

Rembrandtia

Newsletter of the Nora Heysen Foundation Inc

Summer 2018



Rare Nora Heysen linocut now available in a limited edition print

The Foundation has released for sale a limited edition of 100 of this rare linocut printed in black with a small selection hand tinted in watercolour. Each print has beneath it an embossed signature created by Artist, Janet Ayliffe in order to identify the work as Nora Heysen's and all are marked with their individual edition number.

Trustee, Jane Hylton has worded an accompanying document describing the origin of the print's history, the process undertaken and acknowledgement of those involved in the production exercise.

Priority for initial purchase of this limited edition print is to be given to Foundation members for collection either from The Cedars retail shop or for direct mailing from Hahndorf to interstate destinations.

The black and white tonal print will sell at \$400 and the colour-tinted at \$500.

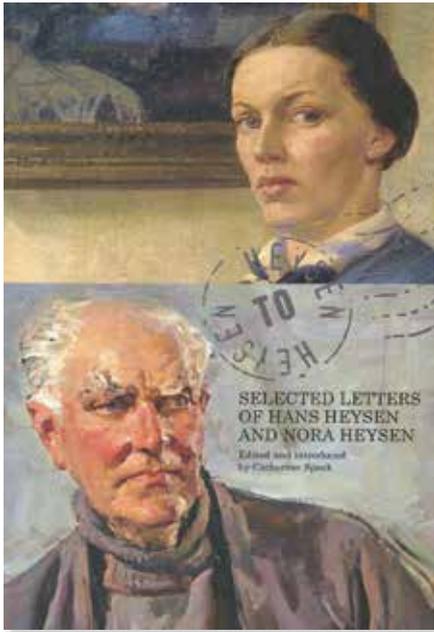
An additional cost of \$25 will cover postage as well as insurance of the print, which will be double bubble wrapped and secured in a padded mailing bag.

Payment preference is for either direct

deposit into the Nora Heysen Operating Account BSB 015 250 Account No. 4969 89982 or by Cheque made out to:

The Nora Heysen Foundation Inc.
P.O. Box 301
Hahndorf
SA 5245.





Heysen to Heysen to be reprinted

Dr Catherine Speck's book *'Heysen to Heysen'* based on the remarkable correspondence between Nora Heysen and her father is to undergo a reprint.

Wakefield Press, Adelaide, have agreed to a second printing of this book which will be available in time for the major Heysen Exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria next year. The initial print was undertaken by the National Library of Australia in 2011.



Nora Heysen Foundation Inc.

Custodian of the art of Nora Heysen

Trustees

Chair and Curator:

Allan Campbell

Heysen Family Representative:

Tim Heysen (proxy: Jill Swann)

Curator and Art Publisher:

Lou Klepec (proxy: Christopher Orchard)

Art Gallery of South Australia:

Tracey Lock,
Curator Australian Paintings & Sculpture

Minister for the Arts Nominee:

Jane Hylton, Curator and Art Historian

Hahndorf Academy Foundation:

George van Holst Pellekaan, Academy Chair
Richard Heathcote, Director Carrick Hill

Public Officer:

Dr Peter Heysen

Unknown, unsigned treasure

Curator's Choice

Female Head Study
Brown Conte

This remains one of my favourite sketches from the Foundation's significant collection of the drawings of Nora Heysen.

It is unsigned and without subject identification, the medium brown conte crayon and the condition of the drawing, excellent.

It presents itself as a piece that probably could have been sketched in the 1970s or 1980s or perhaps even earlier, maybe the 40s or 50s. It therefore has a timeless and mysterious charm to it as

Collection Focus

to the exact era of its completion and the identity of the subject. We will probably never know.

Many of Nora's portrait sketches were initial studies building up to a commissioned oil on canvas but we have no documentation as such of a completed portrait. Nevertheless it is a most beautiful piece demonstrating clearly Nora's expertise as a highly talented exponent of the art of drawing.

Allan Campbell,
Curator, The Cedars

NGV to host major Heysen exhibition

The National Gallery of Victoria will stage a major Exhibition commencing early March 2019 of the combined artistic work of Hans and Nora Heysen.

Entitled 'Hans and Nora Heysen, Two Generations of Australian Art' it will present itself as a unique exhibition on a scale not seen before in a hanging of paintings and drawings of two highly significant Australian artists.

The venue will be the N.G.V's Federation Square Galleries, Flinders St Melbourne and will run from March 8 until July 28, 2019.

The appointed Curator of the exhibition is Angela Hesson, Curator

of Australian Painting, Sculpture and Decorative Arts at the National Gallery of Victoria. Angela has been in preparation mode for the Exhibition for some time and has in place now the proposed loan arrangements for a hanging of close to 300 original works of both father and daughter.

