

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: IMP0292

Lahey, Frances Vida

(1882 - 1968)

Born 26 August, 1882, Pimpama Queensland Australia

Died 31 December, 1968

Occupation Artist

Summary

Vida Lahey began her art studies in Brisbane around 1903, before training at the National Gallery School, Victoria (1905-1906, 1909); she lived in London from 1915, moving to Paris after the war, where she studied at Colarossi's Academy. She exhibited regularly in Brisbane and Sydney during the 1930s and 1940s, specialising in still lifes, interiors and some landscape. Lahey had a strong commitment to the arts, teaching both adult and children's art classes, and along with Daphne Mayo was heavily involved in raising funds for, and promoting, the Queensland Art Gallery. She served on the gallery's Art Advisory Committee (1931-37) 'and often argued for a proper purchasing policy and a qualified full-time director – which occurred only in 1949'. She was commissioned by the Gallery to write *Art in Queensland 1859-1959* which was published in 1959 and remains 'a basic text for Queensland art history'. According to Nancy Underhill, Lahey's main contribution was 'to encourage excellence and public involvement in the visual arts, especially in Queensland, and to serve as a point of contact between Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne' (*Heritage*). Vida Lahey was appointed to The Order of the British Empire – Member (Civil), 1 January 1958, for services to art in Queensland. Her painting 'Beach Umbrellas' was featured on the 1996 \$1.20 stamp for Australia Day.

Published resources

Book Section

Lahey, Frances Vida (1882-1968), painter, Underhill, Nancy D.H., 1995

Book

Songs of Colour: The Art of Vida Lahey, MacAulay, Bettina, 1989

Resource Section

Lahey, Frances Vida (1882-1968), Maynard, Margaret, 2006,
<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A090647b.htm>

Site Exhibition

Faith, Hope and Charity Australian Women and Imperial Honours: 1901-1989, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2003,
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/honours/honours.html>

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Oral History and Folklore Collection

[Vida Lahey interviewed by Hazel de Berg in the Hazel de Berg collection \[sound recording\]](#)

John Oxley Library, Manuscripts and Business Records Collection

[OM67-30 Vida Lahey Papers and \[Works of Art\] 1909-1963](#)

Author Details

Helen Morgan

Created 21 November 2002

Last modified 21 November 2018