

This exhibition celebrates the creative achievements of three generations of the women artists of the Boyd family, one of Australia’s most extraordinary and talented artistic families. The fascinating and often neglected histories of the women are explored, re-examining their important contribution to the artistic and cultural life of Australia. A rich and diverse selection of paintings, watercolours, drawings and ceramics by Emma Minnie Boyd, Doris Boyd, Lucy Boyd Beck, Mary Boyd, Yvonne Boyd, Hermia Boyd and other artists from the Boyd family are featured in the exhibition.

Beginning with the work of artist Emma Minnie Boyd in the late 19th century, the exhibition explores the influences, careers, collaborations and the important role of the women who worked creatively across generations of this inspiring family environment. The women nourished artistic talent, empowering their children and grandchildren to express themselves creatively in a supportive artistic environment. Their connection with *Open Country* located at number eight Wahroongaa Crescent, Murrumbeena from 1913-1963, which was the centre of family life, creativity and an extraordinary artistic milieu for the Boyd family and their circle of friends is also investigated.

Emma Minnie Boyd (née à’Beckett) (1858-1936) was a significant Australian artist working in the late 19th and early 20th century. Highly skilled in the watercolour and painting mediums, Emma Minnie created a remarkable body of work, including accomplished landscapes, domestic interiors and views of everyday life. She received recognition for her creative achievements during a successful career and exhibited widely in Australia and overseas. Her art continues to influence generations of the Boyd family who have followed the landscape tradition. Her daughter Helen à’Beckett Read (1903-1999) was a talented landscape painter.

Doris Boyd (née Gough) (1889-1960) was an accomplished artist who worked creatively throughout her life, producing many impressive paintings, watercolours, and ceramics. Doris worked in close collaboration with her husband artist potter Merric Boyd (1888-1959) in the production of their pottery. She balanced family life with her creative activities. Although her achievements were not fully recognised during her lifetime, she left an important artistic legacy for her children and future generations of the Boyd family.

Lucy Boyd Beck (1916-2009) was the eldest daughter of Doris and Merric Boyd. She was a talented artist who created many accomplished watercolours, drawings and ceramics, and addressed mythological themes, the human form and the spiritual and natural world in her work. Lucy made an important contribution to Melbourne’s artistic and cultural life from the mid twentiethcentury onwards and worked collaboratively with her husband ceramicist Hatton Beck (1901-1994) in the creation of their innovative ceramics, exhibiting widely around Australia.

Mary Nolan (née Boyd) (1926-2016) was the youngest daughter of Doris and Merric Boyd. She was a gifted artist from a young age, with a unique creative vision. Mary created some extraordinary expressionistic war time paintings in the early 1940s, and was a talented photographer. She is renowned for establishing important cultural links between Australia and Britain and was dedicated to her family, to her second husband Sidney Nolan, his career and the activities of the Sidney Nolan Trust until her death in 2016. Mary Nolan left a significant artistic and cultural legacy.

Yvonne Boyd (née Lennie) (1920-2013) emerged as a gifted artist in the mid-twentieth century, with a promising future and a powerful creative vision. She painted works that addressed the social conditions of the 1940s, developing a distinctive expressionistic style. Her artistic activities were limited due to commitments to family life and managing her husband Arthur Boyd’s (1920-1999) career. In 1993, Arthur and Yvonne jointly gifted their Bundanon property and significant art collection to the Federal Government in 1993. This significant cultural asset and their important legacy continues today through the Bundanon Trust.

Hermia Boyd (neé Lloyd-Jones) (1931-2000) enjoyed a successful creative career as an artist. She developed a national and international profile for her accomplished ceramics, drawings, sculptures, prints and watercolours and interest in mythological themes. Hermia’s close artistic collaboration in the ceramic medium with her husband David Boyd (1924-2011) over many decades in Australia and overseas was successful and their innovative ceramics were exhibited widely and acquired by collectors.

This exhibition recognises the creative achievements of the women artists of the Boyd family who empowered future generations to work creatively and continue this important artistic tradition. The artworks in the exhibition have been sourced from major public gallery and museum collections including the National Gallery of Victoria, Bundanon Trust, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Bendigo Art Gallery, Art Gallery of Ballarat, Mornington Regional Gallery, Shepparton Art Museum, and diverse private collections in Australia and overseas.