This will be drawn from the collections of the major State Galleries and Art Institutions, many private collections as well as a substantial loan request from The Cedars itself.

The aim is to also borrow from The Cedars, certain items of furniture,

NGV

decorative arts and fabrics to enhance the hanging with an authentic flavour of the residence interior that both artists drew on for their inspiration and subject matter, particularly in recognition of their shared passion for still life compositions.

The almost five-month hang in Melbourne should certainly provide an excellent opportunity to increase both membership and financial support for the Nora Heysen Foundation.

The Heysen Exhibition will be viewed exclusively only at the N.G.V. so you are encouraged to mark it into your diary for a weekend escape to Melbourne!



Nora's jacket favoured in many self-portraits

In many of her arresting self portraits, Nora can be seen wearing a favoured velvet jacket. There were actually two, one brown and one blue, and she acquired both in her early twenties.

They can be identified in various self portraits held in the collections of many notable art institutions and galleries, such as the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the National Gallery of Australia

and the National Library in Canberra. Both jackets were returned to her Foundation as a specific request from the artist before she died.

The brown jacket can be recognised in the superb self portrait 1932 which hangs in pride of place in her Hahndorf studio where it was painted.

Editor's Note: I think we actually have the best of all the self portraits completed

by Nora. It has been said that indeed, she painted more self portraits than even Rembrandt. Most were characterised by the serious, if somewhat challenging but self assured expression on her face. The Foundation's portrait presents a unique capture of a faint smile, which hovers on her lips. Trustees agreed without hesitation to its loan to the 2019 N.G.V. Melbourne Exhibition.

Professional cataloguing software now recording Nora's legacy for posterity

Some time ago, the Nora Heysen Foundation Trustees recommended that the catalogued data for the Foundation collections, progressively recorded by a volunteer since 2007, be transferred to a recognised management system (MOSAIC) for heritage collections – a system which is also in use at Carrick Hill and in many other organisations around Australia.

This 'small museums' tool, developed by the IST company in Western Australia, facilitates the efficient recording, referencing and researching of collection data.

In order to fund this project, an application was made to the Copland Foundation, based in Victoria. [See <http://www.coplandfoundation.com.au/>].

The NHF subsequently received a grant of \$5,270 in January 2016. Half of the grant fund was transferred to the NHF Foundation shortly thereafter, and funds were expended as per the planned budget.

A laptop computer, and other



associated hardware as recommended by the software company – separate keyboard, backup unit, USBs – were

purchased. In May 2016, the software was installed, and the already accumulated data related to Nora Heysen's works of art was transferred.

Further cataloguing data for other items in the collections (eg sketchbooks, photographs, books, objects) are progressively being added to the database in this ongoing project at The Cedars.

The residue of the grant has been expended on one day's inservice training, a small camera, and a printer as well conservation and storage materials.

Cataloguing of the Nora Heysen Foundation collections continues as a separate project from the current Hans Heysen Foundation cataloguing project being carried out through 2018.

These databases are necessary in effectively managing the precious items in The Cedars collections, and providing the resources for curatorial and research work into the future.

*Jill Swann,
Curatorial assistant*

Foundation Membership

It's that time again! So where, you might well ask, do my membership dollars go?

Well, it's certainly money well spent as your subscription levy supports a necessary range of cost obligations that a Foundation body such as ours requires.

Most importantly is the ongoing programme of conservation work vital to the necessary protection of the Foundation's collection (over 700 works on paper alone).

The provision of ongoing financial investment is fundamental to the continued restoration procedures together with the framing and glazing of the drawings, watercolours and oils.

As well there are the purchase costs of the desirable archival storage materials necessary for the housing of such a comprehensive collection of art.

It also allows for promotion and identification of the studio and works currently on show particularly in terms of brochure printing and advertising costs.

We would like to grow the Membership of the Nora Heysen Foundation in the next year. We invite you to renew your membership status, and rejoin if it has lapsed. Also consider bringing in some new members to the Foundation from your family, friends or social networks, perhaps by presenting them with a membership subscription as a birthday or Christmas gift.

1 Year - \$25 single, \$40 double

2 Years - \$45 single, \$70 double

3 Years - \$60 single, \$100 double

Cheques to the Nora Heysen Foundation or on Credit card details through *The Cedars* shop Tuesday to Sunday – 8388 7277

The Nora Heysen Foundation Incorporated

PO Box 301

HAHNDORF SA 5245

h.heysen@bigpond.net.au

Direct bank deposit to the Nora Heysen Foundation Operating Account BSB 015 250 Account No 4969 - 89982



Two fine artists, two firm friends

Nora Heysen, the first woman to win the prestigious Archibald Prize in Portraiture in 1938, and Judy Cassab, the second winner 22 years later in 1960, were great friends, as these two photographs show.

