



THE QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF THE  
NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

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John Brack, Collins Street, 5 p.m., oil on canvas, 45 ins. x 64 ins., purchased 1956.

#### RECENT ACQUISITIONS OF MODERN AUSTRALIAN PAINTINGS

Although some resistance to change of thought affects all who have learnt to love art of previous generations, when learning was easy to them, it should be recognized, even by such, that repetition weakens original force. Each new generation has to find its own impetus, expression and creative inspiration where it will.

Few even of the great masters have extended an established form simply along its own lines, or merely given personal character to what has been already expressed. New thought must come. At first it seems revolutionary, unrelated to the past, but links will be discovered when time brings new understanding of earlier art through comprehension of the later forms.

During recent months the National Gallery of Victoria has acquired a number of works by Australian painters who have found inspiration in modern terms. These may be called young in relation to present expectation of life, though they have mostly passed the age of those great artists of the past who died in their late twenties and thirties.

John Brack, born 1920, though well aware of many forms of art, does not consider himself an artist-unveiler of visual beauty in the accepted sense. He works to an idea which usually springs from the mundane — the "life of the little man". He is no lover of invention. The abstract holds no lure, except in that art is inevitably abstract, does not challenge life, except through the qualities of a medium. His draughtsmanship is a joy, his design carefully planned. The dry, very restrained nature of his metier is enriched by an equally dry, subtle humour.

"Collins Street, 5 p.m." epitomises the daily march of office workers in blind progression from offices to homes. Brack's economy of representation is so strong it adds to the vocabulary of vision once revealed by the artist.

Robert Dickerson, now 34, has like regard for what he sees in present life. That which attracts him is deeply observed and retained in memory. Humour is not a conscious element of his presentations: Compassion rather. The "Tired Man" slumps over the seat, part of the seat itself. Only the bare essentials of a dreamlike sky and earth exist for him or the observer. The effect is hypnotic, profound and emphatically original.

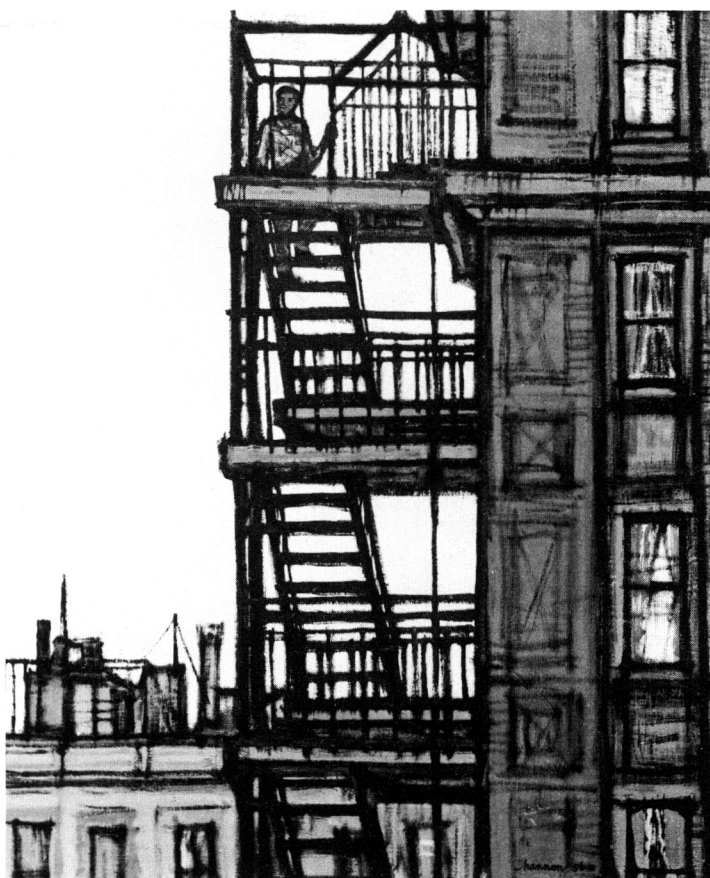
"Cadenza," by Len Crawford, born 1920, reveals highly developed, personal expression by an artist who has matured quietly, neither exhibiting extensively nor mixing much in art circles.

The composition, as its title tells us, owes much to love of music and understanding of such artists as Mondrian. The larger divisions of "Cadenza" correspond plastically to movements in music, or changes of theme. Smaller rectangles and tapering shapes give direction and parallel developments and variations. Crawford's colour has rare harmonic value.

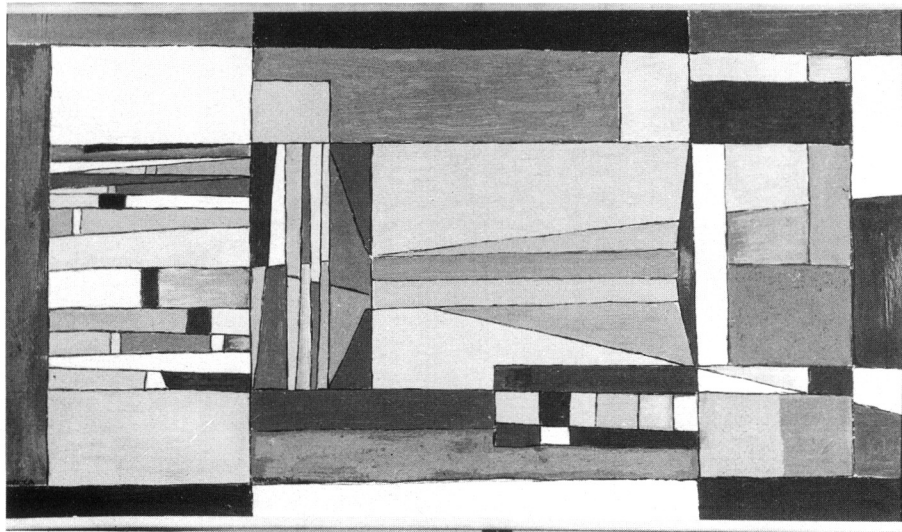
Abstract Expression covers "Living in Between" by Frank Hodgkinson, born 1919. The title may mean as little as those of many other modes, or may have personal meaning. Mood, texture and brushwork are all-of-a-piece romanticism. Painted "Con brio," subtleties of technique are as adventitious as evidence of knowledge. The shapes have force, however; there is variety in their rhythm, movement and tone.

Byzantine influence has dominated the art of Justin O'Brien, born 1917, since the years of service in World War II. It here gives way to the Florentine conception and treatment of "Boy in a Red Shirt." Reproduced in tone, the form is strong and satisfying. Light moves to shade with sure regard for continuity of volume. Its colour has not this verity. Arbitrary convention makes the face in shadow look dirty.

Geometry shares in the fetish-like symbolism of Lawrence Daws' (born 1927) "Fettlers." This work won the artist an Italian Scholarship early last year. He is now studying in Italy. Daws spent some time in Western Australia gaining material for works of this kind and others depicting aboriginal life. There is a strong suggestion of aboriginal art itself in the chalk-white texture and shapes of his figures. Space is convincingly indicated by tonal progressions and perspective. "Fettlers" typifies the strength and haunting intensity of this artist's work.

