



A shared obsession: Olley & Jessup

Margaret Olley Art Centre

From Friday 28 June 2019

This exhibition explores the connection between Margaret Olley (1923–2011) and expatriate Australian artist Fred Jessup (1920–2007). They were life-long friends with a shared obsession for the genre of still life painting.

Olley and Jessup met at East Sydney Technical College in Sydney in the mid 1940s. They travelled together in Europe in the late 1940s and there began a love affair for Jessup with France, where he lived until his death.¹

Despite their geographical distance, Olley and Jessup remained firm friends. Remarkably, their home studios – Olley's in Sydney and Jessup's in the south of France – shared an undeniable synergy. Each space was brimming with objects as subject matter for painting – fresh, synthetic and dried flowers and plants – and countless paintings on the go, complemented by the sounds of classical music.

This exhibition will tell Jessup's story in Australia for the first time via his friendship with one of Australia's most celebrated painters of still life.

Thank you to all members of the Jessup family and his friends in Australia and Europe for their ongoing support of this project.

¹ Meg Stewart, *Margaret Olley: Far from a still life*, Random House, 2012, ix

Fred Jessup's studio, 2018

Photo: Greg Weight © The artist