

JANET DAWSON MBE

Born 1935, Sydney, NSW

Studies

- 1952-56 National Gallery of Victoria Art School, Melbourne
1957-59 Slade School of Fine Art, London (painting & lithography under Ceri Richards)
Central School of Fine Art, London (etching under Anthony Cross)
1959-60 British School at Rome Residency (at Anticoli Corrado) – drawings from this residency
acquired by National Gallery of Victoria, Art Gallery of NSW and National Gallery of Australia
1960 Atelier Patris (of Dutch Tachist Nono Reinhold), Paris (printed works by School of Paris artists
– including Pierre Soulages, Fritz Hundertwasser and Kumi Sugai – and the five lithographs
she produced of her own are in collections of NGV, AGNSW and NGA)

Biography

- 1961-64 Gallery Manager, Technical Assistant and exhibiting artist at Gallery A, Melbourne
Founded Gallery A Print Workshop, Melbourne, to print artists' editions
1961 Coordinated major exhibition *The Bauhaus: Aspects and Influence*, Gallery A, with Max
Hutchinson (dealer) and Clement Meadmore (furniture designer and artist) and opened by
architect Robin Boyd
Coordinated 10 Australian printmakers for exhibition *Prints of the World* for collector and
curator Robert Erskine, London
1962-65 Designed and painted sets at Emerald Hill Theatre, Melbourne, VIC
1963 A special edition of *Meanjin* (September 1963) devoted to French writing featured her work
on the cover and illustrations throughout
1964 On invitation from **Laminex**, Dawson developed her *Living Art* table top series, uniting function
and aesthetics by using "... strong flat colours [that] echo contemporary American abstraction,
particularly Jasper Johns's late 1950s *Target* paintings and Frank Stella's *Protractor* series of
the 1960s." (Goddard)
1965 Moved to Sydney, NSW
1969-71 Scientific illustrator for exhibition displays and museum publications at Australian Museum,
Sydney
1970s-1980s Designed sets, costumes and properties for the premier productions of all but three of
Michael Boddy's written and/or directed plays.
1973 set design for Nimrod Theatre and produced illustrations for a collection of essays on
O'Malley
Moved to Binalong, NSW
1981 Moved to Canberra, ACT, where she and actor Michael Boddy helped establish Theatre ACT
1985 Returned to Binalong, NSW
2014 Boddy died; Moved to Ocean Grove, VIC

Awards

- 1955 National Gallery of Victoria Art School Grace Joel Scholarship (Nude), Melbourne, VIC
National Gallery of Victoria Art School Hugh Ramsey Portrait Prize, Melbourne, VIC
National Gallery of Victoria Art School Award (Abstract Painting), Melbourne, VIC
National Gallery of Victoria Art School Award (Drawings from Life), Melbourne, VIC
National Gallery Society Scholarship (Best Drawing), Melbourne, VIC
1956 National Gallery of Victoria Travelling Scholarship, Melbourne, VIC
1959 Boise Scholarship, Slade School of Fine Art, London (Lithography), UK
1973 Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, NSW
1975 Gold Coast City purchase prize, Brisbane, QLD
1977 Awarded MBE for Services to Art
Trustees Purchase Prize, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, QLD
1979 Mosman Art Prize, Sydney, NSW
1982 Georges Invitation Art Prize, Georges Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
1985 Australia Council of the Arts Artist's Grant
1997 Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, NSW

Solo Exhibitions

- 1961 Gallery A - first solo show after returning to Australia in 1960, Melbourne, VIC
- 1967-83 Held twenty solo exhibitions at Gallery A, Melbourne, VIC and Sydney, NSW
- 1979 *Survey Exhibition*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
- 1996 *The Drawings of Janet Dawson*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT
- 2004 *Recent Paintings*, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2006 *Janet Dawson Survey 1953-2006*, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, NSW and toured to S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney, NSW; University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane, QLD; Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, TAS; Mornington Peninsula Regional Art Gallery, VIC
- 2012 *Janet Dawson: A Personal View*, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW
- 2013 *Janet Dawson*, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2015 *TURNABOUT – the same place but different*, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
Janet Dawson: Paintings and Drawings, Nancy Sever Gallery, Canberra, ACT
- 2018 *Survey*, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2015-19 Two solo shows at Nancy Sever Gallery, Canberra, ACT
- 2019 *Clouds all the way: A bus trip Sydney to Canberra*, Nancy Sever Gallery, Canberra, ACT
Bright Night, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 1996 *The Drawings of Janet Dawson*, 22 June – 11 August 1996, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT
- 2024 *Janet Dawson: Works from the plan chest*, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, VIC

Group Exhibitions

- 1959 ongoing Dawson has been included in over 99 group exhibitions/major survey of contemporary Australian paintings, prints and works on paper, including:
- 1963 *Prints '63: Studio One Printmakers*, Skinner Galleries; Newcastle Regional Art Gallery; Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum; Rudy Komon Art Gallery; Douglas Gallery; National Gallery of Victoria; Bonython Art Gallery, Adelaide; Yosheido Gallery, Tokyo.
- 1964 *Australian Print Survey*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, QLD, 13 August – 6 September 1964
Painter's Sculpture Exhibition, Hungry Horse Gallery, Sydney, NSW, opened 17 June 1964
August: Group Show, Hungry Horse Gallery, Sydney, NSW
- 1965 *Introduction '65*, Janet Dawson, Leonard Hessing, Robert Klippel, Colin Lanceley, John Olsen, Charles Reddington, Gallery A, Melbourne, VIC
- 1966 *Aspects of Australian Painting*, organised by the Auckland City Art Gallery in Association with Qantas, Auckland City Art Gallery, New Zealand
H.C. Richards Memorial Competition, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, QLD, 10 November – 11 December 1966, (Judge: Hal Missingham, Director of AGNSW)
Contemporary Australian Painting, in Los Angeles and San Francisco, USA
- 1966-67 *Gallery A: Summer Exhibition '66*, Gallery A, Melbourne, VIC and Sydney, NSW until February 1967
- 1968 *The Field*, National Gallery of Victoria (Dawson was one of only three female artists included; her works *Wall 11*(1968-69) was purchased by NGA in 1969 and *Rollascape* (1968) was purchased by the Art Gallery of Ballarat in 1988)
The NBN Channel 3 Art Prize, Newcastle City Art Gallery, NSW
- 1970-71 *First Leasing Art Prize 1970*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC, 21 September – 25 October 1970; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, SA, 18 November – 13 December 1970; Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, QLD, 25 May – 22 June 1971
- 1975 *The John McCaughey Memorial Art Prize 1975*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
Looking back: travelling art exhibition, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
Gold Coast City Art Prize, Chevron Hotel, Surfers Paradise, QLD
- 1976 *Coventry Collection 1966-76*, University of New England, Armidale, NSW
- 1984 *21 Australian prints from the Griffith University Art Collection*, Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Brisbane, QLD
- 1986 *Backlash: the Australian drawing revival 1976-1986*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
The Gold Coast Collection, The Centre Gallery, Surfers Paradise, QLD
- 1987 *Contemporary Art in Australia: A Review*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Brisbane, QLD

- The Jack Manton Prize 1987: Recent Works by fourteen Australian artists*, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, QLD
- 1988 *Lasting Impressions: Lithography as Art, part 2*, Gallery 8 (18 June – 6 November) and Gallery 11A (18 June – 31 July) 1988, Australian National Gallery, Canberra, ACT
Janet Dawson, 312 Lennox Street, Richmond, VIC
- 1989 *Modern Australian Paintings 1989*, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
- 1988-89 *The Great Australian Art Exhibition*, National Gallery of Australia, and travelling
- 1990 *Paper Works: Drawings, Watercolours, Pastels and Collages from the Wollongong City Gallery Collection*, Wollongong City Gallery, NSW
- 1991 *The medium pastel: Janet Dawson, James Gleeson, Kristin Headlam, Anne Judell*, David Jones Art Gallery, Sydney, NSW
- 1992 *Australian Prints in the Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, 1946-1964*, Newcastle Regional Art Gallery, Newcastle, NSW
Integrating art on campus: The University of New South Wales collection, University of New South Wales, Kensington, NSW
- 1993 *TECAA: Joan and Peter Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Australian Art*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC, 23 February – 16 May 1993
- 1994 *Creators and Inventors: Australian Women's Art in the National Gallery of Victoria*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
- 1995 *1968*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT
Australian Paintings 1950-1990, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Richmond, VIC
In the shadow of young girls and flowers (A l'ombre des jeunes filles et des fleurs), Benalla Art Gallery, VIC
- 1996-ongoing Various group exhibitions at Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 1997 *Geometric painting in Australia 1941-1997*, University Art Museum, University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD
- 1998 *Stella Downer Fine Art at Louella Kerr*, Sydney, NSW
- 1999 *The Antipodeans: Challenge and Response in Australian art 1955-1965*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT
The possibilities of portraiture, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, ACT
Living in the seventies, Canberra Museum and Art Gallery, ACT
Landscapes in Sets and Series: Australian Prints 1960s-1990s, 6 August – 21 November 1999, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT
- 2001 *Collectors 01-01: A century of collecting 1901-2001: Celebrating the Centenary of Federation by showcasing works from private collectors*, Ivan Dougherty Gallery, College of Fine Art, University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW
Let's face it: the history of the Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, NSW
- 2002 *The full dress: an encounter with the National Gallery of Australia*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT
Intimate Portraits, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, ACT
- 2002-ongoing Various group exhibitions at Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, VIC
- 2003 *On paper: Australian prints and drawings in the National Gallery of Victoria*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
- 2005 *Let's face it: the history of the Archibald Prize*, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, NSW
- 2007 *The Nature of Things*, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2008 *Modern Times*, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, NSW
Janet Dawson, Ian Gentle & Lesley Turnbull, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2009 *Shared sky*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
Paint, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2010 *Slow burn: a century of Australian women artists from a private collection*, Eva Breuer Art Dealer and National Trust S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney, NSW
Filomena Coppola, Janet Dawson, Merrick Fry, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2011 *Lynne Boyd, Janet Dawson, Ishbel Morag Miller*, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2012 *Janet Dawson, Gail English, Rod Holdaway*, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2013 *Marked: Drawing Now*, Cessnock Regional Art Gallery, NSW
A private collection: Artist's choice: Michael Zavros, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Brisbane, QLD, 2013

- 2014 *Gallery Artists*, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
Mid-century modern: Australian furniture design, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
Gallery Artists, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2015 *NSPP: National Self-Portrait Prize 2015*, University of Queensland Art Museum, St Lucia, QLD
Their Everyday: Janet Dawson with Merrick Fry, Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, NSW
- 2016 *Returning to the Field # 2*, Sydney Non-Objective (SNO) Contemporary Art Projects, Sydney, NSW
Panorama, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, VIC
The Popular Pet Show, 4 November 2016 - 13 March 2017, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, ACT
- 2017 *Abstraction: Celebrating Australian Women Abstract Artists*, Geelong Art Gallery, Geelong, VIC and touring (NGA Art Collection)
Let's face it: the history of the Archibald Prize, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, NSW
A Stella(r) Renaissance, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2018 *The Field Revisited*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
- 2019 *Trying to find comfort in an uncomfortable chair* (with the Cruthers Collection of Women's Art at the University of Western Australia, including works by Janet Dawson, Helen Eager, Rosalie Gasgoine, Agatha Goethe-Snape, Elizabeth Newman, Ann Newmarch, Michelle Nikos, Miriam Stannage), Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Perth, WA
Golden Moon, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2020 *Artists in Isolation*, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
Summer – Renewal, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2020-ongoing *Know My Name*, featuring 150 Australian female artists from 1900 to the 21st century, NGA, Canberra, ACT and touring
- 2021 *Printed: Images by Australian Artists 1942-2020*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT
Summer 2021, Stella Downer Fine Art, Sydney, NSW
- 2022 *A leg through the ceiling: the art collection of Etta and Emmanuel Hirsh*, Deakin University Art Gallery, Deakin University – Burwood Campus, Melbourne, VIC

