

**Education Resource Kit**

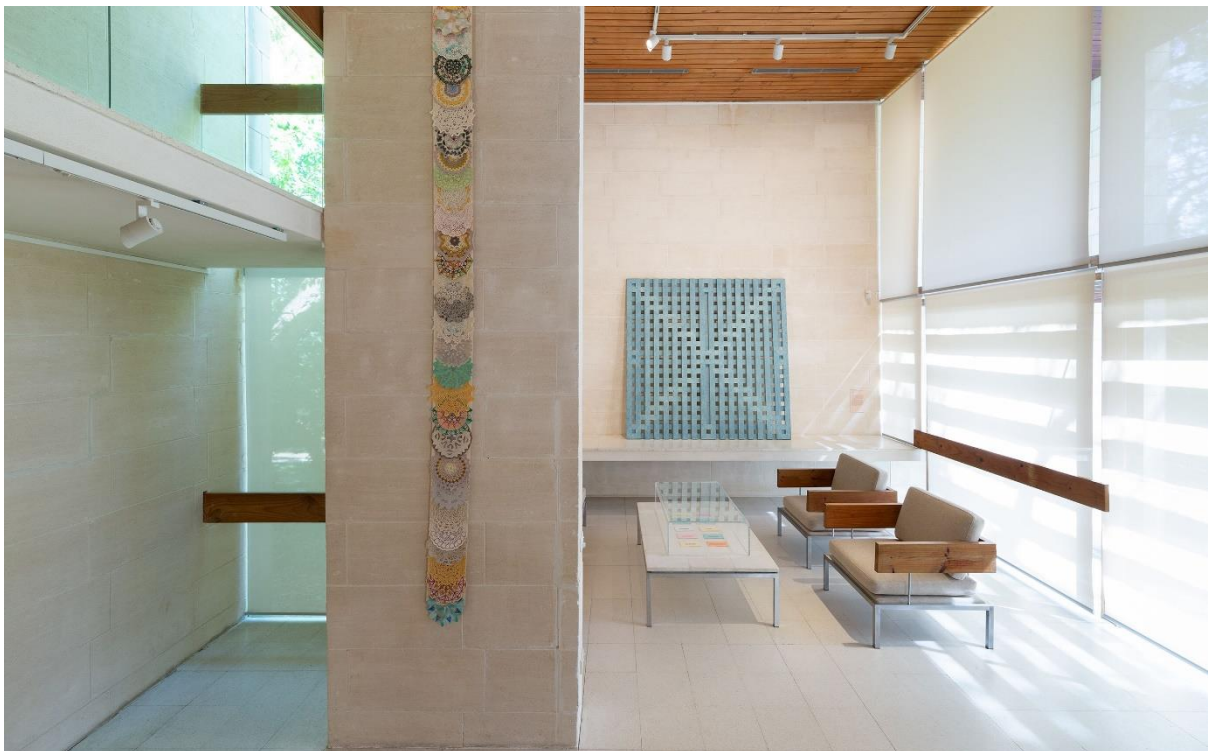
**Year Levels 7-12**

**Heide Modern: A Space Between**

**Dates:** 20 February – 14 July 2024

**Heide venue:** Heide Modern

**Curators:** Laura Lantieri and Chloe Jones



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

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## **Curator's Statement**

When Heide founders John and Sunday Reed moved from the old cottage on the property into Heide II in 1968, it was their dream that the award-winning modernist house would one day become home to a public art museum. Commissioned as a 'gallery to be lived in' and designed by the architect David McGlashan, Heide Modern as it is now known has since hosted and inspired numerous art projects and become a significant architectural destination in its own right.

This exhibition explores the concept of home as a site where conversations, recreation, labour, intimate relationships and closely held values and beliefs cohabit, and considers how architecture shapes lived experience. It reflects on ideas of memory and domesticity, and the intersection of private and public life in the context of a former residence that is now a much-loved museum.

The original McGlashan furniture is displayed alongside a selection of artworks from the Reeds' personal collection and the museum's wider holdings, which have continued to develop in the decades since Heide opened to the public in 1981.

The exhibition features a selection of paintings, works on paper, sculptures, photographs and textile works by the following artists: Micky Allen, Sam Atyeo, Stephen Benwell, Mike Brown, Jon Campbell, Zoë Croggon, Aleks Danko, Katherine Hattam, Joy Hester, Carol Jerrems, Les Kossatz, Robert MacPherson, Hilarie Mais, David McDiarmid, Erica McGilchrist, Rose Nolan, Rosslynd Piggott, Wes Placek, Kathy Temin, Richard Tipping and Jenny Watson.

- Laura Lantieri and Chloe Jones

## **The Heide Collection**

### **Further Information**

When Heide founders John and Sunday Reed first began collecting art in earnest in the 1930s it was not with a clearly formulated strategy, nor with a specific idea about what the outcome might be, but rather with a general inclination and attraction towards the brave and the new. They acquired works by friends and fellow travellers who shared their appetite for exploring the modern condition in all its complexity and were keen to participate in a dialogue about art and ideas that transcended national borders. Very early in their marriage the Reeds made a tacit commitment to support the art and artists of their time, an attitude that saw them champion innovation in contemporary practice across more than five decades.

In many instances the artists they promoted were, or became, their friends and intimates. These associations are reflected in the 500 works that form Heide's foundation collection, which not only charts the relationships that ebbed and flowed across the Reeds' lives, but also traces the development of the modernist movement in Melbourne.

It is perhaps this confluence of the personal and the broader cultural context that makes the collection, and Heide itself, so special. As an art museum Heide offers a beguiling blend of history and storytelling, art and nature, architecture and exhibitions. Set on a sloping grassy acreage with river frontage, a sculpture park, an arboretum and three distinct gallery buildings, it is somehow much more than the sum of its parts. Visitors often say that the human dimension of Heide is palpable, that it emits a sense of lived experience, and of communities and cultures past and present.

As with the Peggy Guggenheim Museum in Venice, Louisiana in Copenhagen, the Maeght Foundation in Saint-Paul de Vence, or Charleston in England's south where the Bloomsbury group gathered, the viewing of art in the place where it was made and collected—where people lived, loved, and shared so much—seems to amplify the imagery and its meaning and make it more relatable and poignant.

The Reeds collected a wide range of art that spanned figurative expressionism to abstraction, beginning with the work of Sam Atyeo, Moya Dyring and Adrian Lawlor in the 1930s and that of Sidney Nolan, Albert Tucker, Joy Hester, Arthur Boyd, John Perceval and Danila Vassilieff in the 1940s. This was followed with paintings by Charles Blackman, Mirka Mora, Elwyn Lynn and Edwin Tanner in the 1950s.

In subsequent years John and Sunday were introduced to the next generation of artists through their adopted son Sweeney, whose work he showed in his two galleries: Strines, in Carlton (1966–69) and Sweeney Reed Gallery, in Fitzroy (1972–75). The Reeds were early champions of Mike Brown and his fellow Annandale Imitation Realists Ross Crothall and Colin Lanceley, and supported the nascent careers of George Baldessin, Sydney Ball, Robert Dickerson, Les Kossatz and Erica McGilchrist.

John and Sunday were actively acquiring art right to the end of their lives. The core collection and the innovative practice and benefaction that it signifies remains at the heart of the Heide Collection as a whole, which has grown in the four decades since the museum opened in 1981 primarily through significant bequests and gifts, and in 2024 numbers more than 3700 artworks.

