



Conservation report

Clarice Beckett *Rainy day* 1930

Supported by Geelong Conservation



Clarice Beckett

Rainy day 1930

oil on canvas on board

49.3 (h) x 56.5 (w) cm (sight);

65.6 (h) x 73.2 (w) x 3.5 (d) cm (framed)

Geelong Gallery

Purchased 1973

Accession number: 1973.3

Photographed pre-treatment by George Stawicki

This painting is one of the Gallery's most popular works and as such it was identified as a high priority for conservation.

Attendance at Geelong Conservation 'A day out' events in 2019 contributed to critical fundraising to support this project. Geelong Gallery thanks all who attended for their contribution to our conservation efforts.

Clarice Beckett studied at the National Gallery School under Frederick McCubbin before becoming a pupil at Max Meldrum's art school where the tonal principles of Rembrandt, Velázquez and Corot were championed.

Beckett preferred to work *en plein air*—wheeling a cart packed with paints and easel about the streets of her bayside home in Beaumaris—to capture the modern world. She developed a distinctly atmospheric style, rendering seemingly everyday scenes such as this Melbourne streetscape in a loose painterly style and reduced tonal palette.



Conservation report

Painting—pre-treatment assessment

Completed by conservator Sabine Cotte, April 2020

Support

Canvas laid on board. The support is in good condition, except two small areas of bulging in the upper left corner where the canvas is detached from the board.

Paint layer

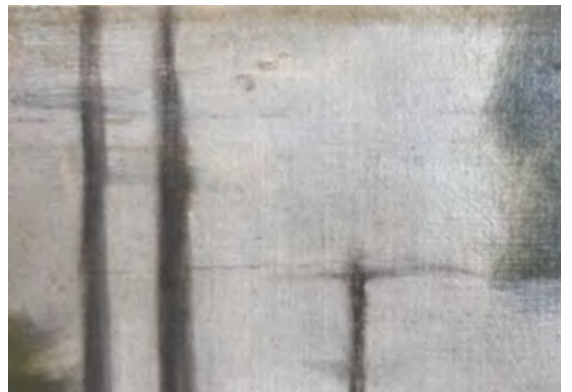
The surface is covered with a layer of discoloured varnish and grime, with local accumulations in the texture of the canvas appearing dark; a few abrasions in the lower right corner expose the under layer. An irregularity, or small slit, in the canvas weave has gathered dirt and appears as a horizontal line (upper central part).



Detail: stain on the left (of photograph) and superficial abrasions in lower right corner
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



Detail: stains in canvas texture
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



Detail: abrasions (top of image) and dark horizontal line in the top section
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



Conservation report

Painting—treatment summary

Completed by conservator Sabine Cotte, April 2020

Reattaching canvas

The two bulging areas of canvas were reattached by inserting an acrylic adhesive in emulsion between the canvas and board using a thin metallic spatula. The canvas was then flattened and left to dry under weights to regain a good planarity.

Cleaning

To remove stains and insect droppings the surface was firstly cleaned of grime with cotton swabs and a cleaning solution. The discoloured varnish was then removed with cotton swabs and a solvent mixture. The accumulations of varnish were removed with a scalpel blade.

Low sheen varnish

The surface was lightly varnished to protect it and isolate the retouching.

Glazing abrasions and remaining traces

The abrasions, small scratches and remaining stains were glazed using varnish-based colours Maimeri for conservation. A light spray of varnish protects the surface after treatment.



Detail: areas of detached canvas bulging (upper left corner of painting)
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



Detail: lower left corner during cleaning (left section cleaned)
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



Detail: during cleaning (left section cleaned)
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



Conservation report

Frame—pre-treatment assessment

Completed by conservator Louise Bradley, June 2020

Frame details

Exterior: 65.6 (h) x 73.2 (w) x 3.5 (d) cm

Sight: 48.9 (h) x 56.8 (w) cm

Rebate: 50.4 (h) x 58.3 (w) x 0.8 (d) cm

Frame maker: unknown

Dates: c. 1970–73 (framed after the artist's death)

Labels and/or inscriptions

Two self-adhesive paper labels attached to verso top of the frame, Geelong Art Gallery label, and Art Gallery of New South Wales *200 Years of Australian Art* exhibition label.

Accession number, 1973.3, inscribed on frame verso upper left and lower right, and on slip verso upper right and lower left.

Frame description

Type of timber: hardwood frame, probably Ramin, softwood slip.

Hanging system: vertical D-rings

Construction details: mitred corners joined with nails

Carved pressed or cast decoration: none

Ground layers and surface decoration: machine applied gesso on timber, frame is gilded with a toned metal foil, the slip has natural linen on the flat, sight edge is gilded with metal foil.

Frame condition

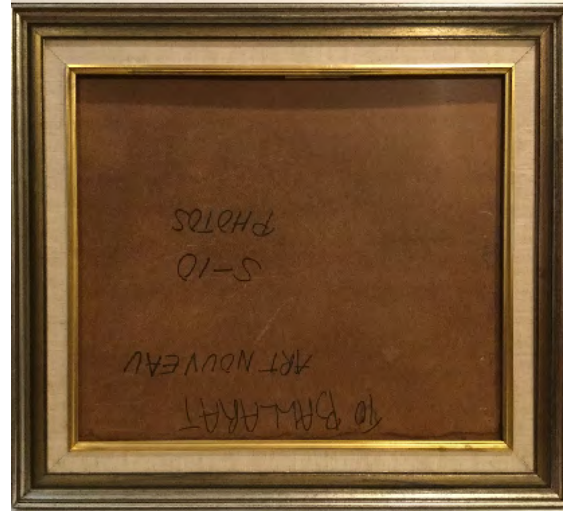
Primary structure: sound but mitre joins slightly loose

Alteration in size: none

Ground layers: sound

Surface layers and coatings: there is some discolouration of the gilding of the slip in the cove at the sight edge.

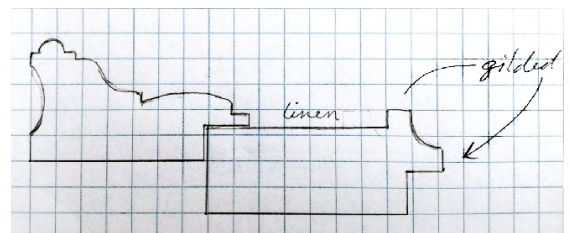
Previous conservation treatment or restoration: none



Frame: recto pre-treatment
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Frame: verso pre-treatment
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Frame profile drawing (measures 3.4 x 8.1 cm)
Louise Bradley



Conservation report

Frame—treatment summary

Completed by conservator Louise Bradley, June 2020

Summary

- Clean frame, dry clean linen slip
- Stabilise joints with joiners glue, tap to close mitres
- Fill gaps in frame and slip with Liquitex filler, tone fills
- Tone losses to frame with Liquitex acrylic and mica pigments
- Tone losses to slip with mica pigments
- Remove green felt tape on rebate and replace with cell air foam
- Back frame with 3 mm acrylic
- Remove labels from frame and encapsulate, fit to acrylic backing
- Fit with mirror plates, cup washers and countersunk screws
- Masonite backing board was not fitted back into the frame but was wrapped and returned to Geelong Gallery



Frame: recto post-treatment
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Frame: verso post-treatment
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Encapsulated labels (completed as part of treatment)
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Conservation report

Frame and painting—post-treatment



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Purchased 1973

This painting and frame were conserved with the support of Geelong Conservation

Photographed post-treatment

Photographer: Louise Bradley

Painting conservation

Sabine Cotte, April 2020

Frame conservation

Louise Bradley, June 2020