, 2003

Blood on the Spinifex, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2002

45 **Untitled** 2003

gouache on acid-free crescent board
51 x 76cm
William Mora gallery stamp and label verso

Provenance

William Mora Galleries, Melbourne
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

William Mora Galleries, Melbourne, December 2003

Reference

Paddy Bedford, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2006, illustrated in index of works – number PB WB 2003.97, p.171

Related works

Numerous related works from this series are detailed and discussed in the monograph published by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

STEPHEN BENWELL (born 1953)

Benwell is first and foremost a ceramicist, his practice rooted in the decorative arts. But within this he has developed a flourishing vocabulary of painterly and sculptural techniques. This has been one of the hallmarks of his career which has spanned more than three decades. The continual improvisation he has performed with the possibilities of his medium has seen his work receive national and international recognition. Examples of his ceramics are held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia, all state galleries and at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. He received a Masters in Fine Arts from Monash University in 2005 and is currently studying for his PhD. In 2006, Stephen participated in exhibitions in the USA, Germany and Australia, and work in *A Secret History of Blue and White* is currently touring Vietnam and Asia.

Literature/Further reading

Craft from scratch: 8 Triennale (Australia and Germany), Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt, 2000

Stephen Rainbird, *Selected Australian Works*, Queensland University of Technology Art Collection, 1995

Grace Cochrane, *The Crafts Movement in Australia: A History*, NSW University Press, Sydney, 1992

Joe Pascoe, *Stephen Benwell and David Potter: Survey Exhibition*, Shepparton Art Gallery, 1989
Daniel Thomas (ed.), *Creating Australia 200 Years of Art: 1788–1988*, International Cultural Corporation of Australia, Art Gallery Board of South Australia, 1988
John McPhee, *Australian Decorative Arts in the Australian National Gallery*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1982

55 **Vase** 1985

porcelain with underglaze painting
38.5 x 21.5 x 21.5cm
signed underneath: S Benwell '85

Provenance

Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Maya Behn Gallery, Zurich

Notes

This work was handbuilt in Lile, France during a twelve month residency. The work is made from earthenware using a spotted clay purchased in Paris with which the artist particularly liked to work.

CHARLES BLACKMAN (born 1928)

Studying at East Sydney Technical College from 1943 to 1946, Blackman moved to Melbourne in the late-1940s to join what he perceived as a more lively and creative artistic milieu. It was there that he met John Reed, who promoted Blackman's work through his network of personal connections. In 1960, Blackman won the Helena Rubenstein Scholarship and travelled to England. The National Gallery of Victoria held a major retrospective exhibition of his work in 1993 and in 2006 they presented an exhibition of his *Alice in Wonderland* series.

Literature/Further reading

Felicity St John Moore, *Charles Blackman: Schoolgirls and Angels*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1993

Thomas Shapcott, *The Art of Charles Blackman*, Andre Deutsch Limited, London, 1989

- 3 **In the gloaming** c.1953
oil on canvas on board
49 x 74.5cm
signed lower right: Blackman

Provenance

Barbara Blackman
Private collection, Sydney (acquired from above in c.1980)

The late-1940s and very start of the 1950s was a time of expansion and learning for Charles Blackman. He travelled between Melbourne and Brisbane meeting a number of poets and artists, including Barbara Patterson, a young poet and his future wife. He was influenced by a wide variety of literary and artistic sources including Sidney Nolan and Arthur Rimbaud. This period of intense engagement gave way to his first mature body of paintings around 1952. They were dark, psychological and surreal.

In the gloaming c.1953 portrays a beachscape, but its colours are far from the radiant imagery of golden sand and bronzed skin. This painting is small, dark and intense. The figures that populate the work are asymmetric shadows, their identity unknown. The beach is a sandy peach colour, providing an intense contrast to the dark blues of the shadow. This colouration is both one of romance and of danger. An eerie combination.

The colour used in this painting is almost identical to that of Blackman's *Schoolgirls* series. The stylised shadow figures on the beach are also related closely to the schoolgirl motif. This work almost certainly provided the stylistic and technical nucleus for the *Schoolgirls* series and much of his art that followed. Shapcott writes that, 'these haunted, inward, dangerously clumsy and stylised inventions became a source of power and reference that was to be pivotal in the young artist's career.'^(pp.9–10)

In the gloaming is, in many ways, a companion piece to *Razzle Dazzle* by *Moonlight* c.1953 (pl. 21 Shapcott). It appears that the location is similar, if not the same.

BERNARD BOLES (1912–2001)

Painter, sculptor, organiser, letter-writer, critic and non-conformist to the core, Bernard Boles is best known as a pioneer of surrealist art in Australia.

Boles studied art at Melbourne Technical College and by 1936 critics Adrian Lawlor and Arnold Shore had commented on the surreal themes in his work. He left for London at the end of the war to continue his studies. In the UK he organised lecture tours and an exhibition of Henry Moore sculpture that toured all Australian states. Returning to Melbourne in 1949, he staged his first solo exhibition on board the tourist boat *Fairyland*, which he moored next to Princes Bridge. He returned to London shortly after and remained for sixteen years. Back in Australia, in 1964, he became art critic for the radical weekly *Nation Review*, where his reviews were iconoclastic and often controversial.

Literature/Further reading

Bruce James, *Australian Surrealism: The Agapitos/Wilson Collection*, Beagle Press, Sydney, 2003

Pam Gullifer, *Aspects of the Unreal: Australian Surrealism 1930s – 1950s*, Geelong Art Gallery, Geelong, 1983

Survey Exhibition 1950–1980, exhibition catalogue, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, 1983

- 33 **Seaside Sunday** 1945
gouache and watercolour on paper
36.5 x 48cm
signed lower left: BOLES

Exhibited

Bernard Boles, a solo exhibition arranged by the artist on board *Fairyland*, a tourist boat moored by Princes Bridge, Melbourne, 1949

Bernard Boles, Surreal & Metaphysical Paintings 1936–1946, Niagara Galleries Melbourne, 16 Apr – 5 May 1982, cat.19

Australian Surrealist Paintings, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, 5 Oct – 8 Nov 1991, cat.4

Provenance

Corporate collection, Sydney
C20, Sydney
Private collection, Melbourne

Typical of Boles' work of the 1940s, *Seaside Sunday* is confidently painted in ink and gouache in fresh, jewel-like colours. Its two biomorphic figures, reminiscent of sailors on a promenade, are set in a shallow space that suggests a theatrical set. In his catalogue notes to *Aspects of the Unreal – Australian Surrealism 1930s–1950s* (Geelong Art Gallery, 1983), WJ Pascoe suggests that Boles' 1940s beach scenes were a surreal reply to Sydney Charm School painting of the mid-1940s, with the 'nuances of ballet décor...echo(ing) the Russian ballet whom Boles had sketched at their rehearsals in 1938'. Its companion piece, *Going for a swim* 1945, is in the Agapitos/Wilson Collection of Australian Surrealism. In 1955 Boles revisited the subject to produce a monumental version in oils, which was shown in his second survey exhibition at Niagara Galleries in 1983.

Boles is an unduly neglected Australian surrealist, and *Seaside Sunday* is a significant work in his oeuvre with a distinguished exhibition history.

PETER BOOTH (born 1940)

(Represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne;
Rex Irwin Gallery, Sydney)

Born in Sheffield, England, Booth began his art studies at Sheffield College of Art in 1956. After emigrating to Australia, he studied at the National Gallery School between 1962 and 1965. Between 1966 and 1986, Booth taught at Prahran Technical College, the National Gallery School and the Victorian College of the Arts. Along with Rosalie Gascoigne, he was the Australian representative at the Venice Biennale in 1981. An important major survey exhibition of Booth's work was curated by Jason Smith for the National Gallery of Victoria in 2003.

Literature/Further reading

Jason Smith, *Peter Booth: Human/Nature*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne 2003

Peter Booth: Works on Paper 1963–1985, University Gallery, University of Melbourne, Victoria, 1985

Gary Catalano, *Australia: Venice Biennale 1982 – Works by Peter Booth and Rosalie Gascoigne*, Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, Sydney, 1982

- 4 **Painting no.1** 1984
oil on canvas
183 x 305cm
inscribed verso: BOOTH 1984 U.V

Provenance

Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Pinacotheca, Melbourne, 1985 cat.1

During the first half of the 1970s, Peter Booth had gained a reputation as an important abstract painter. His minimal canvases were giant doorway-like rectangles of impenetrable black. Towards the end of the 1970s, his dark, textured, abstract surfaces gave way to a shock of colour and eventually strange symbolic figures and landscapes. As if frustrated by the psychological potential for his minimal abstraction, Booth allowed an apocalyptic world to emerge.

This painting was completed in 1984, some six or seven years after Booth's break into figuration. It is in many respects a classic landscape painting. It can be divided into a fore, middle and back ground. But instead of shrubs, trees and ragged mountains, Booth presents us with a wild and threatening vision. Large pointed shapes jump at the viewer, their violent bodies the only thing to populate the abandoned flat lands of the middle ground. In the distance, mountains are silhouetted with dramatic yellow and red outlining, colours that dominate the picture. The whole image, the landscape presented, is completely engulfed by flames.

This painting is of similar subject and dimensions as *Painting*, 1984 in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne and *Painting*, 1984 in the collection of the Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, New York. This painting is a major work from a pivotal time in the development of Booth's oeuvre.

PAUL BOSTON (born 1952)

Studying at Preston Institute of Technology in the late-1960s, Boston set his own path by travelling through Asia in the mid-1970s. During this period he developed an ongoing interest in Eastern mysticism. When he returned to Melbourne in 1980 he began producing paintings and reliefs that had a distinct style, a unique vision in the Australian art world. His first solo exhibition at Reconnaissance Gallery in 1983 began a

long and distinguished period of exhibiting. His work features in numerous public collections, he has been the recipient of many awards including the John McCaughey Memorial Art Prize in 1991 and the Mornington Peninsula Works on Paper Award in 2004.

Literature/Further reading

Roger Taylor, 'Engaging the world', *Asian Art News*, March 2001

Laura Murray Cree and Neville Drury, *Australian Painting Now*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 2000
Gary Catalano, 'A culture like nature: an interview with Paul Boston', *Art Monthly Australia*, no.62, 1993

- 49 **Blue painting I** 1987
oil on canvas
197.5 x 167cm
inscribed verso: Paul Boston/ 1987/ Blue Painting/ I

Provenance

Tony Oliver at Verity Street Gallery, Melbourne
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Group Show, David McKee Gallery, New York, 1988
Tony Oliver at Verity Street Gallery, Melbourne, 1989
The Sublime Imperative, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 1991

Paul Boston's paintings are intuitive meditations on being. His paintings are initially guided by subjectivity and feeling. The painterly concerns of line, colour, texture and shape are decided with this process. But his paintings are also philosophical abstractions. They are discussions or propositions about the esoteric realms of the possibility of experiencing and living in the world.

Blue painting I presents a combination of abstract and figurative elements. Building-like and cloud-like forms jostle with an arrow, sphere, curve and square. Areas of shadow give way to concrete lines. There is a confusion of depth and space in the picture. There is an ambiguity about what connects with what. This is in fact a conceptual diagram. It illustrates the way elements of our world – the things we live with and through – might have an unknowable link. The painting presents a world of real ambiguity. It concentrates the viewer on the ungraspable and elusive elements of our life.

This painting was first exhibited in a group exhibition at David McKee Gallery in New York, and was later included in Boston's solo exhibition at Verity Street Gallery in Melbourne. It was one of three large paintings from a series, which also included a number of related works on paper.

JOHN BRACK (1920–1999)

John Brack produced some of the most recognisable images of Australian art. The iconic *5 o'clock Collins St.* is certainly a centrepiece of the National Gallery of Victoria's Australian collection. Brack both studied and taught at the National Gallery School and was Head of Art at Melbourne Grammar School. A large number of retrospective exhibitions and survey shows of his work have been mounted including the National Gallery of Victoria (1971, 1987), RMIT Gallery (1971), Monash University of Art (1981) and the National Gallery of Australia (1999). His work is included in all state gallery collections, regional galleries and the National Gallery of Australia.

Literature/Further reading

Robert Lindsay, *The Nude in the Art of John Brack*, McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park, Melbourne, 2006
Ted Gott, *A Question of Balance: John Brack 1974–1994*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2000
Sasha Grishin, *The Art of John Brack*, vols I & II, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1990
Robert Lindsay, *John Brack: A Retrospective Exhibition*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne 1987

- 27 **Seated nude** 1970
conté crayon on paper
71 x 50cm
signed lower right: John Brack 70

Provenance

The Estate of John Brack

The nude is a perennial subject in western art. Drawing the nude is where drafting skills, like the models themselves, are laid bare. Brack had a particular way of presenting his nudes which were contrary to the sensuous, exotic tradition of opulent furnishings and draped poses. In stark, domestic settings, his nudes were awkwardly positioned against everyday furniture.

Millar discusses Brack's approach:

...in the matter-of-fact suburbanism of the Brack domestic surroundings it occurred to the painter that here once more was chance to score several visual points at once. Any notion of making these girls into an erotic symbol or vision of sexual loveliness was out of the question. Brack would explore the nakedness instead of the nudeness. (p.70)

Seated nude was created in 1970, probably at the same time as a group of other conté crayon works which were studies for later oil paintings. The model in this work is undoubtedly the same model as for *Mauve nude*, 1970. The 1970 nudes, both the drawings and the oils, were somehow softer, more subtle than those of previous series. There is still a complete absence of eroticism and the model is placed sitting alone in an almost empty room. The rug is a strong compositional device, the diagonal placement seeming to dictate the direction of the sitter.

