

# Silver mornings and mists

As her works reveal to us, Nature was Clarice Beckett's inspiration, and she returned again and again to familiar locations to capture them at different times. The water's edge was a place of contemplation for her and provided a rich fund of imagery and atmospheric effects.

Beckett's capacity to see, feel and paint diffuse light and enveloping mists resulted in compositions of radical reduction but rich painterly vibration. Beckett focussed her eye on what was before her and avoided superfluous detail. In *Silver morning (Near Beaumaris)* and *Sea drift* the economy of her painterly mark and deft configuration of light, reflection, and human movement can border on minimalism. Some of her landscapes approach pure abstraction in their simplification, like *Autumn evening, Rickett's Point*.

While Beckett suffuses many of her works with a mystical air, it is difficult to look now at Port Phillip Bay, and the waters of Beaumaris or Ricketts Point reflecting a grey-blue sky, to see the near-dissolution of the horizon and the merging of sea and sky, and not think of Beckett's truth to Nature, to her painting of the reality of what she saw.