



MOAC

Margaret Olley Art Centre

Kids Guide

EXPLORE. LOOK. THINK. LEARN. DRAW.

MOAC

Margaret Olley Art Centre

The Margaret Olley Art Centre at the Tweed Regional Gallery is a special and exciting place to explore and visit.

Rooms from the home of the artist Margaret Olley have been rebuilt within the Gallery. During your visit you will see objects, furniture and paintings that she owned.

We would love you to draw in the Gallery, but please keep your pencil away from the artworks and the walls.

Collect a pencil and use this booklet to explore, think, learn and draw.

NOTES:

- | please do: | please don't: |
|------------------|----------------------|
| - look around | - eat or drink |
| - ask questions | - run in the gallery |
| - draw things | - take photographs |
| - discuss things | - talk on the phone |

Always remember not to touch the artworks.
Artwork is delicate and sometimes breakable.
Please keep a safe distance and stand back from the artwork you are looking at.





↑ Margaret as a baby at Horseshoe Creek, c 1923



↑ Margaret, with her sister Elaine, mother and brother Ken in a rowboat on the Tweed River, c 1931

Who was Margaret Olley?

Margaret Olley was one of Australia's most loved and admired painters.

Margaret lived most of the latter part of her life in Sydney. She was born in 1923 in Lismore in northern NSW, not far from the Tweed. Margaret lived for a short time near Condong on a sugar cane farm and went to primary school in Murwillumbah. One of her favourite subjects at school was art.

When Margaret was 20 she moved to Sydney to study art. She met many other famous artists, including William Dobell. He painted her portrait in 1948. After she finished her studies, she travelled overseas to live. She studied in London and Paris. Margaret loved visiting the big

galleries and museums to see her favourite paintings, which included art works by the artists Henri Matisse, Pierre Bonnard and Giorgio Morandi.

When Margaret returned to Australia in 1953 she began a busy life that included travelling for many years between houses in Brisbane, Newcastle and Sydney. She also travelled overseas and painted for exhibitions. Painting was Margaret's passion and the only thing she ever wanted to do but she was also known for her kindness and gave a lot of paintings and money away. Her friends called her "Oil".



↑ One of Margaret's first paintings, Kewpie Doll, painted when she was 15 years old



↑ A portrait of Margaret by Greg Weight, in 1991

Draw yourself here →

My name is Age

My friends call me

I was born in

Some places I've been to

.....

My favourite things to do are

.....

.....

.....



Duxford St & the Hat Factory

Margaret bought the terrace house in Duxford St Paddington, Sydney in 1964.

Over the years Margaret lived in parts of the house and rented out other parts to tenants. At the back of the house was a building that had once been a hat factory. Margaret turned this building into her home and studio and lived there on and off until she died in 2011.

In the MOAC you can see rooms from the main part of her home in the Hat Factory, and the Yellow Room which was in the original terrace house. Margaret loved classical music and she had the radio on everyday while she lived and painted in her home. Friends were also very important to her. She hosted many lunches and dinners around her very long dining table.

View of the Hat Factory



Use the empty space to draw your house, or perhaps some flowers that you see in Margaret's home...

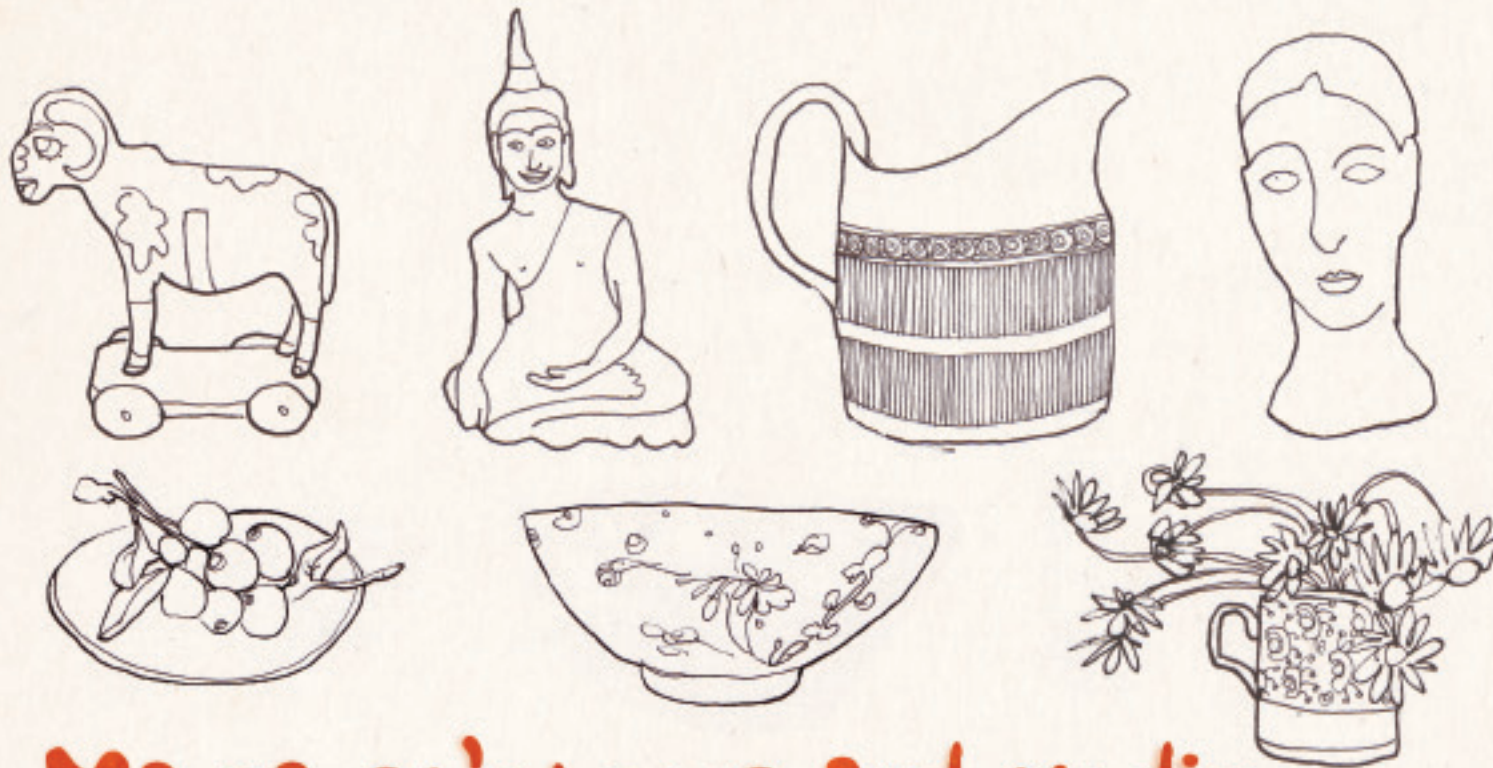
Duxford St



Most of Margaret's paintings were created using natural light from the windows that looked out over her beautiful and lush garden. She loved the soft, filtered light that came through the rooms at different times of the day.



These flowers are from Margaret's garden. Investigate how to press flowers from your own garden. Ask your teacher or a parent to find some simple instructions so you can do it at home.



See if you can spot these objects in the rooms and then colour them in

Margaret's home and studio

What you'll see inside Margaret's home

Margaret loved to paint and collect things. She is well known for her paintings of interiors and still life. She never had a separate studio, but painted inside her home and in her friends' homes.

You can see many objects like furniture, fruit, bowls, vases and flowers in her home. She also collected books, ornaments, sculptures from other countries and sometimes funny bits and pieces. She didn't like throwing things away in case she needed them again or wanted to paint them.

Margaret liked to paint in different spots around her house. Her favourite rooms to paint in were near the kitchen and a room she called the Yellow Room.

Margaret's objects

Margaret Olley was fascinated by many things and liked reading, listening to classical music, visiting galleries, travelling and collecting old and interesting things.