## Selected artworks in the exhibition

### The bedroom

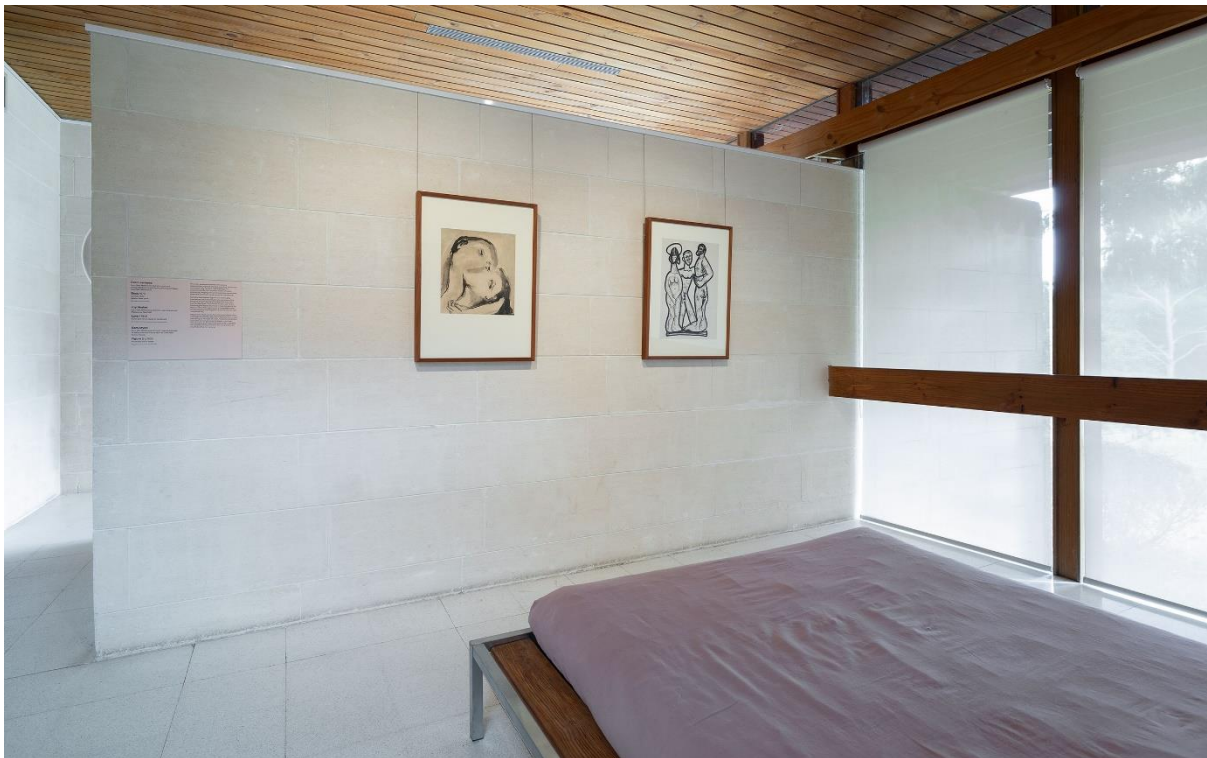
#### Exhibition Label

The works presented in the bedroom explore relationships, physical intimacy, and deep emotional connection. Joy Hester's *Love* drawings are characterised by the recurrent motifs of lovers embracing, merging into and consuming one another, often with a shared eye as a point of intersection.

Similarly, Sam Atyeo's figures are inextricably intertwined, the conjoining forms evocative of his personal and emotional entanglement with John and Sunday Reed. The trio met in 1932, and by the following year Atyeo was more or less living with the Reeds in their first experiment in a *ménage à trois*. For Sunday, the blending of art and love was the very 'current of life'.

Adjacent to these works, Carol Jerrems's *Boys* offers a somewhat abstract yet poetic depiction of a couple embracing at the base of a bed. The entwined bodies exemplify Jerrems's enduring desire to portray intimacy, love and lovers. Her works offer a glimpse into private worlds, where tender connections are enacted before her camera.

### Joy Hester



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

### Further information

Joy Hester

*Love I* 1949

brush and ink on paper on cardboard

54 x 64 cm

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Purchased with funds donated by Nancy Underhill 2018

Although Joy Hester was an artist whose abilities the Reeds quickly recognised and endorsed, she remained little acknowledged in her lifetime. Now lauded as one of Australia’s most significant female modernists, Hester did not receive the critical acclaim she deserved until almost twenty years after her death, with the first major retrospective of her work presented at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1981, to which the Reeds lent works. Several of Hester’s drawings from the 1940s are in the core collection, such as the surrealist-inflected *Gethsemane*, c.1946, which depicts the imagined features of Sunday Reed’s treasured faceless rag doll, and is emblematic of the close bond between the two women.

Hester’s life and work is closely entwined with the story of Heide and John and Sunday Reed in the 1940s and 1950s. While the Reeds, and particularly Sunday, encouraged and supported Hester’s work both practically (through the provision of food and shelter, often for extended periods) and financially, during the span of her relatively short life her idiosyncratic and deeply empathic drawings remained little known outside of a small circle of artists and writers. Hester’s life was marked by personal upheavals including financial struggles and ongoing battles with ill health, yet one thing remained constant: her belief in art and her unswerving commitment to a creative life. The harsh reality of her career may have been scant critical attention and virtually no sales, but this began to change almost immediately after her death in 1960, and she is now rightly considered one of Australia’s foremost modern artists.

Hester had long abandoned oil painting by the time she completed her compelling series *Love* in 1949. Two years into her relationship with fellow artist Gray Smith, in remission from cancer and secure in the knowledge that her young son Sweeney was in the care the Reeds, she made the drawing *Love I*, which evokes the heady and all-consuming days of early romance. However, while her facility with brush and ink captures a moment of emotional and physical tenderness between a man and woman, it also seems to hold the possibility—in the merging of the two forms and the more delineated outline of the male’s large hand—of something more sinister.

At once tender and uncompromising, Hester’s art reflects her ability to impart a sense of psychological intensity that is one of the great strengths of her practice, and among the many reasons that her work continues to captivate and intrigue contemporary audiences.

### Exploring the work of Joy Hester

1. In what ways did the societal norms and gender roles of the 1940s and 1950s impact Joy Hester's recognition and success as an artist during her lifetime?

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2. How does Hester’s portrayal of love and relationships challenge traditional representations of romance?

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3. Explore the symbolism and visual elements present in Hester's *Love* series. How do these elements contribute to the emotional complexity of the artworks?

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4. Consider the placement of Hester's *Love* series in the bedroom. Why do you think the curator’s decided to place her work here? What connections can you make with this location and the subject of the work?

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**The bathroom**

**David McDiarmid**



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

## Further information

David McDiarmid

*Identity Crisis* 1976

paper collage and coloured pencil, gold paint on paper

63 x 50 cm

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Gift of the Estate of David McDiarmid 1998

In 1998 Heide became the recipient of a major body of works by David McDiarmid donated by the artist's estate and describing LGBTQ+ experience in the era of AIDS. Drawing material for his work from outside the canon of high art, McDiarmid often tested what was then regarded as acceptable content in this context.

After staging an extraordinary exhibition ('Secret Love', Hogarth Gallery, Sydney, 1976) addressing homophobic bigotry, sexual hypocrisy and contemporary gay identity in Sydney, McDiarmid visited the United States for the first time in 1977. He found the experience of the vibrant gay subcultures of San Francisco and New York transforming, and relocated to New York in 1979.

The hedonistic euphoria of this creative milieu was to be brutally punctured by the scourge of AIDS, a topic which McDiarmid began addressing in his art as early as 1983. In 1987, after his own HIV-positive diagnosis, McDiarmid returned to Sydney. As the AIDS epidemic spread throughout Australia, its seemingly unstoppable mortality rate prior to the discovery of preventative medications in the mid-1990s incited fear and hatred. Gay men who had only recently seen their sexuality decriminalised found themselves newly stigmatised and vilified, accused of spreading HIV/AIDS through irresponsible sexual practices.

Seeking to maintain a sex-positive view in his artistic practice despite the denial that comes too easily from fear, McDiarmid made works at this time about sexuality and defiance as well as fragility and loss.

## Exploring the work of David McDiarmid

1. How does David McDiarmid's artwork challenge societal attitudes towards LGBTQ+ individuals during the era of AIDS?

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2. What messages does McDiarmid's artwork convey about sexuality, defiance, fragility, and loss?

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3. Why do you think the curators placed this artwork in the bathroom? What connections can you make with this location and the subject of the work?

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## The study

Jon Campbell



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

### Exhibition Label

Jon Campbell

*Yeah Flag* 2006

polycotton, bunting, brass

90 x 180 cm

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Purchased through the Heide Foundation 2006

*Yeah Flag* and the accompanying artworks in this room engage with ideas of dialogue and interpersonal exchange that cross public and private domains.

In 2006 Jon Campbell was commissioned by Heide to create a new work in his *Yeah Flag* series to be displayed in the museum's sculpture park. With its golden yellow fabric and hot pink lettering, *Yeah Flag* is an optimistic and playful alternative to the nationalism portrayed by the official Australian Blue Ensign. Over time the outdoor elements wore away the pink letters, rendering the brightly enthusiastic 'yeah' into a more casual, well-worn affirmation. Hanging in John and Sunday's former study, the flag serves as a placard of conversational familiarity, personal thought or collective political belief.

**Exploring the work of Jon Campbell**

1. How does Jon Campbell's *Yeah Flag* challenge traditional notions of national identity and patriotism through its use of colour and text?

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2. In what ways does the transformation of the *Yeah Flag* over time, due to exposure to outdoor elements, reflect changes in its message or significance?

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3. Considering the placement of the *Yeah Flag* in John and Sunday's former study, how does its presence contribute to the overall atmosphere of dialogue and personal expression within the room?

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## Rose Nolan



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

### Exhibition Label

Rose Nolan

*You See What I'm Saying (Version 2)* 2013

laser cut acrylic

18 x 114.5 x 15.5 cm

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Anthony Scott 2018

This clear Perspex structure bears the paradoxical phrase 'You see what I'm saying' in laser-cut lettering. Its irregular concertina shape makes the words virtually invisible, and their message—ironically—difficult to read and almost abstract. Nolan has said of the work:

*The original phrase presented itself to me in New York in 2010 when I was there for six months. I overheard it from telephone conversations in the subway, etc. I always enjoyed the slippage between seeing, reading and voice so began a series of works, in different formats, using that text. Perspex is a strong material but almost ephemeral at the same time, it adds a degree of difficulty, so subverts the text further. The text almost disappears as if no longer being able to be heard trailing off along the ribbon-like form.*

**Exploring the work of Rose Nolan**

1. How do you think the experience of hearing a phrase like ‘You see what I’m saying’ in a telephone conversation in 2010 might differ from the way we communicate through smartphone conversations today?

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2. What do you think the artist, Nolan, is trying to convey about the relationship between seeing, reading, and voice in the context of modern communication technology?

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3. In what ways does Nolan’s use of Perspex as a material and the almost invisible lettering of the phrase add to the message or meaning of the artwork?

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4. What connections can you make with this location and the subject of the work?