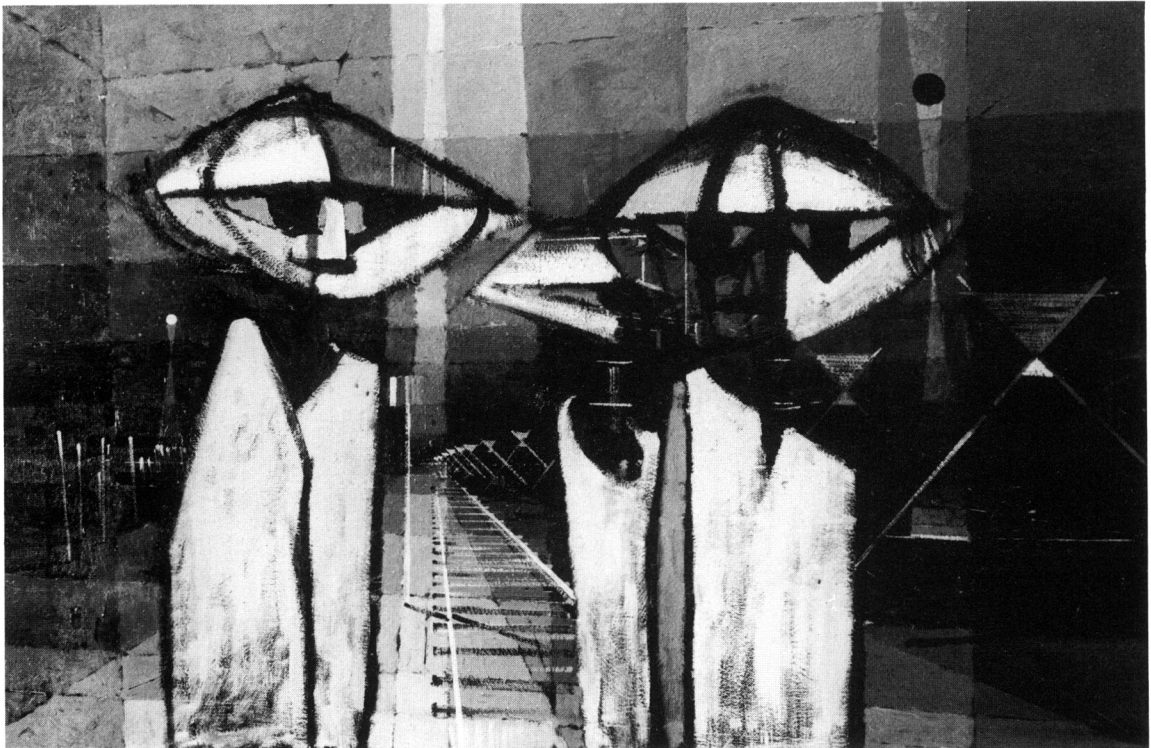


Michael Shannon, Fire-escape, oil on canvas, 29½ ins. x 23½ ins., purchased 1957.



Len Crawford, *Cadenza*, oil on board, 13½ ins. x 23¼ ins., purchased 1957.

Lawrence Daws, *The Fettleers*, oil on board, 35 ins. x 54 ins., presented by Aubrey Gibson Esq., 1957.



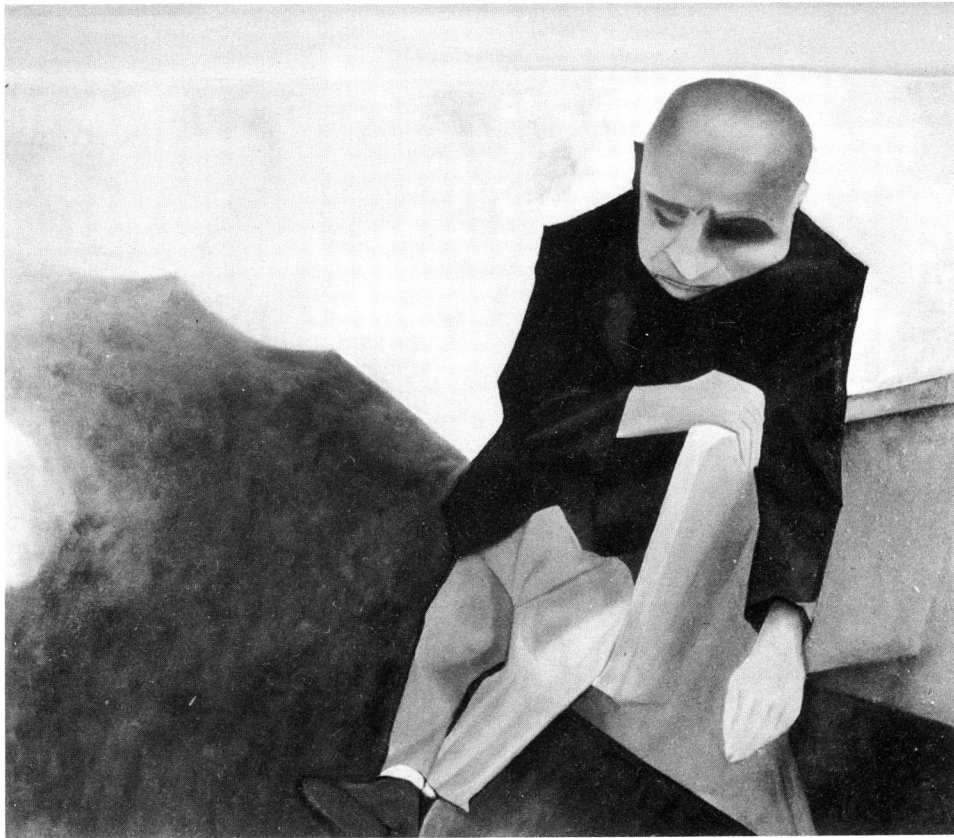
Arthur Boyd's (born 1920) attraction to figure work consistently accompanies love of landscape painting. His latest development in human portrayal, represented on the cover of this Quarterly by "Shearers Playing for a Bride" (generously presented by Mr. Tristan Buesst) is an allegorical series dealing with problems of an aboriginal and the half-caste he loves — a series constituting a major event in Boyd's art. The main impact of each work lies in its feeling and expression of complexities besetting a sensitive male and a typical female. Psychological tension animates the "Shearers" more than average card players in a game. Monumental in scale, the picture is also notable in interplay of tone and colour.