Above: Judy Cassab, Margaret Woodward and Nora Heysen drawing in Judy's studio in 2000 (photo by Barbara Konkolowicz, National Library of Australia)

Right: At the Pen and Pencils Artists' Christmas Party 2002 (photo by Lou Klepac)



Deed protects Nora's interests under the new Hans Heysen Foundation

Many Nora Foundation members have asked me what effect is the establishment of the Hans Heysen Foundation going to have on the future of the Nora Heysen Foundation. It is, as a member of the Foundation, something that I was also concerned about.

The establishment of the Hans Heysen Foundation has taken considerable time to ensure the future of The Cedars. Nora is of course an integral part of that wonderful picture, and the need to protect that has not been ignored.

As a result a Deed has been signed between both Foundations to ensure that the Nora Foundation is protected.

This Deed acknowledges Nora Heysen's contribution to the legacy and the history of The Cedars as a cultural hub in the Adelaide Hills. The Deed protects the right of access for the Foundation as well as the right to permanently display Nora's work, including curatorial oversight. It also guarantees specific areas for Nora's work to be displayed in any new facility established at The Cedars.

The legacy of one of Australia's most important women artists is safe and has a permanent home at The Cedars.

*George van Holst Pellekaan,
Trustee*

"Did I ever tell you – we have another artist in the family! Nora has decided on the profession, and is showing remarkable aptitude. She seems to possess the natural talent and endless industry and concentration to make a success of it, and I must confess her progress in twelve months is quite wonderful. She draws quite naturally – has a splendid sense of proportion and a feeling for design, and with it a good colour sense. Already she draws better than most of our professional artists and can paint a very fair still life – true in tone values and with a nice sense of colour and light. I am hoping quite a deal from her."

Hans Heysen to Lionel Lindsay
June 1927 (Nora aged 16 years)



A rich heritage – celebrating art and roses at The Cedars

In the spring of 2015, a special and grand event and fundraiser was held in collaboration with Heritage Roses in Australia, which promoted and publicised “The Cedars” and the growing of roses. “A Rich Triumph” celebrated the garden and its beautiful collection of roses, as well as the art of Hans and Nora Heysen, particularly their still life.

Sunday 8th November, 2015 was very hot and so most visitors arrived in the morning to beat the heat. The rambling rural garden, having been lovingly tended for so many months, was dressed for the day in its absolutely finest spring apparel. We had much to offer our visitors including art, flowers, music, an “open house”, food, drinks, plants, produce, studio displays and invited speakers. Heritage Roses in Australia had stalls of roses for sale and a fine display table of roses, named and identified, that grow in the garden at “The Cedars”. The Speakers’ Tent on the lower lawns drew large audiences to hear talks by some of South Australia’s most celebrated rose “gurus”.

David Ruston used his talent for flower arranging to recreate two Heysen paintings featuring Nora Heysen’s French Bourbon rose *Souvenir de La Malmaison*, named after the Chateau where Napoleon’s Josephine created a

splendid rose garden. This rose, with its delicate form and soft shades of pink, was favoured by both artists. *Souvenir Roses*, (1946) was given by Nora to her father as a gift and it was a joy to see David Ruston recreating the work with a vase of freshly picked flowers from the garden. Hans Heysen’s iconic *Spring Flowers*, (1931) was also recreated for the enthralled audience by David Ruston, who had sourced all the flowers portrayed including delphinium, lily, penstemon, poppy and rose.

Walter Duncan talked about his relationship to the Heysen family and his provision and arrangements of roses for the Heysen artists to paint. He even used to pack up and send arrangements to Sydney for Nora Heysen to paint at her home in Hunters Hill.

Allan Campbell talked about the history of “The Cedars” garden and the passion of Heysen and his wife Sallie for the growing of roses in particular. There were always arrangements of fresh flowers inside the house, a tradition that Allan upholds to this day and that is always hugely appreciated by visitors.

Trevor Nottle talked about companion planting for roses and was available during the day to sign copies of his book “*Endless Pleasure*”, a history of gardening

and gardening implements. George Thomson also presented his experience and knowledge of the breeding of new roses.

Maureen Ross, from the Ross Rose family, generously donated five newly-released Hans Heysen roses which were duly planted in the garden at a ceremony late in the day.