On her travels she collected a lot of objects that she displayed at home. She loved art from New Guinea and Egypt and bought home posters by her favourite artists to hang on her walls. She also collected the work of other artists who often became her good friends.

She loved entertaining at home and many bunches of flowers were given to her by visitors and friends.

How was Margaret Olley's home moved to Murwillumbah?

This huge job was done by a special museum person who slowly photographed and carefully packed everything to be transported from Sydney to the Gallery.

The rooms in the Centre have been specially built to recreate Margaret Olley's home, but the windows and doors are the actual ones from her house. Every object and piece of furniture you can see was put back in the same place it was found.

Margaret preferred to spend her time painting rather than doing housework, though she always knew where everything was kept.

Look into the Yellow Room and the Hat Factory. Draw some of the objects you see in this space...

Write a list of all the objects that you can see

What is your favourite room to be in at home?

Write a list of all the objects that are in that room





↵
Margaret Olley's paint
palette with brushes and
cornflowers

How and what Margaret painted

Margaret used her home as a studio.

An artist's studio is a place or room where the artist paints, draws, or just sits and thinks. Margaret combined the space where she lived and painted. The objects she collected and the many gifts she was given inspired her to create new paintings. These piled up over the years and filled every part of her home.

Margaret painted directly in front of her subject matter, without an artist's easel. She sat at a chair and leaned a board on her lap. She painted on a dark brown, smooth board and sketched her design in white chalk. She then quickly painted the shapes in acrylic paints then finished

the top layer using oil paint. Sometimes she would finish a work quite quickly. Others could take years to finish if she had to wait for the right light to come through a window.

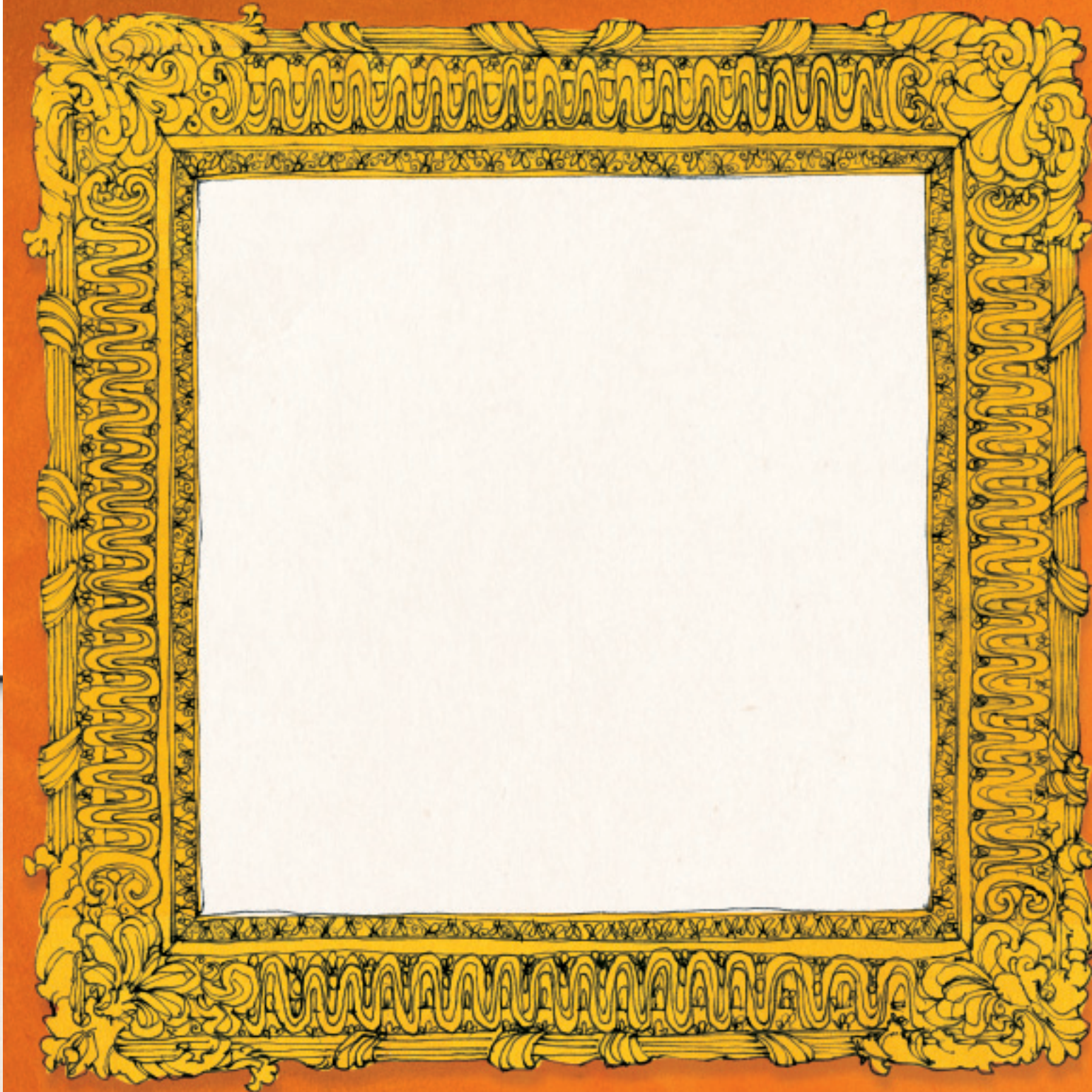
You can see a lot of paints and brushes inside Margaret's home. Some were even kept in the kitchen! Margaret also used a board to mix her paint on. This is called a palette. See if you can spot a palette inside the house.

