

North Rotunda

The elegant North Rotunda was constructed in the 1940s, its cream walls framed by pink-terracotta architraves. Subsequent colour schemes have included simple grey, cream and pale green finishes, as well as its current vibrant red.

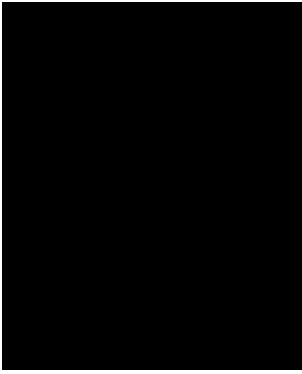
Historically, the Rotunda has exhibited portraiture. These portraits form part of the State Collection, which contains more than one million images collected over 160 years, documenting the social history of Victoria.

The paintings on display here include portraits of writers, poets, artists, activists and other individuals who have contributed to the history and cultural life of the state. The portraits bring to life aspects of Australian culture and society, revealing to us the sitters, the artists and their times. Through them, we can see how portrait-making has changed over time, not only in the stylistic techniques of the artist or the dress of the sitter, but also the genre itself and the scope of what portraiture can be.

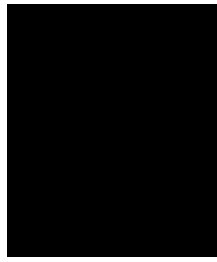
State Library Victoria acknowledges the generosity of Porter's Paints in supplying the custom colour, 'North Rotunda Red, for this gallery.

These portraits, painted at the height of settler colonialism in Tasmania and south-eastern Australia, show that while portraiture is most often used to mark stature and celebrations, traditionally it has also been used to commemorate mourning and sorrowful times.

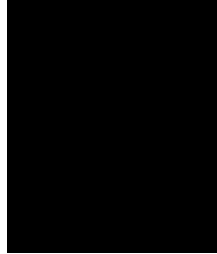
Ellen Cosgrave (nee Atcheson), in the portrait simply titled Mrs John Cosgrave, is featured in mourning dress. Unfortunately, her story is not included in the historic record; she is known only for her husband's role as a politician in early Melbourne. Her portrait sits alongside two others, a mother and a daughter, both named Mary Lawrence. The mother is in mourning and the daughter sits for her engagement portrait. Both enjoyed a life of privilege as the wives of wealthy landowners in Tasmania at a time of great upheaval for Tasmania's First Peoples, a decade after martial law and the Black Line.



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1 Oswald Rose CAMPBELL

Mrs John Cosgrave 1853

Oil on canvas

Find in catalogue: H34829

2 Henry MUNDY

Mrs Lawrence as a widow c. 1841

Oil on canvas

Bequest of Miss Elsie Hindson, 1968, through Mrs Beth Henty-Anderson, 1992

Find in catalogue: H94.103/1

3 Henry MUNDY

Mary Ann Lawrence, later Henty 1841

Oil on canvas

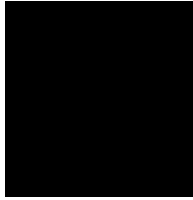
Bequest of Miss Elsie Hindson, 1968, through Mrs Beth Henty-Anderson, 1992

Find in catalogue: H94.103/2

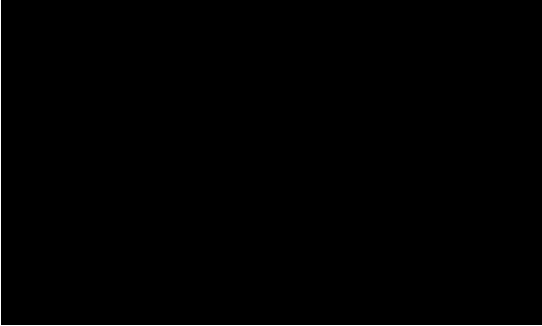
Maree Clarke, a Yorta Yorta, Wamba Wamba, Mutti Mutti, Boonwurrung woman, is a pivotal figure in reclaiming south-east Australian Aboriginal art and cultural practices. Here we see a portrait of Maree alongside a group portrait of women in mourning, from the series *Ritual and ceremony*, which explores the traditional grief and mourning practices of Aboriginal people along the Murray–Darling. The series speaks of the impacts of colonialism on land, language and culture, but through Clarke's practice of cultural regeneration, we see the power of art to heal. It leaves us to consider the erasure that is the legacy of colonial settlement and collecting institutions.