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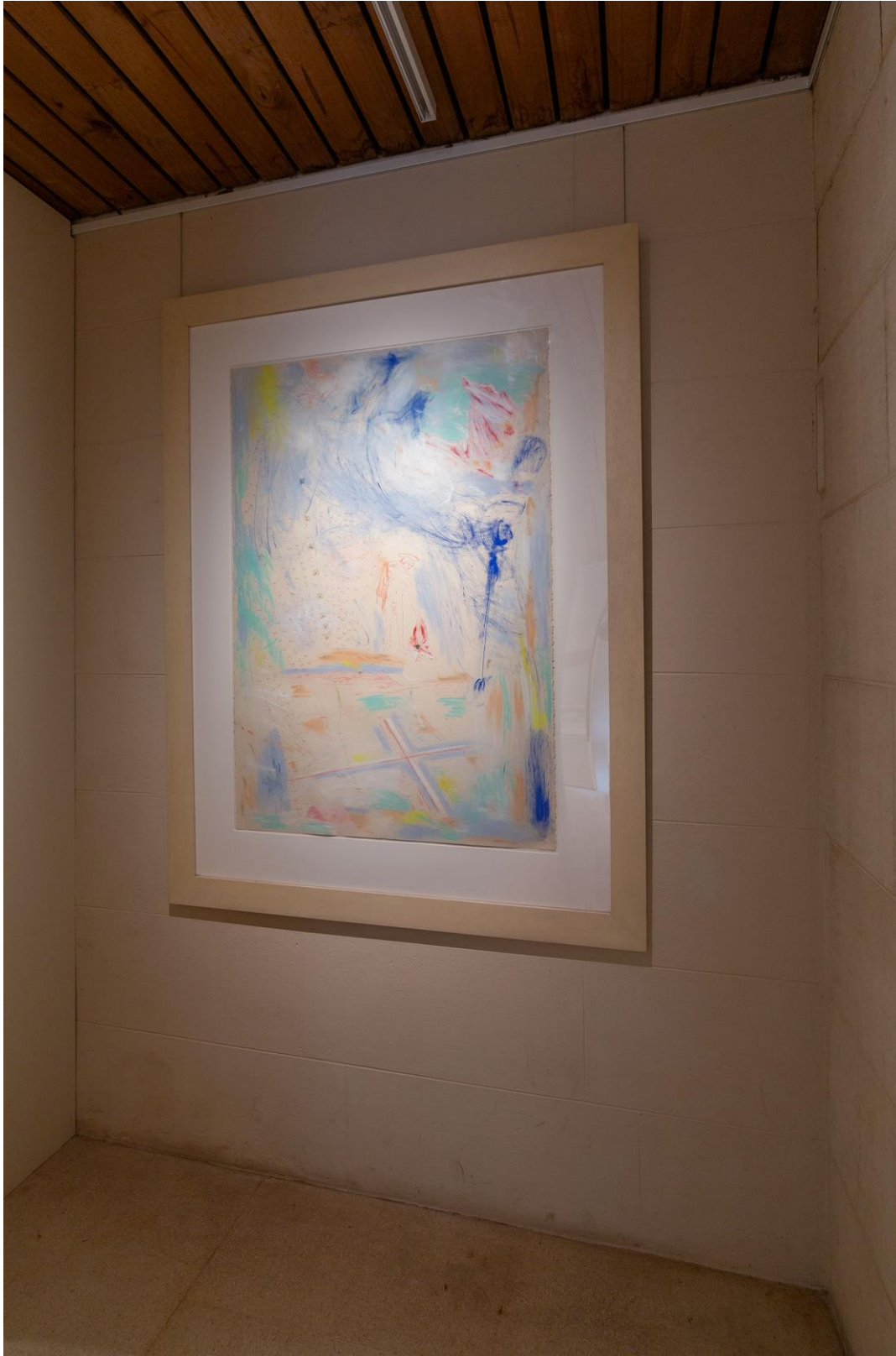
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**The powder room**

**Micky Allan**



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

## Exhibition Label

Micky Allan

*From Above* 1988

pastel, fibre-tipped pen, coloured pencils and collage on paper

112 x 77 cm (sheet), 150 x 114.3 cm (frame)

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Bequest of Barrett Reid 2000

An influential artist in the women's movement during the 1970s, Micky Allan shifted the focus of her practice in the 1980s and 90s following travels across Asia, where she became interested in Eastern philosophy and spirituality. At the same time she moved from photography to drawing and painting, synthesising elements of representation and abstraction in her work and revealing imaginary worlds of her own creation.

With its winged and haloed figures, *From Above* presents a sensuous and ethereal vision of interior contemplation and reflection. The picture's atmospheric effect is anchored and brought into the human realm by the delicately rendered cross.