Margaret's favourite things to paint were flowers, fruit and her collected treasures.



↵
Margaret's favourite things
to paint were flowers, fruit
and her collected treasures.

Draw some of the things Margaret would have painted in the book above.
In the frame draw a still life or your favourite Margaret Olley painting. ↗



Other Resources:

In the Margaret Olley Art Centre you can find more activities and information about Margaret’s home studio.
An Education Resource is available that contains extended information on MOAC and Margaret Olley and her paintings.

There are a lot more things to see and do in the Gallery after you have visited the MOAC.

- > Look at other really cool works of art
- > Go onto the balcony and look at the amazing view
- > Have a drink or something to eat at the Café
- > Look at cool art books in the Library
- > Collect a piece of paper and a pencil and draw your favourite artwork in the Gallery
- > Buy something from the great gift shop to take home to add to your collection or give to someone.

Acknowledgements and contributions:

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Image details:

- Cover Greg Weight, *Classic FM* (detail) 2011. photograph, permanent pigment on cotton rag paper
Donated through the Australian Government’s Cultural Gifts Program by the artist, 2013 Tweed Regional Gallery collection
- Pg 2–3 Steven Alderton, *Margaret’s Chair* 2011. inkjet print on cotton rag paper
Acquired through the Tweed River Art Gallery Donations Fund, 2012 Tweed Regional Gallery collection
- Pg 4–5 Photograph: Margaret Olley, Horseshoe Creek, Kyogle c. 1923. Photographer unknown.
Courtesy Art Gallery NSW Archives, Margaret Olley Estate
- Photograph: Margaret, Elaine, Grace and Ken Olley in a rowboat on the Tweed River to meet the school bus. c. 1931 Tyngah, NSW.
Photographer unknown. Courtesy Art Gallery NSW Archives, Margaret Olley Estate
- Margaret Olley, *Kewpie Doll* 1938. oil on linen. Gift of the Margaret Olley Estate, 2013 Tweed Regional Gallery collection
- Greg Weight, *Margaret Olley* 1991. photograph, permanent pigment on cotton rag paper
Donated through the Australian Government’s Cultural Gifts Program by the artist, 2013. Tweed Regional Gallery collection
- Pg 10 View of the exterior lane view of the Hat Factory, c. 1970’s. Date and photographer unknown. The Margaret Olley Estate. Tweed Regional Gallery collection

