Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6204

Spate, Virginia Margaret

(1937 - 2022)

Born	19370101, Reading United Kingdom
Died	20220812, Sydney New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Academic, Art historian

Summary

Virginia Spate was born in the United Kingdom, moving to Australia with her family in 1951. She holds Bachelor of Arts (Honours) and Masters degrees from the University of Melbourne and a PhD from Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania.

Virginia Spate returned to the UK in 1967, where she was a teacher for the Inner London Education Authority, the Bath Academy of Art and the Central School of Art. She was appointed to the Department of Art History at Cambridge University in 1970 and in 1979 became Power Professor of Fine Art at the University of Sydney, a position, she held until her retirement in 2003.

During this time, Virginia Spate secured a home for the large collection of contemporary art purchased through the Power Bequest, which became known as the Museum of Contemporary Art. She organised or contributed to a number of major exhibitions, notably *The Revolutionary Decades: French Painting 1760-1830* (1980-81); *Dreams, Fears and Desires* (1984); *Claude Monet, Painter of Light* (1985-6); *Monet and Japan* (Canberra 2001). She has published books on John Olsen, Tom Roberts and Claude Monet.

Virginia Spate was elected a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities in 1981. She was honoured with the award of a Centenary Medal in 2001, the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in 2003 and Companion in the Order of Australia in 2018.

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection
Papers of Virginia Spate, 1840 - 2013

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Virginia Spate, author and arts administrator, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

National Gallery of Australia, Research Library Archive
[Virginia Spate : Art & Artist Files (Australia and New Zealand)]. / Virginia. Spate

ANU University Archives
Virigina Spate Art Forum lecture

National Gallery of Australia Research Library
The Aboriginal Memorial : 9th birthday lecture

National Gallery of Victoria, Shaw Research Library
Virginia Spate, Artist File

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