The work's presentation in this small room allows for a quiet and immersive viewing experience, freed from external influences. This invokes the ways in which our homes offer us relief from the outside world, providing a comfortable and safe space for introspection, spiritual meditation, and dreaming.

### Exploring the work of Micky Allan

1. How does the small room where *From Above* is displayed make you feel? Does it remind you of being at home, where you can relax and think quietly?

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2. How does the use of winged and haloed figures in *From Above* enhance the feeling of spirituality or meditation?

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## The Conversation Pit

Jenny Watson



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

### Exhibition Label

Jenny Watson

*The Bottled Memories* (3)

*The Bottled Memories* (5)

from the portfolio *Aus Australien* 1988

etching, aquatint and gouache

79.8 x 47.8 cm (plate) 99.4 x 70.4 cm (sheet)

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Gift of Peter Tyndall 2012

Jenny Watson's work often has an autobiographical underlay, and characteristically features text in the form of stories or idioms that trigger free associations between image, language and memory. As their title suggests, the aquatints in this series depict the artist's personal history as memories preserved within bottles.

Child-like figures, domestic interiors, objects and pets are among the expressively drawn scenes and fragments that gather at the bottom of the bottles like sediment. Above them fractured words float in the air, the letters split and inverted so that their meaning is illegible, and the memories fallible and incomplete. Drawn from Watson's childhood recollections and dreams, these diaristic images

convey the power of certain memories to stick with us and inform our identities, while others dissipate from our minds.

### Further information

Like several other painters of her generation, Watson found herself in the centre of a figurative zeitgeist in Australian art in the mid-1980s. Her imagery changed from meticulously rendered coloured pencil drawings made throughout the 1970s—of favourite pets, musicians and prominent women in the Australian art world—to painterly renditions of the Melbourne houses in which she had lived.

Around 1980 Watson adopted a deliberately crude, informal and childlike brushstroke in paintings that began to combine image and text (and text as image), while continuing to draw on experiences from her immediate environment, popular culture, personal life and psyche. From the early 1980s her painting became an intensely diaristic and complex form of self-portraiture in which she cast herself as Lewis Carroll's *Alice*, or the romantic aristocratic lady down on her luck, in part a visual metaphor for the reduced economic status of many Australian artists in the period.

### Exploring the work of Jenny Watson

1. How does Jenny Watson use drawing and painting techniques to create images that look like they're inside bottles?

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2. What do you think she does to make them seem like they're floating?

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3. Why do you think Jenny Watson puts words in her artwork about her memories? How do these words help us understand what she's feeling and remembering?

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## Stephen Benwell



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

### Further information

Stephen Benwell

*Vase* 1991

stoneware

42 x 27 cm (diam.)

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Gift of Nellie Castan 2014

Since the early 1970s Stephen Benwell has combined the craft traditions and practical resolutions of the studio potter with the painterly, sculptural, and theoretical concerns of the conceptual artist. In doing so, Benwell has continually celebrated and challenged the conventions of ceramics. While making use of classical shapes and images, his work has expanded our understanding of the art of the potter.

From the outset, Benwell has shunned the traditional potter's wheel in favour of hand-building, and this freedom enables him to deploy the pot as a three-dimensional 'canvas' for the painterly mark, graphic notations of daily observations, and personal, autobiographical imagery.

In 2013 a forty-year retrospective at Heide of Benwell's ceramics revealed their development from early, seemingly archaic, eccentric forms melding references to the antique, through the evolution of

hand-built pots and their complex, sometimes lyrically painted surfaces, to the abstract and figurative sculptural forms.

*Vase* is one of many commandingly-scaled large vases hand-built by Benwell over the past five decades. It exemplifies the deftness with which his painting can shift from the wildly polychromatic to the starkly monochromatic. Note Benwell's surface drawing, pictorial fragments and stylised symbols, and the integral relation they have to the irregular, organic form and texture of the hand-built pot.

**Exploring the work of Stephen Benwell**

1. Why do you think Stephen Benwell puts personal stories and pictures on his ceramic pieces? How does this make his artwork more meaningful?

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2. Why do you think Stephen Benwell chooses to shape his ceramics by hand instead of using a pottery wheel? How does this help him express his ideas and observations through painting?

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**The living and dining room**

**Erica McGilchrist**



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

## Exhibition Label

Erica McGilchrist

*Queues of Qs* 1981

*Fern* 1990

*Constellations* 1990

embroidery cotton, synthetic polymer paint and fibre-tipped pen on linen

29 x 26 cm (irreg.); 34.5 x 28 cm (irreg.); 29 x 31 cm (irreg.)

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Gift of Erica McGilchrist 2013

Erica McGilchrist

*D'oyly-oyly-oyly* 1977

cotton, wool, synthetic fibre, stencil and coloured inks, pen, paper, calico

399.5 x 32.5 cm

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Gift of Erica McGilchrist 2014

Erica McGilchrist's embroideries of the 1980s and 90s evolved from her public commission to paint a Melbourne tram in 1979. Her design was based on a patchwork quilt, acknowledging the undervaluation of women's textile practices. The combination of cloth, knots, threads and stitches was then explored in a series of drawings and paintings and finally culminated in embroideries themselves.

In line with feminist rhetoric of the time, McGilchrist borrowed materials and techniques from what had traditionally been considered 'women's work'—domestic and ornamental handcrafts that were previously disregarded or accorded minor status within the canon of art history. This liberating act validated women's experience and domestic subjects and elevated the status of these practices from household activities to 'high art'.

*D'oyly—o'yly—o'yly* was created for *The Women's Show*, an art event held across multiple venues in Adelaide in 1977. It is constructed from found lace doilies that are stitched to a strip of calico, which spills down the length of the living room wall. A major, yet unsung achievement in McGilchrist's oeuvre, this work has not been shown in public since its original display.

## Further Information

Erica McGilchrist's work features prominently in the Heide Collection, following two generous gifts of paintings, drawings and prints from the artist in 1999 and 2005. Although McGilchrist's oeuvre is lesser known than many of her contemporaries represented in the collection, her contribution to the development of Australian modernism is equally significant.

Her talent and deep commitment to modern art was recognised among a predominantly male circle of artists in Melbourne in the 1950s. McGilchrist was a committee member of the Contemporary Art Society and its secretary for several years, and one of the artists who was instrumental, with John Reed, in the formation of the Museum of Modern Art of Australia. She also became a spokesperson and activist for women's art, helping to establish the Women's Art Register in 1975.

Throughout the 1950s McGilchrist was working in both figurative and abstract styles, depending on the approach she felt was most suitable to the mood and meaning of her individual pieces. Of greatest concern to the artist, even in her non-objective works, was how she could best communicate ideas and feelings.

In 1960, with the support of a postgraduate scholarship and the German Government's academic exchange program, McGilchrist travelled to Germany, where she studied in Munich under the geometric abstract painter Ernest Geitlinger at the Academy of Fine Arts. It was a productive period for McGilchrist, which culminated in solo exhibitions in both London and Munich that featured her latest paintings: large gestural abstractions which expressed psychological states in response to not only her own personal circumstances and relationships but also to the broader socio-political context of postwar Europe.

After returning to Melbourne in 1963, McGilchrist produced a number of works that demonstrated an affinity with the international style of late modernism typified by the colourfield painting and hard-edge geometric abstraction, which dominated Australian art at the time. *Abstract Wall Hanging*, 1966, and *Meander*, 1968, with their bold geometric compositions, reflect these tendencies while also marking a return to the fabric wall-based works that the artist first began making in the 1950s.

McGilchrist described these works as 'moveable murals' and considered them as 'an alternative to a painting in a rigid frame', a concept that intersected with ideas challenging the hierarchy of 'high' and 'low' art and divisions between art and real life that were gaining currency internationally during the 1960s. The artist's re-engagement with textiles, which was to become a prominent feature of her work from the 1970s onwards, corresponded with her increasing involvement with the women's art movement and feminism in the following decades.

These developments in McGilchrist's art were galvanised by her encounter with the influential New York art critic, writer and feminist Lucy Lippard, who visited her studio during her visit to Australia for International Women's Year in 1975. It was a defining moment for McGilchrist and she dedicated much of the latter part of her career to developing feminist strategies in her work, employing techniques such as needlepoint embroidery as well as references to cloth, knots, stitches and other motifs associated with the domestic and the notion of 'women's work' as a political feminist statement.

### Exploring the work of Erica McGilchrist

1. How does Erica McGilchrist's use of traditional women's handcrafts, such as embroidery, challenge historical gender roles and elevate them to the status of 'high art'?

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2. In what ways does McGilchrist's artwork, particularly *D'oyly—o'yly—o'yly*, reflect feminist rhetoric and the political climate of the late 20th century?

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3. What role did McGilchrist play in the development of Australian modernism, especially considering her advocacy for women's art and her involvement in establishing institutions like the Women's Art Register?

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## Hilarie Mais



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

### Exhibition Label

Hilarie Mais

*Ala* 1989

oil on wood

201 x 201 x 3.9 cm

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Purchased 1989

Minimal in appearance and form, *Ala* epitomises Hilarie Mais's long-standing preoccupation with the capacity of pure form to evoke, or invoke, emotion. Its symmetrical grid links the work to the impersonal structures of late modernism, though the soft timber, irregularities and hand-painted surface imbue it with human presence, symbolic meaning and a sense of intimacy.