"Fire-escape" marks the present stage of the interest of Michael Shannon (1927) in buildings and city scenes. Love of line for itself and the enclosure of coloured masses shows the artist's sympathy with stained glass effects. Many contemporary artists have found that line so used eliminates problems of tone, definition, recession and modelling. As employed by Shannon, the style brings to current mode the decorative illustrative records of place and time of the early years of this century.

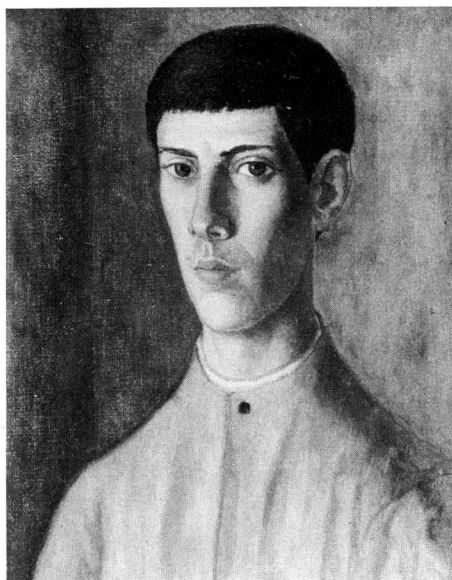
Arnold Shore



Frank Hodgkinson, Living In Between, oil on board, 72 ins. x 36 ins., purchased 1957.



Robert Dickerson, *The Tired Man*, oil on board, 53 $\frac{1}{4}$  ins. x 59 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins., purchased 1957.



Justin O'Brien, *Boy in a Red Shirt*, oil on canvas, 16 ins. x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins., presented by Aubrey Gibson Esq., 1957.

FROM THE PRINT ROOM



Russell Drysdale, Aboriginal Child  
ink and wash drawing, 6 ins. x 4 $\frac{1}{8}$   
ins., purchased 1957.

John Brack, Head of the Model, conte drawing, 15 ins. x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins., purchased 1957



RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE ART GALLERY INCLUDE:

OIL PAINTINGS

The Studio Table . . . . . Anthony Underhill . . . . . Purchased  
Nude in an Armchair . . . . . John Brack . . . . . Purchased  
Three Self Portraits . . . . . John Bratby . . . . . Felton Bequest

DRAWINGS

Cabby . . . . . Wyndham Lewis . . . . . Felton Bequest  
Landscape with Roadside Church . . . . . Jan Brueghel . . . . . Purchased

GENEROUS DONATIONS TO THE NATIONAL GALLERY INCLUDE:

Gannetts Diving . . . . . John Perceval . . . . . Presented by the National Gallery Society  
Shearers Playing for a Bride . . . . . Arthur Boyd . . . . . Presented by Tristan Buesst Esq.

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**THEATRETTE: ART FILMS** on the third Tuesday of each month; **DOCUMENTARY FILMS** on Tuesday, excepting each third Tuesday; **MUSICAL RECORDINGS** on the second and fourth Thursday. All these activities are held at 1.15 p.m.

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The cover design is a detail from Arthur Boyd, *Shearers Playing for a Bride*, oil on canvas, 58½ ins. x 68¾ ins., presented by Tristan Buesst Esq.