Entry type: Resource
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Nora Heysen interviewed by Heather Rusden [sound recording]

Repository	National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection
Reference	ORAL TRC 3121
Date Range	25-Aug-94 - 25-Aug-94
Access	Access open for research, personal copies and public use.
Finding Aid	Timed summary (6 p.) and corrected transcript (typescript, 42 leaves) available.

Details

2 digital audio tapes (ca. 115 min.)??Nora Heysen discusses her rural childhood; her artistic pre-eminence over her siblings; attending a convent school in Mt Barker, South Australia; her family's lack of interest in organised religion; her family's focus on art; music and dance; studying at the Adelaide School of Art; studying in London; her parents' support of her art studies; aesthetic theory; comparisons between her and her father's work; family dynamics; attitudes towards women painters; taking up portraiture; moving to Sydney (1938); differences between the Melbourne and Sydney art movements; the process of portraiture; winning the Archibald Prize (1938); securing portrait commissions; the advantages of commissioned work; her feelings about motherhood.??Heysen discusses being appointed as an official war artist (1943); New Guinea and her official instructions there; her working conditions; insubordination; illness and recall to Australia; official complaints about her work; love and marriage (1953); settling in Hunter's Hill, Sydney; pets and animals; caring for her husband; women's nurturing and domestic roles; travelling in the tropics; her artistic output during this period; her marriage's end; the value of emotional experiences to an artist's work; the burden of having a famous family name; her lifetime achievements and artistic reputation; her father's death; temperamental inheritances from her parents; artistic influences; her materials and palettes; the most important elements of painting; Impressionism and Post-Impressionism; art as an escape; eyesight problems; particular aesthetic challenges; friends; old age; independence; domestic routine; the difficulties and rewards of an artist's life; smoking; her regrets at not learning German as a child.

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