A survey of Brack's nudes at McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park is current until 25 March 2007.

- 29 **An amateur couple** 1969
watercolour, pen and ink on paper
43 x 59.5cm
signed lower left: John Brack 69

Provenance

Private collection, Queensland

Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney, April 1970

Desborough Galleries, Perth, Jan – Feb 1974

John Brack: A Retrospective Exhibition, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1987

References

Robert Lindsay, *John Brack: A Retrospective Exhibition*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne 1987
pl.169

Sasha Grishin, *The Art of John Brack*, volume II, Oxford University Press, Australia, 1990, pl.127

Brack's poignant ballroom dancing series was begun in 1968. Thirty-two works later, in 1969, the series was complete and exhibited at Rudy Komon Gallery in Sydney in 1970. Brack had researched the subject since 1967, even attending the World Ballroom Dancing

Championships in Melbourne and subscribing to *The Australasian Dancing Times*. Brack used photographs from newspapers and magazines as source documentation remaining surprisingly faithful to the image in both subject and composition. All of the details in the paintings were researched thoroughly to ensure that the dancers were represented with the greatest authenticity.

Ballroom dancing is a reality far removed from the monotonous grind of daily life of the workers in *5 o'clock Collins Street*. In the ballroom, the world is not drab or dreary, but glamorous and fantastic. The task at hand may not be a mundane office job, but the forced smiles, excruciating poses and superficial pleasantness are just as soul-destroying. The characters are captured at a moment frozen in time where their anguish and personal tragedies are stripped away and all that is left is the artifice.

Grishin explains:

This was the most extensive and ambitious series of work he had attempted up to that date and was intended as the culmination to a number of concerns that had preoccupied him for almost twenty years. By using the theme of professional ballroom dancing as a visual parable that could be interpreted to stand for life itself and the whole tragedy of the human condition Brack consciously placed himself in the tradition of painters such as Goya and Münch, who also used the theme of dance as an allegory for the dance of life.

This watercolour is one of only seven in the entire series. It has been widely reproduced and is regarded as one of the best in the series.

ANGELA BRENNAN (born 1960)

Born in Ballarat, Victoria, Brennan studied painting at RMIT between 1979 and 1981. In 1988 she expanded her studies by pursuing philosophy at the University of Melbourne, completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1992. Brennan continues to add to her repertoire of styles, which include minimal, floating, organic forms; complex layered grids; text paintings; portraits; interiors and landscapes. Her work was included in the exhibition *Good Vibrations: The Legacy of Op Art in Australia*, at Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne and in 2006 she was the subject of a major survey

exhibition at Monash Museum of Art, *Every Morning I Wake Up on the Wrong Side of Capitalism*. Her work is included in major public collections throughout Australia and overseas.

Literature/Further reading

Max Delany, Lizzy Newman, Amanda Rowell, Judith Pascale, *Angela Brennan: Every Morning I Wake Up on the Wrong Side of Capitalism*, exhibition catalogue, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2006
Amanda Rowell, 'Angela Brennan: Text Paintings', *Heat*, No.10, New Series, Sydney, 2005

Ashley Crawford, 'Angela Brennan: peas cooked the Roman way', *The Sunday Age*, 4 April 2004

Donald Williams, *In Our Own Image: The Story of Australian Art*, Fourth Edition, McGraw Hill, Sydney, 2001

Laura Murray-Cree and Nevill Drury, *Australian Painting Now*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 2000

Stuart Koop, 'The failure of modernism and the painting of Angela Brennan', *Art and Australia*, vol.34, no.2, 1996

- 57 **Naming the sensation (blue)** 2001
oil on linen
183 x 153cm
signed lower left: Angela Brennan 2000
inscribed verso: Angela Brennan/ 2000/ oil/linen

Provenance

Private collection, Melbourne

Naming the sensation (blue) takes up much more space than the dimensions given, as it explodes forth from the canvas into at least a third dimension. The modernist grid is metaphorically blown away, and we can see a supernova of new life forming before us. Fluorescent colours dart and weave across the surface, searching for somewhere or someone to settle upon. As we struggle to find words to name the sensation we experience in this work - exuberance, excitement, urgency, spontaneity, anxiety, aggression, love, life – Brennan has chosen a colour to express all these thoughts. Her name for the sensation is blue. Wittgenstein's theory of private language, comprehensible only to its originator, could well be proven in this painting.

GUNTER CHRISTMANN (born 1936)

Gunter Christmann's career has spanned more than three decades since he arrived in Sydney, from Berlin, in 1959. He has produced an extensive body of work, creating paintings that traverse stylistic boundaries. Initially associated with the Central Street Gallery in Sydney in the 1960s, he has continued to produce abstract paintings alongside more representational pieces. Christmann was included in the groundbreaking exhibition *The Field* at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1968 and the XI Bienal of Sao Paulo in 1971. Since then, his work has been included in a number of important Australian exhibitions such as *Perspecta '81* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales; *Vox Pop* at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1983; and the *Joan and Peter Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Australian Art*, by invitation, held at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1996. He has participated in notable solo and group exhibitions in London, Berlin, Paris and San Francisco. His work is significantly represented in the National Gallery of Australia collection, with Christmann being regarded as one of the true geniuses of Australian painting, by former NGA Director, James Mollison. His work is included in European public collections in Germany, Netherlands and the former Yugoslavia. He is represented in all major state and regional gallery collections of Australia and numerous private and corporate collections in Australia and overseas.

Literature/Further reading

Christopher Heathcote, Bernard Smith and Terry Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–2000*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2001

Joan and Peter Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Australian Art, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1996

Australian Perspecta, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1981

Elwyn Lynn, 'Gunter Christmann', *Art & Australia*, vol.10, no.3, 1973

- 28 **Diagonal composition** 1966
oil on hardboard
122 x 122cm

Provenance

Collection of the artist
Niagara Galleries, Melbourne

Exhibited

Central Street Gallery, Sydney, 1966
Gunter Christmann, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, 1992 cat.2

Reference

Bernard Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1970*, Oxford University Press p.437 (illus.)

Gunter Christmann, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne 1992 (illus.)

Central Street Gallery was opened in 1965 in Sydney. It was a hub for new directions in abstract art. Although short lived, closing in 1970, many of its artists went on to have long and varied careers. Many of the artists represented in *The Field* exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1968 were drawn from those exhibiting at Central Street Gallery. It represented the avant-garde of Sydney abstraction in the later 1960s.

Diagonal Composition, 1966 was exhibited in Gunter Christmann's first solo exhibition held at the Central Street Gallery in 1966. It reveals an interest in a more optical and European style of abstraction than the classic colour-field style paintings produced by other artists represented at the gallery. In the introduction to his 1992 exhibition, Christmann comments on the distinctive influences found in this work:

The European tradition of geometric abstraction as in Mondrian, Bill, Vantangerloo etc. these were the influences that put me on track. The American influences as with Mark Tobey and Mark Rothko came only after 1970. In 1966 I saw my work as GEOMETRIC ABSTRACTION, in the European tradition.

The emphasis that Christmann puts on the European source of influence is important, for so much of the Australian hard-edge and colour-field abstraction of the period was exclusively influenced by American and English precedents. Christmann's knowledge and application of an European tradition makes this paintings a rare and important example of an alternative tradition of abstraction to the Greenbergian formalism so notorious during this time.

WILLIAM DELAFIELD COOK (born 1936)

(Represented by Rex Irwin Fine Art, Sydney)

Dividing his time between Australia and the United Kingdom, William Delafield Cook is widely recognised for his almost photographic paintings, mainly of landscapes. He studied painting at RMIT in Melbourne between 1953 and 1955. Soon after he travelled to London. He had intended to stay for one year, but he eventually settled permanently in the United Kingdom. His work moved from an interest in abstraction towards his mature realist style, influenced by photographers such as William Henry Fox Talbot. Still actively painting and exhibiting in Australia and Europe, his work is included in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia, all state galleries, a number of regional galleries, the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in New Zealand and numerous private and corporate collections in Australia and overseas. A survey exhibition of his work was held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 1987. Cook now lives and works in London.

References/Further reading

Deborah Hart, *William Delafield Cook*, Craftsman House in association with G+B Arts International, Sydney, 1998

William Delafield Cook: Selected works 1958–1987, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 1987

William Delafield Cook: Mid-career Survey, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1987

- 13 **Dam** 2006
acrylic on linen
76 x 183cm
signed and dated lower right: W Delafield Cook 06

Provenance

The artist

William Delafield Cook is often labelled a painter of photo-realist imagery, yet this description is misleading. It alludes to a mechanical objectivity, an unfeeling reproduction of what is seen. Delafield Cook's paintings have a sensitivity that moves beyond a photographic understanding of our world. The composition of his images, their weight and balance, are always harmonious. His painterly touch is so soft and careful as to almost be invisible. His realism is not

that of the camera, but of a European sublime, a metaphysical realism associated with artists such as Ingres, Chardin and Casper David Frederick.

Dam is a large horizontal painting. The left and right margins of the work seem to have been stretched to accommodate a wide pool of water. The dam, an almost ubiquitous part of the rural Australian landscape, has been painted in an iridescent, glowing blue. The charcoal tones of the surrounding landscape provide contrast for the aqua blue, making its effect even stronger. The painting possesses a soothing quality, but also speaks of a liveliness and vitality belied by the delicacy of its execution.

Having honed his skills as an accomplished abstract painter in the 1960s, Delafield Cook's work always has an impressive rendering of texture and tone, the formal qualities possible in painting. This mesmerising work is no exception.

RAY CROOKE (born 1922)

Ray Crooke's studies began at Swinburne Technical College in 1946, but were interrupted at the end of 1948 due to service in the armed forces. Whilst in the armed forces, Crooke travelled through Western Australia, Far North Queensland and Borneo. After this period, Crooke spent two years on Thursday Island working for the Catholic church. It was here that he first painted his characteristic subject matter of saturated tropical landscapes and the indigenous people of the Pacific region. Crooke's work, both in subject and style, relates closely to Paul Gauguin. In 1969 he was awarded the Archibald Prize for his painting of writer George Johnston. His work was the subject of a major retrospective exhibition organised by Perc Tucker Regional Gallery in 1998 and a survey of his landscape paintings was curated by the Cairns Regional Art Gallery in 2005.

Literature/Further reading

Sue Smith, *North of Capricorn: The Art of Ray Crooke*, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville, 1997
James Gleeson, *Ray Crooke*, Collins, Sydney, 1972
Bernard Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1970*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1971
Rosemary Dobson, *Focus on Ray Crooke*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1971

15 **Island woman III** 1968

monotype
13 x 17.5cm
signed lower left: Ray Crooke

Provenance

Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Ray Crooke, Australian Galleries, Melbourne
19–29 October 1968, cat. 43

Reference

Ray Crooke, exhibition catalogue, Australian Galleries, Melbourne 1968

16 **Island woman II** 1968

monotype
13.5 x 19.5cm
signed lower right: Ray Crooke

Provenance

Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Ray Crooke, Australian Galleries, Melbourne
19–29 October 1968, cat. 42

Reference

Ray Crooke, exhibition catalogue, Australian Galleries, Melbourne 1968

ROBERT DICKERSON (born 1924)

(Represented by Dickerson Gallery, Melbourne)

Bob Dickerson received no formal art training, instead leaving school at 14 and working in factories as well as spending several years, from 1940 to 1944, in the professional boxing ring. He took up painting in 1947 and soon after exhibited with the Contemporary Art Society. He sold his first painting from the 1950 CAS show.

In February 1949 Dickerson married Innis Sailes. Times were hard and in 1950 he took a job filling gas bottles and loading them on trucks for the Blue Ray Gas Company at Blackwattle Bay where the couple lived on the premises in his caravan which was parked in one of the storage yards.

From 1952–1955 the Dickersons lived in a rented house in Annandale, the artist using one of the children's bedrooms as a studio on Sunday. Introduced to the Brisbane poet Barrett Reid by painter

Lawrence Hope, they visited Dickerson in 1952 with fellow poet Jim Maguire. Reid was excited by what he saw and asked that two paintings be sent to John and Sunday Reed at Heide. This was the beginning of a supportive association with John Reed who gave Dickerson one person shows at the Gallery of Contemporary Art in 1956 and 1957 and the Museum of Modern Art of Australia in 1960.

Renowned for his stark, expressive figure studies, his work is featured in all major state collections as well as the collection of the National Gallery of Australia and major corporate and private collections.

Literature/Further reading

Christopher Heathcote, *A Quiet Revolution. The Rise of Australian Art 1946–1968*, The Text Publishing Company, Melbourne, 1995
Christopher Heathcote, Bernard Smith and Terry Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–2000*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2001
Jennifer Dickerson, *Robert Dickerson. Against the Tide*, Pandanus Press, Brisbane, 1994
Richard Haese, *Rebels and Pre-cursors: The Revolutionary Years of Australian Art*, Penguin Books, Australia, 1981
John Hetherington, *Australian Painters Forty Profiles*, Specialty Press Ltd, Victoria, 1963
Leonard French, in Barrett Reid (ed.), *Modern Australian Art. A Melbourne Collection of Paintings and Drawings*, Museum of Modern Art of Australia, Melbourne, 1958

7 **Hospital** 1950 verso **Mother and child** c.1952–1955 enamel on compressed board 101.6 x 76.3cm signed lower right: DICKERSON

Provenance

Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney
Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Possibly exhibited under the title *Man sitting on a bed*, Mack Gallery, Sydney, March 1953, cat.21
Possibly exhibited under the title, *Before the operation*, in *Bob Dickerson*, Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney, March 1962, cat.4
Robert Dickerson Retrospective, Holdsworth Gallery, Sydney, 1983

Reference

John Reed 'Statement on Bob Dickerson: Painter', *Ern Malley's Journal*, vol.2, no.2, November 1955, pp. 15–17 (illus.)
Robert Dickerson Retrospective, exhibition catalogue, Holdsworth Gallery, Sydney, 1983, illus. p.4
Sandra McGrath, 'Robert Dickerson Retrospective, Holdsworth Gallery' *The Australian*, 10–11 September 1983
Jennifer Dickerson, *Robert Dickerson. Against the tide*, Pandanus Press, Brisbane, 1994, illus. p.22

Hospital is one of Dickerson's earliest surviving paintings from the period 1947–1950 and was evocative of visits to his grandmother who was in an old age home at the time. It was painted while he was living at the Gas Company. *Mother and child*, painted on the verso of *Hospital*, is possibly Innis with one of their children. Their first daughter Robyn was born in May 1950, the second daughter Sharyn in 1952 and their son Guy in 1954. As the child appears to be aged about three to five years, the painting on the verso may have been completed later than *Hospital*. The marriage was dissolved in 1960.

John Reed wrote the first critical essay on Dickerson in 1955 in Barrett Reid's *Ern Malley's Journal*, putting his faith in him after seeing only twenty paintings. He recognised that Dickerson was 'carving his own tradition and exposing immediately the very soul of his creative being', adding, 'it is because of this that I feel able to use the word "great" when referring to his art'. He saw a kinship with Tucker, Nolan and Boyd. No feint praise for an untrained mid-thirty year old artist. Referring directly to *Hospital*, Reed described Dickerson's creative vision:

By this I mean a vision which in his case penetrates to the roots of the most unassuming of our everyday acts and presents them in all their elemental truth. A man's casual placing of his hand over his own foot, the crossing of one leg over another... The other thing is the amazing psychological import which so many of his paintings carry. From the barest possible canvas, with the merest outline of forms, projects the most disturbing sense of the portrayal of human feelings.

Reviewing the artist's retrospective in 1983, Sandra McGrath said: 'His work from the 50s is still his best. I

find his palette more interesting in this period: subtle greys, pale apricots, dirge greys... But if ever one should ever doubt Dickerson's ability to create powerful images, then one only has to recall such works as ...*The Hospital Bed* (1950).'

IAN FAIRWEATHER (1891–1974)

Though born in Scotland, Ian Fairweather led an itinerant existence throughout Asia for much of his life. He completed his formal art studies at The Hague Academy, Amsterdam and the Slade School of Art, London, but a far greater influence on his art practice was his observations of Chinese calligraphy. He eventually settled on Bribie Island, near Brisbane, in 1953 at the age of 62, leading an ascetic and reclusive life in conditions his infrequent visitors found appalling. Despite no running water or electricity, Fairweather continued to produce powerful paintings and drawings of extreme beauty and profound sensitivity. Australian indigenous culture was a certain influence on his own art, and his paintings provided an important example for generations of Australian artists after him. He stands with Williams, Brack and Nolan as one of the greatest Australian artists of the modern era.

Literature/Further reading

Murray Bail, *Fairweather*, Art and Australia and Craftsman House, Sydney, 1994
Ian Fairweather: Paintings and Drawings 1927–1970, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, 1985
Murray Bail, *Ian Fairweather*, Bay Books, Sydney, 1981
Nourma Abbott-Smith, *Ian Fairweather: Profile of a Painter*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1978
Ian Fairweather, *The Drunken Buddha*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1965

- 1 **Centaurus Lupus** 1962
synthetic polymer paint and gouache on cardboard on hardboard
98 x 70.5cm
signed lower right with ideograph: IF
inscribed: Centaurus Lupus, June, China

Provenance

Philip Bacon Galleries, Brisbane
Private collection, Adelaide

Exhibited

Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, 1962 cat.16
Ian Fairweather, 16 May – 14 June 1984, Philip Bacon Galleries, Brisbane cat.69

Reference

Ian Fairweather, exhibition catalogue, Philip Bacon Galleries, Brisbane, p.19 cat. 69 (illus)
Murray Bail, *Ian Fairweather*, Bay Books, 1981 cat.171, illus. fig.45, p.102

Centaurus Lupus has myriad mythological and astronomical references. Centaurus and Lupus are two adjoining constellations in the southern hemisphere, both named after aspects of Greek mythology. A Centaur is a half-man half-horse creature and Lupus a wolf. The Centaur features in the epic myths of Heracles, specifically in the Fourth Labour of Heracles where the chief Centaur Chiron is accidentally poisoned and dies.

Ian Fairweather had a great interest in mythological tales and folklore. A year later, in 1963, he painted the work *Diogenes*, named after an hermetic Greek mystic; and his 1961 exhibition at Macquarie Galleries had also contained a number of works based on Greek mythology. These myths provided Fairweather with a core subject on which to produce complex, meditative paintings.

This painting was included in Fairweather's 1962 solo exhibition at Macquarie Galleries in Sydney. This is highlighted by Murray Bail as one of Fairweather's best, and it included a large number of Fairweather's most important works – 'Painting after painting revealed fresh levels of Fairweather's powers'.

- 30 **Pagoda** 1941
gouache and watercolour on paper
39 x 35.5cm
signed lower right: Ian Fairweather
titled on exhibition label verso

Provenance

Lina Bryans, gifted to Arthur Frater (the brother of artist William Frater) at Darebin in February 1989, thence by descent
Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Ian Fairweather: A Retrospective, Queensland Art Gallery 3 Jun – 4 July 1965 and touring, cat.80
Blue Chip III, Niagara Galleries, 2001, cat 42

Reference

Ian Fairweather: A Retrospective, Queensland Art

Gallery, cat.80

Blue Chip III, exhibition catalogue, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, 2001, cat.42 (illus.)

During the 1930s, Ian Fairweather lived throughout various parts of Asia and Australia. With the onset of the Second World War, Fairweather felt compelled to enlist for the British army. In 1939 and living outside Cairns he attempted to enlist. His efforts though, were frustrated. At the age of forty-eight and being a British citizen, there was nowhere and no-one that could help him join the army. So in May 1940 he left Australia for Hong Kong. He travelled to Bangkok, then Singapore and finally in May 1941 he landed in Calcutta.

It was here that Fairweather was able to produce a beautiful series of gouache paintings. As Murray Bail describes, 'while World War II raged in all directions Fairweather, in a "crowded studio full of Indians", painted small gouaches of China [...] all conspicuous for their clarity and tranquillity.'

Pagoda, 1941 is a delicate painting of cloud-like trees and buildings with distinctive Chinese architecture. The palette is a combination of striking blue, ochre red, light cream and the scattered grey of pencil outline. The debt to Chinese calligraphy, one of the hallmarks of all Fairweather's work, is clear. The fluid lines that describe the landscape and buildings are done with great economy, a quality admired in Chinese calligraphy.

As with many of Fairweather's stand out works, the scene has been completed from memory. It had been some six or seven years since Fairweather had lived in China. The time elapsed perhaps helping to distil the characteristic features Fairweather wanted to portray in his paintings.

In 1943, after being discharged from the army and further travels, Fairweather returned to Melbourne. He asked Lina Bryans, a fellow artist, friend and probably the most important collector of Fairweather's work, to store his Calcutta gouaches. It was probably at this time that Bryans acquired *Pagoda*.

ROSALIE GASCOIGNE (1917–1999)

Now recognised as one of the most important Australian artists of the twentieth century, Gascoigne spent her first twenty-five years living in New Zealand before moving to Australia and living on the outskirts of Canberra. She first exhibited her work at the age of 57. Her career spanned 25 years, during which time her work was exhibited widely both in Australia and internationally. In 1978, four years after her first solo exhibition, she was the subject of a major survey exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria. In 1982, alongside Peter Booth, she was chosen to represent Australia at the Venice Biennale. Her works are held in many major public collections in Australia and New Zealand as well as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and numerous corporate and private collections.

Literature/Further reading

Rosalie Gascoigne: Plain Air, City Gallery Wellington/Victoria University Press, 2004

Mary Eagle (ed.), *From the Studio of Rosalie Gascoigne*, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra, 2000

Rosalie Gascoigne, Regaro, Sydney, 1998

Gary Catalano, *Australia: Venice Biennale 1982 – Works by Peter Booth and Rosalie Gascoigne*, Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, Sydney, 1982

Deborah Edwards, *Rosalie Gascoigne: Material As Landscape*, The Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney 1998

11 **Lake** 1991

sawn wooden soft drink crates on plywood
seven panels: 29.6 x 64.7, 55.6 x 70.5, 49.5 x 91.6,
53.7 x 60, 45.3 x 64.5, 32 x 81.9, 53.2 x 64.4cm;
56 x 654cm approx. overall
inscribed verso panel 1: Rosalie Gascoigne/ 1991

Provenance

Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney

Private collection, Sydney

Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Rosalie Gascoigne, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery,
15 Apr – 2 May 1992, cat.4

Conversions. Festival of Installation Works Exhibition #4,
Canberra Contemporary Art Space Inc,
19 Jun – 11 Jul 1992, cat.7

Joan and Peter Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Australian Art, National Gallery of Victoria, 23 Feb – 16 May 1993, cat.3

Rosalie Gascoigne: Material as Landscape, Art Gallery of New South Wales, 14 Nov 1997 – 11 Jan 1998

References

Conversions. Festival of Installation Works Exhibition #4, Canberra Contemporary Art Space Inc, Canberra, 1992
Deborah Edwards, *Rosalie Gascoigne: Material as Landscape*, The Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1997, p.14; pl.19, pp.42–43

Vici Macdonald, *Rosalie Gascoigne*, Regaro, Sydney, 1998, pl.46, pp.84–85

The lake in question is Lake George, which lies between Canberra's northern hills. Gascoigne often spoke of her love of the area, particularly her favourite view from Geary's Gap '...where you can look down in the valley and see Lake George floating away.' This beautiful assemblage essentialises Gascoigne's sublime minimal aesthetic. The paler, washed out colours of pinks, greys and white perfectly evoke the sensation of light reflected off still water. The viewer can imagine travelling along the road as it winds alongside the lake, observing the way the headlands and escarpments unexpectedly project into the shallow waters of this intermittent inland waterway. The seven panels differ in size, just as the lake itself changes size depending on our viewpoint. There is a sense of passing time in the work, as if each panel represents an ideal vista where we should pause and reflect upon the beauty of nature, and the gaps between are the journey itself. The work is hung from the top, an artificial horizon line. In 1997, Gascoigne said, 'You go over Geary's Gap and there's this water in the landscape...I'm mad about that straight horizon the water has. Sea does it too. It's a jolt when I see it, every time. You never stop being freshly jolted.'

This work is closely related to *Suddenly the Lake*, 1995 a sequence of four separated panels, but more boldly coloured, which Gascoigne gifted to the National Gallery of Australia in 1996.

26 **Venus** 1981

wood and printed postcard
58 x 34cm

Provenance

Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Rosalie Gascoigne, Pinacotheca Gallery, Melbourne,
29 April-16 May, 1981

Reference

Rosalie Gascoigne, Regaro, Sydney, 1998, illus. fig.21,
p.32

This witty assemblage was exhibited in Gascoigne's first show at Pinacotheca, held shortly after her first visit to New York and marks the start of her 'mature' style. Using what she called 'poor man's galleries' – postcards of iconic images – the popular is re-presented in a new form of real art. We are reminded of Boticelli's *The birth of Venus*, as the female torso from antiquity is presented to the world between the two halves of a shell, albeit the Shell Company logo. But if this work can invoke the same awe of perfection, and thence to loss of innocence and inevitable decay, then it has the same powerful effect as that of the renaissance master.

The frame is like a window through which we glimpse the art before the shutters are closed entirely as in the later related works, *Shell Board 1*, 1983 and *Shell Board 2*, 1984.

OSWALD HALL (1917–1991)

Oswald Hall studied at the National Gallery of Victoria School between 1934 and 1938, a period when European styles of modernism were being widely discussed and debated. Cementing his allegiance and interest in modernism, Hall was a founding member and later council member of the Contemporary Art Society in Melbourne. His work from the late-1930s and during the 1940s reveals a wide range of interests including abstraction, Surreal landscapes, social realist tableau and tribal figure studies with an obvious debt to Picasso. In the 1950s his work developed into an expressionistic surrealism, combining many of his earlier stylistic interests. His work has been widely written about in the context of Australian surrealism and is featured in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia, Heide Museum of Modern Art and the Agapitos/Wilson Collection.

His father was Bernard Hall, the noted painter and long time director of the National Gallery of Victoria.

Literature/Further reading

Christopher Heathcote, *Oswald Hall*, Niagara Galleries and Waverley City Gallery, Melbourne, 1991

Bruce James, *Australian Surrealism: The Agapitos/Wilson Collection*, The Beagle Press, Sydney, 2003

Surrealism: Revolution By Night, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1993

Susan McCulloch, *The New McCulloch's Encyclopedia of Australian Art*, Australian Art Editions in association with the Miengunyah Press, Melbourne, 2006

35 **End of the dance** 1959

oil on board
91 x 61cm
signed lower right: O Hall 59

Provenance

Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Oswald Hall, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne,

25 Sep – 12 Oct 1991, cat.44

Oswald Hall, Waverley City Gallery, Melbourne,

24 Oct – 1 Dec 1991, cat.44

References

Christopher Heathcote, *Oswald Hall*, Niagara Galleries and Waverley City Gallery, Melbourne, 1991, cat.44

(illus.)

Focusing on a central female figure, this composition reveals Oswald Hall's talents as a unique and interesting expressionist painter. The woman appears to have finished a dance routine and her face is clearly strained. The physical exertion combined with the emotions of the dance have exhausted her to the point of angst. Her facial expression is a striking study, and communicates great depth of emotion.

Around the standing female lead are four abstracted bodies. Their faces have been left bare, the attention focused on the rhythm and angle created by their variously posed heads, torsos and limbs. The unusual blue, green, yellow and red shades that outline the figures adds to the intensity of the picture, its unnatural hues signalling Hall's keen interest in the various movements of modern art.

Hall's influences in this painting are remarkably varied. There is a discernable interest in vorticism, an English variation on cubism, Picasso's use of Cubist or abstracted forms to create a figurative expressionism and social realism, which was an important undercurrent in Australian art throughout the 1930s, 40s and 50s.

H F WEAVER HAWKINS (1893–1977)

At the Battle of the Somme in 1916, Harold Weaver Hawkins was left for dead, but crawled back to camp two days later. He never regained the use of his right hand, and to help his partly crippled left hand, he was encouraged to paint. Later he studied painting and etching in London, coming under the influence of the progressive Vorticist movement. In 1923 he married and spent a decade travelling and painting throughout Europe. He moved to Tahiti in 1933 and arrived in Sydney in March 1935.

Hawkins was a rarity in Australia – a fully trained, mature artist, classically inclined, who saw his art as having a role in 'fighting for the humanising values of society'. But as he was out of step with the Sydney Charm School and the abstract expressionism that followed it, local critics dismissed with his work. But some saw its strength. Reviewing the 1954 Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes in *Meanjin*, Bernard Smith wrote:

Hawkins is a natural mural painter, but his work has never been fashionable for two good reasons: his paintings contain ideas, and he works out his compositions in a firm linear style after the manner of the quattrocento. Most contemporary artists in Australia find thinking a painful experience, which they prefer separated from the sensuous enjoyment of colour and shape... As a result Hawkins is one of the most neglected painters in Australia today.

Another supporter was Daniel Thomas, who curated the first museum exhibition of Hawkins' work, *Project 11, Weaver Hawkins*, at the Art Gallery of NSW in 1976. A full retrospective followed at the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, curated by Ron Radford, and a survey at the SH Ervin Gallery, Sydney, in 1995 to coincide with the publication of *The Art and Life of Weaver Hawkins* by Eileen Chanin and Steven Miller.

Literature/Further reading

Eileen Chanin and Steven Miller, *The Art and Life of Weaver Hawkins*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1995
Daniel Thomas, *Weaver Hawkins 1893–1977: Memorial Retrospective Exhibition 1977–1979*, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Victoria, 1977

54 **Life imprints** 1963

watercolour on paper
55 x 75.5 cm
signed and dated lower right: Raokin '63

Provenance

Professor Bernard Smith, Melbourne
Sotheby's Fine Australian Paintings, Melbourne, 14 August 1989, lot 247 (as *Abstract hands and spheres*).
Sir James and Lady Cruthers, Perth.

Hawkins worked extensively on paper in the 1960s. The 1963 series *Life Imprints* used stencils sprayed with watercolour to mimic the cave paintings at Lascaux and equally ancient Aboriginal art. In its use of hands and feet, it is both an affirmation of our shared humanity, and an acknowledgement of the primacy of the creative act in human experience across the ages. An example from the series was included in the *Project 11* exhibition and is reproduced as plate 34 in the Chanin Miller book. The current example was purchased by Bernard Smith in the 1960s and owned by him until the majority of his collection was sold in 1989 to fund a scholarship for Aboriginal artists.

BILL HENSON (born 1955)

(Represented by Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney and Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne)

The 2005 retrospective exhibition curated by Judy Annear for the Art Gallery of New South Wales cemented Henson's reputation as one of Australia's most accomplished and significant photographers. Self-taught, Henson has produced a huge body of work that embraces human psychology as the key subject. His early works from the mid-1970s were often very small, intimate photographs. During the 1980s he began to print his work at a larger scale, channelling the drama of Delacroix or Gericault. In 1995 he was Australia's representative at the Venice Biennale, in 2002 a large scale monograph *Bill Henson: Lux et Nox* was published by Scalo, Zurich and in 2005 a major book was published to coincide with his retrospective exhibition. His work is held by all state collections and

the National Gallery of Australia, as well as the Guggenheim Museum, New York, San Francisco Art Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, Vienna.

Literature/Further reading

Bill Henson, *Mnemosyne*, Scalo in association with the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Zurich, 2005
Bill Henson, *Lux et Nox*, Scalo, Zurich, 2002
David Malouf and Peter Schjeldahl, *Bill Henson Photographs 1974–1984*, Deutscher Fine Art, Melbourne 1989

10 **Untitled** 1997–1998

(CB/KMC 4 SH 62 N28A)
type C colour photograph
103.5 x 154cm image size
127 x 180cm paper size
edition 1 of 5
inscribed verso: UNTITLED 1997/98 / B. Henson

Exhibited

Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, 2000

Reference

Bill Henson, *Mnemosyne*, Scalo in association with the Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2005, p.455 (illus.)
Bill Henson: *Lux et Nox*, Scalo, Zurich, 2002, p.44 (illus.)

LILY (MINDINDIL) KAREDADA (born c.1937)

From the Woonambal language group, Lily Karedada's country is in the far North Kimberley. Her family began producing paintings and objects in the early 1970s, with her husband Louis, his brother Jack, and her sister-in-law Rosie all having established names as artists. Lily exhibited Wandjina paintings at the first exhibition of works from the Kalumburu community in Perth in 1977 and has continued to produce these powerful images on bark and canvas. Lily's bush name, Mindindil, means bubbles. Her father named her for the bubbles coming out of the spring water on a hill. That Lily paints the Wandjina, the bringer of water to the land, is indeed appropriate.

Literature/Further reading

Susan McCulloch, *Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Revised Edition, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2001
Jennifer Isaacs, *Spirit Country: Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, Hardie Grant Books, Sydney, 1999
Judith Ryan, *Images of Power: Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1993

22 **Wandjina** c.1970

ochre and acrylic on canvas
92 x 99.5cm

Provenance

Collection of Nellie Castan, Melbourne

Wandjina is the name given to the spirit ancestors of the Worrorra, Ngarinyin and Woonambal peoples of the north-west Kimberley area. The Wandjina (Rainspirit) image is one of the most powerful in indigenous art and dates back to the earliest rock paintings. It is said that when a Wandjina finished his or her time on earth they would lay down and then become a painting on the rock-cave wall. The sacredness of the rock art Wandjina is irrefutable and there is much mythology surrounding the depiction of the rain spirit. Wandjina are nearly always painted from a frontal perspective with a large, head and prominent shoulders above an amorphous body. The distinctive U-shaped form which encircles the head represents the cumulonimbus clouds which they govern to bring rain. The face features two large eyes and beak-like nose but are almost always mouthless as some believe that if a Wandjina figure is painted with a mouth, then it will rain incessantly.

This extremely rare and important painting of the Wandjina is one of the earliest canvases produced by the artist. It has been carefully preserved and is presented framed under glass. The natural ochre pigments were mixed with acrylic binder ensuring a relatively stable surface. Typical of Lily Karedada's depiction of the Wandjina is the beautiful veil of dotting (rain) in the body and 'halo' of the spirit figure, surrounded by animals and objects from daily life. Turtle, goanna, birds and snakes appear with coolamon, digging sticks and boomerang. Lily Karedada is recognised as one of the true master painters of the Wandjina and has gained an international reputation for her powerful and beautiful paintings.

DAVID KEELING (born 1951)

David Keeling was born in Launceston, Tasmania in 1951. He attended the Swinburne Film and Television School, Melbourne in 1970, the Tasmanian School of Art in 1973 and the Alexander Mackie School of Art, Sydney in 1981. Keeling has served as Chairman and Board Member of Contemporary Art Services Tasmania, and Artbank, Sydney. He currently lives and works in Tasmania, where his concern for the environment influences much of his oeuvre. A major monograph on his work is expected in August 2007.

Literature/Further reading

Laura Murray Cree and Neville Drury, *Australian Painting Now*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 2000
Ian Mclean, 'David Keeling', *Artlink*, vol.19, no.2, June 1999
Jonathan Holmes and Edward Colless, *Redescubrimiento Rediscovery: Australian artists in Europe 1982–1992*, University of Tasmania, Hobart, 1992

44 **Plant** 1986–1988

oil on linen
43.5 x 61cm
signed lower right: D. Keeling 86–88

Provenance

Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
Private collection, Sydney

Exhibited

Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, 14 Sep – 1 Oct 1988
cat.5

Reference

Gary Catalano, 'The painter as the child of history', *The Age*, 29 Sep 1988

In the mid-1980s, after a period of time living in Sydney, David Keeling took a job in rural Tasmania about an hours drive from Hobart. Driving in and out of Hobart on his way to and from work, he was constantly reminded of the suburban expansion taking place, and the battle between nature and culture it presented.

The 1980s, particularly in Tasmania, was a period of heightened consciousness towards the conflict between developmental and environmental concerns.

The shadow of discord left by the Franklin Dam protests and other environmental battles coloured much of the debate about development in the 1980s and well into the 1990s.

David Keeling's painting *Plant* 1986–1988 is a relatively philosophical intervention into this debate. A small pile of rocks sits in the foreground of the picture while a stark geometric factory occupies the middle. These objects are placed on a barren plane, in front of tree-felled hills. The contrast of the curves of the hills and the rocks to the right angles of the factory emphasise the difference between the look and feel of the natural world versus human designed and built constructions.

Keeling has commented that these paintings were related to an interest in the historical portrayal of development and the industrial revolution and cites 18th century painter, Joseph Wright of Derby's optimistic portrayal of a factory in a landscape as a particular influence. Keeling's work is in many ways a counter claim. It reveals that the promise of development, when left to its own devices and allowed to run unchecked, can often be a curse.

ROBERT KLIPPEL (1920–2001)

Widely recognised as Australia's greatest sculptor, Robert Klippel was born in Sydney in 1920. After studies at the East Sydney Technical College, he spent time in London and Paris exhibiting at the Nina Bausset Gallery in Paris and made contact with the founder of the Surrealist movement André Breton. After a period of teaching in the United States, where he also continued to exhibit his sculpture, he returned to Sydney. He was the subject of a major monograph by James Gleeson in 1983 and a full-scale retrospective exhibition was held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2002.

Literature/Further reading

Deborah Edwards, *Robert Klippel*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2002
Deborah Edwards, *Robert Klippel: Large Wood Sculptures and Collages*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1995
James Gleeson, *Robert Klippel*, Bay Books, Sydney, 1983

43 **No. 677** 1987

bronze, artist proof from edition of 6
101 x 73 x 30.5cm
signed: RK N0677 '87 AP
inscribed bottom: M8 x 1.25

Provenance

The Estate of Robert Klippel

Reference

Deborah Edwards, *CD-ROM Catalogue Raisonné of Sculptures*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2002

Related work

A similar work, *No. 651*, 1987 is in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria.

EMILY KAME KNGWARREYE (c.1910–1996)

Language group: Anmatyerre

During her brief but outstanding career as an artist, Emily Kame Kngwarreye became recognised as one of the most important contemporary painters. Kngwarreye's legacy has been immense. Along with fellow artists such as Rover Thomas and Clifford Possum, Kngwarreye gained a great deal of international exposure and is represented in important public and private collections throughout the world. She began making art as part of the Utopia Women's Batik Group in the 1970s and then at the suggestion of the late Rodney Gooch moved to acrylic painting in 1988.

Literature/Further reading

Jennifer Isaacs, Terry Smith, Judith Ryan, Donald Holt, Janet Holt, *Emily Kame Kngwarreye Paintings*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998
Margot Neale, *Emily Kame Kngwarreye: Alkahere Paintings from Utopia*, Queensland Art Gallery/Macmillan, Melbourne, 1998
Fluent: Emily Kame Kngwarreye, Yvonne Koolmatrie, Judy Watson, 47th Venice Biennale, 15 Jun – 9 Nov 1997, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1997
Stories: Eine Reise zu den großen Dingen, Sprengel Museum, Hanover, 1995

38 **My anooralya story** 1991

synthetic polymer paint on canvas
90.5 x 61cm
inscribed verso: 91J60/ Emily Kngwarreye

Provenance

Delmore Gallery, Alice Springs
Private Collection, Northern Territory
Private Collection, Canberra

This important canvas by Kngwarreye was painted at a time when she was producing a body of exceptional dot paintings. This yam story has a limited palette of great sophistication. A shifting mass of yellow, white, grey and dark green dots overlay an unusual earthy, purple ground. The effect is mesmerising. The subtle changes in density and clarity of the various coloured dots create light and shade to give the work a structure which overlays the barely discernable network of yam roots tracked first on the canvas.

56 **Untitled** 1995

(105-995)
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
93.5 x 70cm
inscribed verso: 105-995/EMILY KNGWARREYE/SEPT 95/ (R. GOOCH ALICE SPRINGS 29.9.95)/ signed Marc Gooch

Provenance

Rodney Gooch
William Mora Gallery, Melbourne
Ian Hicks Collection
Private collection, Melbourne

These wild, expressive body paint designs were completed late in Emily's oeuvre. Bold stripes had actually been a recurring motif in her work since the beginning when she decorated the edges of her canvases with many small stripes, though it was not until she began to produce body design paintings that the significance of this was realised. Observers of contemporary art may see master expressionists like Tuckson reflected in her work, but the marks are drawn from those applied to the body for ceremonies. The spontaneity of the paintings comes from the confidence of intimate knowledge about what is being painted. The mark-making is forceful and complete, there is no hesitancy, but a strong joyful line which links this painting to the artist and to the land. A related group of body paint design paintings were selected to be shown at the Venice Biennale in 1997.

RICHARD LARTER (born 1929)

Richard Larter emigrated to Australia from the UK in 1962. In 1965 he held his first solo exhibition at Watters Gallery, Sydney, introducing his particular brand of pop to the Australian scene. His work embraced abstraction, pornography and politics, giving vibrant expression to the mood of the time.

A significant figure in Australian art for some forty years, he won the Clemenger Triennial Award for Contemporary Australian Art in 1996. His work is included in all major public, private and corporate collections in Australia. Undeniably one of Australia's most innovative and provocative artists, Larter's influence continues to inspire young artists today. Living and working near Canberra, he is still actively painting and exhibits annually.

Literature/Further reading

Kelly Gellatly, *Stripperama*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2002
Terence Maloon, *Richard Larter: A Survey*, University of Queensland, Brisbane, 1985
Robert Lindsay, *Aspects: Aspects of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1976

39 **New Zealand landscape** 1974

oil on canvas
129.5 x 96.5cm
signed lower right: R.Larter 5.74

Provenance

Watters Gallery, Sydney
Deutscher-Menzies, 28 Nov 2001, lot 23 (erroneously titled: *Am I ever bored*)
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Aspects: Aspects of Australian Art, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, and touring, 1976, cat.68

Reference

Robert Lindsay, *Aspects: Aspects of Australian Art*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1976 cat.68 (illus.)

This work was included in the Art Gallery of New South Wales' touring exhibition *Aspects: Aspects of Australian Art*. In the catalogue, the curator Robert Lindsay comments on the history of this painting:

New Zealand Landscape was painted in 1974, while Larter was a visiting Senior Lecturer in Painting at Auckland University.

The conversation of the woman on the phone, (a heroine of romantic comic books), is made up of the bits and pieces of popular culture, the clichés, the song titles, and meaningless communication that are part of our cultural environment.

The repeated image of the rather bored looking lady, her head resting on her hand, thinking of..., is in fact a portrait of the artist's wife.

Richard Larter's late wife Pat was often the model in many of his paintings. Pat was an artist and important co-collaborator with Richard on video, photographs and paintings. In this work she looks empty into the distance, and her thought bubble, saying 'Am I ever bored my little spunkies!', reflects the boredom expressed by her face. The title *New Zealand landscape* perhaps a cheeky comment on Pat's experience of accompanying her husband for his professional engagement in Auckland.

The collage-like technique of a number of smaller self-contained images sitting side by side on the one canvas is characteristic of this period of Larter's work. It sits comfortably as an example of classic Pop, a style of which Larter is probably the best known proponent in Australian art. This work relates closely to the major paintings *Silent Words Spray Fresh Job* 1974 in the collection of James Mollison and *Black Friday in Penrith* 1975-76 in the collection of Sir James and Lady Cruthers.

TIM MAGUIRE (born 1958)

(Represented by Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne and Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney)

Over the last decade Tim Maguire has become one of Australia's leading contemporary artists, celebrated for his monumental paintings of flowers and fruit. Less well known are his early landscapes, which forged his reputation and secured his place in the history of Australian landscape painting.

Maguire studied in Sydney in the early-1980s, followed by two years at the State Academy of Art, Dusseldorf. On his return to Sydney, he and fellow artists including Adrienne Gaha, Narelle Jubelin and Paul Saint established the artist-run space, First Draft. From this group came the earliest attempts to re-examine the local landscape tradition, especially colonial art, that were to become the foundations of the movement later known as Post-colonialism.

Maguire has exhibited throughout Australia and overseas, with his work being highly sought after by collectors. In 2003 the Bendigo Art Gallery held a survey show of his *Colour Separation* paintings. He has lived and worked in France and United Kingdom since 1992.

Literature/Further reading

Dr Shaune Lakin, *Painting Under Duress: Tim Maguire's Colour Separations*, 1998–2003, Bendigo Art Gallery, 2003

- 2 **Fin de siècle** 1986
(also known as *And a hard place, Dark field*)
oil on canvas
127 x 66cm canvas
151 x 89.5cm overall size including frame
signed lower left: T Maguire '86

Provenance

Phillip Dash Gallery, New York (gallery label verso)
Sir James and Lady Cruthers, Perth

Exhibited

Et in Arcadia Ego, Philip Dash Gallery, New York,
14 May – 21 Jun 1987 (reproduced on the exhibition invitation as *Dark field*).

Maguire's mid-1980s landscapes featured rudimentary structures abandoned in a featureless outback – barbecues, water tanks, gates, columns and so on, often depicted floating in water, like relics of a white society long gone. At a deeper level they punned on ideas of 'interior', representing the existential dilemma of the single white soul, unable to find a home or resting place.

Maguire's first New York exhibition was held at Philip Dash Gallery in 1987. *Et in Arcadia Ego* comprised still life paintings of fruit, and a series of rocks and monoliths, all in water under dramatic skies. They were presented in grandiose gilded frames originally used by artists of the Hudson River School such as Thomas Cole, Frederick Church and John Kensett. Maguire responded strongly to the romantic and sublime works of these painters, who were the American equivalent of John Glover and Eugene von Guerard.

The exhibition catalogue featured an essay by John McDonald, and the show itself was reviewed in *The*

New York Times by Vivien Raynor:

...The monolithic posts or rocks that are the subject of the other paintings also protrude from water. It's all very strange, but then, he is painting not the real world but some private territory where there is daylight, twilight and maybe moonlight, but no weather and no living beings. These are melancholy and often quite beautiful images....

Maguire continued to explore the theme of landscape, winning the 1993 Moët & Chandon Fellowship for a painting of light falling between two tanks. With its brooding atmosphere and hint of menace, *Fin de siècle* remains a concise expression of his painterly concerns in this period.

GODFREY MILLER (1893–1964)

Born in Wellington, New Zealand, Godfrey Miller studied at the Slade School of Art, London in the 1930s. He travelled through the United Kingdom, Greece, The Philippines and Japan before returning to settle in Australia. His delicate paintings, built up with thin dabs of oil paint, are key images of twentieth century Australian art. His status as one of the most important Australian modern painters was confirmed when the Art Gallery of New South Wales mounted a major retrospective exhibition in 1996.

Literature/Further reading

Deborah Edwards, *Godfrey Miller 1893–1964*, The Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1996
Godfrey Miller: Survey Exhibition of Drawings, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, 1982
John Henshaw, *Godfrey Miller*, Darlinghurst Galleries, Sydney, 1965
John Henshaw, *40 Drawings by Godfrey Miller*, Edwards & Shaw, Sydney, 1962

- 21 **Figure series sketch** c.1951–1957
oil on canvas on board
61 x 36cm

Provenance

Artamon Galleries, Sydney
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Artamon Gallery, September 1981 cat.27 (gallery label verso)

Notes

This work relates closely to the major painting *Figure Group* c.1951–1957 held in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales.
A certificate of authenticity from Artamon Galleries, signed by John Henshaw, is attached verso.

MILLINGIMBI (ARTIST UNKNOWN)

A long tradition of art-making exists on Millingimbi, a small island off the coast of Central Arnhem Land. A Methodist mission was established on the island in 1923 and during the 1950s the missionaries encouraged the making of bark paintings and artefacts for sale. By the early-1960s a number of significant artists painted there including Djawa, Bininyiwui, Lipundja, Buranday, Dawidi and many others. This was a particularly dynamic period in Yolgnu art.

Early aboriginal sculptures are of enormous interest today, particularly works of such quality and craftsmanship as these outstanding bird carvings. Similar works are held in all significant collections of indigenous art.

Literature/Further reading

Susan McCulloch, *Contemporary Aboriginal Art*, Allen & Unwin, revised edition, Sydney, 2001
Jennifer Isaacs, *Spirit Country: Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, Hardie Grant Books, Sydney, 1999
Judith Ryan, *Spirit in Land Bark: Paintings from Arnhem Land*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1990

- 31 **Jungle fowl** 1959
natural earth pigments on carved softwood
height: 29cm
- Provenance*
The Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, USA
Private collection, Melbourne
- 32 **Wild goose totem** 1961
natural earth pigments on carved softwood
height: 43cm
- Provenance*
The Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, USA
Private collection, Melbourne

SAMUEL NAMUNJDJA (born 1965)

Samuel Namunjaja began painting in the late-1980s. He is part of the Kuninjku language group and belongs to the Yirridjja moiety. He was born in Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory in 1965 and has lived in Mankorlod, Oenpelli and Maningrida. He paints with natural ochre on bark, rag paper and poles. He comes from an artist family and his father, Peter Marralwanga, taught him how to paint the stories of his clan.

Samuel's knowledge of animals such as bonbon (diver duck) and yibba (frog), and spirit figures such as Mimi and Ngalyod (rainbow serpent) are apparent in the paintings. He also paints Gungura, the spiralling wind associated with several sites on his clan estate. The detailed brush work builds a story of the histories and spirituality of Arnhem Land. His work has been included in numerous exhibitions, including the important *Crossing Country: The Alchemy of Western Arnhem Land Art* held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2004, and *Living Together is Easy*, an exhibition held at the National Gallery of Victoria and Art Tower Mito, Japan. In 2006, Namunjaja won the 23rd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award for bark painting.

Literature/Further reading

Transitions: 17 Years of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award, Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory, Darwin, 2000
Hetti Perkins, *Crossing Country: The Alchemy of Western Arnhem Land Art*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2004

42 **Gungura (Wind dreaming)** 2006

(3533-06)

ochre pigments with PVC fixative on stringybark
150.5 x 48cm

Provenance

Maningrida Arts and Culture, Northern Territory (label verso)

SIDNEY NOLAN (1917–1992)

Nolan is an iconic figure of Australian painting. His Ned Kelly series has gone beyond art historical import and seeped into the consciousness of the Australian public. Closely associated with patrons John and Sunday Reed, Nolan was a key figure amongst the writers and artists associated with the Angry Penguins and Heide. His first major survey exhibition came in 1967 at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. He was the subject of a retrospective exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1987 and his images of central Australia formed the basis for another important exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria in 2004. Heide Museum of Modern Art recently conducted an exhibition focusing on his later Ned Kelly series. His work is included in major public collections throughout Australia and overseas, including The Tate Gallery, London and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

In the period 1948–1951, Sidney Nolan painted over 130 ink and enamel paintings on glass, 100 of which were exhibited in four exhibitions in Sydney and London from June 1949 until February 1951. The motivation for this unusual technique and prodigious output can perhaps be found in Nolan's peripatetic work experience during the Depression in Melbourne. In 1932 he worked for a firm manufacturing signs on glass and learnt the process of applying enamel paints and tinfoil to the back of glass. Now highly collectable, such signs were popular with publicans to advertise wine and beer on plain or mirrored glass.

Nolan revisited the glass painting technique when living at Heide in 1941 with John and Sunday Reed. Using an old window frame, he painted hands, heads and flowers on each of the six glass panes to make *Girl & Flowers* for his muse, Sunday Reed (Collection: Heide Museum of Modern Art).

The Ballarat Fine Art Gallery's collection of *Eureka Stockade* transfer drawings may have been a launching point for the paintings on glass on the same theme. In 1948 Nolan commenced making his *Eureka Stockade* glass series by drawing directly on the back of the glass as if it were a sheet of paper, firstly in India ink and pen. Transfer drawings or monotypes also require a back-to-front way of working. To distinguish the line drawings on glass from the transfer drawings on paper,

he added body and translucency by broadly brushing colour over the ink lines with quick drying Ripolin enamel house paint. The under drawing was unable to be altered once the enamel dried, the dribbled and drawn black ink permanently encapsulated between the glass and enamel. He sometimes remembered to initial the sheets with his trademark back-to-front 'N' or 'n', adding a date or abbreviated month, but many works from the series were unsigned and undated.

Unlike the earlier paintings made at Heide which were painted on 'found' glass, Nolan ordered new glass sheets from a glazier, each sheet generally the same size: 25.5 x 30.5 cm or 10 x 12 inches in imperial measurements. A few larger panels were painted on convex glass. All were intended for exhibition and each was framed in a wide convex shaped moulding made from a warm coloured maple or silky oak. His *Eureka Stockade* exhibition held at The Macquarie Galleries in July 1949 was comprised solely of glass paintings, all but two of the sixty six images the same size and all uniformly framed.

After his first exhibition in London at the Redfern Gallery in 1951 (which included 20 glass paintings) Nolan appears to have ceased making glass paintings for his exhibitions. The largest quantity shown in recent years were 39 glass paintings from 1948–1951 exhibited at the Joseph Brown Gallery in 1979. All had been forgotten by the Nolans after being stored along with paintings, drawings and documents in a weatherboard shed at Cynthia Nolan's Wahroonga home from 1954 until 1978. They were retrieved by Nolan following Cynthia Nolan's death in November 1976.

Literature/Further reading

Geoffrey Smith, *Sidney Nolan: Desert and Drought*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2003

T.G. Rosenthal, *Sidney Nolan*, Thames and Hudson, London, 2002

Jane Clark, *Sidney – Landscapes and Legends*, International Cultural Corporation of Australia Limited, Sydney, 1987

Elwyn Lynn, 'Introduction', *Sidney Nolan. 102 Works from the First Fifteen Years (1939–53)*, Joseph Brown Gallery, Melbourne, 1979

Elwyn Lynn and Sidney Nolan, *Sidney Nolan – Australia*, Bay Books, Sydney and London, 1979

Daniel Thomas, 'Documentation', in Hal Missingham, *Sidney Nolan Retrospective Exhibition. Paintings from 1937 to 1967*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1967
Colin MacInnes and Kenneth Clark, *Nolan*, Thames and Hudson, 1961

- 47 **Untitled (Antique theme)** 1950
ink and enamel on glass
30.5 x 25.5cm
signed lower left: n/50.

Provenance

Possibly The Redfern Gallery, London, 1951
Australian Galleries, Melbourne (gallery labels verso)
Sotheby's, Melbourne 27 November 1995, lot 298
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Possibly *Sidney Nolan; Sylvia Gosse; Vera Cuninghame; French Paintings*, The Redfern Gallery, London, 11 Jan – 3 Feb 1951, cat. 28–33, or 38–39. (Nolan's exhibition was held in "Room One" and comprised twenty four *Paintings of Central Australia* and fifteen Glass paintings. Six glass paintings were titled *Antique Theme, I-VI* and two titled *Notes on an Antique Theme, I and II*.)

After arriving in England in September 1950 with his wife Cynthia and her daughter Jinx, the Nolans lodged with Cynthia's sister, Margaret Reed in Cambridge during the winter of 1950–51. *Untitled (Antique Theme)*, an image of a mother and child as statuary – Cynthia and Jinx? – may have been made following a visit to Ely Cathedral near Cambridge. Alternatively, as it appears to be a Roman inspired subject, the painting may have been made during Nolan's thirteen week tour of Spain, Portugal, Italy and France from 9 December 1950 to March 1951. If *Untitled (Antique Theme)* was included in Nolan's first exhibition in England at The Redfern Gallery in January 1951, it must have been painted in England, as Geoffrey Smith has written that the show was 'selected prior to his visit to Spain.'

Nolan must have been pleased with this mother and child motif as two similar paintings of the same subject in a horizontal composition are known, each of which are almost identical with this vertical composition.

- 48 **Untitled (Township)** c.1948–1950
ink and enamel on glass
25.5 x 30.5cm
signed lower right: 'n'

Provenance

Possibly The Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, 1950
Australian Galleries, Melbourne (gallery labels verso)
Sotheby's, Melbourne, 28 April 1997, lot 462
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Possibly *Exhibition of Paintings: Sidney Nolan*, The Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, 28 Jun – 10 Jul, 1950, cat.12. (Nolan exhibited 28 paintings: 6 x *Notes for Bourke and Wills Series*; 20 x *Paintings on Glass* and 2 x *Paintings on Board and Paper*.)

Untitled (Township) is undated, but would appear to date from 1948 when Nolan painted his Queensland Outback paintings. It is reminiscent of his paintings of hotels with decorative verandas, such as *Agricultural Hotel*, *Royal Hotel*, and *Going to work Rising Sun Hotel*. (Illustrated in Rosenthal, *Sidney Nolan*, 2002, pp.136–139)

CARL PLATE (1909–1977)

Carl Plate studied under Raynor Hoff at the East Sydney Technical College between 1930 and 1934. In the late-1930s he travelled through Europe, America and Mexico, spending time at St Martin's School and the Central School of Arts and Crafts, both in London. Plate produced some of the most accomplished modernist and surrealist inspired pictures in Sydney from the 1930s through to the early 1950s. His late abstract expressionist canvases also make an important contribution to the history of Australian art. Plate was the proprietor of Notanda Gallery, a centre for avant-garde ideas during the 1940s and 1950s in Sydney. His work is held in numerous public and private collections throughout Australia and features prominently in *The Agapitos/Wilson Collection of Australian Surrealism*. In his seminal text *Australian Painting 1788–1970*, Bernard Smith makes the comment that Carl Plate's work, '[p]ossesses a genuine feeling for nature, at times a note of wit, and always a sense of good taste.' (p.316) He continued, saying that Plate, 'placed an emphasis upon the landscape of the mind, "to expose a glint of the unknown".' (p.363)

Literature/Further reading

Bernard Smith, *Australian Painting 1788–1970*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1970
Surrealism: Revolution by Night, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra 1993
Bruce James, *Australian Surrealism: The Agapitos/Wilson Collection*, The Beagle Press, Sydney, 2003

- 12 **Cows and moons** 1954

oil on board
20 x 33.3cm
signed lower right: Carl Plate '54
inscribed verso (under frame): Niagara 3913A/ G12 54?/ CP88031 Cows And Moons

Provenance

The Estate of Carl Plate

The subject of inquiry pursued by surrealism often overlapped with that of the occult. There was a shared interest in the mystic revelations of an unseen-unknown. Followers of the occult believed in the mystic powers of distant objects; stars, moons, or the more mundane of trees and leaves. Surrealism invested these mystic realms with a similar power, but emphasised their connection to the unconscious. It was only through their relation to the unseeable workings of our mind that these objects exerted their true mystic force.

In Carl Plate's cryptic painting *Cows and moons*, 1954 this overlap of occult symbology and surrealist beliefs has been performed. Two large horned cows rest in the fore- and mid-grounds of the picture, their solidified shapes emphasising their symbolic potential. Above a shed are seven moons painted in blue, cream and white. The symbolic language employed by Plate is impossibly esoteric. Instead of describing a specific logic of the unconscious, the painting is meant to act as a gestalt; an invitation into the fertile terrain of our own unconscious.

This work has not previously been exhibited.

MARGARET PRESTON (1875–1963)

On her first visit to the Art Gallery of New South Wales, at the age of twelve, Margaret Preston set her sights on becoming an artist. A talented and ambitious young woman, she soon began painting lessons and later enrolled at the National Gallery School in Victoria. Like many artists of the period, Preston completed her studies in Europe. Travel became a life-long passion for the artist and had a profound affect on her career. Ultimately, she used her experiences of different cultures to evaluate her perceptions of Australian identity. This manifested itself in her work and her ongoing desire to develop a national Australian art form. In 2005, she was the subject of a major retrospective exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales which also toured to the National Gallery of Victoria. Preston's works are held in all state and regional galleries and important private and corporate collections in Australia and overseas.

Literature/Further reading

Deborah Edwards, *Margaret Preston*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2005 including CD-ROM catalogue raisonnée

Roger Butler, *The Prints of Margaret Preston*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1987

Elizabeth Butel, *Margaret Preston: The Art of Constant Rearrangement*, Penguin Books, Melbourne in association with the Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1985

Ian North, *The Art of Margaret Preston*, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 1982

52 **Native Flowers** 1949

colour stencil
30 x 21.5cm
signed lower right: M.P 1949

Provenance

Grosvenor Galleries, Sydney
Private collection, Sydney

Exhibited

Grosvenor Galleries, Sydney, September 1949
Margaret Preston, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1985

The Prints of Margaret Preston, National Gallery of Australia, 1987

References

Your Garden, 1954 (cover illustration)
Elizabeth Butel, *Margaret Preston: The Art of Constant Rearrangement*, Penguin Books, Melbourne in association with the Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1985, illus. p. 68

Roger Butler, *The Prints of Margaret Preston*, Australian National Gallery Canberra, 1987 illus. cat.361, p.304
Deborah Edwards, *Margaret Preston*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2005 listed on CD-ROM catalogue raisonnée

Notes

This work was printed in an edition of three. The other two impressions are held in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia and the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

53 **The snail** 1949

colour stencil
29.5 x 20.5cm
signed lower centre 'M.P 49'

Provenance

Grosvenor Galleries, Sydney
Private collection, Sydney
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Grosvenor Galleries, Sydney, September 1949
Margaret Preston, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1985

References

Deborah Edwards, *Margaret Preston*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2005 listed on CD-ROM catalogue raisonnée
Roger Butler, *The Prints of Margaret Preston*, Australian National Gallery Canberra, 1987 illus. cat.360, p.303
Elizabeth Butel, *Margaret Preston: The Art of Constant Rearrangement*, Penguin Books, Melbourne in association with the Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1985, illus. p.70
Advertisement for Grosvenor exhibition in *Catalogue, Society of Artists Annual Exhibition*, 1949 (illus.)

Notes

Although originally thought to be an edition of three, there are currently four known impressions of this image. They are located in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the National Gallery of Victoria, a private collection and the example seen here.

JEFFREY SMART (born 1921)

(Represented by Australian Galleries, Melbourne and Sydney; Philip Bacon Galleries, Brisbane)

Born in Adelaide, Smart studied at the South Australian School of Art from 1937 to 1941. He travelled to France and studied at the Académie Monmartre, Paris under Fernand Léger. In the 1960s he moved to Italy and has continued to live and work there since. He has maintained a strong connection to Australia through regular solo exhibitions and is recognised as one of our most significant living figurative artists. A retrospective exhibition was organised by the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 1999 and his work is held in major collections throughout Australia.

Literature/Further reading

Barry Pearce, *Jeffrey Smart*, The Beagle Press, Sydney, 2004

Jeffrey Smart, Edmond Capon and Germaine Greer, *Jeffrey Smart: Drawings and Studies 1942–2001*, Australian Galleries, Melbourne, 2001

Edmond Capon, *Jeffrey Smart Retrospective*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1999

John McDonald, *Jeffrey Smart: Paintings of the 70s and 80s*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1990

Peter Quartermaine, *Jeffrey Smart*, Gryphon Books, Melbourne, 1983

37 **San Cataldo II** 1964

oil on board
49.5 x 72.5cm
signed lower right: JEFFREY SMART 64
titled verso: SAN CATALDO II

Provenance

Private collection, Brisbane

Exhibited

Jeffrey Smart, Macquarie Galleries, Sydney 1965
Galeria 88, Rome, 8–23 April 1965

Reference

Barry Pearce, *Jeffrey Smart*, The Beagle Press, Sydney, 2005, illus. p.73

Peter Quartermaine, *Jeffrey Smart*, Gryphon Books, Melbourne, 1983, cat.460 (erroneously dated and catalogued)

Smart's art is resolutely realist, his technique classic. There is the sense that his paintings might be 'straight forward' depictions of the world. But they are not.

His careful realism is also accompanied by an ambiguous, possibly unknown, narrative. The figures which populate his artworks are frozen in time. We are given the smallest fragment, a moment of a larger story that can only be filled with conjecture and the viewer's imagination.

San Cataldo II was painted just one year after Smart's move to Italy. It presents a sleepy scene set in San Cataldo, a small town on the island of Sicily. Painted in a beautiful scumbling technique, the buildings are typical of the raw Italian architecture Smart has so often utilised in his pictures.

The 1960s was a highly productive period for Smart. He had developed and started to resolve his mature style of bold and quite brightly coloured realism. In 1962, just two years before he painted *San Cataldo II*, he produced his iconic and most famous painting *Cahill Expressway*, now in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria.

EVELINE SYME (1888–1961)

Eveline Syme was born in Melbourne, moving to England in her twenties to study at Cambridge University. After completing her degree, she pursued her interest in art, moving to Paris in 1923 to 'take criticism' from Maurice Denis. In 1929 she enrolled at the Grosvenor School of Art in London, where she studied linocutting under Claude Flight. She moved back to Australia in the late-1930s and combined her art making interests with an involvement in women's education.

Literature/Further reading

Hendrik Kolenberg and Anne Ryan, *Australian Prints: From the Gallery's Collection*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1998

Stephen Coppel, *Linocuts of the Machine Age: Claude Flight and the Grosvenor School*, Scholar Press in association with the National Gallery of Australia, London 1995

Felicity St John Moore, *Classical Modernism: The George Bell Circle*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne 1992

Roger Butler, *Melbourne Woodcuts and Linocuts of the 1920s and 1930s*, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Victoria, 1981

Chris Deutscher and Roger Butler, *A Survey of Australian Relief Prints 1900/1950*, Deutscher Gallery, Melbourne, 1978

18 **(The market garden)** not dated
watercolour and ink on paper
32.5 x 24cm
signed lower right: E W SYME

Provenance

Private collection, Melbourne

NEIL TAYLOR (born 1945)

Melbourne sculptor Neil Taylor has been practising for more than forty years, refining his technique and conceptual framework with remarkable dedication and consistency. Working from his studio he has undertaken commissions for public and private collections, including a major piece for the Heide Museum of Modern Art sculpture garden funded by the Victoria Commissions Program in 1999. His work has been included in numerous group exhibitions in Australia and overseas and is included in the collections of the National Gallery of Victoria, the National Gallery of Australia and Tarrawarra Museum of Art. In 2005, Taylor exhibited in Chicago at the curatorially challenging Suburban Gallery and was a finalist in the *Macquarie Bank National Sculpture Prize and Exhibition* at the National Gallery of Australia and *The Helen Lempriere National Sculpture Award* in 2005.

Literature/Further reading

Neil Taylor, exhibition catalogue, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne 2005

Robert Nelson, 'Working with metaphor', *The Age*, 9 April 2003

Volume & Form, exhibition catalogue, Andres Contemporary Art, Singapore, 1999

Roger Taylor, 'From the inside out', *World Sculpture News*, 1999

50 **Pre-Columbian matter** 1998
coated wire fabric
15.5 x 23.5 x 18cm

Provenance

Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Neil Taylor, Niagara Galleries, Melbourne,
14 Jul – 8 Aug 1998, cat. 12

As an exploration of the structural patterns which evolve from the joining of set forms, this hostile sculpture is remarkably successful. Each circular unit is cut from a formed tube of coated wire, and then

assembled with formulaic process. As with all Taylor's wire work, it is not so much about creating a shape, but finding a balance between form and density, the sense of mass versus the interior space. The artist has titled the work for the deep jewel-like green/blue of serpentine, and spiky cacti of South America. There is also perhaps an acknowledgement of the great architecture and mathematical ingenuity of an ancient culture.

VIOLET TEAGUE (1872–1951)

In the early 1890s Violet Teague's step-mother took her and her siblings on a tour of Europe. At the end of the trip, Teague stayed on in Brussels. She studied art at the Blanc Garin in Brussels and then at Herkomer's School in Hertfordshire in England. Her return to Australia in 1896 found her in the midst of a lively artistic and academic circle then active in Edwardian Melbourne. Her highly accomplished portraiture, widely exhibited in Australia as well the Paris Salon on multiple occasions, sits comfortably alongside the efforts of Bernard Hall, Emmanuel Phillips Fox and Rupert Bunny. Her printmaking work in the early-1900s drew strongly from the lessons of Japanese art, an important influence on progressive art practices at the time.

Literature/Further reading

Jane Clark and Felicity Druce (eds), *Violet Teague 1872–1951*, Beagle Press, Sydney 1999

Chris Deutscher and Roger Butler, *A Survey of Australian Relief Prints 1900/1950*, Deutscher Galleries, 1978

Roger Butler, *Melbourne Woodcuts and Linocuts of the 1920s and 1930s*, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, 1981

41 **Flirt tails and away!** 1905
coloured woodcut
21 x 14.3cm
signed lower right: V.T.

Provenance

Bridget McDonnell Gallery, Melbourne (gallery label verso)
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

A Survey of Australian Relief Prints 1900/1950, Deutscher Galleries, 1978, cat.1
Melbourne Woodcuts and Linocuts of the 1920s and 1930s, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery and touring, 1981

References

Chris Deutscher and Roger Butler, *A Survey of Australian Relief Prints 1900/1950*, Deutscher Galleries, Melbourne, 1978 illus. cat. 1, p.8

Roger Butler, *Melbourne Woodcuts and Linocuts of the 1920s and 1930s*, Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, 1981 (illus.)

This print was once a page from the illustrated children's book *Night Fall in the Ti Tree* (page 31). Teague was commissioned to make images that would accompany Geraldine Rede's text. Teague's lively woodblock prints utilize many compositional and stylistic devices found in Japanese art. This influence, both fashionable and progressive at the time, is an important precursor to many of the modernist styles of art. Roger Butler, a printmaking scholar and National Gallery of Australia curator, comments that these illustrations are likely to be the first colour woodcuts produced in Australia.

ROVER (JOOLAMA) THOMAS (c.1926–1998)

Language: Kukatja/Wangkajunga

Rover Thomas began painting on a regular basis in 1981. His first works were painted as ceremonial objects for the Kurirr Kurirr corroboree, Rover Thomas' own dreaming. His work has become synonymous with the art of the East Kimberley people and he has gained international recognition as one of Australia's most important landscape painters.

Along with Trevor Nickolls, he was the first Aboriginal artist to represent Australia at the Venice Biennale in 1990. A retrospective of Thomas' work curated by Wally Caruana, was held at the National Gallery of Australia in 1994. In 2003, a definitive touring exhibition of Rover Thomas' works from the Holmes à Court Collection was shown at the National Gallery of Victoria and toured nationally. His works are in all major state galleries, and prominent private and corporate collections in Australia and overseas. Thomas died in 1998, having become one of the most widely known and respected contemporary Aboriginal artists.

Literature/Further reading

Belinda Carrigan (ed.) *Rover Thomas: I Want to Paint*, Heytesbury Pty Ltd, Perth, 2003

The Eye of the Storm: Eight Contemporary Indigenous Artists, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1996

Rover Thomas with Kim Akerman, Mary Mächa, Will Christensen and Wally Caruana, *Roads Cross: Paintings of Rover Thomas*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1994

Judith Ryan, *Images of Power: Aboriginal Art of the Kimberley*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1993

Wally Caruana, *Australian Aboriginal Art*, World of Art Series, Thames and Hudson, London 1993

Bernard Lüthi, *Aratjara: Art of the First Australians: Traditional and Contemporary Works by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artists*, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Dusseldorf, Germany, 1993

Michael O'Ferrall, 'Rover Thomas' in *Venice Biennale, Australia: Rover Thomas – Trevor Nickolls*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 1990

23 Narmaran: Serpent travelled from Turkey Creek to Alice Springs 1987

(RT5487)

earth pigments and natural binders on plywood
60.8 x 90.7cm

inscribed verso: in black marking pen lower left on diagonal, 'RT5487' and lower left on lower edge, 'SRRRX'.
inscribed verso along top left edge: 'Property of Mary Mächa'. Subsequently the word 'Ex.' was inscribed before 'Property of Mary Mächa' and the current owner's name inscribed below. Stamped under the inscriptions is an unidentifiable rubber stamp of circular wood grain, perhaps a plywood manufacturer's trademark.

Notes

Painted at Turkey Creek/ Frog Hollow in April 1987. To preserve the delicate surface of the painting, the work was framed and glazed by Louis Bradley, Picture Framer in June 1998. The inscriptions were photographed for documentation purposes.

Provenance

Mary Mächa, Western Australia (certification available)
Garry Anderson Gallery, Sydney
Private collection, Melbourne

A stockman in the cattle industry since a teenager in the 1930s, Rover Thomas began painting in 1981. Discovered at Turkey Creek by Mary Mächa, then a field officer and manager for Aboriginal Arts and Crafts Pty Ltd in Western Australia, Rover Thomas had found inspiration in the Kurirr Kurirr, (according to Wally

Caruana, pronounced 'grill grill') a corroboree or what Kim Akerman calls a 'narrative dance cycle'.

According to Will Christensen, Rover 'found' the Kurirr Kurirr soon after the devastation of Darwin by Cyclone Tracy in 1975. 'It came to him in his dreams over a period of time. As he shared the knowledge he had gained in this way, its significance was recognised. Out of this sharing emerged the community celebration of the Kurirr Kurirr.'

Mary Mächa remembers seeing the paintings of the Kurirr Kurirr cycle painted by the artist Paddy Jaminji in 1981, 'the first person to whom Rover would have turned to make the boards'. She credits Jaminji with founding a 'school' of painting at Warmun and Rover Thomas coming to her amongst a crowd and introducing himself to her with the statement: 'Rover Thomas. I want to paint.' Mary Macha encouraged him to paint by sending boards (and later, canvases) to Turkey Creek. The then store manager documented the paintings on small cards which he would send back with the works.

This information was recorded on typed cards and formed the basis of Macha's careful documentation of Rover Thomas' oeuvre. These cards provide a reliable and accurate record of the provenance of each work. Photocopies of Mary Mächa's card No 214 and a photograph of *Narmaran: Serpent travelled from Turkey Creek to Alice Springs* after completion leaning against a wall, are available.

Mary Mächa's associate, geologist John Clarke, gives an account of the chemistry employed by Thomas to make his early paintings. This is instructive when considering the remarkable condition of *Narmaran: Serpent travelled from Turkey Creek to Alice Springs* 1987.

In addition to Rover's use of naturally occurring ochres and pigments he also made up paints that were based on gums and resins from Eucalyptus and Xanthorrea plants. These were melted in a billy can over a fire and 'cooked' to produce a shiny, black, viscous paint into which ground charcoal or other pigments were mixed. This paint featured in many of his earlier paintings and often produced a rough textured surface which, on occasions had a slightly shiny finish, especially when the resin/pigment ratio was high.

(John Clarke, in Belinda Carrigan (ed.) *Rover Thomas*, 2000)

TIWI ISLANDS (ARTIST/S UNKNOWN)

Located north of Darwin, the Tiwi Islands refer to Bathurst Island and Melville Island. The indigenous communities of these islands developed distinct cultural expressions; the burial ceremony associated with the Pukamani poles is a prominent example. European settlement came to the Tiwi Islands in 1825 with Fort Dundas, a British military post. Researchers including Hermann Klaatsch and Baldwin Spencer spent time on the Tiwi Islands recording traditional customs. In 1969 the Tiwi Design Aboriginal Corporation was established, providing a formal outlet for textile printing, pottery, material culture and limited edition prints.

Literature/Further reading

Margaret KC West, *Declan: A Tiwi Artist*, Australian City Properties, Perth, 1987

Margo Neale, *Yiribana: An Introduction to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collection*, The Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1994

36 **Pukamani poles** c.1970s

natural ochres and binders on wood
heights: 180cm, 197cm, 133cm

Provenance

Mary Mácha, Perth
Private collection, Perth

Pukamani refers to the burial ceremony conducted by the Tiwi Island people. These heavy wood posts, painted with ochre and natural gum binder, form a central part of the ceremony. Carved by middle-aged men of high status, the poles represent aspects and characteristics of the deceased. The different motifs painted on the poles represent fingers, eyes, clan and body scarification. In the ceremony, the poles are placed around the burial site of the deceased.

These three poles were originally purchased from the official government marketing outlet in Perth in the late-1970s. They were purchased on behalf of a private collector by the art consultant and government adviser Mary Mácha. A related set of Pukamani poles, commissioned by Tony Tuckson, are a centrepiece of the Aboriginal collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

The simple forms of the Pukamani poles are

recognised as some of the most elegant in contemporary Australian sculpture. Early poles of this quality are rarely available on the market, most having been curated into public collections.

RONNIE TJAMPITJINPA (born c.1943)

Language group: Pintupi

Prior to his career as a painter, Ronnie Tjampitjinpa lived throughout the Western Desert region of central Australia. Growing up in a traditional lifestyle, he worked as a labourer and fencer. He moved to Papunya when the community was established in the late-1960s and was one of the original group of artists to start painting there around 1971. He lived in Yuendumu, Papunya and then in the early-1980s moved to his traditional homeland of Kintore. His first solo exhibition was at Gallery Gabriel Pizzi in 1989 and he has gone on to have an esteemed career in the visual arts exhibit widely throughout Australia. His work has been included in group exhibitions nationally and internationally and his work is held in the National Gallery of Australia, most state collections and in the collection of the Musée du Quai Branley, Paris.

Literature/Further reading

Susan McCulloch, *Contemporary Aboriginal Art: A Guide to the Rebirth of an Ancient Culture*, revised edition, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2001
Hettie Perkins and Hanna Fink (eds), *Papunya Tula: Genesis and Genius*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2000

51 **Untitled (Tingari)** 1999

(RT9906100)
oil on canvas
153 x 122cm
inscribed verso: Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd / RT9906100 / CMS306/1 / Ronnie Tjampitjinpa

Provenance

Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd (certification available)
Private collection, Melbourne

This work is one of the paintings depicting designs used to celebrate the Tingari ceremonies at the swamp site of Ngurrupalangu, west of the Kintore community. The Tingara paintings are rarely given a full interpretation, as they are concerned with ancient and very secret men's business in which only initiated males can participate.

Various-sized concentric circular motifs are enclosed within bands of grey and deep ochre yellow. The composition of the painting is not symmetrical and the imagery appears to bulge on the right. This 'off-centredness' gives the work great character and movement. There is a sense of the elements shuffling left to accommodate the enormity of the story on the canvas.

LONG TOM TJAPANANGKA (c.1930–2006)

Working as a stockman and police tracker for much of his life, Long Tom began painting in 1993. Originally from the Kimberley, he settled at Haasts Bluff and began painting at the Ikuntji Women's Centre. In 1999 he won the prestigious Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award. After completing his contribution to the 2000 Adelaide Biennale exhibition *Beyond the Pale*, Long Tom declared he would stop painting. Despite much demand for his art, he decided that his eyesight had deteriorated to the extent that he could no longer produce paintings to the standard he would like. His work is included in all important state collections as well as the National Gallery of Australia. The cover of the Art Gallery of New South Wales publication, *Tradition Today: Indigenous Art in Australia*, features a major Long Tom painting from their collection. Long Tom passed away in 2006 after a long illness.

