Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6013

Falls, Joy

(1913 - 1983)

Born	19131105, Perth Western Australia Australia
Died	19830511, Perth Western Australia Australia
Occupation	Photographer

Summary

Joy Falls was a commercial photographer whose professional work was primarily based in Sydney. Falls was the earliest woman photographer to have worked with colour processing in Australia.

Details

Joy Falls was born in Perth in 1913 to parents who were ‘teacher[s] and educationalist[s]’ (Hall 116). She attended the Claremont Teachers’ College and went onto study at the University of Western Australia. In 1937 she married Geoffrey Paton Falls, a scientist. Initially the couple lived in Canberra, where Joy worked for an accountant.

Three years later they moved to Sydney. Here Joy began working as a professional photographer; she was 27 years old at the time. It is not known where Falls was trained or what experience she had when she commenced work in this profession. However, by 1940 she had opened a photography studio with Louise St Evans Krips (who was married to Henri Krips the conductor), at Spit Road in Mosman. The studio operated until 1942. Falls then purchased another studio in King Street in Newtown, and the pair moved their business there.

During this period she also started working from her home in Darling Road, Balmain, operating under the name Paton Dace Photography. It was at this time (1944) that Falls began experimenting with colour. In effect, she was the earliest woman to work with colour processing in Australia, only two years after it had been introduced in England.

In 1951 Falls travelled to Spain for a year. Following this she went to London, where she worked for the picture press agency Photo-Union. Falls managed its colour film processing laboratory for six months. Accompanied by her husband, she returned to Australia in 1953 and continued her photography work in Sydney. Falls opened her own colour processing laboratory in 1956.

Falls specialised in using an Italian product called Ferrania, and established a successful business called Colourlab, in Darlinghurst. She went to Milan in 1957 on the invitation of Ferrania to attend a three month course there. The following year she went to Germany to the Wiesbaden colour film plant.

Falls closed her business in 1962 and moved back to Western Australia, where she devoted herself to the conservation movement. She continued to take photographs; these consisted largely of portraits, and nature studies in black and white.

Events

1940 - 1989
Active as a commercial photographer.

Published resources

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Book
Australian Women Photographers 1840 - 1960, Hall, Barbara and Mather, Jenni, 1986

Author Details
Anne Maxwell (with Morfia Grondas and Lucy Van)

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