My art is about regenerating cultural practices, making people aware of, you know, our culture, and that we are a really strong culture, and that we haven't lost anything; I think ... some of these practices have been lying dormant for a while.

– Maree Clarke



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4 Maree CLARKE

Mutti Mutti, Wamba Wamba, Yorta Yorta, Boonwurrung

Self-portrait 2012

Exhibition print of inkjet print photograph

Purchased 2023

5 Maree CLARKE

Mutti Mutti, Wamba Wamba, Yorta Yorta, Boonwurrung

Women in mourning 1, 2012

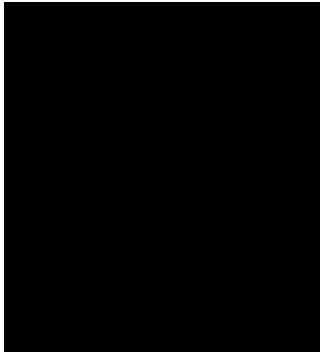
Exhibition print of inkjet print photograph

Purchased 2023

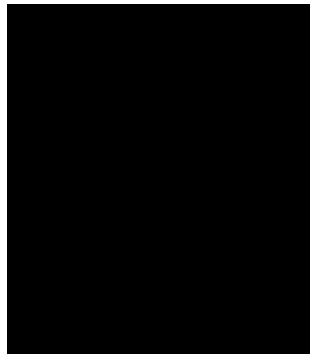
The painting by Sharon West at the centre top of this display is an ironic play on the 19th-century salon hangs, which were popular in Europe and introduced at colonial galleries and museums across the world. Densely hung pictures of animals and scenes from the 'new' Australian colonies verge on fantasy to emphasise the exoticism at the heart of the colonial gaze.

Displayed around West's painting are portraits that the Library has collected over the past 160 years. Many of their subjects are well known for their impact on or contribution to the history of Victoria. There are also people whose names have not been recorded in the archives, so the sitters cannot be identified.

Two recent self-portraits by photographers Atong Atem and Hoda Afshar question the traditions of representing identity. Atem alludes to classical Western painting through the pose she assumes, yet she subverts this tradition by using her colourful dress as a striking symbol of her South Sudanese culture. By contrast, Afshar wears a hijab in her Andy Warholesque portrait to comment on the stereotypical representations of Islamic women in Western art, and society more broadly.



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6 Max FÜRST

Portrait of Pastor Sir Doug Nicholls, Yorta Yorta 1965

Oil on canvas

Gift of the artist, 1974

Find in catalogue: H36045

7 Hoda AFSHAR

The Westoxicated #4 2013–14

Exhibition print of archival pigment print photograph

Purchased 2023

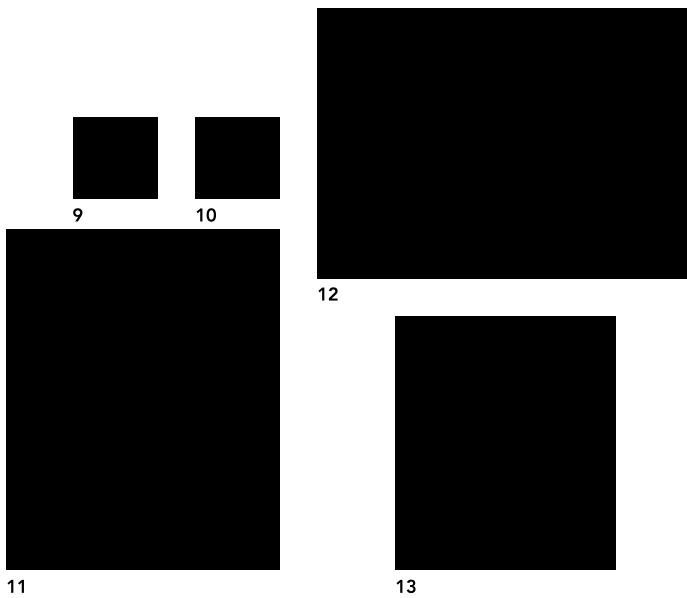
8 Arthur Thomas CHALLEN

Name unrecorded c. 1937

Oil on canvas

Challen Collection

Find in catalogue: H28388



9 Kenny

Gunaikurnai

Four mobs coming together at a meeting place 2022

Acrylic on canvas

Purchased 2023

Find in catalogue: H2023.31/2

10 Dools

Gunaikurnai

Family[®] me, partner and kids 2021

Acrylic on canvas

Purchased 2021

Find in catalogue: H2022.6

11 William BECKWITH MCINNES

Family portrait [Ethel Margaret Ewing] 1926

Oil on canvas

Gift of Mrs Ethel Margaret Ewing Cutten, 1990

Find in catalogue: H92.174

12 Sharon WEST

The Royal Academy summer salon 2006

Oil on canvas

Purchased 2012

Find in catalogue: H2012.253/2

13 Gainsborough DUPONT

Matthew Flinders c. 1788–90

Oil on canvas

Gift of Sir W. Russell Grimwade, 1951

Find in catalogue: H32342



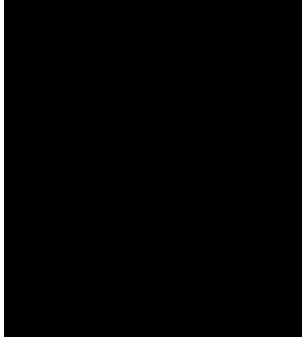
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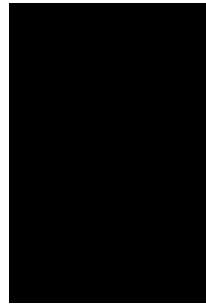
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14 Philip LINDO

Portrait of the late Mr Augustus Tulk 1852

Oil on canvas

Gift of Mrs Jane Tulk, 1878

Find in catalogue: H292

15 May and Mina MOORE

Portrait of a Mori woman, name unrecorded c. 1910–13

Exhibition print of gelatin silver photograph

May and Mina Moore Collection

Find in catalogue: H38782/637

16 Alice BALE

Portrait of William Rowell c. 1924

Oil on canvas

Purchased 1988

Find in catalogue: H88.63

17 Paul FITZGERALD

Portrait of David Wang 1966

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Wang family, 2008

Find in catalogue: H2018.504

18 Rick AMOR

Henry Maas (Buddy Lovestein) 2007

Oil on canvas

Gift of the artist through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2008

Find in catalogue: H2009.82/22

19 Atong ATEM

Yellow Dress 2 2022

Exhibition print of digital photograph

Purchased 2022

Find in catalogue: H2022.122

In 1904 the Australian artist Frederick McCubbin painted his triptych *The Pioneer*. McCubbin hired models and painted the work near Mount Macedon in Victoria, with views across land owned by his friend, William Peter McGregor who was the second chairman of the mining company BHP.

While McCubbin was always non committal about the narrative within his work, *The Pioneer* is undoubtedly a romanticisation of the selectors, who cleared the land in a frenzy of slashing and burning for the mass cultivation of imported livestock. The impact of the cloven hooves of these animals upon the newly bared land changed the composition of the soil forever.

The title of McCubbin's work, *The pioneer*, marginalises thousands of years of nurturing land management by Aboriginal communities. McCubbin's triptych, with its association to the coal mining company and its almost religious view of land clearing by European settlers, offers an unintentionally prophetic vision of the sustained Anglo dominance of Australian popular culture, the continuing extractive nature of the country's economy and the death of Australia's natural environment.

– Yask Desai



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20 Yask DESAI

The big Australian 2020

Exhibition print of digital inkjet on Ilford Gold Fibre Gloss paper

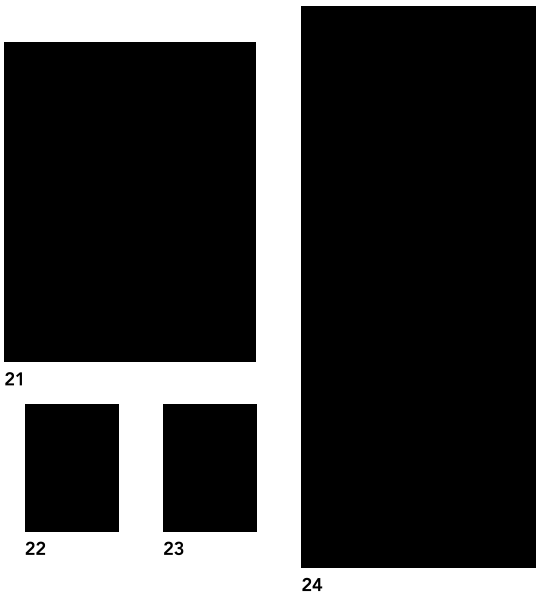
Purchased 2022

Find in catalogue: H2022.117

Known for his vibrant airbrushed paintings of Australian suburbia, Howard Arkley agreed to just one portrait commission during his career: an irreverent picture of musician Nick Cave for the National Portrait Gallery, in Canberra.

On display are rarely seen studies for the portrait, held in the Library's Howard Arkley Archive. The several iterations in the archive demonstrate the artist working through different poses and colour combinations for the final painting.

Hanging next to the studies is a portrait of Arkley painted by his long-time partner, Alison Burton, after Arkley's untimely death from a heroin overdose in 1999.



Howard ARKLEY

Nick Cave 1999

Synthetic polymer paint on canvas

175.2 x 135.2 x 4.3 cm (support)

National Portrait Gallery of Australia

Commissioned with funds provided by L Gordon Darling AC CMG 1999

©The Estate of Howard Arkley, Licensed by Kalli Rolfe Contemporary Art

21 Constance STOKES

Portrait of Phyl Waterhouse 1980

Oil on composition board

Purchased 2003

Find in catalogue: H2004.6

22 Howard ARKLEY

Study for the Portrait of Nick Cave 1999

Synthetic polymer paint, felt-tip pen, pencil and photocopy on paper

Howard Arkley Archive

Find in catalogue: MS 14217/1.1658

23 Howard ARKLEY

Study for the Portrait of Nick Cave 1999

Synthetic polymer paint, felt-tip pen, pencil and photocopy on paper

Howard Arkley Archive

Find in catalogue: MS 14217/1.1009

24 Alison BURTON

Darkley (One) 2003

Acrylic on canvas

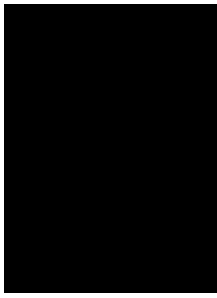
Purchased 2003

Find in catalogue: H2004.7

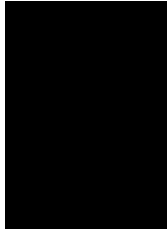
From portraits of Helen Brack and Phyl Waterhouse to Sybil Craig's self-portrait, artists feature prominently in the State Library Victoria collection.

The always provocative work of Juan Davila is on display in this self-portrait, Picasso theft, which shows the artist holding the replica of Weeping woman by Pablo Picasso. It was painted in 1986 and controversially offered to the National Gallery of Victoria as a gift following the scandalous theft of the original work.

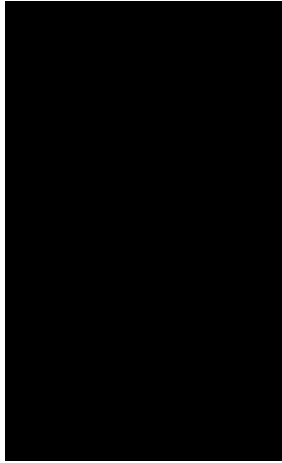
The self-portrait of Hayley Millar Baker, from her series I will survive, questions memory and altered truths. How do we interpret stories we are told? How do we remember them and what narratives do we keep alive?



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25 Kirsten LYTTLE

Waikato: Ngiti Tahinga, Tainui a Whiro

Mekameka weave 2012

Exhibition print of giclee print on Ilford Galerie Gold Fibre Silk

Purchased 2023

26 Juan DAVILA

Picasso theft 1986

Mixed media on paper

Purchased 1992

Find in catalogue: H92.462

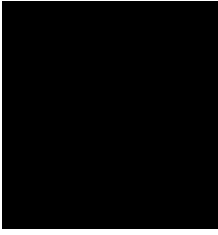
27 Ian ARMSTRONG

Portrait of Helen Maudsley c. 1965

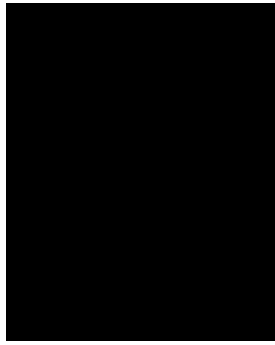
Oil on canvas

Purchased 2008

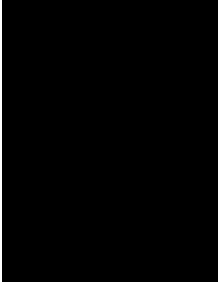
Find in catalogue: H2008.132



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28 Sybil CRAIG

Self-portrait c. 1934

Oil on composition board

Gift of Sybil Craig, through Mr Jim Alexander, 1989

Find in catalogue: H89.282

29 Hayley MILLAR BAKER

Gunditjmara, Djabwurrung

I will survive: 8 2020

Exhibition print of inkjet print on Canson Baryta

Purchased 2021

Find in catalogue: H2022.7

30 Charles BUSH

Phyl Waterhouse, c. 1958

Oil on composition board

Gift of Mrs Margaret Carnegie and the estates of Charles Bush and Phyl Waterhouse, 1991

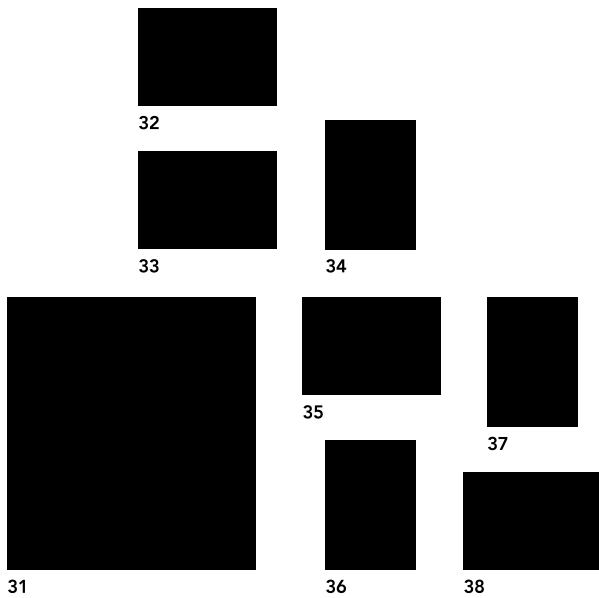
Find in catalogue: H92.415

Victoria has a long and proud literary history, from the oral traditions of the people of the Kulin Nations to the poets and writers that we see on these walls.

A portrait of man of letters Stephen Murray-Smith, founder and editor of the literary magazine Overland, sits alongside portraits of contemporary Victorian poets from Nicholas Walton-Healey's Land before lines series. This series comprises photographs of more than 70 poets, accompanied by each sitter's poetic response to their portrait.

