

Plein Air Painting,
The Heidelberg School
&
Australian Impressionism
(Victoria)

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There were two important stylistic changes in art in France from around 1830 to 1870 -

Realism or Naturalism

in response to both political upheaval and the ability to paint *en plein air* (outdoors)



Camille Corot, *View near Epernon*, 1858-60

and, as a consequence of this development

French Impressionism



While both styles were to influence Australian artists to varying degrees, it was the *Naturalistic* style with which the earlier Australian Plein Air artists were more familiar - particularly as this style had also become popular in England, particularly around Cornwall.

Berthe Morisot, *After Luncheon*, 1881

Art development in Australia in 1800s

From the early 1800s the style of art in Australia was known as **Colonialism** and was largely dominated by artists who had migrated to, or were visiting, Australia.

They brought with them the styles, painting techniques and teaching norms from overseas, particularly Europe. They were also generally employed as the teachers of art.

As teaching schools emerged, particularly the gallery school in Melbourne, the trustees favoured British techniques, such as copying from old casts of sculptures. Landscapes were produced by artists making sketches, and then undertaking paintings in their studios.

With wealth gained from the gold rush period, middle class settlers became interested in purchasing paintings.



William Strutt (attrib), *Gold Diggers receiving a letter from Home*, c1860

From around the 1880s paintings of Australian landscapes rapidly became more identifiably Australian

- Greater sense of Nationalism as Australia headed toward Federation in Jan 1901
- Teachers in expanding number of schools slowly moving to the notion of encouraging painting outdoors (*en plein air*)
- Incorporation of ideas and techniques of painting in style known as Realism from the French Barbizon School & plein air in England
- Clubs formed stimulating discussion and new ideas - Buonarotti Club
- More professional artists painting in Australia (born overseas and locally)
- With expansion of train lines – easier to visit the country to view landscapes



Frederick McCubbin, *Down on his luck*, 1889



Tom Roberts, *A Sunday afternoon picnic at Box Hill*, c1886



Tom Roberts, *The Breakaway*, 1890-91



Arthur Streeton, *The purple noon's transparent might*, 1896



Charles Condor, *Herricks Blossoms*, c1888



Jane Sutherland, *On the Last Tramp*, 1888



Sophie Steffanoni, *Cambridge Street, the Rocks*, 1902



Clara Southern, *An Old Bee Farm*, c1900



Girolamo Nerli, *Beach Scene*, c1888



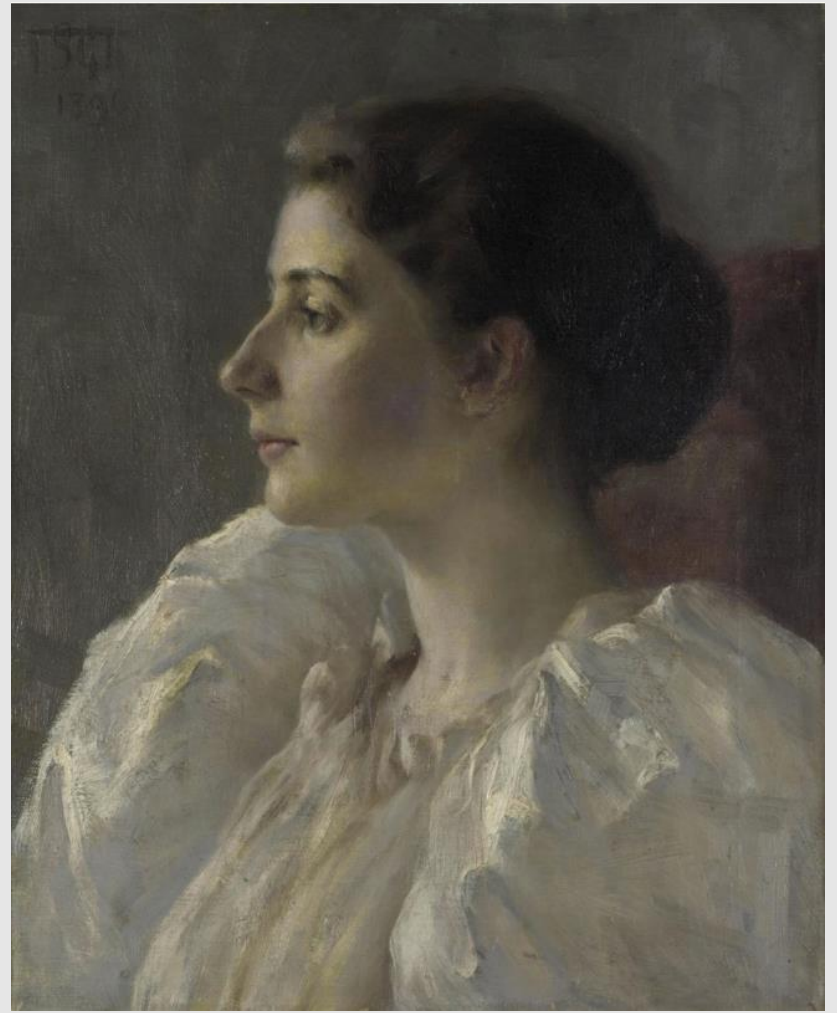
Emmanuel Phillips Fox, *Riverside, Charterisville*, c1899



David Davies, *A Hot Day*, 1888



May Vale, *Girl Reading*, 1890



Tudor St George, *Portrait of a young lady in a white dress*, 1896

Introducing plein air painting, naturalism and Impressionism in Australia

Key early influencers were:

- Louise Buvelot
- Julian Ashton
- Alfred Daplyn
- Arthur Loureiro
- Tom Roberts

Painting en plein air

Louis Buvelot (1814-1888)

- Swiss painter influenced by Barbizon school
- Arrived Australia 1865
- Contributed landscapes to various international, intercolonial and Victorian exhibitions from 1866 until 1882
- Considered to be a defining landscape artist
- Taught briefly at Artisans School of Design in Carlton
- Encouraged key artists in Melbourne to paint outdoors



Tom Roberts, *Louis Buvelot*, 1886

By 1869 Buvelot's reputation as the colony's leading landscape artist was established.



Louis Buvelot, *A Bush Track*, 1876

Arthur Streeton, Tom Roberts and Frederick McCubbin acknowledged him as the father of Australian landscape painting. McCubbin wrote:

"There was no one before him to point out the way; he possessed, therefore, in himself, the genius to catch and understand the salient living features of the country. I remember as if it were yesterday, standing one evening a long time ago, watching the sunset glowing in the trees in Studley Park, and it was largely through Buvelot that I realized the beauty of the scene".



Louis Buvelot, *Winter morning near Heidelberg*, 1866

Louis Buvelot

Swiss

Realist artist and teacher

3 March 1814 – 30 May 1888

Julian Ashton (1851 – 1942)

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In 1873 he spent a few months at the new Académie Julian in Paris

Returned to illustration in London and had work accepted by the Royal Academy of Arts.

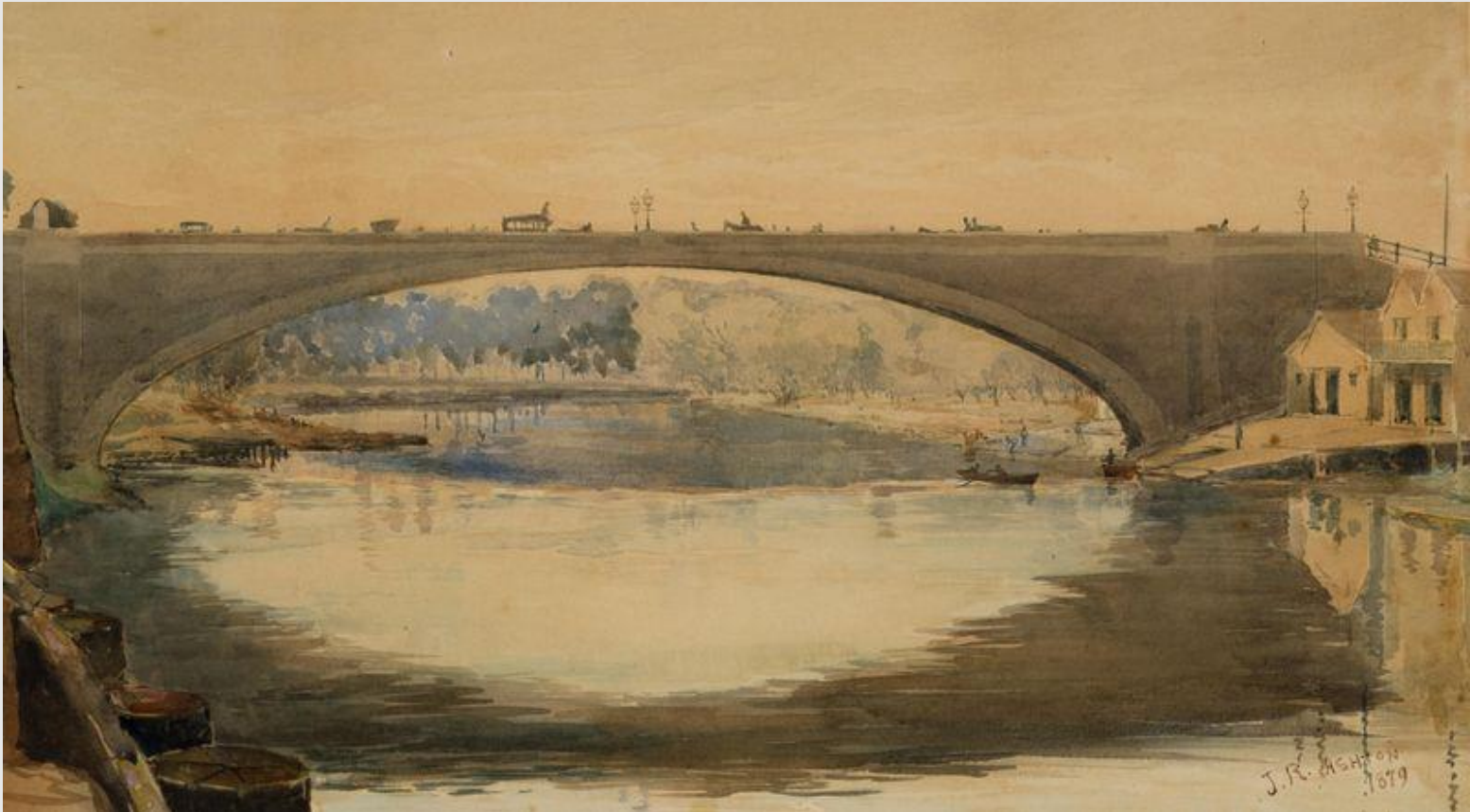
Came to Melbourne to work on the *Illustrated Australian News* in 1878

'*Evening, Merri Creek*' 1882, was claimed by the artist to be the first true 'plein air' oil painting in Australia

Julian Ashton, *Evening, Merri Creek*, 1882

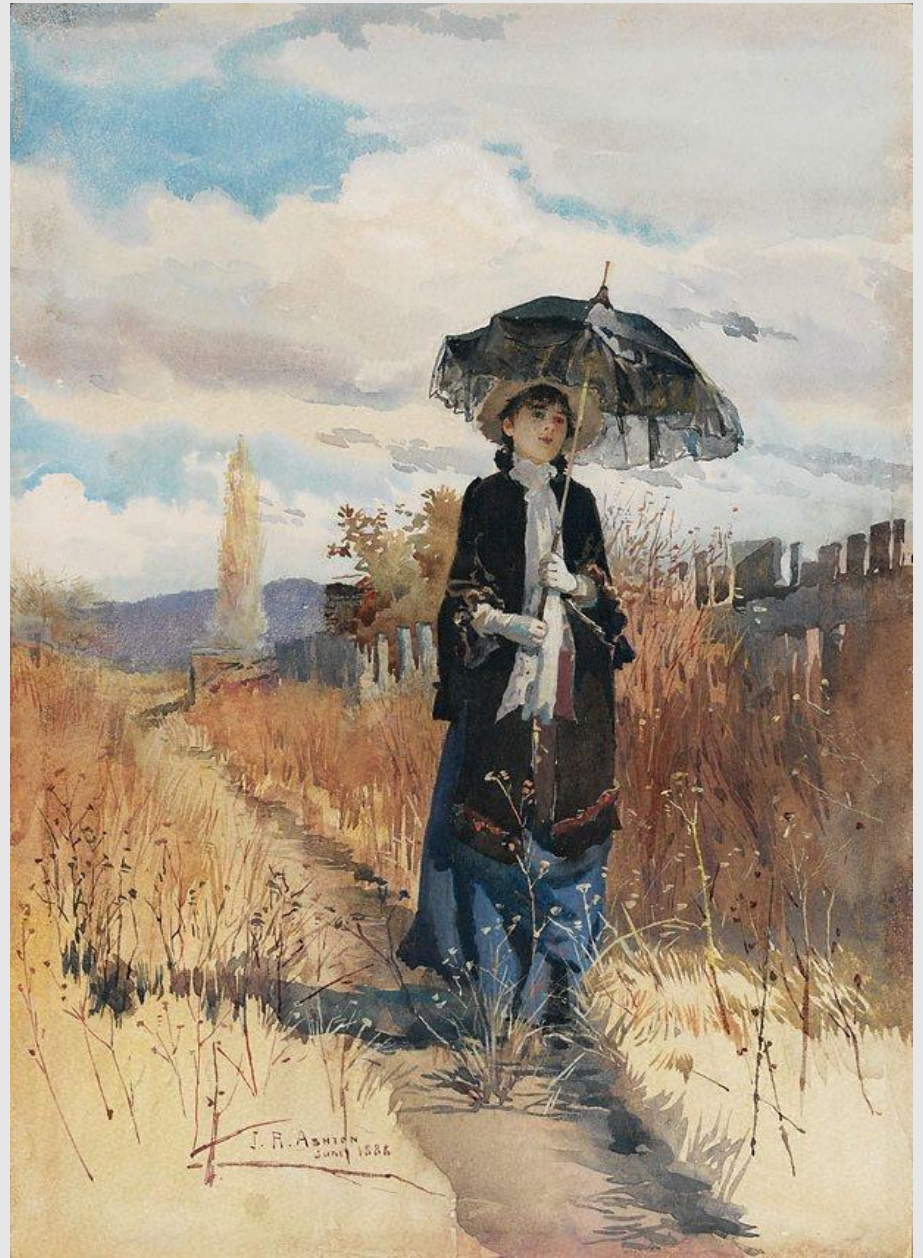
Shortly after arriving in Melbourne Ashton purportedly asked Frederick McCubbin why he painted a (classical painting) of a woman 'long since deceased'. "*Why not paint the life about you?*"

He maintained that "*modern artists are beginning to see the true historical painting consists in reproducing the scenes which lie around them*" and they "*should leave behind them historical pictures of the greatest value to coming generations*".



Julian Ashton, *Bridge over the Yarra*, 1879

Ashton moved to Sydney 1883
where he became a major influence
– opened Academy Julian, painting
school



Julian Ashton, *A Solitary Walk*, 1886

Alfred Daplyn (1844 – 1926)

- Studied at the Slade School in London, the National Academy in New York, at L'Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts in Paris and in Rome.
- Also studied under **Carolus-Duran** and **Corot**, and artist colonies in Pont-Aven and Barbizon in France and familiar with style of **Velázquez**
- Migrated to Melbourne in 1881
- Strong advocate of plein air painting
- According to the *Argus*, 25 March 1882, he *"painted in the low tones after the French method, and in the style of the "impressionists"*, possibly the first use of the word in an Australian context.



Alfred Daplyn, *Rowboat on Shore and Hens*, c1882

Daplyn moved to Sydney in **1884**, became secretary of the New South Wales Art Society and its instructor in painting in 1885-92.

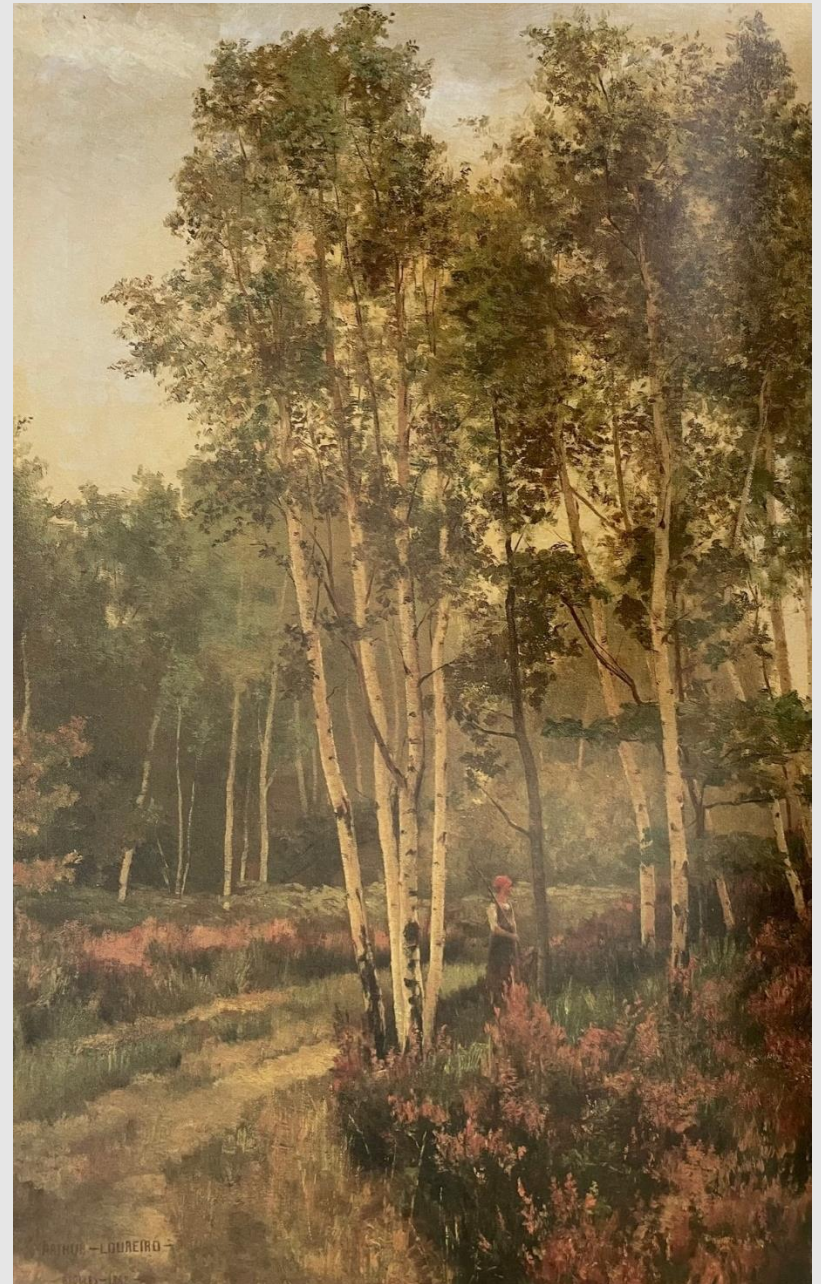


Alfred James Daplyn, *Beach Inlet with Gulls*

Arthur Loureiro (1853 -1932)

- Studied under Alexandre Cabanel at the École des Beaux-Arts, and exhibited at the Salon
- Had lived at Brolles, in the forest at Fontainebleau, and knew of the latest developments in the Parisian art world
- Arrived Melbourne 1885 & brought with him an enthusiasm for plein-air painting
- Founding member **Australian Artists' Association** in 1886, and his stylish studio was a meeting place for the Melbourne art world
- Close friend of Frederick McCubbin

This painting suggests influence of both Bastien-Lepage and Françoise Millet



Arthur Loureiro, *The Forest at Fontainebleau*, 1882

Buonarotti Club

- Established in Melbourne in 1883 by engraver, draughtsman and artist, **Cyrus Mason**.
- Designed to support *'the cultivation and practice of art, literature and music among its members'*
- Members travelled outside Melbourne and painted *plein air*, including near Mason's property at Tynong, 66 kilometres from Melbourne. Tynong was accessible by train from 1880.
- *"Often we used to set out from Mr. Mason's estate at Tynong for the old Koo-weerup Swamp, with a loaf of bread, bag of tomatoes, a bag of oysters, bottles of beer, and plenty of cigarettes. Painting was the first object of the expeditions, but the rough life had a zest all of its own which appealed strongly to all of us"*. Louis Lavater



Frederick McCubbin, *Old Stables* , 1884

Tom Roberts (1856 – 1931)

- Born in Dorchester, England 1856
- Moved to Australia in 1869
- Worked with a photographer, preparing and painting backdrops – where he discovered his talent for painting
- Studied at the National Gallery of Victoria schools from 1874 where he made numerous friends with other students
- His talent recognized and first major Australian artists to be awarded a bursary to study in England at Royal Academy of Arts



- Returned to England in 1881 & studied at the Royal Academy schools.
- Training was quite conservative – drawing from busts (plaster casts) and accurate attention to detail
- Aged in his mid 20s, Roberts keen to explore and enjoy life as he furthered artistic ambitions.
- Met and mixed with other local artists who were rejecting the strict academic styles (some of whom later formed the New English Art Club).



Tom Roberts, *Brought Back*, 1883 (The Deserter)

Keen to paint Moorish subjects along Iberian Peninsular (Spain and Portugal) and intending to produce his version of the Vibert he'd seen at NGV.



Jehan Georges Vibert, *French Artists in a Spanish Posada (The Siesta)* 1862



Edwin Long, *A question of propriety*, 1870

He was also keen to view work by Velázquez of his academic works and peasants painted in a naturalist style

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Diego Velázquez, *Philip IV on Horseback*, 1634

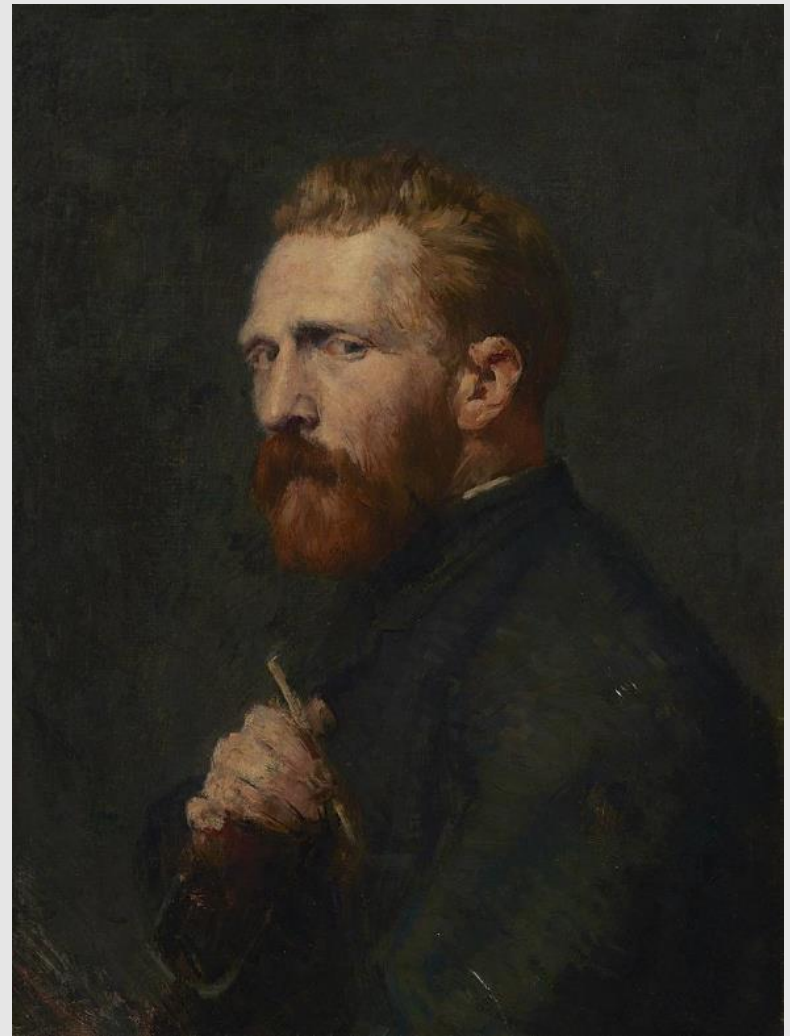


Diego Velázquez, *The Waterseller of Seville* c1620

Toured Spain in 1883 with Australian artist **John Peter Russell** – they were to become lifelong friends who corresponded regularly, with Russell reporting on the art scene in France.



John Peter Russell, *Madam Sisley on the banks of the Loing at Moret*, 1887



John Peter Russell, *Portrait of Van Gogh*, 1886



Tom Roberts, *A Spanish Beauty*, 1883-4

Ramon Casas was a student of Carolus-Duran - . According to him the whole art of expressing form . . . should consist in expressing it, as we see it, by light'. He said to his students: 'When you go into the fields you will not see a Corot; paint what you see'.



Carolus-Duran, *Édouard Manet*, 1880



Ramon Casas, *Portrait of Tom Roberts*. 1883



Tom Roberts, *A Moorish Doorway*, 1883

These were revolutionary ideas for Roberts – the notions of considering his own impressions when looking at subject matter, and the importance light and colour.

He used these ideas in one of his paintings from that time, ***The Moorish Doorway.***

Although the building in the foreground is painted in sharp detail, the distant sunbathed hill shows an attempt at showing the effects of light.

In subsequent works he experimented with fusing his academic painting style with the use of light to create atmosphere.

Barrau studied under French artist **Jean-Léon Gérôme** (1824-1904) who told his classes to paint a direct sketch everyday although he was not a supporter of the Impressionists.

Roberts studied for a very short time at the **Académie Julian** in Paris under Jean-Léon Gérôme in 1884 and later quoted a remark by Gérôme : *“When drawing, the important thing is form; but in painting the first thing to look for is the general impression of colour.”*



Tom Roberts, *Una Muchacha, (A girl)*, 1883



Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Bashi-Bazouk*, 1869

Roberts returned to London and visited Paris for a short time in 1884 - strongly influenced by Jules Bastien-Lepage who was somewhat of a cult figure.

