

Presenting *Rhythm sequence*, the first career survey of Australian artist Gemma Smith.

QUT Art Museum is pleased to present *Rhythm sequence*, a UNSW Galleries exhibition, to Brisbane audiences from Saturday 17 August to 27 October 2019.

As the first career survey of Australian artist Gemma Smith, the exhibition traces the development of Smith's practice since 2003 and its experimentation with the language of painting. It celebrates Smith's reworking of abstract codes and styles, as well as her testing of colour, form and painterly gestures.

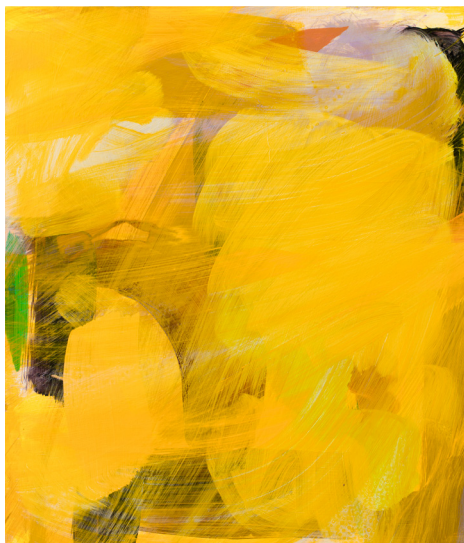
Rhythm sequence features more than 40 paintings and sculptures drawn from collections across Australia. Many of the works are being exhibited for the first time since their original exhibition.

Included are a collection of Smith's earliest paintings depicting crystalline forms and geometric compositions on chessboards; sculptural 'boulders' and 'adaptables' where colours are reconfigured and interact; as well as hard edge and gestural works that explore the blocking, translucency and opacity of paints. The exhibition also includes Smith's most recent works in which colour is barely perceptible.

Rhythm sequence comprises an arrangement of small boards and large canvases which together reflect the physicality and intimacy of the artist's studio work. Rather than reflect a chronology, the exhibition is sequenced to emphasise Smith's playful engagement with ideas of juxtaposition and disjunction, and her enduring interest in the act of painting itself.



Gemma SMITH, *Furill* 2014, acrylic on canvas
Private Collection Sydney. Image courtesy of the artist and Sarah Cottier Gallery.



Gemma SMITH, *Goldens* 2018, acrylic and oil on board.
Private Collection Sydney. Image courtesy of the artist and Sarah Cottier Gallery.

UNSW Galleries Director and exhibition curator, José Da Silva, explains: "Gemma Smith is one of the most significant painters working in Australia today. We are delighted to recognise her practice through this mid-career survey. This is a unique opportunity to see the full trajectory of Smith's practice and its exuberant use of colour play and painterly gestures. The exhibition marks the first in a new series of mid-career surveys by influential Australian artists and designers – a commitment that aims to provide audiences with a deeper appreciation of contemporary practice in Australia."

Gemma Smith is an alumnus of QUT, and her work is held in the QUT Art Collection. The university seeks to develop a collection that represents the best of contemporary Australian and Queensland art, including the acquisition of works by key QUT-trained artists.

QUT Art Museum's Gallery Director Vanessa Van Ooyen comments, "Smith's work epitomises the spirit of the Collection, which has an adventurous commitment to contemporary art, with many geometric abstract works dating from the 1960s onwards."

