

Curator acknowledgments:

We are honoured to curate this exhibition and especially touched to have been invited by Gertrude as a mother-daughter pairing. Our gratitude goes to the staff at Gertrude for their support and enthusiasm, with special thanks to Executive Director Tracy Burgess and Artistic Director Mark Feary for inviting us to curate this exhibition. We also thank Curators Brigid Moriarty and Amelia Winata, Gallery and Education Manager Sharon Flynn, Exhibition and Studios Coordinator Ian Bunyi, Communications Coordinator Anador Walsh and Engagement Coordinator Brigit Ryan for their expertise and dedication. We are grateful to the lenders, both private and institutional, whose generosity helped bring this exhibition to life, and recognise the support of the Estates of Howard Arkley, Destiny Deacon, and Rosemary Laing. We acknowledge Heide Museum of Modern Art and the Centre for Contemporary Photography for assistance with display furniture. We also acknowledge Monash University Museum of Art, especially Director Rebecca Coates and Museum Officer David Thomas, for their support in presenting Gail Hastings' *Room for Love* (1995/2005). Thanks also to Stephen Bram and Zisis Zikos for their assistance with artwork conservation. Most importantly, we are deeply grateful to the artists for their creativity, openness, and conversation— their art illuminates and inspires.

1985
*A Fictional Retrospective:
 Gertrude's First Decade*
 Curated by Sue Cramer & Emma Nixon
 Gertrude Contemporary
 Saturday 8 February –
 Sunday 23 March 2025
 1995

When 200 Gertrude Street opened in 1985 it quickly became a focus for the creativity and aspirations of a generation of young artists. *A Fictional Retrospective: Gertrude's First Decade 1985-1995* offers a speculative lens on the artists and works that shaped the gallery's formative years. Featuring more than 30 artists, the exhibition brings together works that were either exhibited at Gertrude or made during a studio residency between 1985-1995. Where such works were unavailable, indicative examples are presented in their place. Many of the exhibited artworks have rarely been seen in forty years, yet retain contemporary relevance through their diverse explorations of cultural and artistic identities; painting both figurative and abstract; the staged and cinematic.

This account of Gertrude's history is necessarily incomplete—a fiction of sorts, woven from excerpts, fragments, and recollections of the organisation's early years. The title *A Fictional Retrospective* is borrowed from Melbourne artist Sandra Bridie, referencing her long-term project, which began at Gertrude in 1991, of creating exhibitions by fictional artists. In adapting Bridie's concept of a fictional survey, we acknowledge that all histories are unfinished narratives, and that subjectivity and chance inevitably play a role in the curatorial process. We recognise too, that the artworld at the time of Gertrude's emergence did not accurately represent First Nations perspectives, Australia's multi-culturalism or diversity in the way it strives to today. Gertrude's anniversary will undoubtedly spark conversations and debates as more memories and perspectives emerge. These informal exchanges are just as essential to the shaping and reshaping of our cultural and social histories.

– Sue Cramer and Emma Nixon

Publication available:
 On the occasion of *A Fictional Retrospective: Gertrude's First Decade 1985 – 1995*, curated by Sue Cramer and Emma Nixon, Gertrude is pleased to publish the first edition of a curatorial publication series to coincide with the year-long program *Past is Prologue: Four Decades of Gertrude*. Authors: Sue Cramer & Emma Nixon. Coordinated by Brigid Moriarty, edited by Mark Feary and Sharon Flynn, designed by Narelle Brewer, printed by Adams Print. Available to purchase from Gertrude and online.

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 Gertrude acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation as the traditional owners and custodians of this land and pays respect to their Elders—past and present. Gertrude is assisted by the Visual Arts, Craft and Design Framework, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments; and the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria. *Past is Prologue: Four Decades of Gertrude* is supported by the Copyright Agency Cultural Fund and Proclaim.



