

Joanna Poulson

Elegance And Dignity: A Celebration Of Dahlias

February 28 – March 14, 2026

Anthea Polson Art presents Joanna Poulson's inaugural exhibition with the gallery. Renowned for her floral imagery the Adelaide-based artist imparts that her current art practice explores the beauty and vibrancy of nature. Interestingly, the inspiration for Poulson's visual celebration of dahlia flowers originated during a solo trip to Europe in 2024 to reacquaint with family and friends.

It was in Epernay, northern France, that Poulson noticed an alluring bed of dahlias one drizzly morning when walking through the famous Parc de l'Hotel de Ville - Town Hall Park. As is her usual practice she photographed them, umbrella overhead. "Upon returning to Adelaide I reviewed my many holiday photos and kept coming back to those of the dahlias from Epernay. They made a significant impact on me and I realised I wanted to solely focus on these particular flowers for my next body of work," she reveals.

Poulson subsequently researched and then visited a number of South Australian growers to photograph the very diverse varieties of dahlias and learn their names. "The size and beauty of the flowers and the variations in form and colour has me enthralled," she enthuses. "Dahlias are a wonderful source of inspiration and presented new challenges in painting."



In describing her process of depicting these flowers Poulson tells, "Before I even begin an artwork I spend hours reviewing my photographs until landing on a composition that feels balanced. If the lighting isn't ideal I sometimes tweak the image in photoshop to replicate the ambience and colour intensity I'd experienced when viewing the flower in actuality." She continues, "I am still 'old school' in my preparation, gridding both photographic image and painting surface. With the larger works I mostly use charcoal when sketching a form onto the linen or canvas and pencil for the smaller pieces. Three layers of blended oil pigment ensues. It is both a challenging and relaxing experience."

Acknowledging her initial stimulus for this exhibition, the *Epernay Dahlia* painting is a prime example of Poulson's extraordinary skill in bringing an image into 3D acuity. As with all other works the muted, less defined background foliage facilitates the detailed "macro" petals to seemingly extend beyond the picture frame. The viewer cannot help but be enamoured by the 'elegance and dignity' of the dahlia flower and consequently, the natural world's other - often unnoticed - beautiful botanical displays.

JACQUELINE HOUGHTON

Trained at the Adelaide Central School of Art, Poulson gained an Associate Degree in Visual Art in 2008. Her paintings have been acknowledged in a number of Art Prizes including: 2023 Finalist Solar Art Prize; 2022 Finalist Kennedy Art Prize; 2022 Finalist, Omnia Art Prize; 2021 Public Art Grant, City of Prospect; 2017 Finalist Emma Hack Art Prize; 2013 Finalist City of Whyalla Art Prize; 2012 First Prize, Bald Clanger Portrait Prize, Grace Emily Hotel; 2012 First Prize, Adelaide Cathedral Art Show; 2010 Emerging Artist Prize, SA Life/Loreto Spring Art; 2008 Commission Award Boulderstone Hornibrook/Helmpmann Academy; 2008 Finalist CIBO/Loreto Spring Art Emerging Artist Prize; 2007 Grant, Helmpmann Academy; 2007 Scholarship, Adelaide Central School of Art (ACSA); 2006 Commission Prize, Exeter Hotel/ACSA.

29 Tedder Avenue, Main Beach, QLD 4217 **Postal Address:** PO Box 985, Main Beach, QLD 4217

Phone: 07 5561 1166 **Email:** info@antheapolsonart.com.au **Web:** www.antheapolsonart.com.au