



# WHEN WE WERE MODERN

## It takes three to tango

Beyond the landscape of passion was a sea of obsession, a love triangle, a romantic rivalry where love and art were never ending.

Sunday Reed, 34, was the brilliant black sheep of one of the richest families in Australia. With her husband John Reed, 40, a lawyer and publisher, she helped young modern artists survive in war time Australia. When her husband introduced her to a young painter, Sidney Nolan, 22, she fell deeply in love. Recognizing the only way to keep Sunday was to let the affair run its course, John invited Nolan to live with them at their idyllic home in the bush, called Heide. John also loved Nolan and the physical aspects of that relationship remain enigmatic, like John himself. But Sunday and Nolan consumed each other physically and mentally for seven years. Sunday enriched his knowledge, became his muse, prepared his canvasses, inspired him and helped create Australia's most famous artist.

Inevitably conflict came to paradise when Nolan wanted to exit the triangle. Dramatically, his way out was through Cynthia Reed, John's sister, who seduced him and took him to London. She was John and Sunday in the one person. In London, in a meteoric rise, he became one of the Queen's favourite artists and friends. Sunday had groomed him well for worlds he had hardly dreamed of. But she crashed when he left, never fully recovering from the lost love. In a dramatic twist she adopted the baby child, of her best friend, Joy Hester, who was diagnosed with cancer. The child, Sweeney became an emotional replacement for Nolan, a man Joy had also loved.

The ménage was over. There were emotional casualties, but history was richer. Sensuality that scorched the earth and the ravages of bohemianism came together in a fierce sexual drama.

**THE THEME:** The sexual tangle of a ménage a trois fascinates in both fact and fiction. It's the last great taboo. There's a steamy aspect to three to tango where three's not a crowd. But at the heart of a threesome is nuclear material that explodes and transforms into immense creative energy. Henry Miller, Lord Nelson, Lenin, Picasso, Hemingway, de Beauvoir, Sartre, are just a few historical giants who lived in a ménage. Ménages have had a profound effect on the world. This film is about three lovers, "ménagers" who dared to suspend traditional values. They explored love and sex in a way that defied what they felt was the hypocrisy of Forties Australia, and they created their own world in a place called Heide.

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