List of works

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|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| 1. Gail Hastings
<i>Room for Love</i> 1990 (reconstructed 2005)
tête-à-tête conversation chair and plinths, acrylic paint on wood; Loveswept edition paperback novels; pigmented wax on timber
80 x 300 x 300 cm overall
Courtesy of the artist | <i>Do not forget eyelashes</i> 1987
charcoal on paper
32.7 x 22.4 cm | Courtesy of the artist and Sarah Scout Presents, Naarm Melbourne | Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Naarm Melbourne | 26. Rose Nolan
<i>Untitled (Hessian Piece)</i> 1989
oil on hessian
200 x 180 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Naarm Melbourne | 31. Mikala Dwyer
<i>Tubeweight</i> 1996
organza, silicone, glue, pins, DAS clay, teddy bear limbs
dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist and 1301SW, Naarm Melbourne |
| 2. Robyn Stacey
<i>Ice</i> 1989
Cibachrome front mounted to plexiglass
105 x 174 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney | <i>Something being restrained + letting go</i> 1983
biro on paper
14.5 x 21 cm | 15. David Noonan
<i>Untitled</i> 1994
oil on canvas
40.5 x 51 cm
Collection of Paul Morgan and Dr Jo Scicluna | 23. Raafat Ishak
<i>And government No. A</i> 1993-1995
oil on canvas
20 x 40 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Sutton Gallery, Naarm Melbourne | 27. Jon Campbell
<i>The Party</i> 1986
enamel and acrylic paint on cotton duck
2 panels, 209 x 243 cm overall
Courtesy of the artist and Darren Knight Gallery, Sydney | 32. Mathew Jones
<i>image #1 of 5</i> (from the catalogue <i>Silence = Death 1991</i>) 1991
Epson UltraChrome Pro Inkset on Canson Rag Photographique
92 x 92 cm
Courtesy of the artist |
| 3. Janet Burchill
<i>Mute (3rd Version)</i> 1985-1990
solvent paint on cotton
4 panels, 37.5 x 171 cm overall
Courtesy of the artist and Neon Parc, Naarm Melbourne | <i>Breathless</i> c.1985
ink on paper
29.7 x 21 cm | 16. Stephen Bram
<i>Untitled</i> 1994
oil on canvas
35 x 27.5 cm

<i>Untitled (Two-Point Perspective)</i> 1993
oil on canvas
40.5 x 30 cm | <i>And government No. 20</i> 1993-1995
oil on canvas
40 x 20 cm
Collection of Karen Hall | 28. Angela Brennan
<i>Untitled</i> 1992
oil on canvas
151 x 110 cm
Collection of Nic Mims | 33. Destiny Deacon
<i>Dance Little Lady (a)</i> 1994-2000
photograph
86.5 x 100.5 cm |
| 4. Michael Graf
<i>A Plate from the Encyclopaedia: The Soap Factory</i> 1988
oil on canvas board, integral wooden frame
140 x 88 cm
Collection of David Brand | <i>Beautiful land</i> 1983
pencil on paper
10.5 x 11.4 cm | <i>Untitled</i> 1992
oil on canvas board
30 5 x 22.8 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Naarm Melbourne | 24. Tony Clark
<i>Design for a column with four Sections from Clark's Myriorama</i> (Gertrude Street, 1993) 2025
acrylic paint, permanent marker ink and shellac on cardboard
90 x 8 x 8 cm
Courtesy of the artist | <i>Untitled</i> 1992
oil on canvas board
2 panels, 10 x 15 cm each
Courtesy of the artist, The Commercial, Sydney and Niagara Galleries, Naarm Melbourne | <i>Dance Little Lady (b)</i> 1994-2000
photograph
103 x 86.5 cm |
| 5. Louise Paramor
<i>Rhapsodesia</i> 1996 (one red section remade 2025)
aluminium foil and wrapping foil
270 x 240 x 240 cm
Courtesy of the artist and Void, Naarm Melbourne | 9. David Jolly
<i>Intersection</i> 1993
enamel on glass
50 x 40 cm | 17. Howard Arkley
<i>Untitled [Zappo Study]</i> 1983
synthetic polymer paint on paper
151 x 111 cm
© The Estate of Howard Arkley, courtesy Kalli Rolfe Contemporary Art. Private collection, Naarm Melbourne | 25. Hany Armanious
<i>Woodsman</i> 1998
gesso, gouache and aquarelle on Styrofoam
50 x 50 cm
Michael Buxton Collection, the University of Melbourne Art Collection. Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Michael and Janet Buxton, 2018 | 29. Constanze Zikos
<i>Jubilee</i> 1995
glomesh, velvet, fringing, zips
300 x 280 cm
Private collection, Naarm Melbourne | <i>Dance Little Lady (c)</i> 1994-2000
photograph
103 x 86.5 cm |
| 6. Nike Savvas
<i>Nice Bubbles</i> 1994
iridescent blown glass
dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist and Arc One Gallery, Naarm Melbourne | <i>Spring</i> 1994
oil and enamel on glass
27 x 20 cm
Courtesy of the artist | 18. Diena Georgetti
<i>ENeRGie und Die</i> 1992
chalk on blackboard
2 panels, 61 x 184 cm overall
Courtesy of the artist and Neon Parc, Naarm Melbourne | | 30. Anne-Marie May
<i>Untitled (Constructions of Coloured Rays)</i> 1993
felt on modern stretcher
122 x 112.5 cm

