

**MEDIA RELEASE**

28 May 2015

## **HALCYON DAYS: HEIDE IN THE 1940s**

Opening on 20 June 2015, *Halcyon Days: Heide in the 1940s* celebrates highlights of Heide Museum of Modern Art's collection from the 1940s, a heady period of extraordinary creative achievement and cultural change in the history of Heide.



Throughout the 1940s, John and Sunday Reed's home, Heide, formed a focal point for some of Australia's most avant-garde artists, who rejected conventional ways of living and learning and spearheaded the modernist movement in Melbourne. This constellation of rising talent included the young Sidney Nolan, cerebral painter Albert Tucker and his partner Joy Hester, the quiet yet passionate Arthur Boyd and free-spirited John Perceval. Each developed a distinctive practice and came to hold an undisputed place in the canon of Australian art.

Such was John and Sunday's belief in this group that they supported them financially and materially and in some instances formed close attachments to them. As poet Barrett Reid observed, the Reeds provided a 'total concentration of life' at Heide, which not only gave rise to unprecedented experimentation and attainment, but witnessed a drama of human relationships.

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The 1940s saw the creation of many much-loved Heide icons and the selection displayed in *Halcyon Days* will include Ned Kelly and St Kilda images by Nolan, some of Hester's compelling psychological portraits, and surrealist images by Tucker. In addition, a remarkable major portrait group by Boyd makes its debut, a recent donation to the Museum by the Estate of Beverly Brown.

*Curator Kendrah Morgan is available for interview.  
High res images are available upon request.*

### EXHIBITION

**HALCYON DAYS: HEIDE IN THE 1940s**

**Saturday 20 June – Sunday 13 September 2015**

### RELATED PROGRAMS

**ART TALK: HALCYON DAYS**

**Saturday 20 June, 2pm**

John and Sunday Reed's home formed a focal point for some of Australia's most avant-garde artists during the 1940s, such as Sidney Nolan, Albert Tucker, Joy Hester, Arthur Boyd and John Perceval. This decade saw extraordinary creative achievement and cultural change. Join curator Kendrah Morgan for a tour of Heide Collection highlights and a discussion on how these works spearheaded the modernist movement in Melbourne.

**FREE** with admission

**Venue** Heide I

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### ART TALK: SIDNEY NOLAN

**Sunday 21 June, 2pm**

Dr Nancy Underhill, author, curator and art historian, unravels the story behind one of Australia's most fascinating artists in her new biography *Sidney Nolan: A Life*. Following the talk, a book signing will take place with the author.

**FREE** with admission

**Venue** Heide I

### MORNING TEA: THE 1939 HERALD EXHIBITION OF FRENCH AND BRITISH CONTEMPORARY ART

**Thursday 30 July, 10–11.30am**

The 1939 *Herald* Exhibition of French and British Contemporary Art arrived in Melbourne at a pivotal time in the history of Australian art, influencing a generation of artists who were to later produce some of Australia's most iconic art images. The *Herald* exhibition had a lasting impact on Heide founders, John and Sunday Reed, and the Heide circle of artists, Joy Hester, Sidney Nolan and Albert Tucker, for whom the exhibition provided a firsthand encounter with the influential work of European modernists.. Writer Judith Pugh discusses this important exhibition and its impact on the politics and history of Australian art with curator Kendrah Morgan. A delicious morning tea from Café Vue is included.

**Cost** Adult \$22, Member/Concession \$18 (includes admission & morning tea)

**Assemble** Heide III Information Desk

**Bookings:** 9850 1500

Image captions:

Sidney Nolan | *Bathers* 1943 | ripolin enamel on canvas | 62.9 x 75.5 cm | Heide Museum of Modern Art | Bequest of John and Sunday Reed 1982 | © The Sidney Nolan Trust

Albert Tucker | *Joy Hester Doing a Handstand* c.1940 | gelatin silver photograph | 22.4 x 17.3 cm | Heide Museum of Modern Art | Gift of Barbara Tucker 2001 | © Barbara Tucker

**- END MEDIA RELEASE-**

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Museum Opening Hours  
Tuesday-Sunday 10am-5pm. Closed Mondays.