

**Entry type:** Resource  
**Entry ID:** AWH002616

## Betty Churcher interviewed by Sheridan Palmer in the Australian art from 1950 to the present oral history project [sound recording]

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**Repository** National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

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**Reference** [ORAL TRC 6111/4](#)

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**Date Range** 8-Nov-10 - 2-Mar-11

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**Access** Access open for research, personal copies and public use.

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**Finding Aid** Timed summary (3 p.) and uncorrected transcript (typescript, 128 leaves).

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### Details

2 sound files (ca. 185 min.)??Betty Churcher, born in Brisbane (1931), discusses her childhood and early memories; her parents and grandmother; gender inequalities within her family; the lack of professional female role models which existed in Australia at that time; the Australian art world in the 1950s; moving to London on a travelling art scholarship (1953-6); raising money to support her studies; being determined not to return to Australia; marriage; return to Australia (ca. 1956); motherhood; the relationship between motherhood, her art and her career; the London art world in the 1960s; completing her post graduate education at the Courtauld Institute of Art (London, 1976).??Churcher discusses her work in education in Brisbane and Melbourne; visual art and academia; the importance of art history; art students today; intellectualisation of the creative process; the Melbourne academic world in 1978; the women's movement and support for professional women; the bureaucratisation of the arts industry in the 1980s; working as Deputy Chair of the Australia Council; working as Chair of the Visual Arts Board; working as the Director of the Art Gallery of Western Australia (1987-90); working as the Director of the National Gallery of Australia (1990-7); reshaping the National Gallery of Australia; the 'efficiency dividend' and staff cutbacks; the introduction of blockbuster exhibitions; the rising powers of curators; Australia's cultural image at that time; her work in television; her memory as an archive; her failing sight; her drawing skill; her desire and ability to normalise art; various artists, art administrators and critics; various colleagues, political and cultural figures; various arts institutions and organisations within Australia and globally

### Author Details

Alannah Croom

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