

# Exhibition Production

## Year 10, 11, 12 Art & Design

### Research Guide 1

This guide explores the roles of the Project Manager and Project Assistant in the preparation of the exhibition.

These professionals working together were asked to personally describe their role.

---

#### Meet the Collections & Exhibition Manager Jennifer Thompson

My background is in the visual arts. I completed my Bachelor of Arts in Visual Arts, majoring in printmaking and textile design at Newcastle University. I then set up a textile studio in Newtown, Sydney where I produced fabrics for exhibitions and sale through galleries and art to wear shops. At this time I was also teaching —adult education in printmaking, colour theory, foundation art at many places from community centres to TAFE to university—and I pursued further study completing a Post Graduate in Design Studies at UTS. After some overseas travel I returned to Sydney to do a Masters in Museum Studies at Sydney University which I completed in 2000. I was also working in the collections and exhibitions section of the Australian National Maritime Museum. I moved to the South Coast in 2001 and since then have worked with the Bundanon Trust in Collections & Exhibitions as well as Education.



Collections & Exhibition Manager, Jennifer Thompson, selects works from the Bundanon Trust Collection. Photo Grace Cochrane.

---

#### Meet the Collections & Exhibitions Officer Julia Bambach

I initially started my studies at the University of Western Sydney with a Bachelor of Arts in Visual Communication. After two years at Western Sydney and a further two years travelling I decided to change the course of my degree and moved to the University of Wollongong to study a Bachelor of Arts in History with particular emphasis on Art and Australian history. I graduated with distinction in 2005 and began volunteering at the Wollongong City Gallery after completing an internship with Cultural Services at the Wollongong City Council.

After deciding on a career in arts administration and curatorship I commenced the Masters in Museum Studies degree at the University of Sydney. Around this time I completed an internship at the Wollongong City Gallery and was offered the role of part time Curatorial Assistant with the gallery. Shortly after the opportunity to work at Bundanon presented itself when the part time Collections Assistant role was advertised, and after an interview surrounded by Boyd paintings I was offered the job. Since coming to Bundanon my role has expanded to full time Collections and Exhibitions Officer. My Masters degree is ongoing.



Collections & Exhibitions Officer, Julia Bambach working during the set up of White gums and ramoxes at the Drill Hall Gallery Canberra. Photo Grace Cochrane.

---

# Project Management for *White gums and ramoxes*

## Collaboration

Working in collaboration with guest curator Grace Cochran has been an enriching experience for both of us. We have worked together from concept stage to the logistics of the tour and with Grace's experience and knowledge there have been many opportunities to learn new skills and ways of approaching a project such as this.

## Concept development

Due to the international importance of the work of Arthur Boyd and the strength of the holdings in the Bundanon Trust Collection of Merric Boyd's ceramics and drawings and their significance in terms of the story of the development of pottery in Australia, Bundanon invited Grace Cochran to view the Collection in order to develop a story around the Boyd family and select works for a national touring exhibition. It soon became apparent that the focus would be the relationship between Arthur and his father Merric.

## Exhibition development

**Research:** At this stage Collections staff concentrated on collating all the information we had about these two artists and their ceramics and wider arts practice. Draft lists of works were made with all related information recorded in the Collection database. We also looked at other works—drawings, paintings and prints—that related by theme. We worked very closely with Grace through this stage. Information from the Bundanon Trust archive was also researched and documents such as letters, studio notes, old catalogue listings and the like were very useful in getting the details of design and production just right.

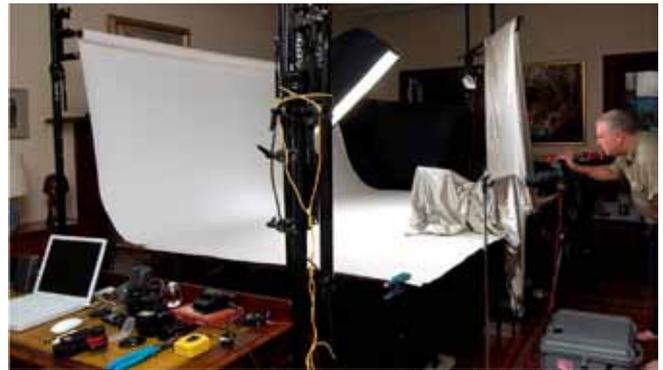
**Selection of objects:** Grace visited Bundanon often. Each time we took the Merric Boyd ceramics from the cabinets and laid them out in groups looking at how they worked together and what they contributed to the story. Some were taken away, some were added until the groups and themes were just right for telling the story that was developing.



