

# **TREASURES OF AUSTRALIAN ART 1890 - 1950**

## **Hazelhurst Regional Gallery & Arts Centre**

### **13 August - 19 October 2016**

**EDUCATION KIT: 7 - 12**

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### **THE EXHIBITION**

The Howard Hinton Collection showcases over 50 key works from one of the most significant collections of Australian Art. *Treasures of Australian Art 1890 to 1950*, is a partnership project between New England Regional Art Museum (NERAM) and Hazelhurst Regional Gallery & Arts Centre. Artists include Norman Lindsay, Arthur Streeton, Hans Heysen, Nora Heysen, Rupert Bunny, Lloyd Rees, George W Lambert, Elioth Grunder, Charles Condor, Margaret Preston, Albert Namatjira, Sydney Long, Roy de Maistre, Jean Bellette and Ethel Spowers. Today NERAM is adjacent to the Armidale Teachers' College, which was the original home of the Hinton Trust.

### **THE COLLECTOR**

Howard Hinton (1867-1948) was a generous and mysterious art collector and benefactor with a passion for art. When he first arrived in Australia from England in 1892, he lived in the artists' camps around Sydney Harbour. As a result befriended artists such as Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton and Julian Ashton and began buying their paintings. By 1933, Hinton decided to create the best collection of art in Regional Australia.

Hinton lived modestly in an apartment in Mosman most of his life (coincidentally named Hazelhurst). He first donated works to the Armidale Teachers' College in 1929 and by the time of his death in 1948, had given away over 1200 works. Writing to the Secretary of the Department of Education in 1947, Hinton said:

*My object was to provide a complete collection illustrating the development of Australian art from 1880 onwards, and my action in making the gift to the Armidale Teachers' College was prompted by my great interest in Australian education and my desire that the collection should be available in perpetuity for the benefit of succeeding generations of the students of the Armidale Teachers' College.*

During half a century of purchasing art, Hinton only ever kept a dozen works hanging on his North Shore rented room's walls and several more in a metal trunk by his bed. He did not seek any recognition for what he was doing for art and artists. Hinton developed his collection for the purpose of encouraging artists, educating students, and for the benefit and enjoyment of the public.

## **CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

The *TREASURES OF AUSTRALIAN ART 1890 – 1950: The Howard Hinton Collection* Education Kit contains background information on the exhibition as well as selected images. This Education Kit aims to facilitate learning under NSW Visual Arts Syllabus requirements for Years 7 – 12. This is done by providing information about the Artist's Practice, Artist's Statements, questions regarding the Frames, the Conceptual Framework and Practice. Suggestions for relevant Artmaking activities are also included. It may be used in conjunction with a visit to the exhibition or as pre-visit or post-visit resource material.

## **CURRICULUM LINKS**

### **Stage 4**

Artmaking Outcomes  
4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6

Critical and historical studies  
4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10

### **Stage 5**

Artmaking Outcomes  
5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6

Critical and historical studies Outcomes  
5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.10

### **Stage 6**

Artmaking Outcomes  
P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6 and H1, H2, H3, H4, H5,  
H6 (If developed into a body of work)

Art Criticism and Art History Outcomes  
P7, P8, P9, P10 and H7, H8, H9, H10

## **PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES**

1. Look at information about the Howard Hinton Collection and visit suggested websites to be familiarised with the works. Eg.
  - <http://www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/Community/Hazelhurst/Exhibitions/Treasures-of-Australian-Art-1890s-to-1950s-The-Howard-Hinton-Collection>
  - <http://www.neram.com.au/portfolio-items/collection/>
  - <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hinton-howard-6681>
  - [http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/?exhibition\\_id=2933&page=1](http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/?exhibition_id=2933&page=1)
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2. Discuss artists in Hinton Collection. Who are they, what were their common themes, subject matter and materials? What were they trying to achieve in their representations of Australia? What were the main influences on their artistic style? How has this shaped Australian art and the representation of Australian life and landscapes today? What is the Heidelberg school and why or how did it form?

3. Discuss: What is en plein air? Why were artists interested in using this method? Why were artists interested in representing the landscape? Why did artists want to paint still lifes?
4. Discuss Hinton as a collector. What was his background? How did he become an art collector? What is the benefit of having art collections?
5. **Key Words - Definitions are available in Vocabulary/List of Terms**
  - Artists' Camps
  - Plein Air
  - Landscape
  - Still life
  - Heidelberg school
  - Impressionism

#### **QUESTIONS Years 7 to 12**

- What are the main styles of painting represented in the collection?
- Why were artists painting landscapes? Why might they have been trying to achieve?
- Why were these artists representing the world around them?
- Why were artists capturing still lifes?
- Why do you think *en plein air* painting was popular during this time? Is it popular now? Why? Why might the paintings be small?
- What are the main materials used?
- What do you think prompted Hinton to create this collection?