The leaning wooden construction is equivalent in size to Mais's body fully outstretched and the gaps or intervals register her hand or finger size. It proclaims its physicality by joining us in space rather than hanging on the wall, inviting a more direct encounter with the object. Presented within the iconic modernist architecture of Heide Modern, a building that celebrates clean, functional design for living and minimal ornamentation, *Ala* reinvests the space with a sense of humanity and feeling.

### Further Information

Mais has been preoccupied with the linearity and spatial geometry of the grid since the mid 1980s, and her work has elaborated the potential of this modernist archetype to contain and project

personal meaning and content. The grid offers endless possibilities for formal and conceptual manipulation.

There is a humanist dimension to Mais's work that counters the impersonal, anonymous structure of the grid. In this sense her work speaks to an inherent but unselfconscious feminist perspective and a post-minimalist concern to reinvest images and objects with lived experience. This is evoked in the painterly surface where the hand of the artist and her method of construction thwart Minimalism's insistence on depersonalised form.

The title of Mais' work, *Ala*, is a Latin word meaning 'wing', and in this instance refers to the wing of ilium in human anatomy, or the large lateral portions of pelvic bone. The structural organisation of the work alludes to this part of the skeletal structure: the central column may be read as a spine separating triangular wings, which are defined and delineated by slight colour variations across the surface. In *Ala* the formal language of the grid is subtly conditioned by metaphor: the mathematical matrix doubles as porous body.

### Exploring the work of Hilarie Mais

1. How does Hilarie Mais use simple shapes and structures in her artwork to make us feel certain emotions?

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2. What does the grid in Mais's artwork mean, and how does she change it to show her own thoughts and feelings?

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3. Why does Mais use soft wood and irregular shapes in her artwork? How does this make her art feel more personal?

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4. Why is it important that *Ala* is displayed in a modern building? How does this affect how we see the artwork?

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## The laundry

Zoë Croggon



*Heide Modern: A Space Between*, installation view, photograph: Christian Capurro

### Exhibition Label

Zoë Croggon

*Harp 2* 2015

*Kink* 2015

c-type photograph

83 x 74.5 cm; 82.5 x 88.5 cm

Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Purchased with the assistance of The Robert Salzer Foundation 2018

Zoë Croggon's photographic collages consider the relationship between the body and its built environment and are composed by digitally cutting and pasting found images. *Harp 2* and *Kink* belong to a suite of C-type photographs in which the artist spliced together athletic bodies with elements of modernist architecture.

Drawing on her background as a dancer and long-standing interest in movement and performance, these formal and poetic images highlight the dynamic synergies between human and architectural forms, as well as how our environment shapes the ways in which we live.

### Exploring the work of Zoë Croggon

1. How does Zoë Croggon's background as a dancer influence her approach to creating photographic collages that explore the relationship between the human body and modernist architecture?

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2. What visual and thematic connections can be observed between Croggon's artistic depiction of athletic bodies and modernist architecture in her photographic collages *Harp 2* and *Kink*?

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## Discussions with students about the exhibition

When Heide founders John and Sunday Reed first began collecting art in earnest in the 1930s it was not with a clearly formulated strategy, nor with a specific idea about what the outcome might be, but rather with a general inclination and attraction towards the brave and the new.

They acquired works by friends and like-minded acquaintances who shared their appetite for exploring the modern condition in all its complexity and were keen to participate in a dialogue about art and ideas that transcended national borders. Very early in their marriage the Reeds made a tacit commitment to support the art and artists of their time, an attitude that saw them champion innovation in contemporary practice across more than five decades. As a result, the Heide Collection traces the development of the modernist movement in Melbourne.

1. Why do you think the Reeds were attracted to art that explored modern themes and transcended national boundaries? How might this reflect their worldview or interests?

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2. How do the artworks in the Heide Collection reflect the cultural and artistic shifts in Melbourne over different periods of time? Can you identify any specific influences or trends?

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3. Why do you think the Reeds valued innovation and challenging creative practice in their collection? How might this have impacted the artists they supported?

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4. How does the architecture of Heide Modern building enhance or influence the viewing experience of the artworks? Can you think of any specific examples?

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5. Why is it important to consider the original context in which artworks were created and displayed? How does this context affect our interpretation of the artworks?

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6. Do you think experiencing art in a space where people lived and shared experiences adds to its emotional impact? Why or why not?

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7. How do your own experiences of home compare to the themes depicted in the artworks at Heide? Can you identify any commonalities or differences?

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8. What social or historical factors might have influenced the creation of the artworks in the Heide Collection? How do these factors shape our understanding of the artworks?

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9. How does viewing art within the context of its creation and collection at Heide contribute to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the artworks? Can you think of any examples from your own experiences?

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10. What have been your favourite artworks in this exhibition, what have been your favourite rooms, and why?

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**EDUCATION PARTNER**

