



# Media Release

**Media Contact**  
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## Stephen Bram— abstract painting

Geelong Gallery  
23 November 2019 to 23 February 2020

Free entry  
Open daily 10am to 5pm



Stephen Bram  
*Untitled* 2014  
synthetic polymer paint on canvas  
Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery  
Photographer: Christian Capurro

This summer, Geelong Gallery presents an exhibition of new paintings by Melbourne-based abstractionist **Stephen Bram**.

Bram began exhibiting his work in the late-1980s and is critically acclaimed for highly refined paintings on stretched canvases, panels and boards, large-scale wall paintings, and architectural environments that he has produced and exhibited in galleries around the world. Bram's practice has been characterised by precise, dynamic 'architectural' paintings that typically consisted of hard-edged abstract shapes, creating in their flat abstraction the sensation of great spatial depth.

Bram's long engagement with abstraction takes, for him, a radical shift in Geelong Gallery's forthcoming exhibition of these recent—and never previously exhibited—black and white paintings that extend the ways in which Bram tests illusion, representation, landscape, architecture and the perception of viewers.

Geelong Gallery Director & CEO Jason Smith says: 'We are extremely pleased to be presenting this exhibition of new works and look forward to introducing first time audiences to Stephen's work while providing an opportunity for established audiences to see the development in the artist's recent body of work.'

Author of the exhibition catalogue essay, Michael Graf, has said of these new works: 'The non-geometric paintings in black and white that have emerged quietly from Bram's studio over the last few years are remarkable on every level. They upend almost every assumption anyone could make about what a Stephen Bram painting should look like. And unlike all of his other work, they are made without any prior planning, completely dispensing with his perspective system.

Additionally, whereas Bram usually works with a paint roller and masking tape, the abstract forms of the new works are slowly built up with small black brush marks ... Bram's dabs form a series of loose, overlapping grids that suggest areas of light and dark, and these abstract compositions can also give an impression of three-dimensional objects.'

In addition to the new series of works, a suite of five paintings from 2012–16 will be exhibited in the adjacent gallery to provide a counterpoint to the recent black and white works. In these earlier paintings, Bram employs a more extensive colour palette and depicts what might be described as more precise hard-edged forms. For the artist however, there are many similarities between the two bodies of work.

According to Bram: 'Both groups of work are produced improvisationally, more or less, but always in the context of a system of simple rules. The rules are precise in the larger coloured works and loose or fluid in the black and white works. The works in both groups are ambiguous, as all abstraction is, but unlike [a lot of] abstraction they explicitly engage with representation. They seem to show something, but what they show doesn't have a name and whatever it is it doesn't persist, from one time to another it changes.'

Stephen Bram is represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne.



Geelong Gallery  
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Geelong VIC 3220 Australia

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Free entry  
Open daily 10am – 5pm

Drop-in tours  
Saturday and Sunday



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*Untitled 2017*  
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Photographer: Christian Capurro

## **Stephen Bram—abstract painting**

Saturday 23 November 2019 to Sunday 23 February 2020

Free entry  
Open daily 10am to 5pm  
Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day

### **Floortalk**

Stephen Bram  
Saturday 22 February at 11.00am

Join exhibiting artist Stephen Bram as he discusses his new series of mesmerising black and white abstract paintings.

Free event | No bookings required

### **Catalogue**

A printed catalogue, including installation images, will be released and available for purchase in the Geelong Gallery Store (in-store and online) before Christmas.

### **Catalogue partner**

Friends of Geelong Gallery



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