

ROOM 8 - PRESTON ROOM

QUEEN WITH ENSUITE



One of the Hotel's features is our rooms are named after Australian artists. Room 8, one of our Queen ensuite rooms, is named after Margaret Preston.

Margaret Preston (29 April 1875 – 28 May 1963) was an Australian painter and printmaker who is regarded as one of Australia's leading modernists of the early 20th century. In her quest to foster an Australian "national art", she was also one of the first non-Indigenous Australian artists to use Aboriginal motifs in her work.[1] Margaret Preston (1875-1963) is one of Australia's most innovative early modernists and one of our most celebrated artists.

Bold, cosmopolitan and intensely coloured, her paintings and prints, predominately of still life subjects, particularised a moment of extraordinary innovation in Australian art history. Born in 1875, Preston moved to Melbourne in 1893 where she studied at the National Gallery of Victoria School of Arts under the painter Fredrick McCubbin and the Director, Bernard Hall.

In 1904 she travelled to Europe where she actively sought out the work of Europe's influential modern painters. It was during this time following exposure to works by artists such as Matisse, van Gogh, Cézanne, Gauguin and Whistler, and the influences of oriental aesthetics, that Preston developed a 'decorative' style that she would carry through her entire oeuvre. Even through she travelled widely throughout Europe and Asia, Margaret Preston strongly advocated a national style that was distinctive and reflective of Australian culture. "Art is the tangible symbol of the spirit of a country" (Margaret Preston 1927).

Central to Margaret Preston's distinctive Australian style were Chinese and Japanese influences along with the techniques and motifs of Australian Aboriginal art. Even more than her paintings, Preston's woodcuts, linocuts, and monotypes show her capacity for Modernist innovation. These prints were inexpensive to produce and helped her to extend her reach to a broader market. Preston created over 400 known prints, not all of which are documented and some of which are lost.

From the 1920s through to her death in 1963 – a period when Aboriginal art received little public attention – Margaret Preston became one its most committed advocates. Her use of Aboriginal iconography and imagery has caused much discussion and criticism. In 1937 Preston won a silver medal at the Exposition Internationale, Paris. She died in the Sydney harbourside suburb of Mosman in 1963. [Source Wikipedia and Art Gallery of NSW]

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Some works by Margaret Preston