



Colourfield, Hard Edge and Abstract Expressionism to distil a distinctly Australian vision that strongly holds its own. It is a show not to be missed.'

The exhibition takes audiences on a journey from the early twentieth century, charting the evolution of abstract art from European Cubism and avant-garde art practices in Paris and London – and the key Australian women participants who brought back to Australia the key tenets of modernism – through to the breakthroughs of the New York school in terms of Abstract Expressionism, Hard Edge abstraction and Minimalism, and on to the present day. The exhibition celebrates the work of women who led the charge early on in this field showing curiosity, imagination, and a breathless passion for colour, shape and rhythm, as they engaged with one of the defining movements of the twentieth century.

*Abstraction* Curator **Lara Nicholls** said, 'The most striking thing about this exhibition is that, despite the fact that many of the women who are represented were innovators and leaders, many of them have fallen into relative obscurity. Their work was rarely exhibited or included in critical studies of Abstraction in this country. In this exhibition alone there are twenty-six works that have not been shown since their creation or premiere exhibition. One such example is Janet Dawson's *Study for lighthouse*, which was shown in Sydney in 1968. Dawson then kept the work wrapped in a blanket for over forty years before gifting it to the National Gallery of Australia in 2015, which accounts for the clarity and freshness of the work, which made it look as though it had just been painted when we first unwrapped it in our conservation laboratory. This will be the first time the work has been shown since 1968.'

A small suite of gouache studies by Anne Dangar, painted in the early 1930s after she had arrived at Albert Gleizes' artist colony in Sablons in the Rhône Valley and acquired by the National Gallery of Australia from a French collection in 2012, have never been seen before in Australia.

This National Gallery of Australia exhibition also reveals the significant commitment of our national collecting institution to acquiring the works of these ground-breaking artists over several decades. Launched at Geelong Gallery before a national tour, *Abstraction: celebrating Australian women abstract artists* will illustrate the critical role of female artists in the development of Abstraction in Australia, reveal the stylistic connections that flow between their works, whilst also bringing a number of lesser-known artists to greater prominence. – Ends –

## Public programming—

### Floortalks

**Abstraction—Lara Nicholls, Curator**  
25 February, from 11.30am to 12.30pm

### International Women's Day

**International Women's Day guided tour**  
8 March at 2.00pm

**Abstraction—Jason Smith, Director**  
18 March, from 2.00pm to 2.45pm

**International Women's Day: In conversation**  
**Kaz Paton, Melinda Harper and Lisa Sullivan**  
8 March, from 5.00pm to 7.30pm

### First Friday lecture

**Professor Jeanette Hoorn—art and gender**  
3 March, from 11.00am to 12.00pm

## Exhibition sponsors

**NGA**

National Gallery of Australia



Australian Government  
National Collecting Institutions  
Touring & Outreach Program

This project has been assisted by the generous support of the National Collecting Institutions Touring and Outreach Program, an Australian Government program aiming to improve access to the national collections for all Australians.

## Government partners



Geelong Gallery is supported by the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria

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Little Malop Street Geelong VIC 3220 | T: 03 5229 3645 | **Free entry** Open daily 10am–5pm  
Closed Good Friday | [www.geelonggallery.org.au](http://www.geelonggallery.org.au)

**Geelong  
Gallery**