

# POST-IMPERIAL PERSPECTIVES

## BRITISH ART SINCE 1940 AT THE ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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Margot Osborne

Department of Art History

School of Humanities

Faculty of Arts

University of Adelaide

December 2015

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VOLUME ONE

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## **DECLARATION**

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name for any degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint award of this degree.

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Signed

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At the Art Gallery of South Australia, registration, images sales, curatorial and research library staff have been particularly generous in allowing me to view works, providing access to the Gallery's internal records and supplying images of works in the collection for reproduction in this thesis. I am particularly grateful to Jin Whittington, Communications Manager, AGSA Research Library, for her knowledgeable and thoughtful assistance over a period of almost four years as I carried out research in the Library's archives and accessed to the Library's specialist books. I am also grateful to Georgia Hale, Associate Registrar, Collections Management, who brought many of the works in the collection from the Gallery's store for me to view, and to Sue Smith, Collection Database Assistant, who provided the database records of British works in the collection dating from 1900 that are the foundation of the Appendices.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation examines the Art Gallery of South Australia's patterns of collecting modern and contemporary British art since the outbreak of the Second World War. It analyses the relative influence on these collecting patterns of Australia's transition from a mono-cultural British dominion to a post-imperial multicultural nation positioned in the Asia/Pacific region, in comparison to the influence of institutional and art world changes. It evaluates the resulting strengths and weaknesses of the collection and assesses post-imperial museological issues pertaining to collection management.

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