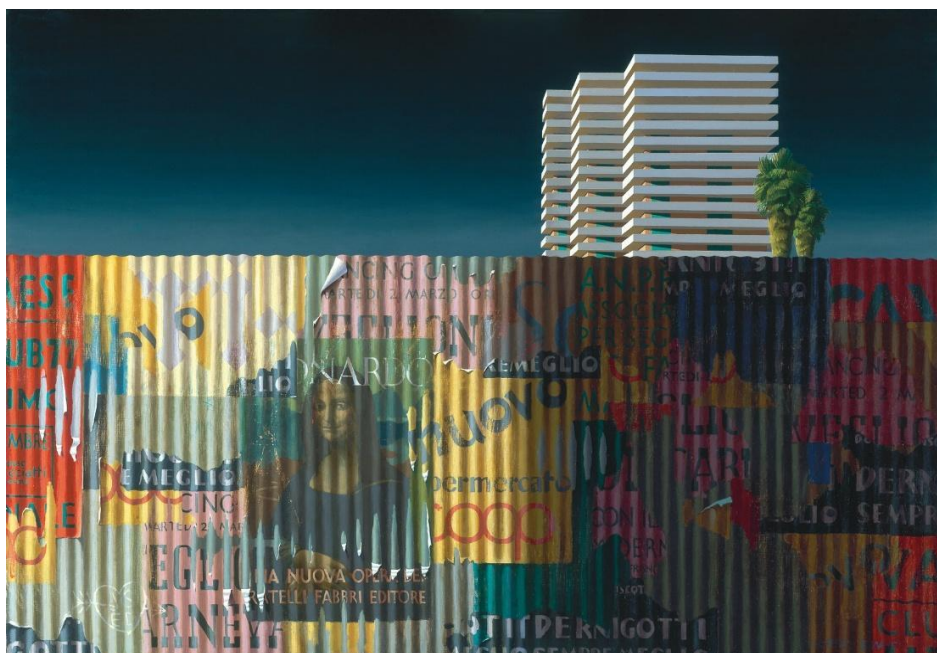


SOIRÉE

JEFFREY SMART IN MOTION

A collaboration between the Academy of Queensland Ballet, Philip Bacon Galleries, and Camerata, Queensland's Chamber Orchestra.



Corrugated Giaconda by Jeffrey Smart

Brisbane, 16th October, 2025: As part of Artistic Director Ivan Gil-Ortega's inaugural 2026 season, Jette Parker Young Artists and the Academy of Queensland Ballet, present *Soiree*, an annual collaboration with the prestigious Philip Bacon Galleries, at the Thomas Dixon Centre, from 24 – 26 September, 2026.

Inspired by the seminal works of Australia's acclaimed artist, Jeffrey Smart, Academy of Queensland Ballet choreographers, Paul Boyd and Grant Aris together with emerging student choreographers, will produce their own creative responses to his iconic paintings, to be performed by the graduates of the Academy of Queensland Ballet, and the Company's Young Artists.

Art dealer, philanthropist and director, Philip Bacon Galleries, Philip Bacon AO, said that Jeffrey Smart was very interested in the 'nitty gritty' of life.

"Jeffrey Smart thought it important not only to document our surroundings exactly as they are, but to celebrate them. He found poetry in concrete, billboards, and construction sites—the everyday scenes we often ignore."

"Smart's precise geometry, often surreal urban landscapes and his sense of stillness offer fertile ground for exploration through movement. I hope that by providing practical opportunities for our young dancers to engage with these masterpieces, we can encourage them to see art in the world around them, to look closer, and to express that same curiosity and precision through their own creative voices."

"I am delighted to once again collaborate with Queensland Ballet. I look forward to seeing the results," he added.

Director, Academy of Queensland Ballet, Christian Tatchev said the association with Philip Bacon Galleries not only unites two non-verbal artforms but offers a valuable opportunity for the dancers to experience and discuss their responses and engage creatively with these masterpieces.

"Translating Smart's distinctive visual style, use of light, and fascination with human isolation into a rich, physical vocabulary, gives our young artists an extraordinary creative challenge," Tatchev said.

"Smart's paintings are so precise and yet so full of mystery — they invite interpretation. Through movement, the dancers can explore what lies beneath the stillness of his scenes and the poetry found in our everyday surroundings."

"We're deeply grateful to Philip Bacon Galleries for their ongoing support and generosity in making this collaboration possible. Their commitment to connecting the visual and performing arts provides our dancers with an inspiring platform to develop and share their artistry," Tatchev added.

This performance season is made possible through the generous support of Philip Bacon AO, a longstanding champion of Australian arts, whose commitment to fostering young talent and honouring great visual artists lies at the heart of this project.

Ends

Event details

- **Venue:** Talbot Theatre, Thomas Dixon Centre
- **Dates:** 24 September – 26 September, 2026.
- Presented in collaboration with **Philip Bacon Galleries** and **Camerata** – Queensland's Chamber Orchestra.
- **Costume Designer** Kathryn Lee
- **Lighting Designer** Glenn Huges

Editors Note

- Interviews: Claire Vince, Communications Manager, cvince@queenslandballet.com.au / 0468 726 910
- Background information and photos see [here](#).

[About Queensland Ballet](#)

Queensland Ballet's mission is to contribute to Australia's cultural landscape by being an integral part of the national and international ballet ecology - striving for artistic excellence, pathways for emerging artists, and impact through our community outreach, education, and Dance Health programs. We aim to enrich lives and contribute to wellness across society through the magic of ballet.

Fast Facts on Jeffrey Smart

- Born in Adelaide in 1921, Jeffrey Smart initially wanted to be an architect.
- One of Australia's most celebrated artists, seeking inspiration from the world around him, his love of the built environment remained a strong force.
- Smart said his artistic streak showed in early childhood
Smart grew up in Adelaide, and said his artistic streak showed up early years at school where his love of drawing was noticed by his teacher, along with his 'stash' of yellow chrome pencils.

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- After school, Smart taught art in Adelaide from 1941 until 1948, when he left Australia for London and Europe, working as a dish washer on the ship.
- Smart always said that he struggled with loneliness due to his homosexuality, but when he started travelling and studying in Europe he realized there were more like men like him.
- In 1949 he commenced studying under Fernand Léger at the Academie Montmartre in Paris. Léger initially told Smart that he had already been 'ruined' by conservative Australian art teaching.
- In 1951, when he returned to Australia, Smart saw advertised the Commonwealth Art Prize, worth 500 pounds, which he won. (approx. \$27,000 in today's value)
- During the 1950's he worked as an art critic for the Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, and as Phidias on the ABC Radio program '*The Argonauts*'
- Smart said *Corrugated Giacnda* is a witty juxtaposition of the banal with the revered. *"A couple of green palm tree "heads" look over a corrugated fence covered with peeling posters and graffiti, where the Mona Lisa smiles out from the vertical intersection of "the golden mean," a classical division of the rectangle thought by Renaissance artists to be the most pleasing to the eye.*
- Note in the painting that there is graffiti of a heart with an arrow through it, "JS (loves) ED," affirming Smart's commitment to his new partner, Ermes De Zan.