



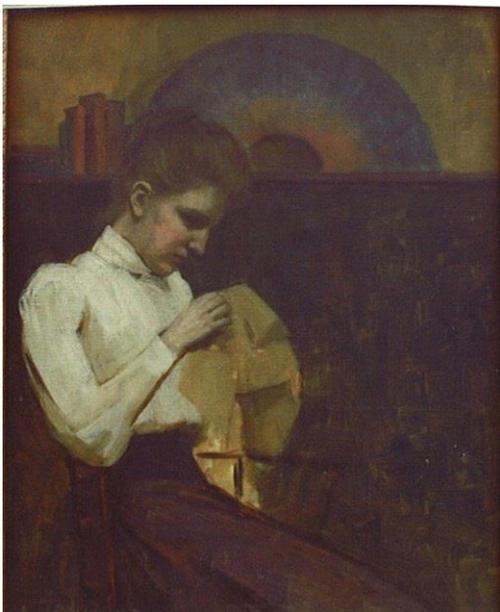
Warrnambool Art Gallery - Explore Learn Create from home

Let's meet Mary Cecil Allen!

Mary Cecil Allen was born in 1893 in Melbourne. Her parents were called Harry and Ada and she had two sisters – Edith and Beatrice. Her father, Harry, was a professor at the University of Melbourne and the family lived there. Mary grew up at the University. She was taught by a governess (a name for a teacher who came to teach in your house) and also travelled lots.

Mary loved art and attended an art class for children run by an artist called May Vale. We also have works by May Vale in the Warrnambool Art Gallery Collection.

May Vale thought that Mary's work was excellent!



Mary's art classes as a child inspired her to continue as she grew up. She began studying at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne but after she left Australia with her parents in 1912 for England, she enrolled at The Slade School of Fine Art in London.

May VALE (1862 – 1945)

Woman Sewing

oil on canvas

Collection Warrnambool Art Gallery



Portrait of Mary Cecil Allen 1920s

photograph
National Library of Australia

When Mary and her family returned to Australia, Mary continued her studies at the National Gallery of Victoria and also taught art. She was really good at teaching too. In fact, a lady from America who went to one of Mary's lectures liked it so much that she invited Mary to become a tour guide in Europe!

After spending some time in France working in art galleries, Mary moved to New York. She concentrated on her own art and enjoyed trying new things and being experimental.

She loved colours and shapes and painted in a style called **cubism**. The style is called cubism because it looks as though the picture is made up of lots of cubes. Cubist painters and artists show objects from lots of different angles. It is like being able to see every part of the object all at once.

A very famous cubist artist that you may have heard of is Pablo Picasso. Here is one of his artworks.

Pablo Picasso

Weeping Woman 1937

© Pablo Picasso/Succession Pablo Picasso. Licensed by Copyright Agency, Australia



Mary Cecil Allen

**View from a window, Provincetown
1935**

oil on canvas

Collection Warrnambool Art Gallery



This painting is from the Warrnambool Art Gallery's permanent collection. It is on display in our exhibition, *Line of Site*.

Can you see all the cube shapes in the picture?

This was the view from Mary's window. What do you think she could see?

Mary became very popular in America and Europe.

Mary Cecil Allen

Sea, studio: Winter 1949
oil on canvas

**National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne**
Purchased, 1950
© Mary Cecil Allen



Here is another painting she made in the cubist style. Mary painted this in Provincetown too.

This painting is at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne.

Now see if you can find out where Provincetown is?

Which country is it in?

Mary lived there and also eventually died there in 1962.

Mary also loved to make artworks based on her homeland, Australia. She made this wonderful screen for a friend.

How many kangaroos can you see?



Mary Cecil Allen

Screen 1941

wooden frame, oil on cardboard

© National Gallery of Australia

Your turn!

Begin by spending a little time learning about cubism and the artists who used this style. There are some resources at the bottom of this page but there are also many more for you to find.

Jot down some of the things you have learned about cubism:

- Can you name some cubist artists?
- Are there different types of cubism?
- Did you see some cubist paintings that you liked?
- Which were your favourites?

Think about shapes, patterns, colours and textures. These are all elements which cubist artists added to their work

We are all staying at home at the moment so it would be fun to draw your view from your window – just like Mary did. Have a go at drawing and colouring it in the cubist style.

You will need:

- Paper
 - Coloured pencils
 - Imagination
1. Start by sitting somewhere comfortable where you can see out of a window
 2. Spend a few minutes looking at the view
 3. What shapes and colours do you see? Think about how you could incorporate them into your picture
 4. Perhaps begin by sketching the view normally – not in a cubist style
 5. Next try your hand at drawing and colouring your own, *View from a window*..... using a cubist style
 6. Take a photo of your artwork and post it in the comments of the Warrnambool Art Gallery Facebook post. Name your artwork, *View from a window*, (followed by the name of the town you live in!) We would love to see your creations!

Resources

The Tate:

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/c/cubism/all-about-cubism>

Britannica Kids:

<https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Cubism/399417>

Ducksters:

<https://www.ducksters.com/history/art/cubism.php>

National Gallery of Victoria:

<https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/artist/1858/>