## SUBJECTIVE FRAME Years 7 to 12



Esther Paterson *The Yellow Gloves (Portrait of Betty Paterson)*, 1938 oil on board

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Esther Paterson was born into an artistic family and was best known for her street scenes and landscapes and worked as a commercial illustrator. She entered the National Gallery of Victoria School in 1907, aged just 13 and graduated first in her class in 1912. Paterson painted a number of portraits of uniformed and civilian officers, many of which were exhibited at the Australian War Memorial.

Paterson was a member of the Victorian Artists Society (1954-68), fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, London (1949) and president of the Melbourne Society of Women Painters and Sculptors (1966). She won the Archibald Prize in 1926 with her portrait, *Silk and Lace*, of W. B. McInnes. *Yellow Gloves* is a portrait of her younger sister, Betty, who was an artist, children's book author and talented musician. The title of the work was changed to *The Yellow Gloves* upon the request of Hinton, when it was sent to the Armidale Teachers' College.

- What is the relationship between the artist and the subject? Do you think their relationship is positive? How can you tell?
- What feelings is Betty having during the meeting with her sister? What are the indicators of this? (Consider setting, time place, position of subject, colours, use of light).
- Describe the personality characteristics you think Betty might have and why.
- How has the artist drawn the viewer into the painting and shown joy and comfort? (Describe the subject's posture, direct gaze, round table, informal environment, colour palette).
- Does the title *The Yellow Gloves* give any more meaning to the painting and how?

## STRUCTURAL FRAME Years 7 to 12



Roy de Maistre *Boat Harbour*, 1928, oil on wood

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Roy de Maistre is best known in Australian art, for his early collaborative experimentations in colour and abstract form after WW1, with fellow artist, Roland Wakelin. De Maistre studied violin and viola at the NSW State Conservatorium of Music and painting at the Royal Art Society of NSW under Norman Carter and at Julian Ashton's Sydney Art School. He developed a colour-music theory after being inspired by colour therapy given to soldiers.

In 1923 de Maistre was awarded the NSW Travelling Art Scholarship, spending time in London, Paris and St Jean de Luz, where he produced several coasting paintings including *Boat Harbour*. Emigrating to London in 1930, his work became influence by Cubism and other Modernist Styles.

- Describe the style and technique the artist has adopted in this painting.
- What colours has the artist used, what are the relationships, how do they evoke an emotive response from the viewer?
- Look at the texture of the brushstrokes. Can you notice any change in direction? Why has the artist done this?
- Is the colour palette important? Does it relay anything about the environment or season of the painting setting? Why time of day is it? What are the visual clues to this? Consider light and shadow.
- How has this work been composed? Consider shapes, texture, palette, foreground midground and background. Does it remind you of any painting styles or other artists?
- The artist was inspired by colour therapy. How do you think this has influenced his painting? Do you get a sense of harmony or imbalance in this painting?

## CULTURAL FRAME Years 7 to 12



Tom Roberts *Mosman's Bay*, 1894, oil on canvas

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tom Roberts was a leading artist of the Heidelberg School of Impressionist painters, and a proponent of plein air painting in Australia. Roberts produced many iconic paintings, attempting to capture the unique atmosphere of the Australian landscape, with particular reference to bush and rural labour.

Roberts studied art in National Gallery of Victoria schools and at the Royal Academy of Art, London. Travel to Europe exposed him to plein air principles, which he used on his return to Australia. In 1881, Roberts moved to Sydney and established an Artist Camp at Sirius Cove, Mosman Bay, with Arthur Streeton and Arthur Fullwood.

- How does the artist attempt to reflect the attitudes and cultural values of the time? Consider the landscape, activities, clothing and buildings.
- What social activities were common to people in 1894? Research if you are unsure. How is this different to the activities we engage in today? Consider the scene of Mosman Bay today. How would it look? How many people would be there? What kind of social activities might they be engaged in?
- What kind of social etiquette might have applied during this time and how are these conveyed in the painting?
- What were the social divisions like at the time? What kind of influence did wealth have on people's lives? How is this conveyed in the painting?
- How does this work reflect the aims of the Heidelberg School?

## CULTURAL FRAME Years 7 to 12



Margaret Preston *Australian Flowers*, 1932, oil on canvas

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Margaret Preston is one of Australia's most significant artists and a key figure in the development of Modern Art in Sydney from the 1920s to the 1950s. Preston endeavoured to create a uniquely Australian style through her paintings and woodcuts of native flora and local landscapes.

Preston studied art with W. Lister in Sydney, the National Gallery School, Victoria and the Adelaide school of design. Travel and study in Europe were important to Preston with her work being exhibited with French Post-Impressionists. Preston was also influenced by Japanese art and cubist principles in her later work. She experience fame and success in the 1920s with articles and images of her work in journals including *Home* and *Art in Australia*.

Colourful woodcut views of Sydney Harbour and still lifes remain her best known work.