Collections

Art Gallery of Ballarat, VIC
 Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW
 Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, SA
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, WA
 Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, NSW
 Benalla Art Gallery, VIC
 Deakin University Art Collection, VIC
 Geelong Gallery, VIC
 Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, Goulburn, NSW
 Gold Coast City Art Collection, Surfers Paradise, QLD
 Griffith University Art Collection, Brisbane, QLD
 Mosman Art Gallery, Sydney, NSW
 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, VIC
 National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, ACT
 New England Regional Art Museum [NERAM], Armidale, NSW
 Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art [QAGOMA], Brisbane, QLD
 TarraWarra Museum of Art, Yarra Valley, VIC
 The Royal Society, London, UK
 University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW
 University of Queensland Art Collection, Brisbane, QLD
 Wollongong Art Gallery, NSW

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Australian Print Survey, exhibition catalogue, Queensland Art Gallery, 13 August – 6 September 1964

Bell, Jenny, 'Look Again: The work of Janet Dawson in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia', exhibition review, *Art Monthly Australia*, Issue 259, May 2013, pp. 39-41

Borlase, Nancy, 'Multiple Meanings', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Sat 20 August 1977, p. 16

Brook, Donald, 'Paintings by Janet Dawson' (at Gallery A), *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Thu 9 May, 1968, p. 9

Brook, Donald, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Thu 22 October 1970, p. 12

Butler, Rex, *Radical Revisionism: An Anthology of writings on Australian Art*, 1st ed., Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2005

Butler, Roger, *Printed: Images by Australian Artists 1942-2020*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT, 2021

Carrick, John and Katrina Rumley, *Integrating art on campus: The University of New South Wales collection*, exhibition catalogue, University of New South Wales, Kensington, NSW, 1992

Catalano, Gary, 'A Natural History' (interview), *Art & Australia*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1997, p. 332-341 and illus. cover

Catalano, Gallery, 'The world reduced to the workings of water', *The Age*, Wed 24 February 1988, p. 14

Charles Nodrum Gallery, *Modern Australian Paintings 1989*, exhibition catalogue, Richmond, VIC, 1989

Charles Nodrum Gallery, *Australian Paintings 1950-1990*, exhibition catalogue, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Richmond, VIC, 1995

Charles Nodrum Gallery, *Abstraction 15*, exhibition catalogue, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Richmond, VIC, 2016

Charles Nodrum Gallery, *Abstraction 17*, exhibition catalogue, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Richmond, VIC, 2016

Charles Nodrum Gallery, *Abstraction 22*, exhibition catalogue, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Richmond, VIC, 2022

Charles Nodrum Gallery, *Australian Painting and Sculpture*, exhibition catalogue, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Richmond, VIC, 2022

Clark, Deborah, *The Drawings of Janet Dawson: 1956 to the Present*, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery of Australia, 22 June – 11 August 1996

Clemenger, Joan, Peter Clemenger and John McPhee, *TECAA: Joan and Peter Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Australian Art*, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1993

Cockington, Daniel, 'Images in the frame', *Money – The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2012, p. 8

Contemporary Art in Australia: A Review, exhibition catalogue, Museum of Contemporary Art, Brisbane, 1987

Dawson, Janet, *Coffee Table*, c 1964, QAGOMA Collection, available online <https://collection-online-beta.qagoma.qld.gov.au/objects/10881/>

Desmond, Michael, *1968*, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, ACT, 1995

Eagle, Mary, 'Paintings of private eccentric', *The Age*, Sat 14 July, 1979, p. 19

Engledow, Sarah (curator), *The popular pet book*, National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, ACT, 2016

Evans, David, *Coventry Collection 1966-76*, exhibition catalogue, University of New England, Armidale, NSW, 1976

First Leasing Art Prize 1970, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1970

Fitzgerald, Michael, 'Open Gallery', *Spectrum – The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17-18 August 2013

France, Christine (curator), *Janet Dawson Survey 1953-2006*, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, NSW, 2006

France, Christine, 'Janet Dawson', *Artist Profile*, No. 32, 2015, pp. 90-94

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Gilchrist, Stephen and Allison Holland, *Shared sky*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2009

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Gleeson, James, 'The gap in our graphic arts', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Sun 2 July 1967, p. 92

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Kirby, Sandy, *Sight lines: women's art and feminist perspectives in Australia*, Craftsman House (in association with Gordon & Breach), 1992

Leahy, Cathy and Kirsty Grant, *On paper: Australian prints and drawings in the National Gallery of Victoria*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2003

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Living in the seventies, exhibition catalogue, Canberra Museum and Art Gallery, Canberra, 1999

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