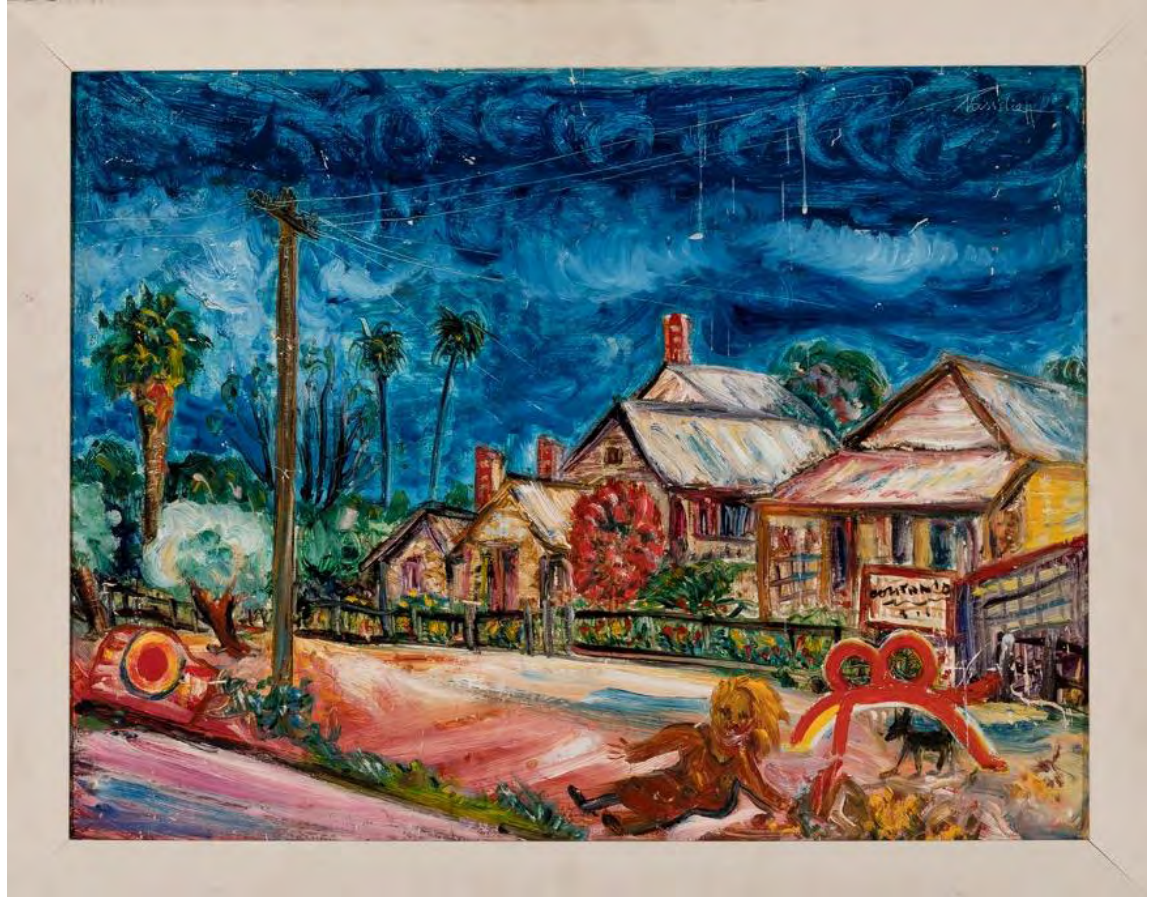




# Conservation report

## Danila Vassilieff *An accident I saw* 1948

Supported by Geelong Conservation



### Danila Vassilieff

*An accident I saw* 1948

oil on board

47.0 (h) x 61.1 (w) cm (sight)

54.1 (h) x 68.6 (w) x 2.1 (d) cm (frame)

Geelong Gallery

Gift of the AG Morant Estate, 2005

Accession number: 2005.2

Photographed pre-treatment by Sabine Cotte

This painting was identified as a high priority for conservation given its condition, place within the artist's oeuvre and exceptional provenance to Anthony Morant (a key supporter of the artist).

It was aligned to the Geelong Conservation fundraising excursion to Heide Museum of Modern Art, given Vassilieff's involvement in the 1940s and '50s with the artistic circle associated with the home of John and Sunday Reed.

Life's simple pleasures and struggles were the main inspiration for Vassilieff's street scenes of the 1940s and '50s. Here, the artist documents the aftermath of an accident in a characteristically bold palette, generating a sense of intrigue by capturing the small neighbourhood dog on the scene: potentially another witness to—or cause of—the tumult of a few moments prior.