- What do still life paintings tell you about cultural beliefs and ideas around gender at the time? Consider why women often painted still lifes or portraits rather than landscapes.
- Why do you think Preston was painting *Australian Flowers* in particular? Consider the flowers as signs and symbols.
- Is still life still a prominent art form today and why? Research contemporary artists who use still life in their work.
- What does this work depict about domestic life at the time? Research the 1930s. What kind of social, cultural and political environment was Preston painting in?

## ART CRITICISM Years 9 to 12

### ESTHER PATERSON

- Do you think this work is successful as a portrait? Give reasons.
- What do you consider to be the best qualities of the portrait? Think of technical skill, emotive response, colour and how these evoke feelings in the viewer.

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### ROY DE MAISTRE

- Which aspects of this painting link it to impressionism? Consider subject matter, colour palette, texture, materials and method.
- What feelings does the work evoke? How has this been achieved?
- How has the sense of timelessness been captured in this work?

### TOM ROBERTS

- Why do you think Tom Roberts was interested in capturing a uniquely Australian landscape?
- Do you think Robert's succeeds in capturing the light, feeling and atmosphere of the time?
- Why did people paint *en plein air*? Why do you think this is less popular now?

### MARGARET PRESTON

- How does this still life compare to Margaret Preston's later work?
- What can you infer about gender roles and the subject matter women were painting during this time? This may require further research.
- How has this rendering of Australian Flora impacted on current representations of Australian imagery?

## POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES: ARTMAKING Years 7 to 12

- Create a portrait of a family member. Try to capture the essence of their personality and character. Consider colour palette, subject's gaze, texture, environment and surrounding objects.
- Travel to a local landscape to practice *en plein air*. This could be the beach, bush, or cityscape. You will need a small canvas, paints, palette knives and an easel. Sketch out the landscape and then paint in an impressionistic style.
- Look at Roy de Maistre's *Boat Harbour*. Create a 3D construction of this painting using cardboard. Colour using paints or coloured paper.
- Find a picture of a landscape of buildings that you like. Simplify this into cubist shapes. Draw it onto coloured cardboard. Colour with oil pastels and add texture.
- Roy de Maistre experiments with links between colour and music. Listen to a favourite song. See if you could represent it using different blocks of colour and shapes. You may like to review de Maistre's *Colour Music* for inspiration.
- Do a large sketch of Tom Robert's *Mosman's Bay*. Add contemporary signs and symbols that have meaning in your world. This may include modern conveniences, favourite restaurants, contemporary buildings and people. Consider adding colour in pencil, marker, watercolour, collage or acrylic paint.

- Look at Margaret Preston's' later still life works. Research native flora in your area. Arrange a series of these flowers and create a stylised linocut of these. Hand colour with watercolours.
- Research contemporary artists who work with still life, such a Jude Rae. Consider the objects you might place in your own contemporary still life. Paint your own still life with objects relevant to you in the style of Jude Rae. Consider the importance of the objects, how these might speak to an audience and the colour palette, tone and hue that might be relevant.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Artists' Camps** - Artists' camps flourished around Sydney Harbour, mainly in the Mosman area, in the 1880s and 1890s, dying out after the first decade of the twentieth century. They developed as a result of the enthusiasm for *plein-air* painting.

**Plein Air** – from the French word meaning “open air”. Painting in the outdoor daylight.

**Landscape** – depiction of landscapes and natural scenery where the main subject is in wide view.

**Still Life** – a representation of mainly inanimate objects such as a bowl of fruit or flowers.

**Heidelberg School** – an art movement in Australia of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Refers to artists from this time who painted *en plein air* (in the open air), including Tom Roberts and Arthur Streeton. Also known as Australian Impressionism.

**Impressionism** – a theory or practice in painting especially among French painters of the late 1860s depicting the natural appearance of objects by dabs or strokes of primary unmixed colours in order to simulate actual reflected light.

**Post Impressionism** – the work and style of a varied group of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century artists including Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin who reacted against the naturalism of impressionism and to explore colour, line and form as well as the emotional response of the artist, which in turn led to the development of Expressionism.

**Cubism** – a revolutionary new approach to representing reality invented around 1907 by artists Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, who aimed to bring different views of subjects (usually objects or figures) together in the same picture, resulting in paintings that appear fragmented or abstracted.

**Modernism** – refers to the broad movement in Western arts and literature that began around 1850 and is characterised by a deliberate rejection of the styles of the past; emphasising innovation and experimentation in form, materials and techniques in order to create work that better reflected modern society.

**Texture** – the visual and tactile quality of a surface.

**Shading** – the graded areas of tone, lines, dots etc indicating light and dark in a painting or drawing.

**Oil Paint** – a thick paint made with a ground pigment and drying oil.

**Foreground** – the part of the view that is nearest to the observer.

**Midground** – the point between the foreground and the background in an image.

**Background** – the part of a scene that is farthest from the viewer.