Visitors were fascinated and delighted by the mystery surrounding two very similar paintings of *Spring Flowers* by father and daughter that were brought together for the first time and displayed in Nora Heysen’s studio. The works depict an almost identical arrangement of flowers picked from a spring garden, with Hans Heysen’s painting being the one that David Ruston recreated for the audience. The note of intrigue surrounding these paintings was that they had different dates and different vases. Did the artists work together on their compositions, agreeing to paint these different vases, with Hans then completing and dating his a year later? Another of Hans Heysen’s large paintings, *Pumpkins and Onions* (1922), was also displayed and was accompanied by Allan’s arrangement beside it using real vegetables with the magnificent brass vessel that features in this work.



The house was open all day so that visitors could walk through and imagine the family's lifestyle, with Sallie Heysen presiding as the consummate hostess with her legendary homemade cakes served with coffee. Costumed members of the Victoriana Society strolled through the rooms and the grounds, while beautiful music was provided by Janet and Hugh Gordon of "Tamarisque". In the past, celebrated visitors included Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh, Marcel Marceau, Sir Edmund Hillary, Helen Keller, Anna Pavlova and opera singer, Dame Nellie Melba. Melba, a frequent visitor and early collector of Hans Heysen's work, would treat everyone to fine renditions of her songs.

The morning and afternoon teas replicated the recipes of Lady Heysen, with "The Cedars" volunteers, and many others, baking an amazing array of delectable goodies. Visitors were also tempted by the Market Table of fresh fruit and homemade produce, cakes, jams and preserves while Tupelo Grove Nursery provided a supply of attractive plants and generously contributed a percentage of their day's takings. A raffle, with handsome prizes of a framed reproduction of Heysen's Autumn Bunch (1925), and the newly released Hans Heysen Rose and bottles of wine, raised further funds. Heysen wines were available for tastings on the day by the Peter Heysen family who also gave us a percentage of sales.

"A Rich Heritage" was a huge success with about 500 visitors through the gate - an amazing effort by all concerned. Even more important than the financial success



Souvenir Roses, Nora Heysen, 1946, oil on canvas. Collection of the Hans Heysen Foundation.



Roses, Hans Heysen, 1930, oil on canvas. On loan from the family of Michael Heysen.

The 'Heysen' rose: Souvenir de la Malmaison

One of the most beautiful of the French Bourbon roses, it remained a particular favorite of both Hans and Nora Heysen.

It was painted repeatedly and expertly by both artists either mixed with other garden flowers or as a singular arrangement.

It is known as 'Queen of Beauty and Fragrance' and was bred in 1843 by French rose breeder Jean Biluze who named it after the Chateau de Malmaison where Josephine Bonaparte had created a magnificent rose garden.

Both of these oil paintings have been requested to hang in the N.G.V's Heysen Exhibition, Melbourne 2019.

was the enormous goodwill that the day engendered and the endorsement and promotion that "The Cedars" received as a result. It was a wonderful opportunity for all the volunteer guides and helpers to work together, and the camaraderie was a joy. This special day was not only

a glimpse of a past glorious life, but also hopefully a view of the excitement and interest that the future may hold for this national treasure.

*Julie Maitland,
member of the organising committee*



The first proof comes off the press. And below – Julie carefully inks up the block; Janet and Rosemary with one of the completed prints.

Printing from Nora Heysen's still life linocut block delivers a labour of love

In last edition of *Rembrandtia* we talked about a little gem that was discovered among Nora Heysen's possessions that she left to her Foundation. This was a small linocut block of a still life composition believed to have been completed in her studio at The Cedars in the 1930s.

The flowers would have been favourite blooms picked from the garden and arranged in a way quite reminiscent of Margaret Preston. It is believed that this block was never reproduced by Nora Heysen.

The esteemed artist and printmaker Janet Ayliffe was approached with a

view to reproducing the work and Julie Maitland and Rosemary McDonald provided the workforce under Janet's gentle instruction to make (hopefully!) a print run of at least 50 and in so doing to test the stamina of the block.

Janet's belief is that the lino cut was made for printing in a book or as an advertisement for an exhibition as it had been mounted on a woodblock to match the height of the conventional letter press.

Rosemary and I arrived at Janet's wonderfully cheerful pastoral home on the hill at Kangarilla to be greeted by a happy and contented wildlife and

thriving vegetation as we made our way to her door.

Janet's welcome as always was wonderfully enthusiastic and after a warming cup of tea boiled on the woodheater stove she allocated the necessary tasks required before printing.

These included cutting to size the large sheets of beautiful quality Somerset Velvet paper and creating the "washing line" to hang up the drying prints. Following is a pictorial record of the day's work!

Julie Maitland