Lepage mixed colours to create tone on the palette, as close to the tone he wanted on the canvas, before applying to the canvas so that colours were less likely to be muddied by excessive handling. There is no firm record of him meeting Impressionists.



Tom Roberts, *Churchyard at Shillingstone*, 1884

In London strongly influenced by James Abbott McNeill Whistler – probably attended an exhibition. Roberts learnt that paint was a substance with constructive properties of its own.

James McNeill Whistler, *Thames Nocturne*



Claude Monet, *The Thames below Westminster*, c 1871



Tom Roberts, *Fog, Thames Embarkment*, c1884



Tom Roberts, *Trafalgar Square*, 1884

It's also thought that Roberts was aware of Manet's work.

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Edouard Manet, *The Railway*, 1872



Tom Roberts, *Woman on a balcony*, 1884

Tom Roberts; the artist

What skills and techniques do you think Roberts acquired from his time overseas?

Key lessons from this period of time were:

Mixture of making preparatory sketches and painting plein air

Tonalism – work with colour

Importance of light to create atmosphere

Truth to nature & a sense of lyricism, or poetry

Importance of Aestheticism and Japonisme

Importance of painting techniques, type of brush and laying down of paint

Importance of representing what he say before him

When Roberts returned to Australia in 1884 he was a key influence in changing the nature of plein air painting and focusing on a nationalistic approach.

He encouraged the use of a 'square brush' technique (reducing the focus on detail) and ideas on tone and value, and importance of light.

He was enthusiastic and committed, and his personal style led to him being recognised as a leader in a push for a 'nationalistic' representation in art. In 1886 he was a key figure in forming the **Australian Artists Association** and then the **Victorian Artists' Society** in 1888.

Roberts was a key figure in what was to be known as the **Heidelberg School** and the **9 x 5 exhibition** of small paintings held in Melbourne.

From around 1889 he became interested in painting historical subject pictures with a strong focus on both Nationalism and the experience of strong masculine labour. The interest was most evident in the 1890s.

He has made a substantial living from painting commissioned portraits.

Roberts moved to Sydney following the depression in Melbourne in the 1890s – Sydney was less effected by the depression as its economy was still largely based on the pastoral industry. Sydney also provided new subject matter around the harbour foreshores.

Plein Air Artists in Melbourne

From the 1880s

- Tom Roberts
- Louis Abrahams
- Frederick McCubbin
- Charles Condor
- Arthur Streeton
- Jane Sutherland
- Walter Withers
- Girolamo Pieri Ballati Nerli
- Ethel Carrick
- Emanuel Phillips Fox
- Louis Abrahams
- Tudor St George Tucker
- Jane Price
- Artur Jose Loureiro
- May Vale
- Clara Southern
- Emma Minnie Boyd
- Elizabeth Parsons
- Ina Gregory
- Julian Ashton
- Mary Meyer
- David Davies
- Stuart Handasyde
- John Ford Paterson
- Lucy Walker
- Arthur Merric Boyd
- Percy Lindsay
- Elizabeth Mary Ann (Lilla) Reidy
- Alfred Daplyn
- Charles Bennett
- E. Wake Cook
- John Mather
- Henry Gritten
- Henry Burn
- N. J. Claire
- C Nettleton
- C Rudd
- Alice Bale
- Malvina Manton
- Alice Chapman
- Dora Meeson

Painting outdoors in and around suburban Melbourne

- As plein air painting became more popular, artists took advantage of subjects in their vicinity – not having to travel long distances to paint.
- This might include lane-ways, parks and ponds, or, for those who lived on the outskirts of Melbourne, views they might see from their homes.



Elizabeth Parsons, *A Country Lane, Woodend*, c1875



Elizabeth Mary Ann (Lilla) Reidy, *Autumn Leaves, Fitzroy Gardens, Melbourne*

City Paintings - Melbourne

- Several artists had private studios or rented gallery space
- Portraiture became popular and provided some level of financial security
- The cityscape also attracted artists as subject matter

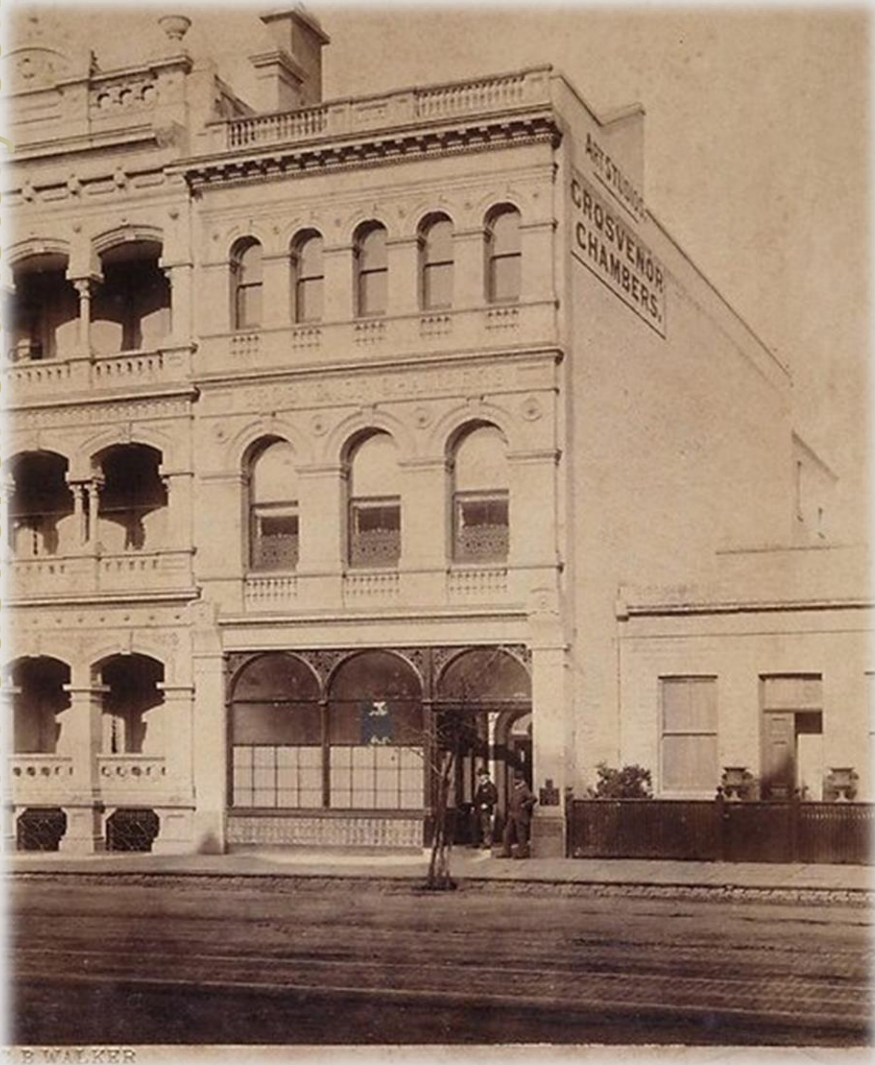


Tom Roberts, *Allegro con brio Bourke Street West*, c 1885-6, (reworked 1890)

Grosvenor Chambers, Melbourne

From 1888

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- Tom Roberts Jane Price
 - Jane Sutherland Louis Abrahams
 - Clara Southern Charles Conder
-
- Grosvenor Chambers became a focal point for social interaction between the artists of the city - 'expressly for occupation by artists' - opened in April 1888.
 - Roberts initiated studio *conversazioni*, at which artists could discuss the latest art journals to arrive in Melbourne.
 - There were informal musical events and there were 'studio days', when visitors could inspect pictures prior to public exhibition.
 - Portraiture was popular, because as Roberts said, "*It pays*".



Tom Roberts, *Mrs L. A. Abrahams*, 1888

Roberts's portrait gives an insight into the décor of his studio.

He had been inspired by studios seen in London and in Europe and he understood how a fashionably decorated studio could help with the sale of an artist's work.

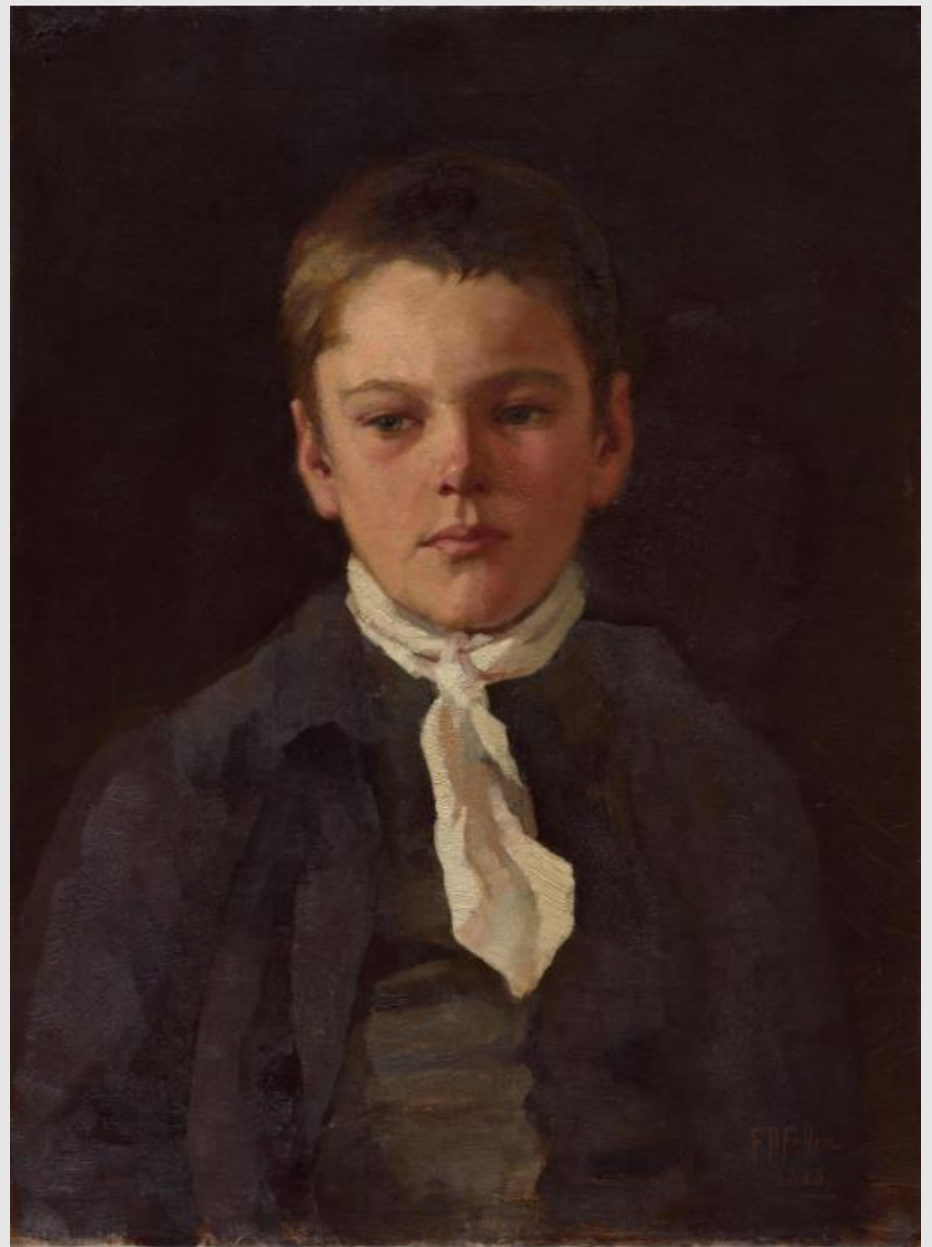
Golda Abrahams is seated in an 'Aesthetic' interior, a panel of muslin in the manner of Whistler's studio behind her, framed by a tall stem of pampas grass.

The lacquered tray, the lantern and the sprig of japonica in the small blue vase refer to the contemporary fashion for Japanese artefacts.

