

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE6207

## Thomas, Bronwyn Jean Dorothy

(1923 - 2000)

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**Born** 4 August, 1923, Melbourne Victoria Australia

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**Died** 23 May, 2000

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**Occupation** Art gallery director, Art teacher, Artist, Curator

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### Summary

Bronwyn Thomas was an artist, art teacher and gallery director who had a particular interest in Chinese culture.

### Details

Bronwyn initially undertook studies in architecture at Melbourne Technical College, however they were cut short due to the outbreak of World War II. Despite this setback, Bronwyn continued pursuing her love and talent for art by drawing part-time at the National Gallery Art School.

Eventually Bronwyn decided to focus on painting and after moving to Brisbane with her first husband Fergus Yeates, she began exhibiting her work. Bronwyn also worked as an art teacher at Queensland University and the teachers' training college, and she played a key role in establishing Queensland's Contemporary Art Society.

In 1966 Bronwyn married Laurie Thomas and together they moved to Sydney. From 1971 Bronwyn was director of the Bonython Gallery in Paddington, followed by director of the Australian Centre for photography from 1974 to 1977. Bronwyn was also appointed executive director of the Australian Art Exhibitions Corporation when it toured the exhibition of Colombian gold objects in 1978.

Bronwyn developed a special interest in Chinese culture, people and language. She first visited China in 1980 and upon her return to Australia she enrolled in a Chinese language course at the University of Sydney. Returning to Beijing in 1983, with a group from the Canberra College of Advanced Education, Bronwyn completed an intensive course in Chinese. Back in Beijing in 1989, she taught English and also helped with displays and the translation of exhibit labels at the Chinese Museum of History. Later Bronwyn helped many Chinese artists settle with their families in Australia.

### Archival resources

#### **National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection**

[Papers of Laurie and Bronwyn Thomas, 1937-1995 \[manuscript\]](#)

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

[Bronwyn Yeates interviewed by Hazel de Berg for the Hazel de Berg collection \[sound recording\]](#)

#### **National Library of Australia**

[\[Biographical cuttings on Bronwyn Thomas, artist, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals\]](#)

#### **State Library of Victoria**

[\[Bronwyn Yeates : Australian Art and Artists file\]](#)

### Author Details

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