

Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO

**MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR
THE LATE JUDY CASSAB AO CBE**

**TEMPLE EMANUEL
WOOLLAHRA**

Thursday, 5 November 2015

PROFESSOR DAME MARIE BASHIR AD CVO

RABBI FOX

**DEAR SONS OF OUR BELOVED JUDY CASSAB – MR JOHN SEED AND
MR PETER KAMPFNER**

FAMILY MEMBERS

AND SO MANY FRIENDS

WE JOIN TOGETHER TODAY, SHARING OUR GREAT SENSE OF LOSS IN THE PASSING OF A WOMAN OF INCOMPARABLE COURAGE, OF GREAT RESILIENCE, OF DEVOTED MATERNAL LOVE AND A PERSON OF COUNTLESS ENDEARING QUALITIES – IN A LIFE OF ALMOST 100 YEARS.

JUDY CASSAB WAS ALSO AN ARTIST OF UNIQUE SENSITIVITY, A SENSITIVITY WHICH HAD BEEN HONED IN HER LONG LIFE BY TRAUMA AND LOSS, BUT WHICH ALSO CAME TO REJOICE IN A LIFE OF CREATIVITY, WHICH GAVE MUCH INSPIRATION TO OTHERS.

THOUGH BORN IN THE GLORIOUS CITY OF VIENNA TO HUNGARIAN PARENTS, THE EVILS OF NAZI PERSECUTION AND DISCRIMINATION FOLLOWED, RESULTING IN THE INCOMPARABLE TRAUMA OF ALL OF HER DEAR FAMILY BEING SENT TO AUSCHWITZ, THAT PLACE OF ENDLESS CRUELTY, WHERE TRAGICALLY ALL PERISHED. JUDY HERSELF THROUGH IMMENSE COURAGE MANAGED TO REMAIN HIDDEN, AND EVENTUALLY TO ESCAPE IN 1951 TO THIS COUNTRY, AUSTRALIA, WHICH BECAME A WELCOMING HOME TO SO MANY VALUABLE JEWISH PEOPLE WHOSE CONTRIBUTION HAS BEEN INESTIMABLE.

TOGETHER, WITH HER TWO CHILDREN AND HER DEAR HUSBAND JANSCI KAMPFLER, WHO HAD SURVIVED A LABOUR CAMP IN RUSSIA, JUDY REACHED AUSTRALIA.

CERTAINLY, THEIR LIFE HERE HAS TRULY BEEN INSPIRATIONAL.

JUDY WAS DESTINED TO BECOME A RENOWNED PAINTER, - RECOGNISED, REWARDED AND AN INSPIRATION TO OTHERS.

WHILST JANSKI, A CHEMICAL ENGINEER, WAS ABLE TO FIND WORK IN A FACTORY, HE ALSO GAVE JUDY IMMEASURABLE SUPPORT IN HER ARTISTIC JOURNEY. BEFORE LONG, SHE WAS TRAVELLING ALONE TO FULFIL OUTSTANDING COMMISSIONS IN PORTRAITURE, WHICH INCLUDED THE QUEEN OF THAILAND, PRINCESS ALEXANDRA IN LONDON, A MAHARAJAH IN INDIA.

HER LOVE OF, AND INVOLVEMENT WITH PAINTING HAD BEGUN AT THE AGE OF 12, AND AS SHE HERSELF HAD SO TOUCHINGLY SAID, “I HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT I EXPRESSED MYSELF WITH A BRUSH. I DO NOT FEEL ANXIOUS ABOUT MY PAINTINGS. I CAN ALWAYS PAINT OTHERS”.

ONE OF THOSE OTHERS WAS MY HUSBAND SIR NICHOLAS SHEHADIE, FORMER LORD MAYOR OF SYDNEY, WHOSE FINE PORTRAIT IS HELD IN THE SYDNEY TOWN HALL.

INDEED, JUDY’S SENSITIVE ARTISTIC INTERPRETATIONS BROUGHT ACCOLADES OF THE HIGHEST LEVEL IN OUR SOCIETY:

- **1960 & 1967 - WINNER OF THE ARCHIBALD TWICE**
- **1969 - COMMANDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE – CBE**
- **1988 – ORDER OF AUSTRALIA - AO**
- **1995 – UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY HONORARY DOCTOR OF LETTERS**
- **1995 – WINNER OF THE NITA B. KRIBBLE AWARD FOR WOMEN WRITERS**
- **2011 – HUNGARY’S GOLD CROSS OF MERIT**

SHE WAS ACCLAIMED AS AN ARTIST OF AN EXTRAORDINARY RANGE OF COMMITMENT AND TALENT.

INDEED, AS JOHN McDONALD, ART CRITIC, HAS SAID, “ONE OF THE BEST LOVED OF ALL AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS.