



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FEELING ABSTRACT? PAINTINGS FROM THE UWA ART COLLECTION, 1950–1990

17 July to 27 November 2021 | Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery

The Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery at The University of Western Australia is delighted to announce the opening of [*Feeling abstract?*](#) an exhibition exploring abstract painting over a forty year period through works in the UWA Art Collection.

Feeling abstract? provides a unique opportunity to view dynamic, large-scale paintings rarely on display. Several of the works included have been included in major national exhibitions and are significant to the history of Australian painting, but have not been on public view at Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery for several decades.

Curated by UWA Art Collection Curator Dr Sally Quin, the exhibition considers abstraction as a broad and diffuse phenomenon in twentieth-century painting and includes works of ‘pure’ abstraction alongside paintings in which abstract elements are an essential part of a figurative practice.

It features key examples of 20th century Australian abstraction, including gestural abstraction from the 1950s, hard-edged painting from the 1960s and the revival of expressive painting in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Several of the artists featured in *Feeling abstract?* participated in exhibitions significant within the history of Australian abstract painting, including *Direction 1* at Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, in 1956, and *The Field* at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, in 1968. In fact, *Ispahan, 1967*, by Sydney Ball, which will be on display in *Feeling abstract?* was exhibited in *The Field*.

Image: Sydney Ball, *Ispahan*, 1967, acrylic on canvas, 182.8 x 341 cm, The University of Western Australia Art Collection, Gift of Dr Albert Gild, 1969.

Feeling abstract? also features work by artists for whom abstraction is an important part of a semifigurative or figurative practice. As such, it features work by artists as different as Sydney Ball, George Haynes, Margot Lewers, Erica McGilchrist, Tony Tuckson and Jenny Watson.

For **Dr Quin**, abstract painting presents new possibilities for viewing; less prescriptive than illusionistic art, it often recalls the movements of the artist, while also encouraging a sensorial and personal response from viewers.

The exhibition also raises questions about the lineage of abstract painting and the relationship between artists across generations.

“One generation on from the revival of painting that occurred in the 1980s, what might artists practising today be able to learn from the broader history of Australian abstract art? And where can painting, particularly abstract painting, go next?” **Dr Quin** said.

Feeling abstract? will be on display at Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery from Saturday 10 July to Saturday 27 November. A series of public programs accompanying the exhibition will be announced shortly. For more information visit the [LWAG website](#).

Additional Information

Images: [Images available here](#) please note all images must be accompanied by captions provided

Select Artists: Sydney Ball, Ralph Balson, Brian Blanchflower, Nancy Borlase, Lina Bryans, Gunter Christmann, Lesley Dumbrell, Elizabeth Ford, Sam Fullbrook, George Haynes, Lidija Dombrovska Larsen, Margot Lewers, John Olsen, George Olszanski, John Passmore, Tony Tuckson, Trevor Vickers, Dick Watkins, Jenny Watson, Fred Williams, Jurek Wybraniec

Curator: Sally Quin, Curator, UWA Art Collection

Website: <https://www.uwa.edu.au/lwag/exhibitions/feeling-abstract>

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