This painting is one of twelve works by Danila Vassilieff originally loaned to the Gallery in 1979 by the estate of AG (Tony) Morant. Vassilieff met Morant, a local mechanic, in 1957, when he moved to Melbourne to take up a position teaching art at Eltham High School. They became good friends, with Vassilieff bequeathing several works to Morant before the artist's death in 1958.



# Conservation report

## Painting—pre-treatment assessment

Completed by conservator Sabine Cotte, January–February 2020

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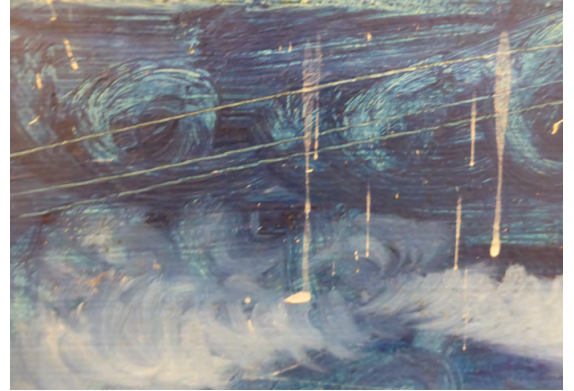
### Support

The support is in good condition.

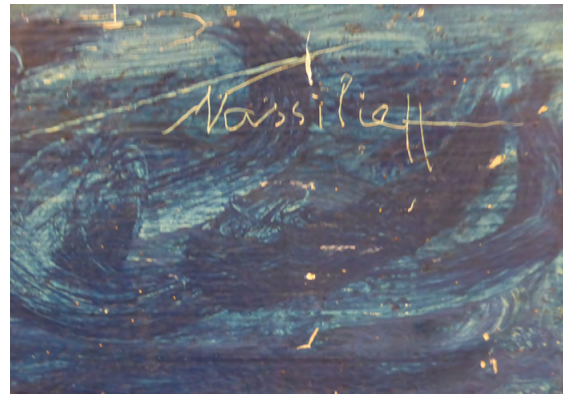
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### Paint layer

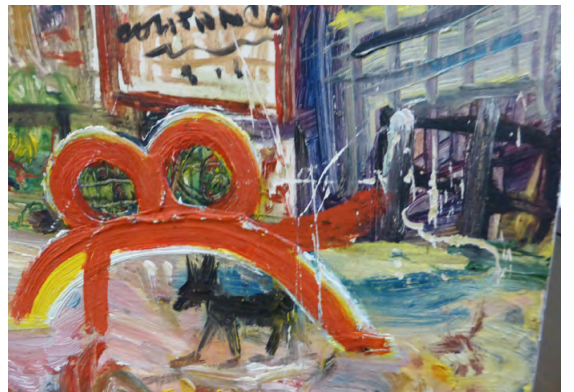
The surface is covered with a light layer of grime, with local stains; there are a great number of scratches, small losses and abrasions scattered on the whole surface, and particularly in the perimeter area. Dripping projections of white liquid are visible in the upper right section.



Detail: scratches and white vertical drips  
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



Detail: scratches and signature etched in paint  
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



Detail: deep scratches in lower right section  
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



# Conservation report

## Painting—treatment summary

Completed by conservator Sabine Cotte, January–February 2020

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### Superficial cleaning and removal of stains and projections

The surface was cleaned with cotton swabs and cleaning solution, then cleared with distilled water. The white projections were reduced with the same solvent and a scalpel blade, but traces remained in the paint layer.

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### Filling paint losses and deep scratches

The losses and deep scratches were filled with vinyl stucco Modostuc.

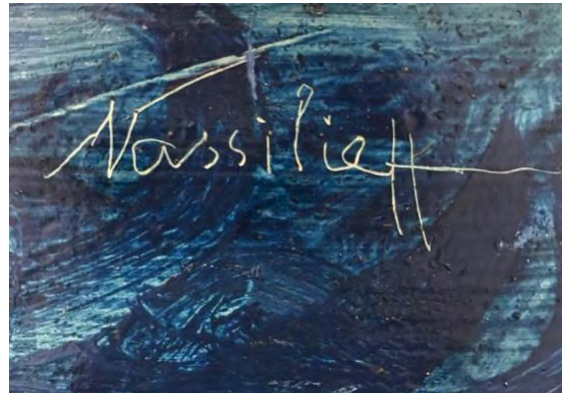
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### Glazing abrasions

After varnishing, the losses and abrasions were inpainted using varnish-based colours Maimeri for conservation.



Detail: after cleaning, with traces of white drips  
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



Detail: after treatment, signature  
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



Detail: post-treatment  
Photographer: Sabine Cotte



# Conservation report

## Frame—pre-treatment assessment

Completed by conservator Louise Bradley, June 2020

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### Frame details

Exterior: 54.1 (h) x 68.6 (w) cm

Sight: 45.7 (h) x 60.2 (w) cm

Rebate: 46.9 (h) x 61.4 (w) cm

Frame maker: unknown,  
possibly Danila Vassilieff

Date: unknown, possibly contemporary  
with painting (1948)

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### Labels and/or inscriptions

Two Sotheby's gummed paper labels  
measuring 1.9 x 3.1 cm, on upper  
member. Both labels are inscribed  
with same numbers: 004439 above the  
word Sotheby's, and 1 below the word  
Sotheby's.

Inscribed verso lower right in pencil:

L1979.2, and in red paint: 2005.2

[NB: L1979.2 is the first number assigned  
when the work came to Geelong Gallery  
as a loan in 1979, 2005.2 is the accession  
number assigned when the work was  
formally acquired in 2005]. A fragment of  
newspaper is attached to the frame lower  
PRS (proper right side).



Frame: recto pre-treatment  
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Frame: verso pre-treatment  
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Details: labels and inscriptions on verso, upper member  
Photographer: Louise Bradley



# Conservation report

## Frame—pre-treatment assessment

Completed by conservator Louise Bradley, June 2020

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### Frame description

Type of timber: Victorian Ash

Hanging system including location of old screw holes: AMS single hole D-rings are fitted on both sides with the ring 11.9 cm from top edge. There are four more holes on each side.

Construction details: mitred corners joined with nails. Nails are on both sides, top and bottom at every corner, so two nails coming from both sides at every corner.

Ground layers and surface decoration: possibly undercoat. A white layer is visible on the verso as well as the paint from recto.

Surface layers and coatings: light grey-green paint, most likely a household acrylic paint.

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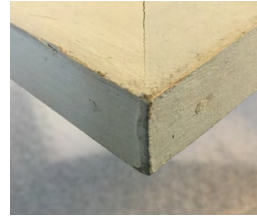
### Frame condition

Primary structure: sound, slight opening of mitred corners.

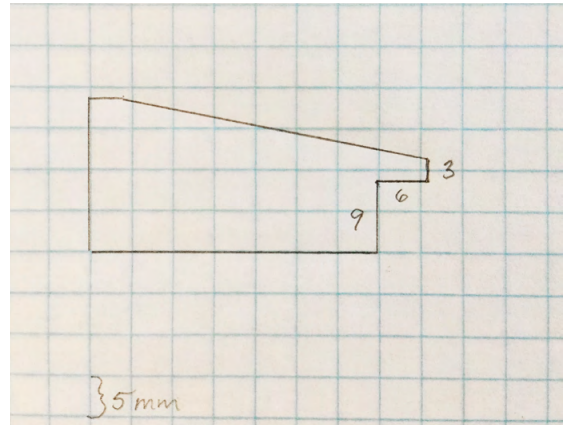
Alteration in size: none

Ground and surface coatings: surface is slightly dirty, minor loss of paint and undercoat, loss and discolouration around the fill of a hole on upper PRS

Previous conservation treatment or restoration: unknown



Detail: mitred corners of frame  
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Frame profile drawing  
Drawing: Louise Bradley



Detail: mitred corners of frame  
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Detail: minor loss at bottom back edge  
Photographer: Louise Bradley



# Conservation report

## Frame—treatment summary

Completed by conservator Louise Bradley, June 2020

### Summary

- Dry clean surface using Staedtler eraser, dry sponge, and document cleaning pad
- Removal of discoloured fill PRS, fill with Liquitex filler, tone
- Tone loss at bottom back edge
- Cover fragment of newspaper frame verso lower PRS with 10 ums Mylar
- Line frame rebate with gummed paper tape, then cell air foam attached with 3M double-sided tape
- Cut 3 mm acrylic to back painting
- Remove labels from frame and encapsulate, fit to acrylic backing
- Change screws on the D-rings to countersunk screws with cup washers
- Fit painting with mirror plates using countersunk screws and cup washers



Detail: (post-treatment) frame verso  
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Detail: (post-treatment) tone loss at bottom back edge  
Photographer: Louise Bradley



Detail: (post-treatment) fragment of newspaper, frame verso lower PRS covered with 10 ums Mylar (transparent)  
Photographer: Louise Bradley



# Conservation report

## Frame and painting—post-treatment



**Danila Vassiliev**

*An accident I saw* 1948

oil on board

Geelong Gallery

Gift of the AG Morant Estate, 2005

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

Photographed post-treatment  
Photographer: Louise Bradley

Please note: the pre- and post-treatment photographs were taken under different studio conditions.

**Painting conservation**

Sabine Cotte, January–February 2020

**Frame conservation**

Louise Bradley, June 2020