

Ms Judy Cassab AO CBE

The degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) was conferred upon Judy Cassab AO CBE at the Arts ceremony held at 11.30am on 3 March 1995.

Citation

Presented by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor D McNicol

Chancellor,

I have the honour to present Ms Judy Cassab for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa).

Judy Cassab is regarded with great respect by the art community in Australia for her artistic attainments, especially in the areas of portraiture and landscape painting.

Born in 1920 in Vienna of Hungarian parents, from the age of nine she lived in Hungary. In 1939 Ms Cassab married Jonsci Kampfner but was separated from her husband during World War II. Most of her family, including her mother, grandmother and uncle, as well as close members of her husband's family were deported to Auschwitz where they were killed. In an effort to escape the Nazi persecution of the Jewish people, Ms Cassab assumed a false identity and worked in a factory. Ms Cassab and her husband were reunited after the war, and in 1951, they arrived in Australia with 21 of her paintings, which were post-Impressionist in style and rooted in her Hungarian experience.

Ms Cassab discovered her Australia, especially the beauty of Alice Springs. "Alice Springs is my borrowed back yard, she says. 'When I first saw Alice Springs, it was a revelation. I knew then why we had immigrated.'

Her recent portrait of our Chancellor hangs proudly in this Great Hall. The University of Sydney is fortunate to own 14 paintings by Judy Cassab, which were either commissioned by or given to the University. Her work can be seen in Australian and overseas galleries, including the National Portrait Gallery London.

She has been showered with praise and awards for her contribution to the art of portraiture, landscape painting and the cultural life of Australia. As the artist and critic Elwyn Lynn has said: "she illuminates art".

Chancellor, I have the honour to present Ms Judy Cassab AO, CBE for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa).