Geelong Gallery
The Geelong Gallery was established in 1896 and is one of Australia’s leading and oldest regional art galleries. Since its first year of acquisitions in 1900, the Gallery has amassed a magnificent collection of 19th and 20th century Australian and European paintings and decorative arts, including 18th and 19th century English porcelain, British art pottery, colonial Australian silver, as well as contemporary Australian paintings, prints, sculpture and ceramics. A particular focus of the collection is early images of the city of Geelong and the surrounding region. The Gallery’s outstanding collection includes many works of national significance such as Eugene von Guérard’s View of Geelong (1856) and Frederick McCubbin's A bush burial (1890). Works from the collection are regularly on display, along with a dynamic exhibitions program, and wide-ranging public programs calendar.

1. Damiano BERTOLI
Australian, born 1969

Continuous moment: requiem 2004
oil on canvas
Geelong Gallery
Purchased with funds generously provided by the Geelong Art Gallery Foundation, 2004

The operatic grandeur and drama of Damiano Bertoli’s Continuous moment: requiem invokes the Romantic sublime as espoused in Edmund Burke’s influential 1757 treatise A Philosophical Enquiry. Burke regarded nature as the most sublime entity, capable of generating the strongest sensations of awe, terror and feeling of insignificance in its beholders. Bertoli’s work is part of his ongoing research into the relevance of art history for contemporary artists, and the cyclical and evolutionary nature of the creative process.

2. Kate BEYNON
born China 1970; arrived Australia 1974

Graveyard scene / the beauty and sadness of bones 2014–15
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
Geelong Gallery
Geelong contemporary art prize, 2016

Kate Beynon’s Graveyard scene/the beauty and sadness of bones was the recipient of the 2016 Geelong contemporary art prize. The image is based on a scene from An-Li: a Chinese ghost tale, the artist’s re-telling of a supernatural story of two young spirits who traverse opposing worlds: one aquatic, the other earthly. Beynon depicts the spectral form of An-Li as he makes a nocturnal visit to his grieving mother. The painting reveals an interest in connections between mother and child, ancestral spirits, and the cycle of life and death.

3. Mike BROWN
Australian 1938–1997

Levels 1977
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
Geelong Gallery
Purchased 1978

4. Mike BROWN
Australian 1938–1997

Mindscape 1979
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
Geelong Gallery
Purchased with the assistance of the Caltex Victorian Art Government Purchase Fund, 1985

Mike Brown was a unique leader of alternative avant-garde art in Australia and a true bohemian eccentric. His work was anarchic and polemical, but it also had a conscious order, beauty, and refinement in its formal resolution. During his 30 year career he waged an unwavering war on art world conventions and sensibilities, critiquing mass culture, consumerism, sex, advertising, censorship, and embracing counterculture, alternative lifestyles and socialism. During his lifetime, Brown produced a multiplicity of work including naive landscapes, pattern based abstraction, pop and text paintings.
5. **Lina BRYANS**  
born Germany 1909; arrived Australia 1910; died 2000

**You Yangs 1966**  
oil on composition board  
Geelong Gallery  
Purchased with the assistance of the Lucy Shaw Bequest Fund, 2000

The picturesque and enigmatic You Yangs range features in many art works depicting Geelong and its surrounding landscape. As a place the You Yangs has inspired artists since the early 19th century. While modernist painter Lina Bryans was an acclaimed portraitist, by the 1960s it was her work in various Australian landscapes that brought her highly expressive and experimental picture making to further critical attention. The wild and ancient terrain of the You Yangs is interpreted in this lively abstract work through Bryans's exceptional balance of colour and painterly texture.

6. **Nadine CHRISTENSEN**  
Australian, born 1969

**Untitled (Tiled floor) 2008**  
synthetic polymer paint on board  
Geelong Gallery  
*Fletcher Jones art prize*, 2008

*Untitled (Tiled floor)* was the recipient of the *Fletcher Jones art prize* (now *Geelong contemporary art prize*) in 2008. This intricately composed painting assembles seemingly incongruous images and forms to examine the relationship between nature and artifice, old and new, real and illusionary, as well as notions of redundancy in a contemporary world of materialism and consumption, and rapid technological obsolescence.

7. **Gunter CHRISTMANN**  
born Germany 1936; arrived Australia 1959; died 2013

**Helau 1983**  
synthetic polymer paint and oil on canvas  
Geelong Gallery  
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council, 1983

At the time of his death in 2013, and after a 50-year career, Gunter Christmann's work was attracting a renewed critical and public attention, the kind that surrounded his striking debut as an artist in the 1960s. Christmann left his native Germany and arrived in Australia via Canada in 1959. He started painting three years later. Painting for himself rather than the market throughout his long career, he moved easily between personal subjects and themes with universal qualities.

His work reflected his European origins and sensibility, and his love of Sydney and the grit of his immediate environment. His painting ranged between figuration and abstraction, politics and pop culture. Helau is a German greeting used at Carnival time, and in this picture Christmann may be reflecting on the colour and chaos of the carnival atmosphere.

8. **John COBURN**  
Australian 1925–2006

**Setting sun 1980**  
oil on canvas  
Geelong Gallery  
Gift of the Geelong Art Gallery Foundation, 1999

John Coburn sought to encompass the colour, light, ancient nature and indigenous heritage of the Australian landscape throughout his career, combining this primary interest with the development of a distinct lexicon of abstract symbols and motifs. In wanting to forge a uniquely Australian abstract language, he represented natural phenomena from the sun to flora and fauna in carefully arranged compositions he hoped would reverberate in the eye of the viewer. Numerous of Coburn’s works invoke a spiritual approach to his considerations of landscape and human beings’ place in it.

9. **Janet DAWSON**  
Australian, born 1935

**Foxy night 3 rising moon 1978**  
synthetic polymer paint on canvas  
Geelong Gallery  
*Capital Permanent award*, 1978

Janet Dawson is critically important in the early development of non-objective—or abstract—painting in Australia in the 1960s. She was one of only three women artists whose work was included in the historic exhibition ‘The Field’ that inaugurated the National Gallery of Victoria when it opened on St Kilda Road on 1968.

The ‘Foxy Night series’ was the product of Dawson’s rural experience living in South-western New South Wales from the early 1970s. In the catalogue for the NGV’s survey of Dawson’s work in 1979, Robert Lindsay wrote of the series: *These paintings, like the moonlight, have an element of ‘foxiness’, of shifting light and ambiguity ... the surface is pulled and pushed in space, and just as moonlight creates changing optical illusions in nature so the painted surface is sometimes reinforced, at other times, denied, by the perspective effects created by the simple linear shapes.*
10. Terry EICHLER
Australian, born 1945

Passing storm, Cape Otway Road  2003
oil on canvas
Geelong Gallery
Gift of the artist, 2004

Terry Eichler’s landscapes of the Otway ranges region are panoramas in which he seeks to convey the atmospheric beauty of changing light and climate as it passes over and briefly transforms his, and our, vision of particular landscapes. The darkness of Eichler’s image is less melancholy than it is deeply meditative and calming. In Eichler’s imagination, the landscape and the weather have a timeless power in a world too easily altered by human beings.

11. Samantha HOBSON
Australian, born 1981; language group Kuuku Ya’u

Burn grass season  2000
oil on canvas
Geelong Gallery
Gift of Jim and Libby Cousins, 2006

Samantha Hobson was born in Lockhart River, on the eastern coast of Cape York Peninsula, Queensland. She belongs to the Kuuku Ya’u (Sand Beach people) who live between the rainforest and the Coral Sea.

Her early, urgently gestural abstract paintings represented something of her experience of the violence and social breakdown occurring in remote communities, a stark contrast to the natural paradise of her and her ancestors’ country. This work is from a series of fire paintings that are the result of Hobson’s acute observations of her country. On the one hand this work reflects cataclysmic and transformative natural events like brushfire, and on another acts as a metaphor for physical and psychological trauma.

12. Robert JACKS
Australian  1943–2014

Metropolis  c. 1985
oil on canvas
Geelong Gallery
Gift of Dr Colin and Mrs Elizabeth Laverty, 2005

Robert Jacks was one of Australia’s most significant abstract artists. His Metropolis series of the mid-1980s is an extensive group of large abstracted representations of the city, and reflect his experience of Manhattan, New York (where he lived during the early 1970s) and Sydney.

13. Louis KAHAN
born Austria 1905; arrived Australia 1947; died 2002

Oil refinery  1962
oil on composition board
Geelong Gallery
Gift of Shell Refinery Company, 1963

Louis Kahan settled in Melbourne in the early 1950s and quickly established a reputation as a fine portrait artist. He won the 1962 Archibald Prize for his dramatic portrait of writer Patrick White. This picture of the Shell Refinery in North Geelong is painted as if from the industrial products of the refinery itself. Kahan reflects on the necessity and terrible beauty of the industrial complex perched on Corio Bay.

14. Sam LEACH
Australian, born 1973

Peacock going up  2006
oil on canvas
Geelong Gallery
Fletcher Jones art prize, 2006

Peacock going up was the recipient of the Fletcher Jones art prize (now Geelong contemporary art prize) in 2006. Sam Leach’s works are influenced by art history, science, and philosophy. In the series of works from which this painting is drawn, Leach combined his interests in the tradition of still life, science and empirical data and observation, and the relationship between humans and animals, and our fleeting existence on a shared planet. The aesthetic refinement and visual precision of his images is a deliberate ploy by Leach to encourage viewers to engage slowly with the object of his picture, in order to summon deeper subjective, emotional responses to the lifeless but still beautiful peacock.
15. Stieg PERSSON  
Australian, born 1959

**Painting 1989, the first anniversary  1989**  
oil on canvas  
Geelong Gallery  
Gift of the Bank of Melbourne, 1997

This important early painting by Melbourne artist Stieg Persson is an exemplar of a period in which his predominantly monochrome paintings juxtaposed lyrical, free-flowing arabesque motifs, with painterly abstract spaces that evoked indeterminate spaces suggesting landscape or the recesses and subjective realms of the mind and imagination. The very act of painting and the communicative potential of the medium, itself was, and remains, of vital importance to Persson.

16. Sally ROSS  
Australian, born 1969

**Volcano (grey)  2013**  
oil on canvas  
Geelong Gallery  
Gift of the artist, 2015

Sally Ross's recent painting has reflected on landscape and portraiture. This image of an erupting volcano is from a larger series exploring the same subject in a variety of textural and colour treatments. Ross's paintings draw on the imagery of postcards, magazines and the travelogue. This picture of an unidentified volcano is enlivened by Ross's particular pointillist mark and lyrical patterning.

17. Murray WALKER  
Australian, born 1937

**Eleven faces  1982**  
synthetic polymer paint on canvas  
Geelong Gallery  
Purchased with the assistance of the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council, 1982

Murray Walker’s long practice of painting, sculpture and installation has been based on his innate sense of the value in the everyday—from people on the street to the weathered objects that he finds and reclaims as part of his bowser-bird like collection of the stuff of life.

18. Dick WATKINS  
Australian, born 1937

**The Cotton Club 1929  1990**  
synthetic polymer paint on canvas  
Geelong Gallery  
*Scotchmans Hill Vineyard art prize, 1990*

The Cotton Club was a New York City nightclub located in Harlem from 1923 to 1935 before moving to midtown. The notoriously ‘whites only’ (apart from performers) club operated during America’s Prohibition Era. It was the place where jazz composer and pianist Duke Ellington’s career rose to prominence during his band’s residency between 1927 and 1931.

Dick Watkins painting style from the late 1960s to the present has been wildly diverse in its abstract forms: from hard-edge to colour-field, abstract expressionism, action painting, lyrical abstraction. While American painter Jackson Pollock’s spontaneous process and action painting are an influence, *The Cotton Club 1929* reveals Picasso as another dominant art-historical ancestor influencing Watkins’s art. Here we apprehend something of the volume, dynamism and spatial organisation found in Picasso’s paintings of the 1920s and 1930s of ore biomorphic figures.