<i>Untitled (Constructions of Grey Rays)</i> 1991
denim on modern stretcher
30 x 30 cm
Courtesy of the artist | <i>Dance Little Lady (d)</i> 1994-2000
photograph
103 x 86.5 cm
Courtesy of the Estate of Destiny Deacon and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney |
| 7. Vivienne Shark LeWitt
<i>Nightmare Abbey</i> 1985
oil on cigar box
22 x 15.5 cm
Collection of Tony Clark | 10. Sandra Bridie
<i>Susan Fielder, detail from 'Institution' 1972</i> 1991 (remade 2025)
oil on birch plywood
152.5 x 122 cm
Courtesy of the artist | 19. Brett Colquhoun
<i>Lure</i> 1986
enamel on board
63 x 98 cm
Collection of Michele and Trevor Fuller | | | 34. Archive: 1985-1995 |
| 8. Rosslynd Piggott
<i>Eyelashes, jewels and a piece of Paris</i> 1987
oil on canvas
35 x 45.5 cm
Collection of Michele and Trevor Fuller

works on paper (left to right, from top left):

<i>The eyelash face, the eyelash face, so beautiful, so wrong</i> 1984
compressed charcoal on cartridge paper
29.3 x 41.5 cm

<i>Love twirls, lace top and drapery folds</i> c.1985
ink on cartridge paper
40 x 32 cm

<i>Bugs</i> 1984
ink on paper
24 x 58 cm | 11. Elizabeth Newman
<i>Painting</i> 1985
oil on canvas
125 x 180 cm
Collection of Julia Cox | 20. Melinda Harper
<i>Untitled</i> 1992
oil on canvas
41 x 51 cm

<i>Untitled</i> 1992
oil on canvas
41 x 51 cm
Courtesy of the artist | | | |
| | 12. Anne Zahalka
<i>The Collector (self-portrait)</i> 1988
Cibachrome photograph
50 x 50 cm
Courtesy of the artist and ARC ONE Gallery, Naarm Melbourne | 21. Matthys Gerber
<i>Landscape 1</i> 1990
oil on canvas
170 x 240 cm
Private collection, Naarm Melbourne | | | |
| | 13. Rosemary Laing
<i>from PARADISE work</i> 1990
silver dye bleach print and baked pigment on aluminium
81 x 241 x 3 cm
Artbank Collection, purchased 1990 | 22. Kathy Temin
<i>Problem</i> 1991
felt, synthetic fur, wire, synthetic filling and Masonite
190 x 80 x 90 cm (irreg)

<i>Black and Yellow Corner Problem</i> 1992
synthetic fur, cord, polystyrene, synthetic filling
74 x 130 x 84 cm (irreg) | | | |

