



review

works by women from the permanent collection

Acknowledgements

The Curators gratefully acknowledge the sponsorship of Carla Zampatti for this exhibition.

The assistance, expertise and commitment to the project of the following individuals is also greatly appreciated: at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Ali Noble and Helen Campbell for all work associated with the Australian art department hang and labels; Anne Flanagan, Rosie Peel, Simone Aquilina, Margot Capp, Paula Dredge, Donna Midwinter, Belinda Hanrahan, Claire Martin, Mollie Gowing, Tracy Paine; Avenel Mitchell, and Professor Joan Kerr and Jo Holder of the National Women's Art Exhibition and Book project.

Thanks are also extended to the following authors of exhibition labels for the works: Pamela Bell, Janine Burke, Sandra Byron, Helen Campbell, Joanna Capon, Melissa Cater, Isobel Crombie, Aviva Finberg, Renée Free, Louise Giacco, Mollie Gowing, Charlotte Hayman, Heather Johnson, Joan Kerr, Brian Ladd, Annette Larkin, Jane Lennon, Victoria Lynn, Terence Maloon, Angela Martin, Joanna Mendelssohn, Stevan Miller, Margo Neale, Ali Noble, Barry Pearce, Rosie Peel, Hetti Perkins, Kate Poppelwell, Ursula Prunster, Jane Raffan, Linda Slutzkin, Marina Strocchi, Emma Smith, Alisa de Torres, Anna Waldmann, Daphne Wallace, Bronwyn Watson. The views expressed in these labels are not necessarily those of the curator.

Deborah Edwards.

JOY HESTER 1920 - 1960

Hester's imaging of the body developed during the Second World War with her involvement in the political and aesthetic debates between her circle of Angry Penguins modernists, and the Social Realists. Within this context Hester figured uniquely in terms of both the issues she addressed and her technical explorations of them. Her all prima approach in brush and ink set her apart from the other artists of her circle who utilised drawing in preparatory sketches for final works executed in oil. Her mode of drawing was particularly suited to the delineation of the transience of expression, the precarious nature of emotional masks and the fragility of states of mind and being.

By 1945 Hester had consolidated the imagery she had evolved during the war. The apprehension and suggested threat of an unseen danger in her earlier street scenes and portraits (1941-42) is by this time directly expressed in the line of her bodies. In *Frightened*, as with other works from this period, Hester registers external tensions directly in terms of the body, exploring different states of psychological stress through the characterisation of bodily parts without emphasising background detail or placing her figure in a recognisable environment or spatial dimension. The fine linear detailing of the body heightens the formal tension in the image by stressing the weightiness of the head, which further reinforces the appearance of psychological as well as physical instability.

Jane Raffan
Art Gallery of New South Wales