



PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 501
23 April 1975

ARTHUR BOYD'S GIFT TO NATIONAL GALLERY

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, announced today that the Interim Council of the Australian National Gallery has accepted the generous offer of a gift from one of Australia's most prominent artists, Mr Arthur Boyd, who has presented to the Gallery a large collection of his work dating from his earliest years as an artist. The gift is conservatively valued at \$1,900,000.

Mr Whitlam said that the Interim Council was most enthusiastic in its praise of this gift, which includes over two hundred paintings in various media, from 1938 until 1974, two tapestries, more than a thousand drawings, a group of ten sculptures in bronze and ceramic, and a small group of pastels. As well, Mr Boyd has given a large and important collection of his graphic work. This last consists of approximately 800 etchings, aquatints, drypoints and lithographs and includes many etching plates which have never been printed or released. Mr Boyd is to allow the Gallery to print these in limited editions and sell them for the Gallery's purposes. This generous offer is of great value both to the Gallery and to the public, who will have available to them in this way the work of one of Australia's greatest artists.

Mr Whitlam went on to say that the Gallery's Australian collection could not but be considerably enriched by this generous gift from a famous Australian artist, for it would not only further the aim of the Gallery to have the best examples of visual arts in all its forms but also give the Australian people an opportunity to see in depth the work of an artist who had played a significant role in an important stage in the development of Australian art.

The Prime Minister also announced that in addition to making a gift of his own work, Mr Boyd, together with other members of his family - Messrs, David and Guy Boyd, Mrs Lucy Beck and Mrs Mary Perceval - had presented the Gallery with a large group of paintings by their late father, Merric Boyd. This was another valuable and generous gift from a munificent and talented family which had contributed much to Australia's artistic achievements in many fields.

Mr Whitlam also paid tribute to Mr Joseph Brown of Melbourne, who had acted for Mr Boyd in making the detailed arrangements which led to the gift being handed over to the Gallery.

NOTE:

ARTHUR BOYD: Born Murrumbeena, Victoria, 1920, studied mainly within the family circle. Was greatly assisted by his uncle, Martin Boyd, the novelist, who made it possible for Arthur Boyd to devote himself to painting in his formative years.

After a number of commissions in Melbourne he went to London in 1960 where his exhibition at the Zwemmer Gallery was followed by a large retrospective exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery, London, in 1962, which established his international reputation. His work is in all Australian State galleries and a number of overseas collections.

Mr Boyd returned to Australia to live a few months ago.

AUSTRALIAN GALLERY INTERIM COUNCIL

Mr R.C. Crebbin, Sydney (Chairman)
Miss P. Bell, Brisbane
Mrs J. Dawson Boddy, Binalong, N.S.W.
Mr G. Cohen, Oerth,
Mr L. French, Melbourne,
Professor P. McCaughey, Melbourne,
Mr J. Mollison, Canberra,
Mr D.J. Munro, Canberra
Mr L. Parr, Melbourne,
Mr F. Williams, Melbourne,
Mr D. Wynn, Adelaide

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