A burnt bush, it seems
That comes out of the eye, in the sun
You look into the lens, again
And he shoots, continuously, multiply, noisily
Till the bush blurs
As his skin browns, into the summer grass

– Ouyang Yu, from Land before lines, 2014



31 Fred WILLIAMS

Stephen Murray-Smith 1980

Oil on canvas

Gift of Mr David Murray-Smith through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2013

Find in catalogue: H2014.95

32–38 Nicholas WALTON-HEALEY

Land before lines 2013

Exhibition prints of digital photographs

Purchased 2014

32 *Alicia Sometimes* 2013

Find in catalogue: H2014.1099/44

33 *Jessica L. Wilkinson* 2013

Find in catalogue: H2014.1099/5

34 *Nathan Curnow* 2013

Find in catalogue: H2014.1099/40

35 *Ouyang Yu* 2013

Find in catalogue: H2014.1099/7

36 *Bella Li* 2013

Find in catalogue: H2014.1099/35

37 *Maxine Beneba-Clarke* 2013

Find in catalogue: H2014.1099/36

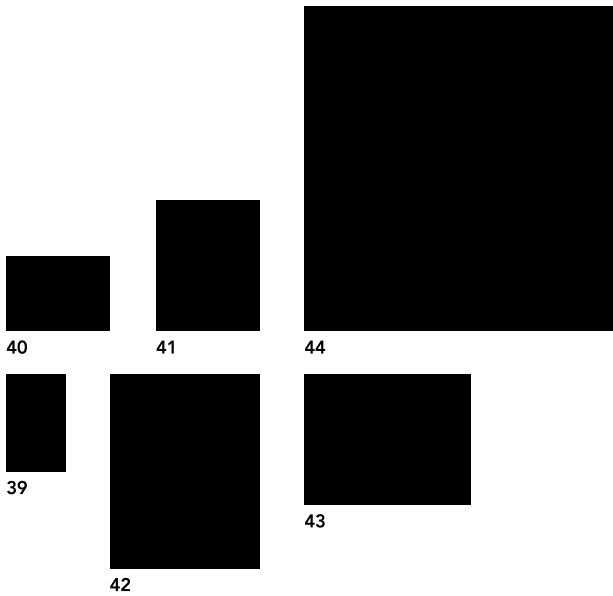
38 *Chris Wallace-Crabbe* 2013

Find in catalogue: H2014.1099/9

Albert Tucker was a keen photographer and took many photographs of members of his artistic circle in the 1940s, when their bohemian lifestyle was as much a talking point in Melbourne as their experimental art.

The group included Joy Hester, Sidney Nolan and Arthur Boyd – all of whom are pictured here – as well as other painters, poets and writers who gathered at 'Heide', the home of art patrons John and Sunday Reed on the Birrarung | Yarra River at Heidelberg.

During this era, the Heide circle made ground-breaking works that are now considered icons of Australian art: Nolan's Ned Kelly series; Tucker's Images of modern evil; Boyd's Brides; and Hester's expressive depictions in her Faces and Lovers series.



39 Joy HESTER

Blue portrait of Albert Tucker c. 1945

Ink on paper

Purchased 1993

Find in catalogue: H93.511

40-43 Albert TUCKER

Exhibition prints of gelatin silver photographs

Albert Tucker Photographic Collection, Heide Museum of
Modern Art & State Library Victoria

Gift of Mrs Barbara Tucker through the Australian Government's
Cultural Gifts Program, 2008

© Albert & Barbara Tucker Foundation, courtesy of Smith & Singer
Fine Art

40 *Portrait of Sidney Nolan* 1954

Find in catalogue: H2010.72/37

41 *Joy* 1940

Find in catalogue: H2008.98/9

42 *Sunday and John Reed bird watching, Heide, Templestowe* 1943

Find in catalogue: H2010.72/10

43 *Arthur Boyd's studio, Open Country, Murrumbidgee, c. 1945*

Left to right: Matcham Skipper, Myra Skipper, Joy Hester, Yvonne Lennie, Arthur Boyd and David Boyd

Find in catalogue: H2010.72/64

44 Wes WALTERS

Arthur Boyd: the artist in his studio 1986

Oil on canvas

Gift of Dr Joseph Brown, 1995