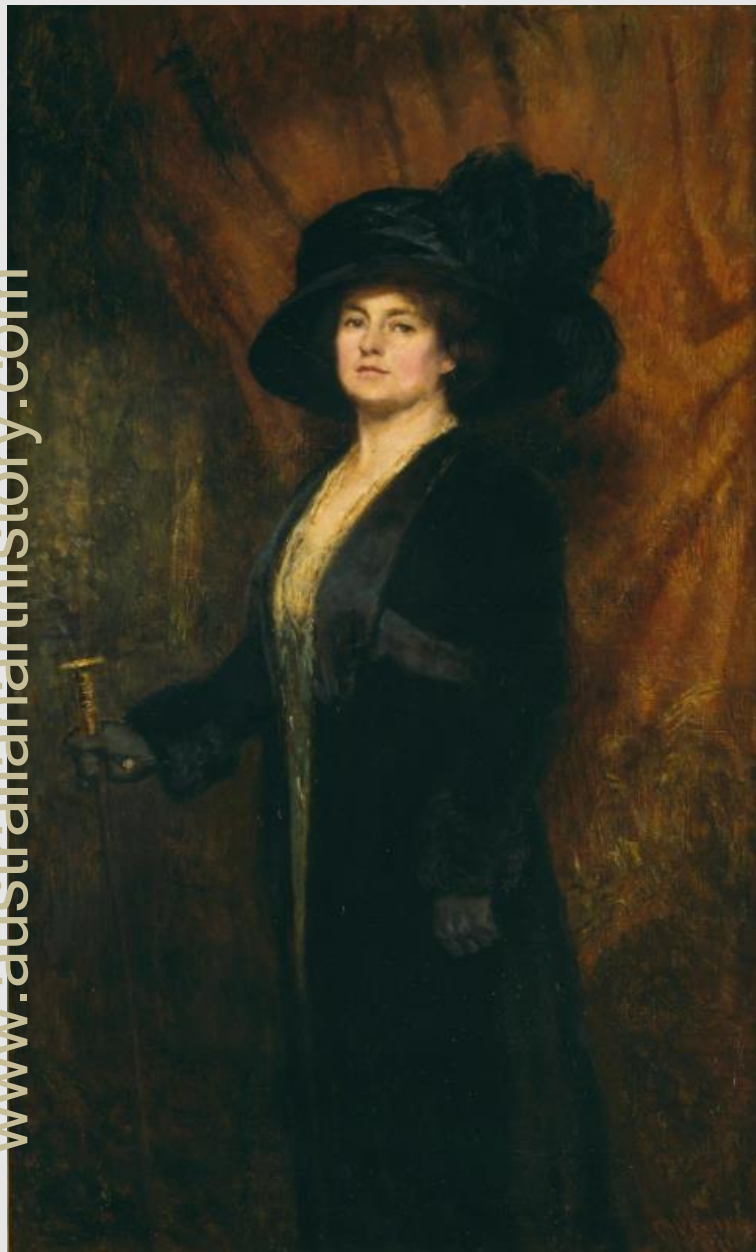
Roberts's use of gum tips and wattle as floral decorations started a fad for gum leaves in the home.



Tom Roberts, *Portrait of Florence*, c 1898



Florence Fuller, *Paper Boy*, 1888



Frederick McCubbin, *Mrs McCubbin wearing a black plumed hat*, 1911, NGV



Jane Sutherland, *Blue and Gold; Portrait of Dorothy Sutherland*, 1908, NGV

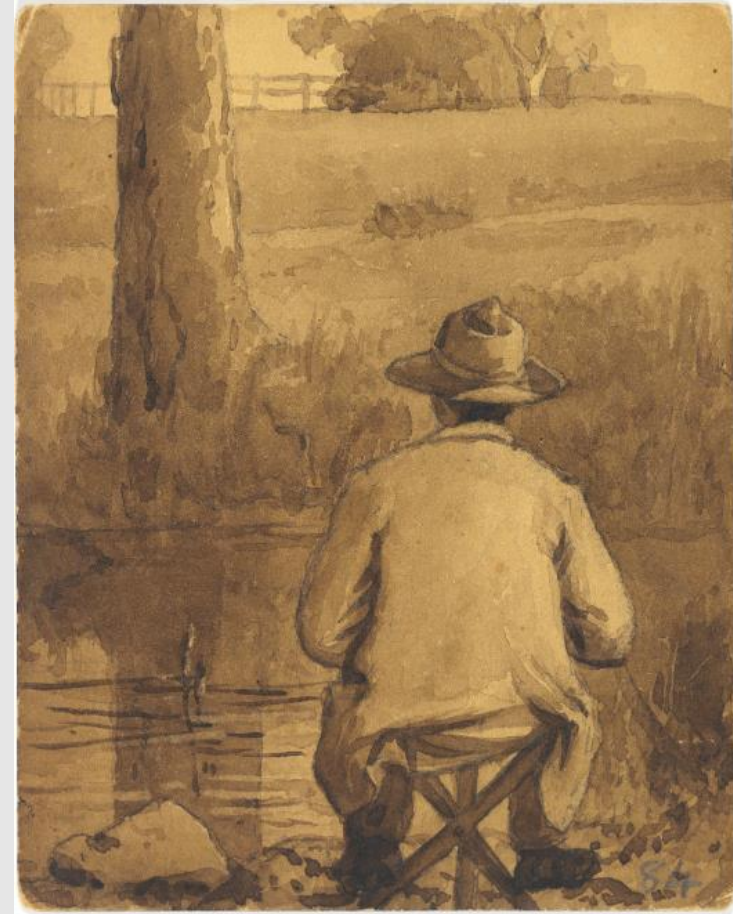
The Heidelberg “School”

Mid 1880s early 90s

Refers to those artists painting *au plein air* around Melbourne – the coast (Mentone, Brighton, Mentone, Beaumaris), Box Hill, and around Heidelberg (Templestowe, Eaglemont, Charterisville).

Not a movement as such, but a group of friends, many of whom studied at the National Gallery Art School of Victoria, who painted together.

Tends to focus on those artists who stayed at camps and not all artists who were painting plein air in and around Melbourne.



Louis Abrahams, from his sketch book

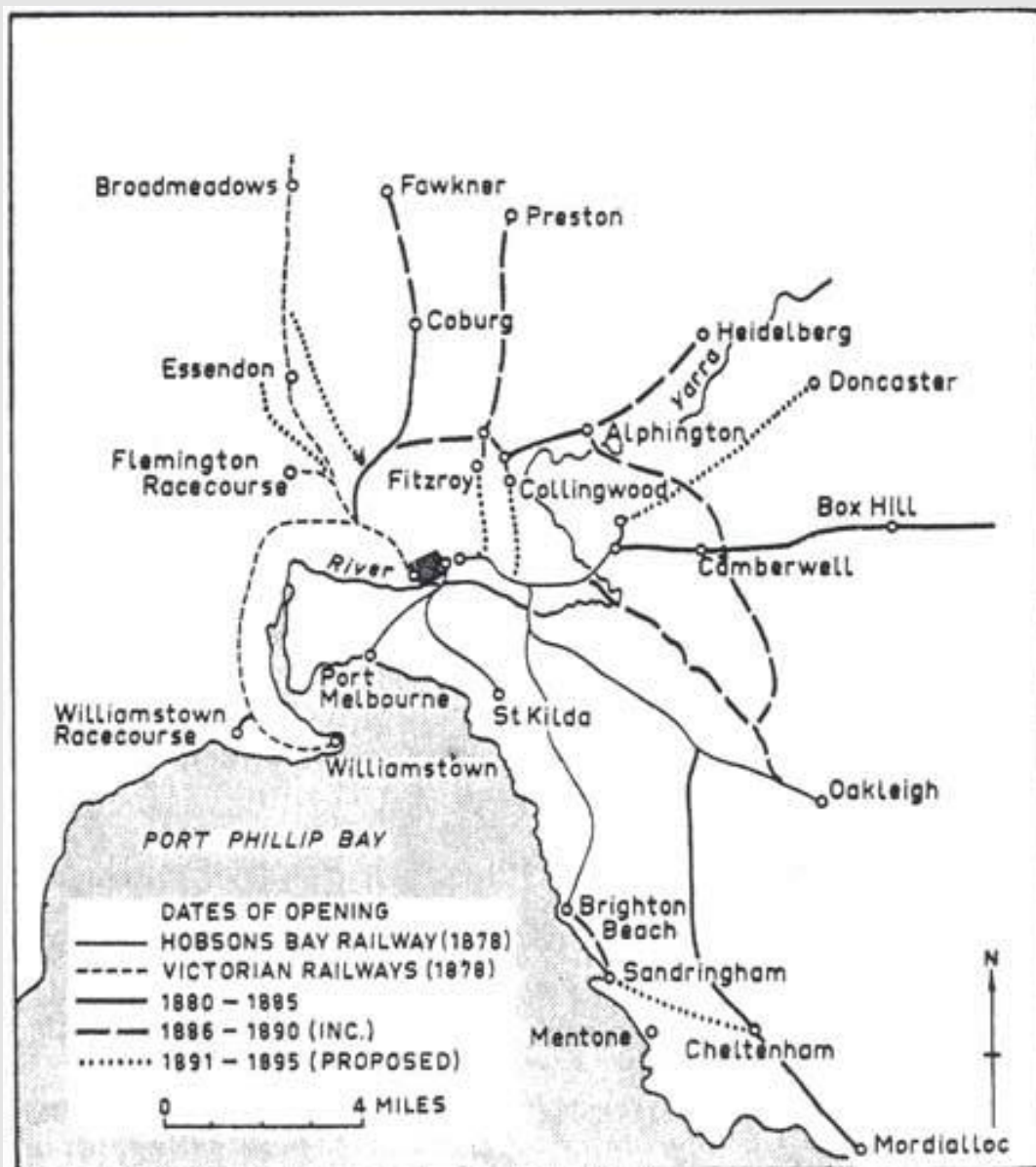
In 1885 **Tom Roberts**, **Frederick McCubbin** and **Louis Abrahams** established the first camp at Box Hill. Roberts met **Arthur Streeton** at Mentone in 1886 and invited him to join them. **Jane Sutherland** knew Roberts from her studio. **Charles Condor** moved from Sydney in 1888, where he shared a studio with Roberts. Many other artists participated in either day trips, overnight camps or lived close to locations.

After the economic crash of the 90s, many artists moved left Melbourne for Sydney or overseas.



Clara Southern, *Girl Scouts in Camp*, c 1910

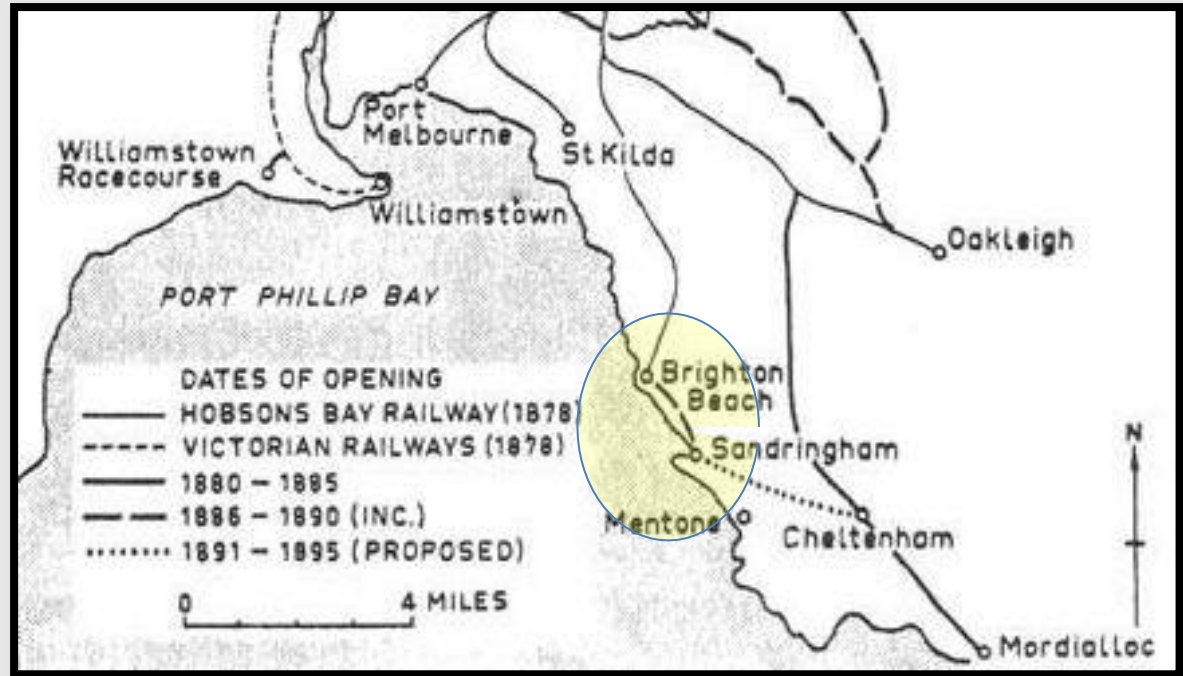
Enabling access to the bush - Train lines from Melbourne in the 1880's



Beach Sites

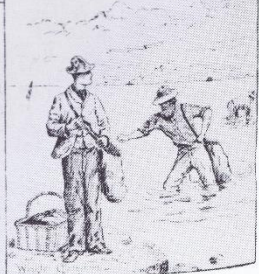
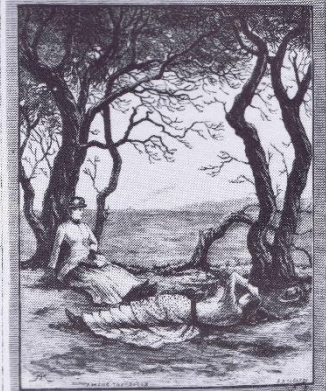
(Mentone, Beaumaris, Brighton, Sandringham)

From the mid 1880s

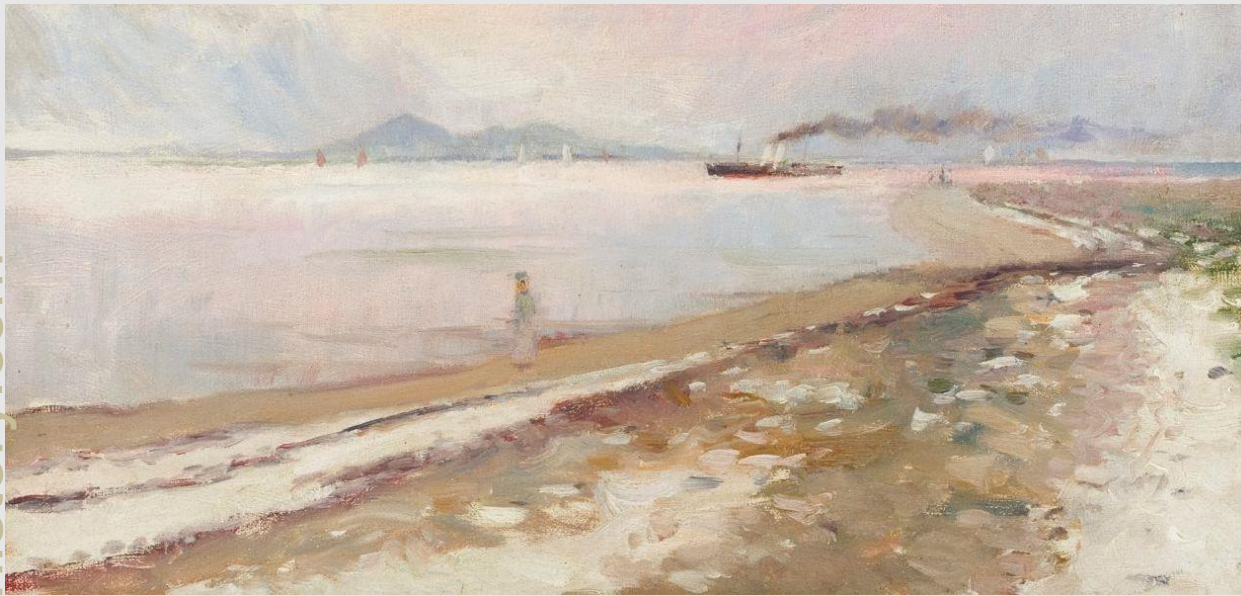




Beaumaris Tramway Company (BTC) horse drawn tram



An Afternoon at Brighton



Walter Withers, *S.S. Excelsior rounding Pt. Henry*, 1890



Charles Conder, *Rickett's Point*, 1890



Tom Roberts. *Slumbering Sea Mentone*, 1887

'In spite of the heat, the vile hammocks we slept in, the pest of flies and the puce-coloured walls, we had a great time here ... On Sundays we took a billy and chops and tomatoes down to a beautiful little bay which was full of fossils, where we camped for the day. We returned home during the evening through groves of exquisite tea-trees, the sea serene, the cliffs at Sandringham flushed with the afterglow.' Arthur Streeton

Box Hill camp

From 1885

- Tom Roberts
- Louis Abrahams
- Frederick McCubbin
- Jane Sutherland
- Arthur Streeton (from 1886)
- Charles Condor



Railway line opened 1882



Tom Roberts, *A Sunday afternoon picnic at Box Hill*, c1886



- By 1885 Box Hill was rapidly being subdivided
- Artists painted in a paddock owned by David Houston
- Small, remnant piece of native scrub
- Camped near a creek

It's considered that Box Hill selected because of its pioneering associations – Tom Roberts wrote

“Happy Box Hill – the barked roof of the old people, Houstons – the land sylvan as it ever was – the tea tree along the creek – young blue gums over the flat alongside, and on the rise, our tent. The evening after the work – the chops perfect from the fire of gum twigs – the ‘good night’ of the jackies as the soft darkness fell – then the talks around the fire, the ‘Prof’ (McCubbin) philosophic – we forgot everything, but the peace of it.”



Frederick McCubbin, *The Morning Train*, 1887

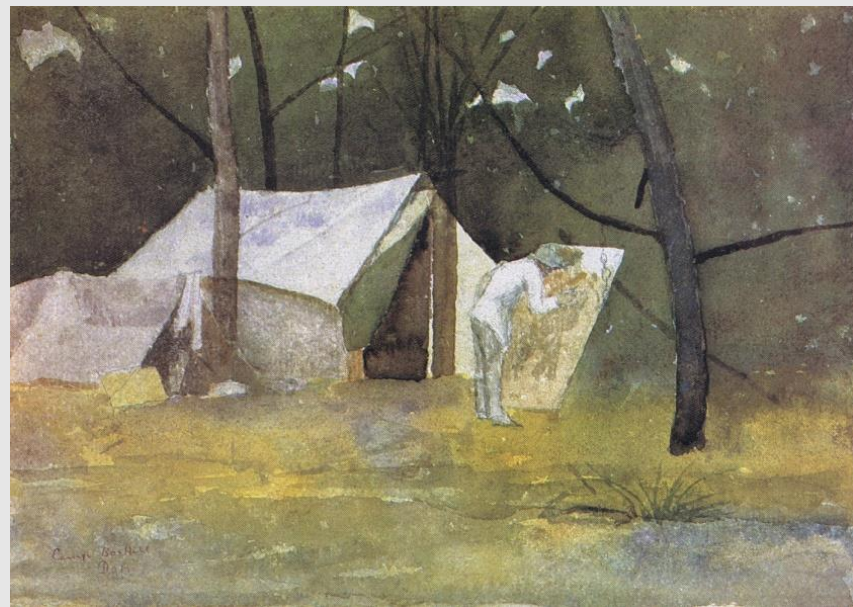


Tom Roberts, *Evening, when the quiet east flushes faintly at the sun's last look*, 1887-8, Box Hill

From around 1887 there was a poetic tendency in Melbourne landscape painting – with a number of scenes portraying twilight. Roberts directed artists attention to the fragile and delicate beauty of the eastern sky, as opposed to sun setting in the west. He used a square brushstroke effect to capture the precise tones, but slightly blurred forms of twilight – with the thin gum sapling silhouetted against the land and sky.



Tom Roberts *Artists Camp* 1886



Louis Abrahams, *Camp at Box Hill*, c1886



Arthur Streeton, *Settler's Camp*, 1888

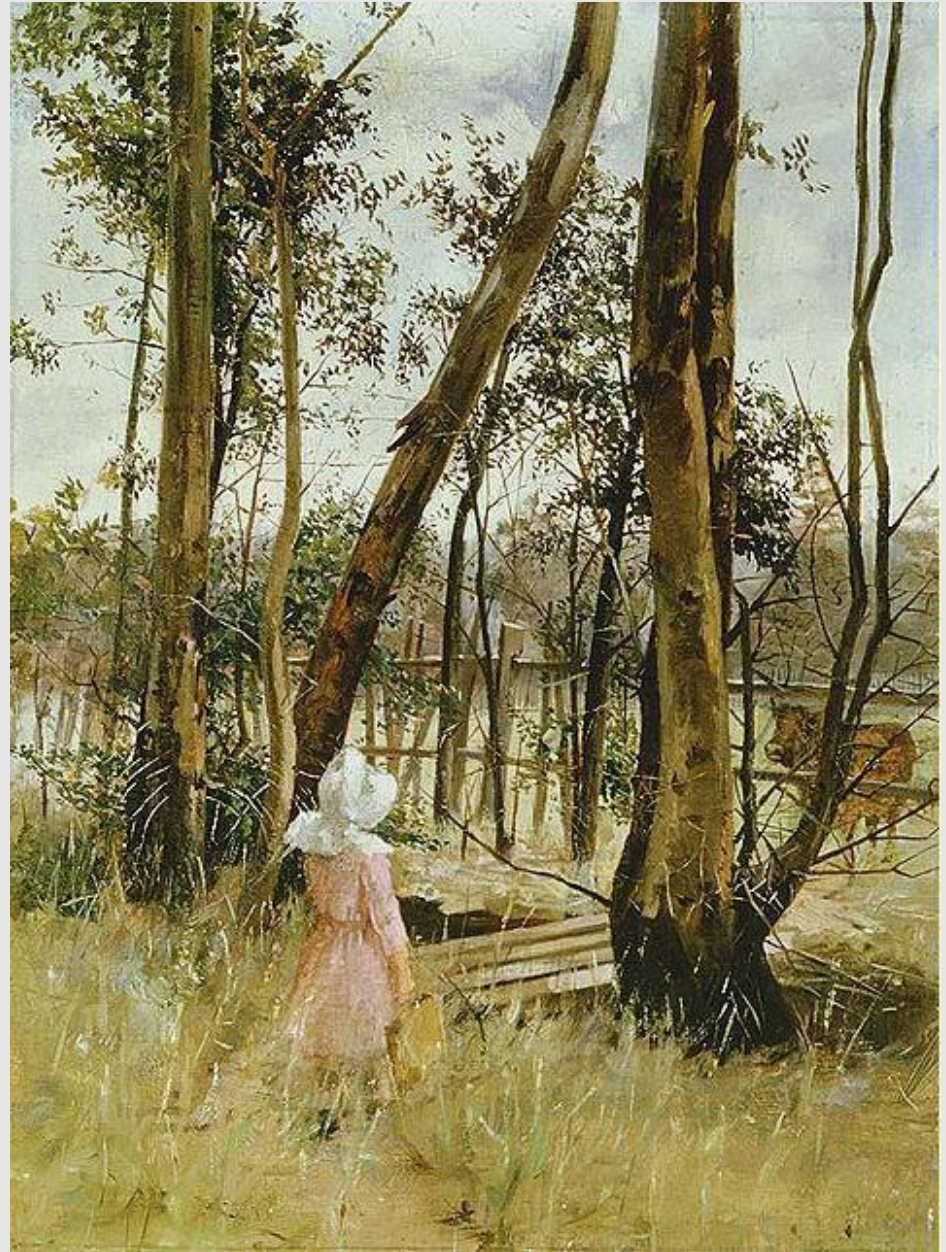
Roberts worked quickly, applying broad areas of colour to the canvas. Over the areas of green, russet and soft browns of the grass, he has brushed in the saplings and clumps of grass in more detail. The 'intimate', close focus of Roberts's painting and the relaxed atmosphere, conveys the sense that this generation of painters felt that they 'belonged' in the Australian bush.

Jane Sutherland (1853-1928)

From 1878, exhibited at the Victorian Academy of Arts, with the Australian Artists' Association, and the Victorian Artists' Society (from 1888)

Undertook plein-air sketching trips to the outlying rural districts of Alphington, Templestowe and Box Hill with her male contemporaries.

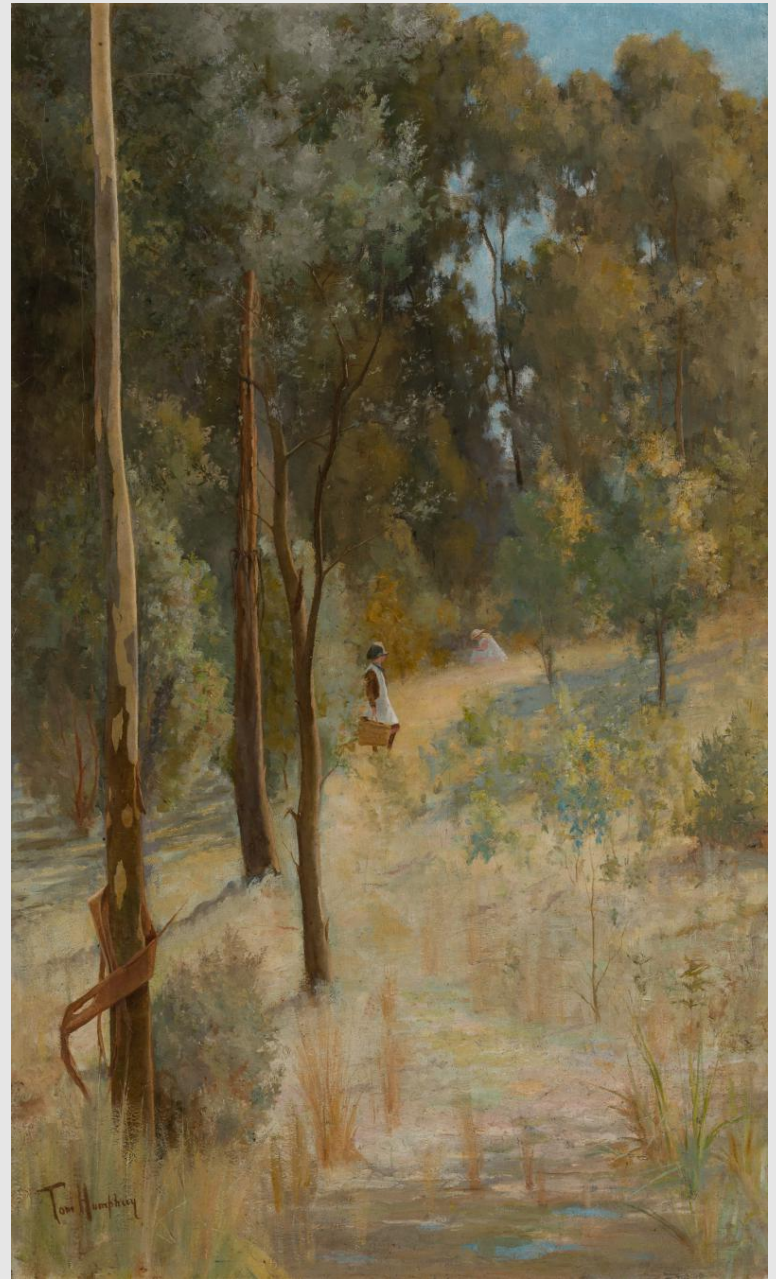
From 1888, shared a studio for teaching with artist Clara Southern.



Jane Sutherland, *Obstruction, Box Hill*, 1887



Tom Roberts, *A summer morning tiff*, 1886



Tom Humphrey, *The Way to School (formerly known as Springtime)*, 1888



Frederick McCubbin, *While the Billy Boils*, 1886

Roberts and McCubbin selected bush screened by gum trees – they used a painting method of looking at the landscape with half closed eyes which caused the colours to transition into smooth harmonise tones.



Clara Southern, *An Old Bee Farm*, c1900

Templestowe

From 1886

(day trips)

- Arthur Streeton
- Tom Roberts
- Louis Abrahams
- Frederick McCubbin
- Jane Sutherland
- Phillips Fox
- Tucker St George
- Llewelyn Jones
- Tom Humphrey



Streeton claimed that it was Buvelot's *A Summer Evening Near Templestowe* which prompted him to walk from Heidelberg Station in order to paint a small sketch.

He also recalled that he met Charles Davies on the train. Davies was to purchase the property Mount Eagle at Eaglemont near Heidelberg, which became a favourite site for the artists to stay.





Arthur Streeton, *At Templestowe*, 1889



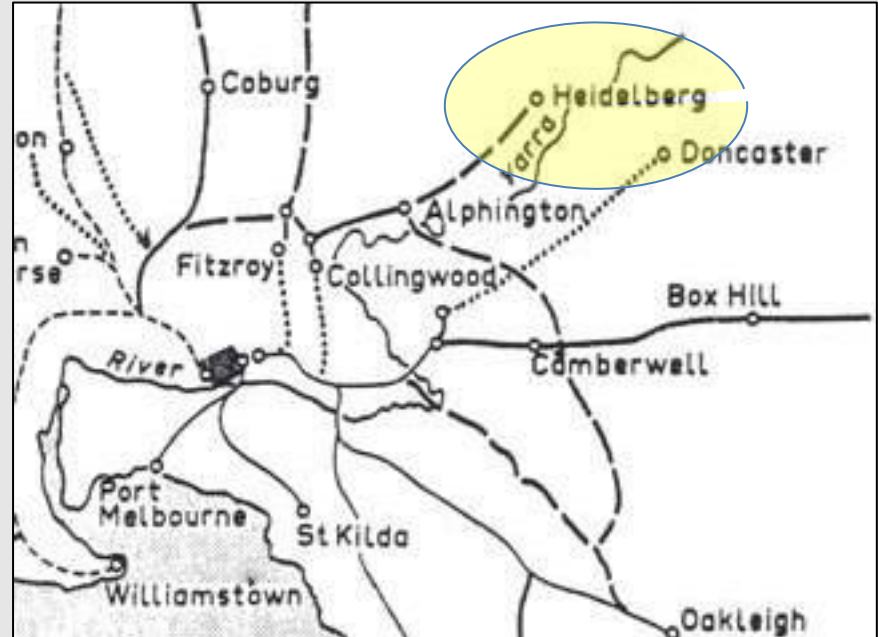
Jane Sutherland, *Girl in a Paddock*, 1890

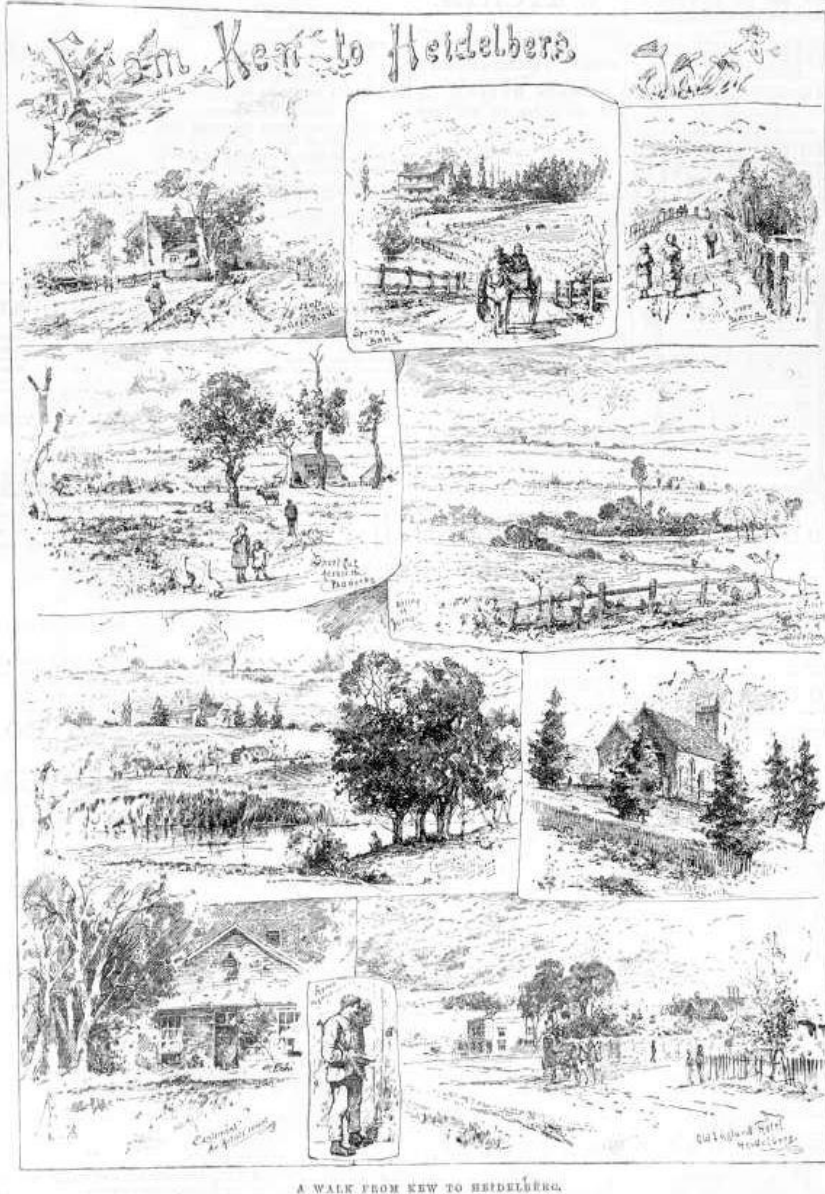
Heidelberg

Eaglemont
Templestowe

From 1888

- Tom Roberts
- Frederick McCubbin
- Walter Withers
- Arthur Streeton
- Jane Sutherland
- Jane Price
- Charles Conder
- David Davies
- John Mather



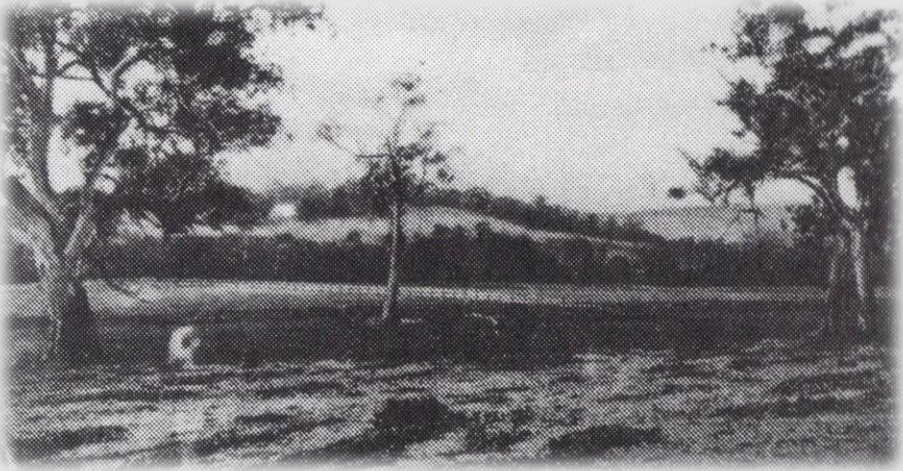
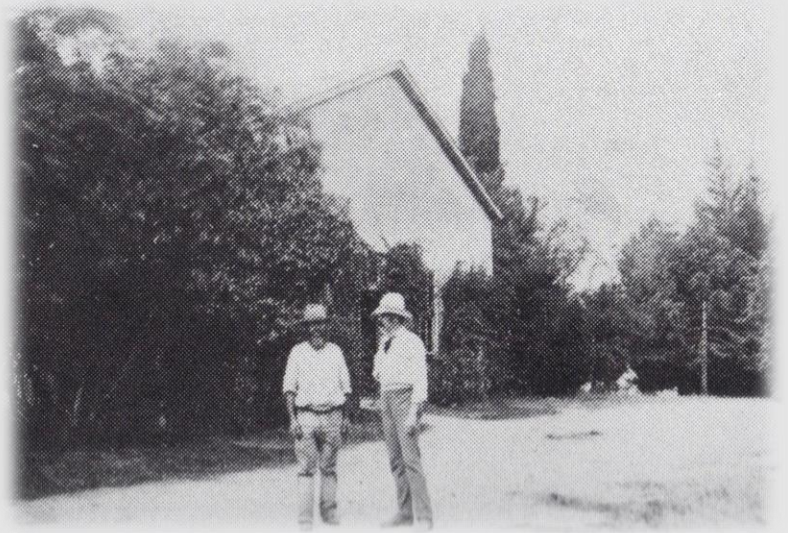


A WALK FROM KEW TO HEIDELBERG.

The area was picturesque and attracted numerous artists, some of whom chose to live in Kew, such as Walter Withers and Jane Sutherland.

Heidelberg was a favoured spot for honeymooners as it was considered to have beautiful scenery.

Artists travelled to Mount Eagle, where Arthur Streeton had access to (derelict) home owned by Charles Davies.





Arthur Streeton, *Bathers*, 1890





Arthur Streeton, *Golden Summer, Eaglemount*, 1890





Charles Condor, *Dandenongs from Heidelberg*, 1889



Walter Withers, *The Yarra below Eaglemont* , 1895



Walter Withers, *Tranquil Winter*, 1895

Frederick McCubbin wrote, *“The more you regard this picture, its tone and colour, the more you will feel the truthfulness and poetry of its interpretation... One feels that in it, nothing has been arranged. Everything is natural and in its place, as though the Artist has come upon some quiet commonplace spot, and magican like, revealed to me and you its tender beauty”*.

Jane Price (1860-1948)



Jane Price, *Spring Clouds*, c1905



Jane Price, *Sunrise*

From 1888 shared studio in Grosvenor Chambers with Clara Southern and Jane Sutherland

Close life-long friendships with Tom Roberts and Frederick McCubbin

Particularly interested in capturing the spirit or mood of the landscape at different seasons, and in capturing the atmospheric effects of moonlight or early morning sunlight.

Often used a high horizon line

David Davies (1864 – 1939)

- Born Ballarat

1887-90 studied at the National Gallery School

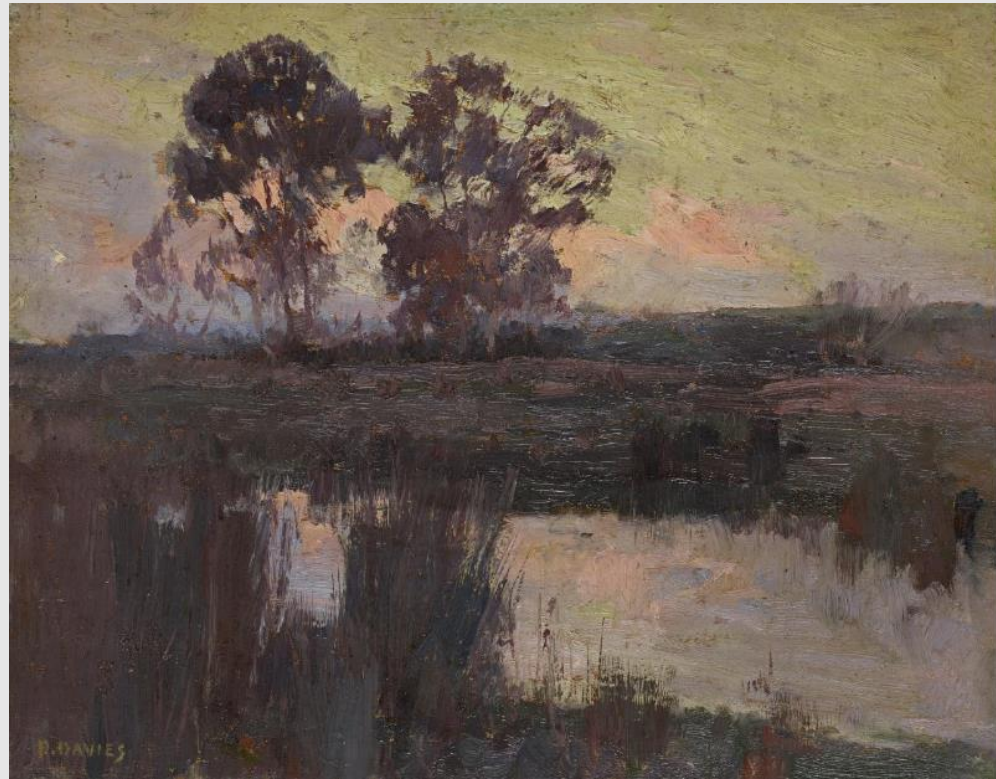
In 1885 became a member of the Buonarrotti Club

1890 left to study in Paris at the Académie Julian

1891 lived at St Ives, Cornwall

Predominant style at St Ives was that of Whistlerian softness and emphasis on the atmospheric effects of light and mood.

