

## Some key events in Australia's early Art History

### - 1820

- C1600 European navigators began charting Australia's shoreline and painting broad observations of topography, birds and wildlife from ships
- 1770 Sydney Parkinson, travelling with Captain Cook, possibly first European artist to set foot on Australian soil and draw from direct observation
- 1803 John Lewin began producing copper etchings
- 1812 Absalom West, emancipated convict, set up business as **publisher of prints** in Sydney (commencing with a series of engravings of the infant colony).  
**First art school** established in Sydney by John William Lewin  
John Lewin records first use of oil paint in Australia in his letters
- 1814 Richard Read senior, first portrait painter, opens art school in Sydney

### 1820 - 40

- 1821 Two lithographic presses set up at Parramatta Observatory
- 1826 Augustus Earle opens **gallery in Sydney**
- 1831 Thomas Bock (artist and engraver) **opens business in Hobart** while still assigned convict
- 1833 **Mechanics School of Arts opened in Sydney** to promote culture
- 1837 **First art exhibition - held in Hobart**

### 1840 - 50

- 1830s Wood engraving begin to be used instead of woodcuts for newspaper illustrations
- 1836 Possible first lithograph by woman artist, **Maria Barney**, NSW
- 1840 First volume of John Gould's *Birds of Australia* **published** (Elizabeth Gould major contributor to work.)
- 1843
- 1844 **National School of Art** gives its first lecture  
Robin Vaughan Hood set up business as **carver, gilder (picture framer), lithographer and dealer in fine arts in Hobart**
- 1845 276 works displayed at the **first public exhibition of paintings in Australia** in Hobart's legislative chamber
- 1847
- 1848 S.T. Gill organises an **Artists' Exhibition in Adelaide**
- 1949 **Exhibition for the Society for the Promotion of Fine Arts** in Australia in Sydney  
**School of Arts established in Brisbane**

### 1850 - 70

- 1853 **First art exhibition in Melbourne**
- 1855? **Sketch Club** formed in Sydney
- 1856 **First Art Society** formed - The South Australian Society of Arts  
**Earliest technical art school** in Australia established - South Australian School of Arts and Crafts
- 1858
- 1861 **Art Treasures Exhibition**, Hobart
- 1867 **National Gallery of Victoria** established  
**National Gallery School of Art of Victoria** established
- 1869 **Artisans' Schools of Design** established in Melbourne  
Melbourne Exhibition - **Ornamental and Decorative Art**

## 1870 - 90

- 1870 **Sydney Intercolonial exhibition**  
**Victorian Artists Society** formed
- 1870s **The Academy of Art** was founded - later to become AGNSW (1880)
- 1872 **First exhibition of colonial art**, under the auspices of the Academy, held at the Chamber of Commerce,
- 1874 *Apsley Falls* by Conrad Martens is the **first work on paper by an Australian artist to be acquired by the Art Gallery of NSW** - commissioned by the trustees and purchased for £50 out of the first government grant of £500.  
*Mount Olympus*, Lake St Clair, Tasmania by WC Piguenit **first oil painting by an Australian artist to be acquired by AGNSW**
- 1875
- 1879 **Sydney International exhibition**
- 1880 **Art Society of NSW** formed by Arthur and George Collingridge and other artists
- 1880s **Art Gallery of South Australia** founded
- 1884 **Society of Painters in Pastel** established
- 1885 **First regional art gallery in Australia opens at Ballarat** in Victoria
- 1887 Beginnings of **Heidelberg** group
- 1888 **Travelling scholarship** established in Victoria - awarded to John Longstaff  
**Melbourne Centennial Exhibition**
- 1889 **First Australian magazine** devoted to art, Australian Art by George Collingridge  
**9 x 5 Impressionist Exhibition** in Melbourne

## 1890s

- 1890 **Julian Ashton School of Arts/ Sydney Art School** opens in Sydney 1890
- 1895 **Art Gallery of Western Australia** opens  
**Queensland National Art Gallery** opens
- 1897 **National Society of Mural Painters** Established
- 1898 Queensland National Art Gallery **first Australian acquisition** - Josephine Muntz-Adams's *Care* c.1893

## 1900 -

- 1908 The **inaugural Wynne Prize** is awarded to Walter Withers for *The storm*  
**Constance Jenkyns first woman to win travelling scholarship** in Australia
- 1916 - 42 Magazine **Art in Australia** published by Sydney Ure Smith
- 1922 **The inaugural Archibald Prize** is awarded to WB McInnes for *Desbrowe Annear*.
- 1982 **National Gallery of Australia** in Canberra opens

Key Sources include:

Moore, William, *The Story of Australian Art*, Angus and Robertson, Melbourne, 1980

Australian Dictionary of Biography

National Library of Australia

Art Gallery of New South Wales

National Gallery of Victoria

National Gallery of Australia

Andrea Hope

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