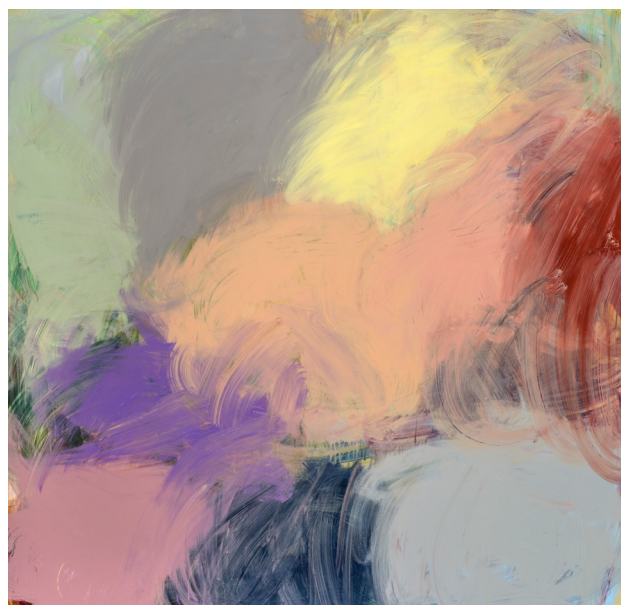
Rhythm sequence runs until 27 October 2019 at QUT Art Museum. Admission is free.

For immediate release
July 2019

This exhibition is a UNSW Galleries touring exhibition curated by José Da Silva. It will be accompanied by the monograph *Found Ground* 2018, published by Formist.



For media interviews with artist Gemma Smith, UNSW Galleries Curator José Da Silva, or QUT Art Museum's Gallery Director Vanessa Van Ooyen or Assistant Curator Katherine Dionysius, or for high-res images, please contact Sian Conway Lamb, Senior Marketing Officer, 07 3138 3380 or sian.conwaylamb@qut.edu.au.



Gemma SMITH, *Crushing* 2017, acrylic on linen.
Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane.

OPENING WEEKEND

[Rhythm sequence](#) and [Empathy swarm](#) opening night

Friday 16 August

6pm-8pm (light canapes and refreshments provided)

[Compelled by colour: In conversation with Gemma Smith](#)

2pm-3pm, Saturday 17 August

Exhibition

17 August – 27 October

[Robotronica](#)

10am-4pm, Sunday 18 August

The opening weekend of *Rhythm sequence* and *Empathy swarm* coincides with QUT's free robotics and technology festival *Robotronica*. The exhibitions will be open to the public from 10am during the festival, with a free artist talk on *Empathy swarm* at 11am.

[Artist talk: Robotic empathy](#)

11am-12pm, Sunday 18 August



Gemma SMITH, *Flow (reverse shadow)* 2016, acrylic on linen.
Courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane.

QUT Art Museum

2 George Street, Brisbane

www.artmuseum.qut.edu.au

artmuseum@qut.edu.au | 03 3138 5370

Tues-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat-Sun 12pm-4pm | FREE

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About Gemma Smith.

Gemma Smith studied at Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney, between 1997 and 1999; and in 2004 at Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane. In 2005 she undertook a colour theory course at Parson's School of Design, New York.

Since 2000, Smith's work has featured in more than 100 exhibitions. Notable among them are: *Superposition of Three Types*, Artspace (2017); *Painting. More Painting*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (2016); *Pittsburgh Biennial*, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Pittsburgh (2014); *Forcefields*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2014); *Case Study – Gemma Smith Considers the Work of Margo Lewers*, Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest, Penrith (2011); *Cubism & Australian Art*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne (2009); *Gemma Smith – Entanglement Factor*, Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Melbourne (2009); *Primavera*, MCA, Sydney (2008); and *Contemporary Australia: OPTIMISM*, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane (2008).

Smith has exhibited regularly with Sarah Cottier Gallery, Sydney since 2006 and with Milani Gallery, Brisbane since 2008..

Her works are held widely in private collections across Australia and in the collections of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide; Art Gallery of Western Arts, Perth; Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne; Griffith University Art Museum, Brisbane; Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane; Deakin University, Melbourne; and Murdoch University, Perth.

Smith's public artworks include the spectacular *Collision and Improvisation (ceiling)* 2012 at the Supreme Court and District Court, Brisbane (2012); *Synchro, Adaptable (Red Oxide/Peach)* 2010 at Brisbane Airport; and *Triple Tangle* 2018, the latest Circular Quay Foyer Wall Commission at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney.

Born 1978, Sydney, and based there until 2004; in Brisbane from 2004 to 2012; and in Pittsburgh, United States, from 2012 to 2014. She currently lives and works in Sydney.