Selecting prints for inclusion in the exhibition. Photo Grace Cochran.

**Documentation:** As the in depth research continued, information flowed in and we were able to add to the documentation about the works. Explanations of production and materials were expanded as were descriptions of each of the works.

**Digitisation:** prior to this exhibition a project to digitise the Collections had commenced. Many of the works selected for the exhibition had already been digitally captured and others were brought forward in terms of priority. Some ceramic pieces had to be photographed in groups for use in the catalogue. The digitised images were very helpful in creating illustrated lists of works making identification of each piece much easier. These were also helpful for sending to conservators and framers.



Photographing ceramics in the Bundanon Homestead. Photo RLDI.

**Conservation:** each work in the Collection has been assessed in terms of its physical condition so we were able to check what conservation treatment if any was required for each piece and arrange for an objects conservator to visit Bundanon. The conservator was able to carry out some work on site and others we carefully packed and sent to her studio in Sydney. The drawings and prints were also checked against their conservation assessment rating and those requiring it were sent to a works on paper conservator and the paintings requiring conservation treatment and/or cleaning were sent to a paintings conservator. After all conservation work was complete Julia and Jennifer completed a condition report for each of the 114 artworks in the exhibition. This document will travel with the exhibition and each piece will be checked against this information for any changes at the unpacking and repacking at each venue.



Conservator Anne Cummins working on the ceramics at Bundanon. Photo Julia Bambach.

**Framing:** after conservation treatments and cleaning were completed the works were then sent for framing to two different framers—one specialising in works on paper, the other in paintings. Each time the works move new paperwork is created to document and track the works which is signed by each person who takes the works into their care for a specified period of time.

**Crates:** a specialist art handling company was engaged to make purpose built crates to safely transport the objects while on tour. Each object was measured and a certain amount of space allowed in the crate. Each crate was filled with special packing foam into which the shape of each 3D object was cut. This hollow was then lined with silk. The object sits safely in its space surrounded by the foam. Another layer of foam was laid over the top then the lid of the crate was screwed in place. Similar crates were made for the framed works as well.



Travelling crates for paintings and framed works on paper. Photo Jennifer Thompson.

**Exhibition design:** An exhibition designer was recommended by Grace and we met with her in Sydney to discuss the requirements of the show. She was asked to design showcases that would facilitate the display of the ceramics, be mobile and compactable. Preliminary designs were drawn up and her initial concept was accepted. After much discussion and more drawings the finer details and practicalities were worked out.

**Graphic design:** the graphic design company that does most of the publicity material for Bundanon was approached to design the catalogue, exhibition labels and signage, the invitation, poster, advertisement and this education guide. They created a visual identity for the show based around *Arthur Boyd three years old*, created by Merric Boyd in 1923.



Merric Boyd, *Arthur Boyd three years old*, 1923. Photo RLDI.

**Catalogue:** Throughout this process Grace was writing the essay telling the story of Arthur and his father Merric. There were many drafts to read and comment on. Jennifer worked closely with Grace in editing and proofing the essay. After it was laid out in the catalogue many hours were spent on the final edit and proofing. Images were selected to sit throughout the text and old photographs of family and friends who come in and out of the story were also selected. Julia tracked down the photographers and gained written permission to reproduce the images.

**Labels:** Using the essay and all gathered research Grace wrote the labels for the exhibition. Jennifer worked with Grace to edit and proof this set of texts that would appear throughout the exhibition and ways of making and designing the labels were discussed with the graphic designers and the exhibition designer to arrive at an integrated solution.



Final labels ready for display. Photo Grace Cochrane.

**Audio-visual:** to supplement the objects and text we decided quite early on to create an audio-visual display—a collage of images, text and music—to provide visitors with the opportunity to gain access to further imagery not in the exhibition. Grace created an outline and Jennifer used this along with the essay, labels, list of works and old photographs to create an illustrated and detailed shot list for the photographers to create a the AV. After some discussion and editing the final piece was produced.

**Education and public programs:** discussions with Bundanon's Education Manager and the graphic designer took place and research guides and activity sheets were written, edited and proofed and designed into an online resource for teachers, students and parents



Part of the online education resource, the discovery trail is for young children visiting the exhibition. Photo Boccalatte.