- On his return to Australia in 1893 he began painting romantic impressions of the landscape in the late afternoon and evening light.



David Davies, *Nocturne, Templestowe*, c1896



David Davies, *Moonrise*, 1894



Tom Roberts, *Across to the Dandenong Ranges*, 1889

On the River Yarra, near Heidelberg, Victoria, was painted at the request of Walter Withers.

Its fresh, rapid execution (which even contains evidence of the artist's fingerprints, displaying haste to record the effect of the motif as quickly as possible) is a great example of plein-air painting and Realism



Charles Conder, *On the River Yarra, near Heidelberg, Victoria*, c1890

John Mather (1848 – 1916) - Scottish

Mather enrolled at the National Gallery School of Victoria in 1882, & he joined camps around Melbourne with McCubbin, Withers, Abrahams and others.

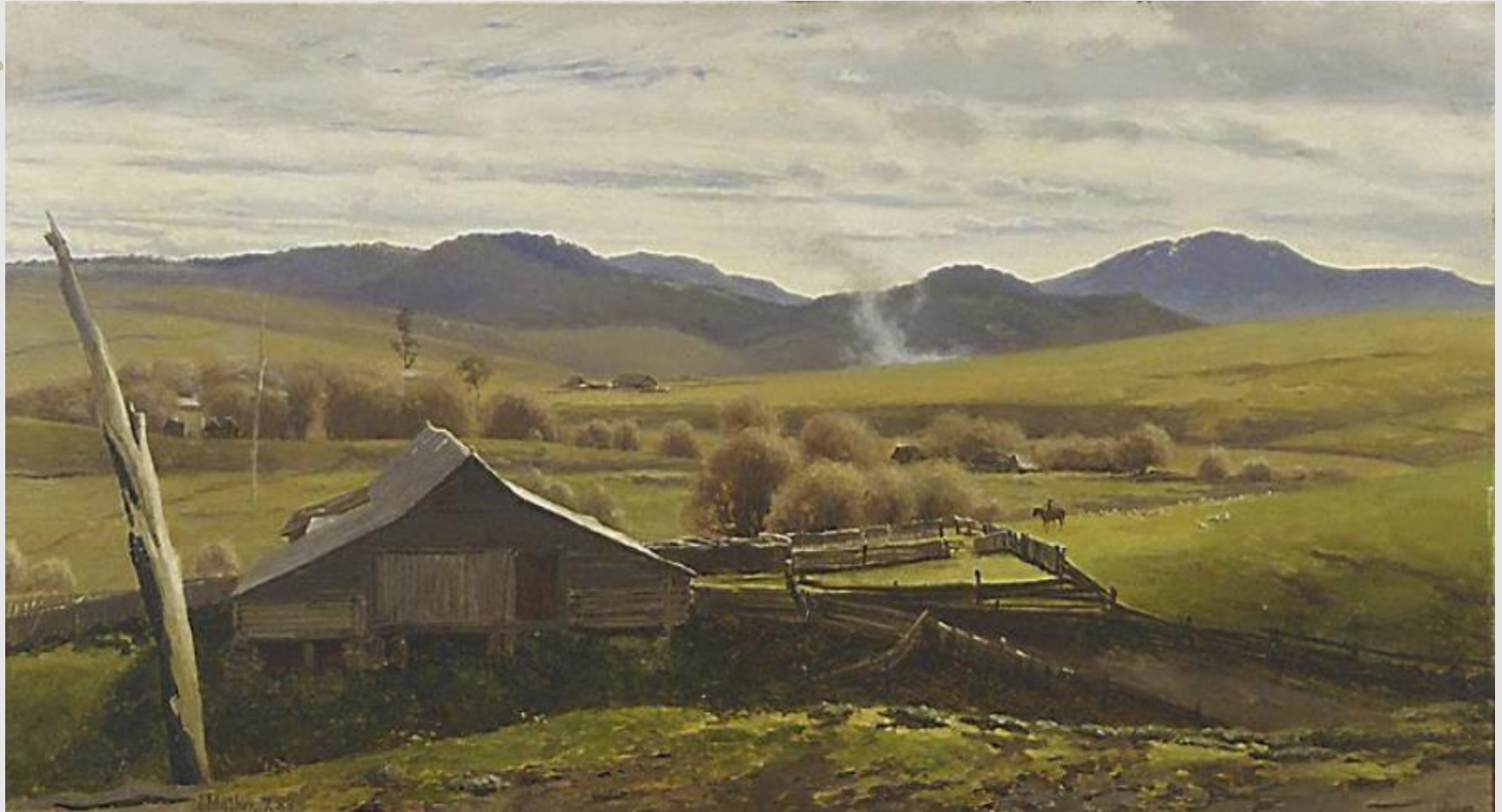
He often accompanied Arthur Streeton and John Ford Paterson. Streeton wrote: *'We three painters met at the Flinders Street Station Melbourne ... They were my seniors by about fifteen years, and it was kind of them to invite me to join in their painting trip to the ocean shore at Kilcunda ... Mather was most industrious'*.

From 1891 he conducted painting classes at his city studio in Austral Buildings, Collins Street, Melbourne, becoming a popular teacher.



John Mather, *Shea Oak Hill*, 1888

John Mather was elected as a founding committee member of the **Australian Artists' Association** in Melbourne in 1886. He loved painting in the parks and gardens of Melbourne, at bayside beaches and on the banks of the Yarra River. He painted in NSW, Tasmania, Western Australia and New Zealand. In 1893 he became the first artist trustee at the National Gallery of Victoria, a position he held until his death.



John Mather, *A Woolshed, Victoria*, 1889

Conder's nickname at camps was abbreviated to 'K' or 'Kay', a play on the first letter of his surname, evoking the almost feminine grace of his elusively vague, poetic persona.

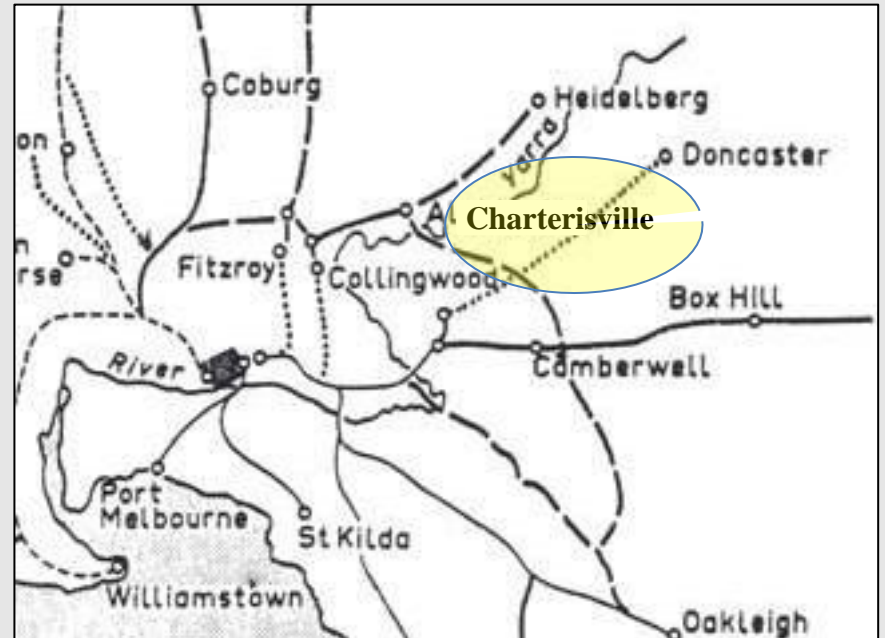


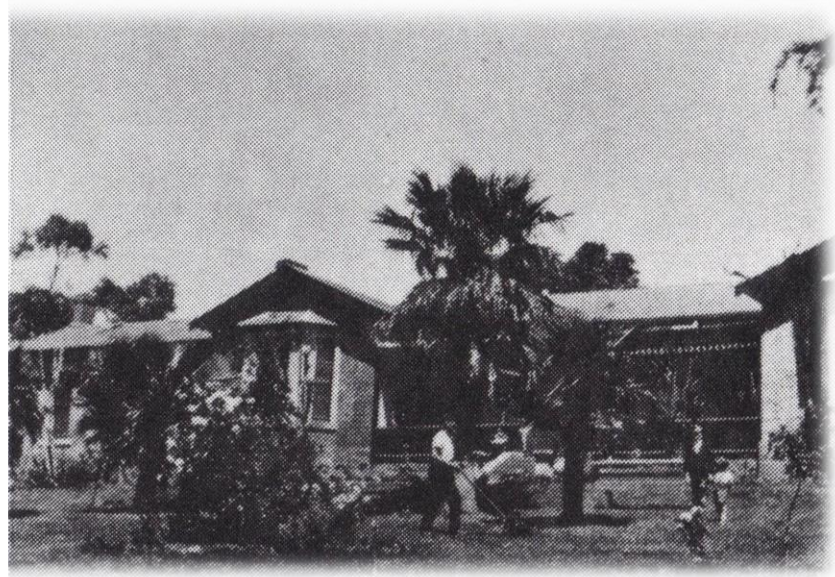
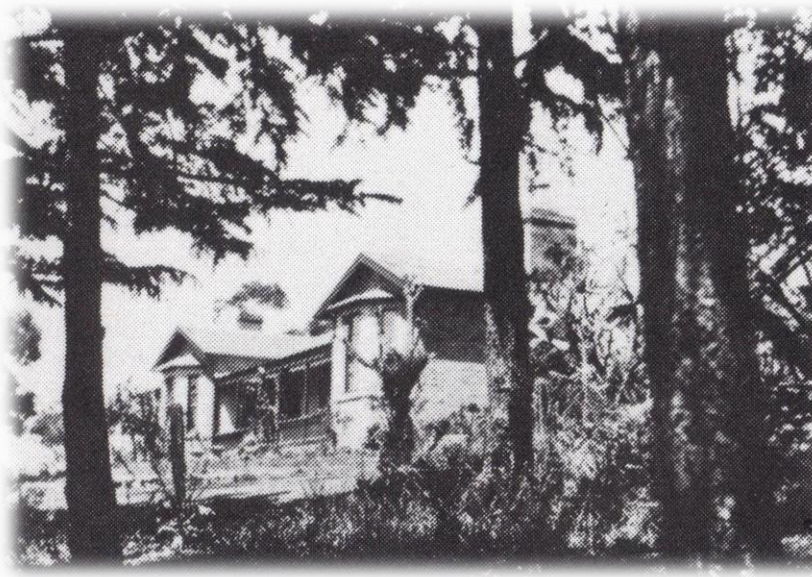
Charles Conder, *Holiday at Mentone*, 1888

Charterisville

From 1890

- Walter Withers
- Emanuel Phillips Fox
- Tudor St George Tucker
- David Davies
- Violet Teague
- Ina Gregory
- Mary Nanson
- Bertha Merfield
- Henrietta Irving
- Ursula Foster







Walter Withers, *Charterisville, near Eaglemont, Victoria* c 1890



Walter Withers, *Yarra River Cottage*, c.1898

- The Charterisville Estate comprised 168 acres, and extended from the Eaglemont hillside to the Yarra River flats
- First leased by Walter Withers
- Occupied by group of artists led by Emanuel Phillips Fox and Tudor St. George Tucker – who provided lessons (From 1893)
- Longest surviving artists camp in Melbourne

Violet Teague (1872-1951)

wrote:

“The garden which sloped down to the Yarra was a beautiful and neglected as it could be. There was a wonderful variety of subjects. We chose our own, and setting up our easels we started work....if the light was good we worked all day and did about four oil sketches ...where Mr Fox judged them.

You would need to work in a community like that to fully appreciate Mr Fox’s kindness...combined with a burning enthusiasm to get even with nature in her most subtle harmonies and rapid change”.



Violet Teague, *River Landscape*

Emanuel Phillips Fox



- 1878 - 1886 trained at the National Gallery school
- won awards for landscape painting 1884 & 1886
- 1887 left for Europe - studied in Paris at the Académie Julian, & the Ecole des Beaux-Arts & painted in *plein air* artists' communities at Etaples and in Brittany and visited Giverny
- 1890 he settled at St Ives in Cornwall
- returned to Melbourne in October 1892
- 1893 he and Tucker established Melbourne School of Art where students were introduced to French academic practices
- At summer outdoor school, held from about 1894 at Charterisville, near Eaglemount, he taught *plein air* painting, incorporating some aspects of Impressionist practice.
- Returned to Europe 1901

Emanuel Phillips Fox, *Autumn Glow, Charterisville*, c1899



Emanuel Phillips Fox, *Heidelberg*, c 1895 - 1900



Emanuel Phillips Fox, *Art Students*, 1895



Emanuel Phillips Fox, *Studio, Charterisville*, c 1900

Tudor St. George Tucker (1862-1906)

Early member of the Buonarotti Club.
Born England, came to Australia at age 20.

