

FRANCES KEEVIL GALLERY

CHARLES BLACKMAN

1928	Born Sydney, Australia
1943 - 46	Studied East Sydney Technical College
1945 - 60	Lived and painted in Melbourne
1950s	Painted Schoolgirl series, followed by Alice in Wonderland series
1960 - 64	Travelled and studied overseas after winning Helena Rubinstein Scholarship Lived and painted in London, exhibited at Whitechapel and Tate Galleries
1965	Tour of northern France and Flanders
1966 - 70	Lived and painted in Sydney
1970 - 71	Toured Italy extensively and lived in Paris
1975	Occupied Australian Studio, Cite Internationale des Arts, Paris
1976 - 2001	Lived and painted in NSW, Queensland, WA
2018	Charles passed away shortly after his 90th birthday.

Blackman, born 12 August 1928 in Sydney, left school at 13 and worked as an illustrator with The Sun newspaper while attending night classes at East Sydney Technical College (1943–46) though was principally self-taught. He was later awarded an honorary doctorate and an O.B.E. He came to notice following his move to Melbourne in the mid-1940s, where he became friends with Joy Hester, John Perceval and Laurence Hope as well as gaining the support of critic and art patron John Reed. His work met critical acclaim through his early Schoolgirl and Alice series, the latter Blackman's conception of Lewis Carroll's most famous character. For some time while painting the Alice series, Blackman worked as a cook at a café run by art dealer Georges Mora and his wife, fellow artist Mirka Mora. In 1959 he was a signatory to the Antipodean Manifesto, a statement protesting against the dominance of abstract expressionism, along with Arthur and David Boyd, John Brack, Robert Dickerson, John Perceval and Clifton Pugh.

Blackman's own work is associated with dreamlike images tinged with mystery and foreboding. In 1960 he and his family lived in London after Blackman won a Helena Rubenstein travelling scholarship, settling in Sydney upon his return five and a half years later. In 1970 he moved to Paris, when awarded the atelier studio in the Cité des Artes. He lived there for a year at the same time as John Coburn, and subsequently returned often, as Paris was for him a lasting source of inspiration. He is considered one of Australia's most iconic and loved artists.