Literature/Further reading

Hetti Perkins (ed), *Tradition Today: Indigenous Art in Australia*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2004
Sylvia Kleinert and Margo Neale (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2000
Brenda L Croft, *Beyond the Pale: Contemporary Indigenous Art*, Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2000
Jennifer Isaacs, *Spirit Country: Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art*, Hardie Grant Books, Sydney, 1999
Marina Strocchi, *Ikuntji Paintings from Haasts Bluff 1992–1994*, IAD Press, Northern Territory, 1995

58 **Ulampawarru, Walungurru, two perentjies** 1995

(IK95LT321)
acrylic on linen
153 x 183cm
inscribed verso: IK95LT321/ 152.2 x 182.5cm

Provenance

Ikuntji Womens Art Centre, NT
Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Niagara Galleries, Melbourne, 1998
Aussie Express, Total Museum of Contemporary Art,
Korea, 1998
Richness in Diversity, curated by the Australia
Museum to tour South-East Asia 1998–1999

This lyrical painting by Long Tom shows two perentjies or goanna against the background of Ulampawarru (Haasts Bluff Mountain) and Walungurru (Kintore Range), the country around the Ikuntji Centre. Long Tom took a particular multi-planar view when painting his works. Mountains and sandhills can all be stacked on top of each other. His is a contemporary, minimal style, with very little need for decorative dotting. Instead he uses expanses of wide solid colour to depict the different mountain ranges and geological features, each of which recognisable with a distinct and consistent form. Long Tom does not paint his traditional dreamings, he says he is 'not making story, just making pictures'.

TURKEY TOLSON (c.1942–2001)

Turkey Tolson was one of the youngest of the original group of Papunya painters. He was born at Haast's Bluff around 1942, and first worked as a stockman. In 1959, after his initiation, his family moved to the recently established settlement of Papunya. There Turkey Tolson observed the first paintings done by the old men for Geoff Bardon, and in August 1973 he approached Bardon with two small paintings. Bardon comments that 'the paintings demonstrated a brilliant technique' and reproduced one, *Porcupine joke story*, in his book *Papunya – A Place Made After the Story*.

By the late-1970s Tolson had become a successful painter and an active figure within Papunya Tula. With David Corby Tjapaltjarri, he was artist-in-residence at

Flinders University in 1979, and Flinders has a large collection of his works. In 1985 he became chairman of Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd, a position he held for the next decade. He gave the opening address at the Tandanya Cultural Institute's 1990 exhibition *East – West: Land in Papunya Paintings*, and in 1997 travelled to Paris with Joseph Jurra Tjapaltjarri to create a sand-painting at the exhibition *Peintres Aborigenes d'Australie*.

14 **Five stories** 1984

(TT841031)
acrylic on canvas
151.5 x 59cm
inscribed verso (Papunya Tula stock number):
TT841031

Provenance:

Papunya Tula Artists Pty Ltd
Tim and Vivienne Johnson, Sydney
Sir James and Lady Cruthers, Perth

Tolson is known for both his innovation and his classically traditional style. *Five stories* is a traditional painting of several of the stories of his father's land. Characterised by simplicity of design, it is typical of his work after 1981, when he began living in his father's country for the first time. When Papunya Tula encouraged their artists to scale up their work around 1990 to produce large minimal paintings, Tolson was one of the first to respond. His *Straightening the spears, Ilyingaugau*, quickly became his signature painting – at once a touchstone for contemporary Aboriginal art and a model for younger Papunya artists intent on developing a personal style.

TONY TUCKSON (1921–1973)

Born in Egypt of British parents, Tony Tuckson moved to England during his childhood years. Studying at Hornsey School of Art in London from 1938 to 1939, he came to Australia in 1939 as part of the RAF Spitfire squadron. He studied at East Sydney Technical College, where he was taught by Ralph Balson and Grace Crowley. In 1950 he joined the Art Gallery of New South Wales as an attendant, and worked his way up to the position of Deputy Director, which he held until his death in 1973. He held only two solo exhibitions during his life-time, in 1970 and 1973, choosing to paint for the most part in privacy.

Literature/Further reading

Terence Maloon, *Painting Forever: Tony Tuckson*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2000
Terence Maloon, *Tony Tuckson: Themes and Variations*, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, 1989
Daniel Thomas, Renee Free, Geoffrey Legge, *Tony Tuckson*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1989
Daniel Thomas, *Tony Tuckson 1921–1973*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1976

24 **(Untitled)** c.1957–1958

gouache on paper
52 x 36cm

25 **(Untitled)** c.1956–1959

gouache on paper
52 x 35.5cm

Provenance

The Estate of Tony Tuckson
Watters Gallery, Sydney
R Crebbin, Sydney
Private Collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Tony Tuckson: Works on Paper 1959–1970,
28 Jun – 15 Jul 1978, Watters Gallery, Sydney

DICK WATKINS (born 1937)

Dick Watkins is a pioneer of colour-field painting in Australia. Born in Sydney in 1937, Watkins occasionally attended art classes at the Julian Ashton School and the East Sydney Technical College between 1955 and 1958, but is essentially self-taught. He was a key participant in the National Gallery of Victoria's landmark exhibition, *The Field* in 1968. Watkins held his first solo exhibition at the Barry Stern Galleries in Sydney in 1963 and from 1966 to 1969, exhibited with Central Street Gallery, which at the time was one of the most progressive contemporary art spaces in Australia. In 1985 he represented Australia at the XVIII Bienal de Sao Paulo in Brazil. In 1989 Wagga Wagga Regional Art Gallery held a major retrospective exhibition of Watkins' work. The National Gallery of Australia mounted the exhibition *Dick Watkins in Context*, a show drawn from the gallery's substantial holdings of his work, in 1993. Dick Watkins is represented in the collections of many Australian state and regional galleries.

His work is also included in numerous corporate art collections, including the Loti and Victor Smorgon Collection and the Holmes à Court collection. Dick Watkins lives and works in Sydney.

Literature/Further reading

Carrie Lumby, 'Dick Watkins: an artist's artist', *Australian Art Collector*, iss. 31, January 2005

Barbara Dowse, *Dick Watkins in Context: An Exhibition from the Collection of the National Gallery of Australia*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1993

Ingrid Periz, 'Dick Watkins: the eighties and after', *Art and Australia*, vol.31, no.2, 1993

46 **The small war machine** 1994

acrylic on canvas

167 x 213cm

signed lower left: RW

inscribed verso and on stretcher: 'THE SMALL WAR MACHINE' / R Watkins / 13-7-94

Provenance

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne

Private collection, Melbourne

Exhibited

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, February 1995, cat.3

Australia has a long and rich history of abstract painting. Many of Australia's finest artists have practiced in this idiom. Their work has often been overlooked due to the difficulty and seriousness of their intent. Despite his long and prestigious career, Dick Watkins could be included in this category.

First coming to prominence with quite radical and early examples of hard edge painting, Watkins was an important member of Sydney's Central Street Gallery in the late 1960s. His work embraced progressive developments in abstraction, while retaining a keen interest in the lessons of Picasso and cubism and Pollack and the abstract expressionists.

The small war machine engages Watkins abilities in abstraction to channel the sense of danger and aggression evoked by the title of the work. The central black shape provides a dramatic contrast to the white ground of the painting. Streaks of red and the ochre-coloured circle, a type of 'eye' in the painting, only add to the sense of threat. The abrupt and severe brush marks create an uncompromising image.

The year before *The small war machine* was painted, the National Gallery of Australia held a survey exhibition of Watkins art, drawing largely on its own collection of his work. The small war machine was exhibited at Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne in 1995. As the work chosen to illustrate the invitation, it was one of the key paintings of the exhibition.

KEN WHISSON (born 1927)

Born in Lilydale on the outskirts of Melbourne, Whisson studied at Swinburne Technical College before taking classes with Danilla Vassilief, a Russian-born painter associated with the Heide circle. He moved to Perugia in Italy in 1977 and continues to live and work there, maintaining close links with Australia through regular visits and annual solo exhibitions. A distinguished senior painter, his work is represented in all major Australian public collections as well as the British Museum, London and the Chartwell Collection, New Zealand. Whisson's exceptional contribution to Australian art was acknowledged in 1996 with the Visual Arts Board Emeritus Award. He is one of a rare number known as an artists' artist; one whom others look to for inspiration and motivation. Whisson has remained true to his beliefs, his politics and his own form of expression. He is a truly unique living treasure in the world of art.

Literature/Further reading

Ken Whisson, *Ken Whisson: Paintings and Drawings 1947–1999 with Writings and Talks by the Artist*, Niagara Publishing, Melbourne, 2001

Ken Whisson, *Ken Whisson: Paintings 1957–1985*, Broken Hill City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 1986

5 **Dark sail II** 1970

oil on board

69 x 75.5cm

inscribed verso: Ken Whisson/London 1970/"Dark Sail II"

Provenance

The artist

Related work

Dark sail 1967 oil on board, 62.5 x 91.5cm Collection of the National Gallery of Australia

Dark sail II was painted in London in 1970. Whisson had joined his brother there between visits to Northern Africa. Painted at a time when Whisson was still largely maintaining a structural composition in his work, the horizon line of the dark green, stormy ocean can clearly be seen against the pale sky. Pictorial elements were however becoming less distinct, and whilst the dark sail of the title dominates the painting, there are more abstract slices of bright colour which in later works are identified as flags and ensigns. This work has remained in the collection of the artist up until now, in itself a glorious mark of its worth having survived the artist's self-culling process for paintings he no longer considers significant. The importance of this work is highlighted by the related work, *Dark sail* 1967, held in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia. Very few paintings from this era are still available for collection.

FRED WILLIAMS (1927–1982)

Born in Melbourne in 1927, Williams studied at the National Gallery School and also attended classes with the early modernist painter George Bell. In the 1950s he spent time in London, before returning to Australia and beginning his long association with the Australian landscape. Williams exhibited regularly with the Rudy Komon Gallery in Sydney. His paintings of the You Yangs, Fern Tree Gully and later the Pilbara have featured in numerous books, catalogues and exhibitions, including a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1977. In 2001, Rio Tinto Limited gifted Williams' *Pilbara Series* to the National Gallery of Victoria where they were placed on prominent display then toured to regional galleries.

Literature/Further reading

James Mollison, *A Singular Vision: The Art of Fred Williams*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1989

Robert Lindsay and Irena Zdanowicz, *Fred Williams: Works in the National Gallery of Victoria*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1980

Patrick McCaughey, *Fred Williams*, Bay Books, Sydney, 1980

17 **Landscape, Lysterfield** 1968

gouache on Arches paper
56.7 x 76cm
signed lower left

Provenance

The Estate of Fred Williams

Exhibited

This work has not previously been exhibited.

Reference

Patrick McCaughey, *Fred Williams*, Bay Books, Sydney, 1980, p.194

In 1965 Fred Williams began painting full-time. Without the distractions of salaried work, Williams could focus his attention on the full development of his art. It was around this time that Williams made some of the most radical and distinctive landscapes of his career.

Landscape, Lysterfield is a supreme sketch. Across the top of the paper a streak of horizon has been smudged with a thin line of black. Filling the picture, dabs and daubs of paint are littered across the image. Red, blue, white, grey, mustard and black have been used to evoke the landscape, their effect together – more than individually – giving a clue to the atmosphere and colouration of the landscape.

Lysterfield is an area at the foothills of the Dandenongs, a small mountain range on the outskirts of Melbourne. It was in 1965 that Williams first sketched this area, and at this time Lysterfield was still a truly rural area. The Lysterfield paintings embrace many of the diverse techniques and styles found in his paintings from the 1960s. The early Lysterfield paintings relate closely to the style of the Upwey and You Yangs paintings. The later paintings and gouaches, such as *Landscape, Lysterfield* make use of the subtleties and evocative potential of a reductive approach to landscape painting, and in this clearly relate to the monumental *Australian Landscape* series.

This work relates closely to the gouache *Lysterfield pink and silver* 1968 and *Triptych landscape* 1967–1968 held in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, both reproduced in Patrick McCaughey's monograph *Fred Williams* (pl.99 and pl.100).

34 **The audience** c.1954

gouache on cardboard
29 x 21.5cm

Provenance

Private collection, Melbourne

William's lived in London from 1951 to 1956 and during this time he sketched compulsively, making a significant number of chalk studies, gouache paintings and etchings. The number of landscapes produced during this time is small, reflecting William's circumstance in the large industrial metropolis of inner city London. Removed from the Australian tradition of landscape painting, and the immediate stimulus of the Australian bush, he turned his skill and attention to the people and places around him.

The *Music Hall* series presents an anomaly in Williams' wider oeuvre and takes as its primary subject the human figure and in the study of personality and type. They have almost no counterpart in Williams' art

In this gouache, the profiles of two figures in the audience has been rendered in fast strong brush strokes. An older man in the foreground and a younger woman behind him have been outlined with bold black lines. The style of these works are surprisingly expressionistic, evoking mood with surprising verve. The intimate scale of this work, and its speed of execution speak of the artist's need to complete the work while the memory and character of his subjects were still fresh.