1883 - 1887 trained at National Gallery
Awarded prizes for drawing in 1884,
1886 & 1887.

joined in landscape-sketching
excursions and taught drawing to
support himself.

In 1887 left for Europe & with E.
Phillips Fox, studied at Académie Julian
& Ecole des Beaux-Arts where he won
a gold medal.

Also painted in *plein air* artists'
colonies, including Étapes and St Ives



Tudor St George Tucker, *Maid of all Work*, c 1891

- Returned to Melbourne in July 1892
- In 1893, together with Fox, Tucker established the Melbourne School of Art, based on French academic practices
- From 1894 they conducted outdoor summer school at Charterisville.

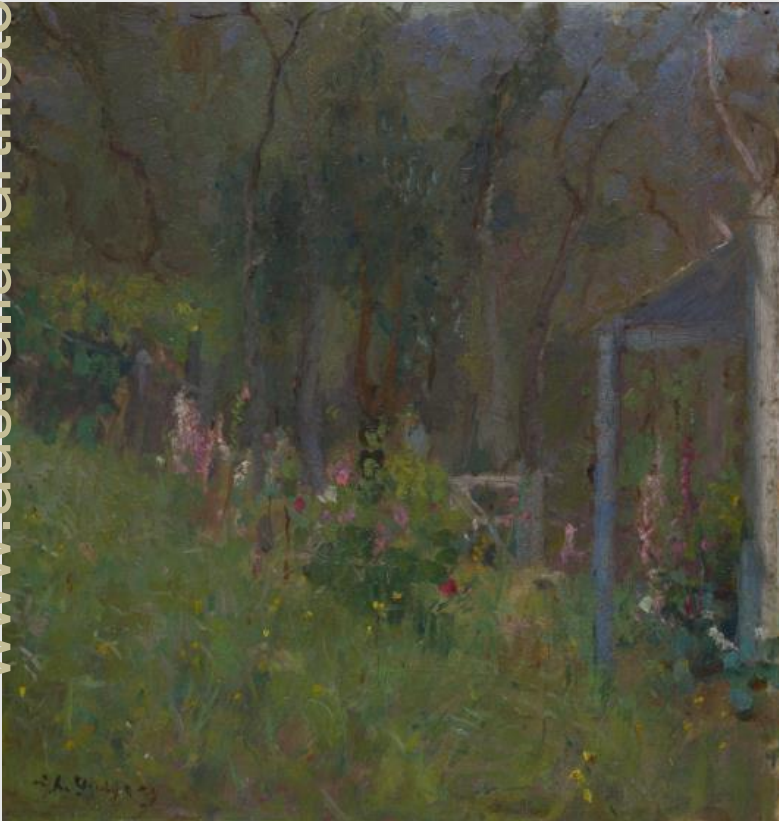


Tudor St George Tucker, *Heidelberg from Eltham Road*, 1895

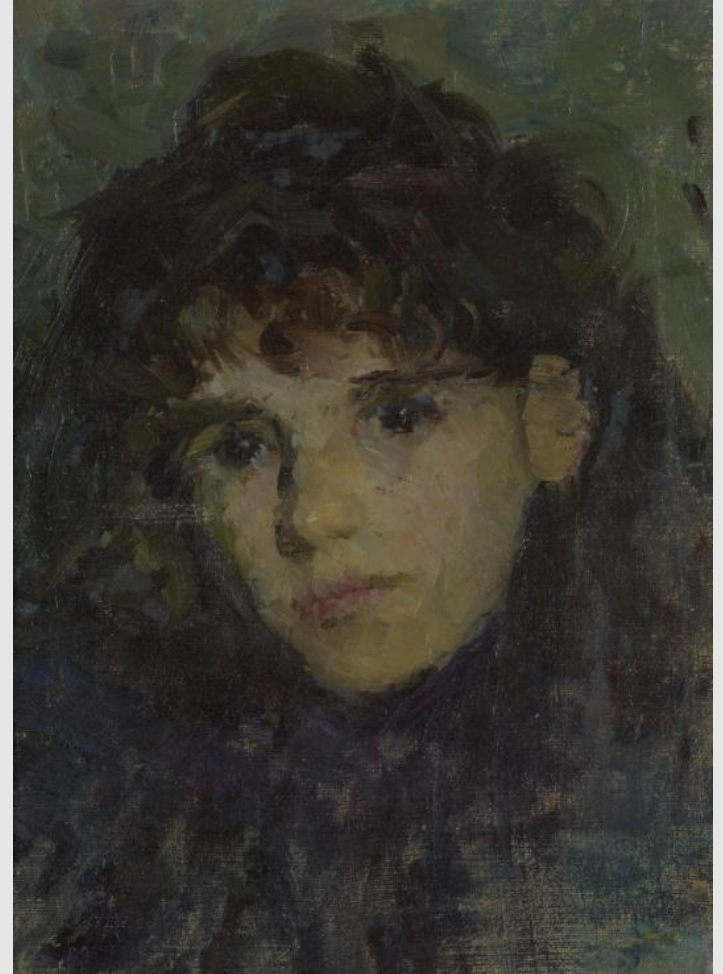
Ina Gregory (1874 -1964)

Studied at National Gallery School, Melbourne School of Art, & at Charterisville.

A portraitist who came to specialise in landscapes and garden views, she exhibited from 1898 to 1912 with the Victorian Artists' Society.



Ina Gregory, *Charterisville*, 1890s



Ina Gregory, *Lucy Sutton*, 1890s

Bertha Merfield (1869 – 1921)

Studied at the Slade School in London & the National Gallery of Victoria Art School.

In 1916 her mural for the Cafe Australia in Melbourne received public acclaim.



Bertha Merfield, *Ti-Tree with Figure*

Violet Teague (1872-1951)

She toured widely, and visited galleries in Germany, France, Belgium the Netherlands and England.

Teague commented "*never shall I forget the Velazquez, with their beautiful horses and exquisite colouring, or the lovely Raphaels*".

She studied in the Brussels studio of Ernest Blanc-Garin and with Sir Hubert von Herkomer in England.

Teague exhibited regularly at the Paris Salons, including with a portrait of a Colonel Rede in 1897 at the Société des Artistes Français.

In 1902 she was appointed to the council of the Victorian Artists Society.



Violet Teague, *Schanck lighthouse*

9 x 5

Impressionist Exhibition

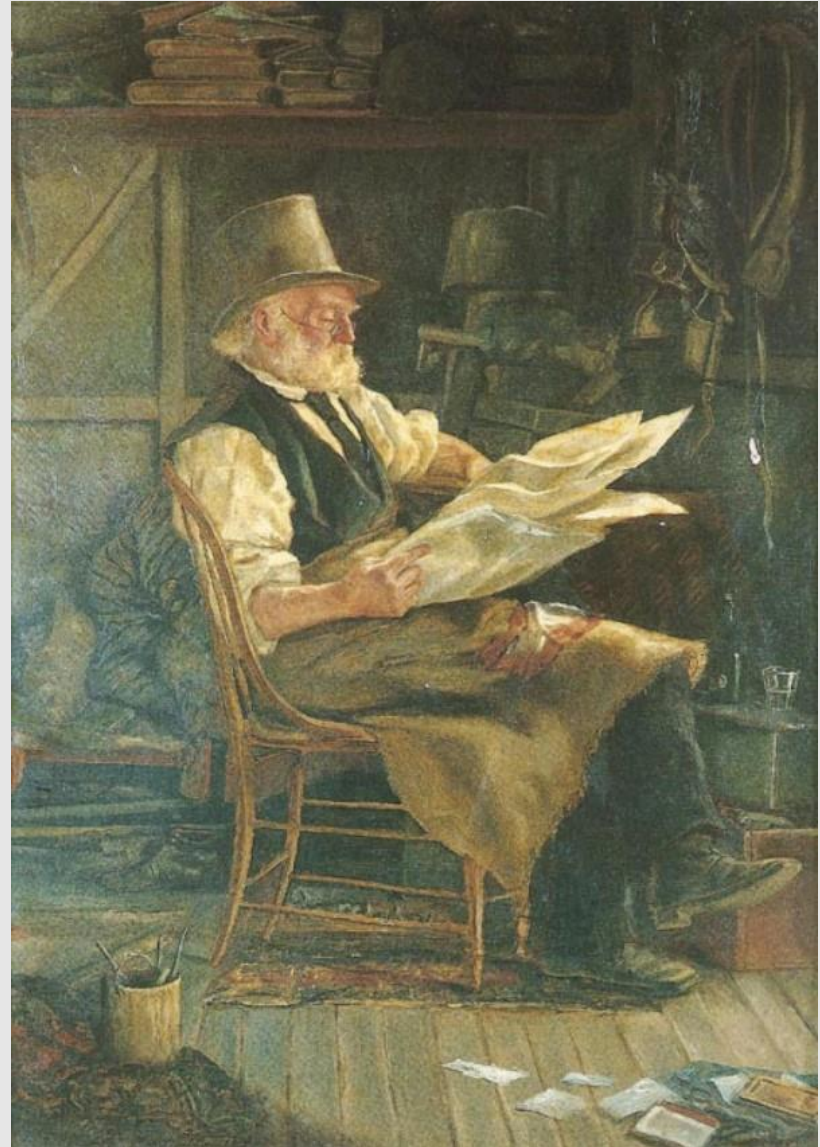
August 1889, Melbourne

Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton, Charles Conder
Frederick McCubbin, C. Douglas Richardson, R.E. Falls, Herbert Daly

(183 works)

Frederick McCubbin (1855-1917)

- At an early age dove a baker's cart before being apprenticed to a coach painter
- 1869 enrolled at Artisans' School of Design, Carlton and then school of design, National Gallery of Victoria and later the school of painting
- Awarded the trustees' first prize in the first of the annual students' exhibitions.



Frederick McCubbin, *An Old Politician*, 1879

During the 1880s and 90s his nationalist landscapes are very typical of the Nationalistic and Realist paintings of the time.



www.australianarthistory.com

Frederick McCubbin, *On the Wallaby Track*, 1893

Known for his penchant for philosophising, McCubbin earned the nickname 'The Prof'.

Travelling overseas for 4 months, he arrived in England in July 1907, and visited many of the galleries around London with Roberts.

Of the works that he saw, he was particularly impressed with the landscapes of J.M.W. Turner, and his influence was evident in many of his later works.



Frederick McCubbin, *Williamstown*, 1915

He also visited Paris and wrote to his wife *"Puvis de [Chavannes] ... a dream of quiet tender colour ... the impressionists some of them very very fine Manet and Monet... [Sisley] very fine"*.

www.austlii.net/au/other/australianhistory.com



Frederick McCubbin, *Collins St*, c 1915

McCubbin continued painting and exhibiting and held his position as Drawing Master at the National Gallery school until 1916, only shortly before his death in 1917.

Frederick McCubbin

Charles Conder (1868 – 1909)

Sent to Sydney from England in 1884 to train as a surveyor, he worked for the Lands Dept and as a lithographic apprentice for the *Sydney Illustrated News*.

Attended Art Society School drawing classes with Julian Ashton and studied painting under Alfred Daplyn.

He befriended Tom Roberts in Sydney in 1887, painting with him at Coogee during Easter 1888.

Following the successful sale of *Departure of the Orient - Circular Quay* to the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Conder departed for Melbourne in October 1888 to work with Roberts.



Charles Conder, *Departure of the Orient - Circular Quay*, 1888





Charles Conder, *Hot Wind*, 1889

Influenced by Whistler, Japanese art, aestheticism and the mood of the fin de siècle (end of the 19th century).

Infused his sunny, optimistic conception of Australian nature with wistful romantic overtones & cast his pictures in decorative shapes and designs

- This painting evokes the intense bright light and searing heat of the Australian summer. The bleached, shimmering tonality of the foreground landscape is characteristic of the artist's foremost works. Conder felt it was one of his best paintings.

Allegory and Symbolism

- Symbolist art and literature drew inspiration from dreams, fantasies, poems and ideas, rather than reality.
- In allegorical art the content of an artwork stands for an abstract idea or concept.
- Although Australian Impressionism is often associated with Naturalism, artists such as Conder and Streeton both made a number of allegorical paintings.



Arthur Loureiro, *The spirit of the new moon*, 1888

In 1890 Conder left Australia for Europe, moving between France and England for the remainder of his life.

In May 1891 while studying in Paris, he saw the first exhibition of Monet's hay stacks and wrote excitedly to Tom Roberts in Melbourne:

“Claude Monet seems to have made a great stride this year, and won over the Philistines. I only wish you could have seen some of his landscapes; they lived, and he does them in the funniest way. He paints a good deal still with pure colour, but you quite lose the paint at three or four yards (less). He takes you among the hayricks and sunsets in a most natural way and then lets you see it as you have been used – not his, but in your own way”.



Charles Conder, *Mrs Conder in Pink*, 1901

Monet was to become an important influence upon Conder, and in his early French landscapes Conder used the bright palette and the broken brushstrokes of Impressionism.



Charles Conder, *Hayfield, Giverny, France, 1894*