

# Art Bulletin of Victoria 1973









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The cover illustration of this issue is a Woven Textile, Silk, Persian 10th century, Purchased 1971





1. *Maurice Utrillo (1883–1955 French) Church at Leynes 61 x 82 cm (28 x 36 ins). Private owner.*
2. *Emilio Greco (b. 1913 Italian) Statuette H. 29 cm (11.5/8 ins). Private owner.*



# Editorial

## Ursula Hoff

This year goes down in the chronicles of the Gallery as an *annus mirabilis*: for the first time in its history the Victorian Government has made a generous special grant matched by an equal sum from the Council in order that the Gallery might participate in an outstanding art sale in London. The occasion was the sale at Sotheby's of a group of old master drawings from the collection of the English portrait painter Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830), which in 1836 had been bought by Lord Francis Egerton, later first Earl of Ellesmere, and had remained in the Ellesmere family since that date. All the world's museums were represented at that sale. The top prize, a model study for a figure in the famous Farnese ceiling in Rome, by Annibale Carracci (1560–1609) was secured for the National Gallery of Victoria as well as a *Landscape with Watermill* by the same artist and a drawing representing *Hercules and the Hydra* by Guercino (1591–1666). Also for the first time, a member of staff, the Curator of Prints and Drawings, Miss Sonia Dean, had been sent to London with the sole object of attending the sale and assisting in the selection of the drawings. All three drawings, but particularly the figure study for the Farnese ceiling which has been shown in many international exhibitions of baroque art and has been frequently reproduced, will add further distinction to an already admirable group of old master drawings in the Print Room collection. The Ellesmere drawings will be reproduced in next year's Bulletin.

Several objects of outstanding interest were made available for display by lenders. Emilio Greco's Statuette (fig. 2) is not only a work by one of Italy's finest modern sculptors who is already represented in the collection by the *Head of Iphigenia* but it has a most close connection with this institution since it was presented to the Honorary Consultant in Greek and Roman Antiquities, Professor A. D. Trendall, C.M.G., K.C.S.G., Litt.D., F.B.A. to mark the award to him of the Galileo Galilei Prize for 1971. The prize is given by Italian Rotary under the auspices of the University of Pisa to foreign scholars who have made important contributions to the study of Italian culture in different fields. In 1971 the field was archaeology and Professor Trendall received it for his contribution to the study of Greek pottery in Southern Italy.

Emilio Greco's figures are both contemporary and traditional; they derive ultimately from the artistic heritage of the Mediterranean. Greco spent much of his youth in Naples, Rome and Florence, where the sight of classical antique, Renaissance and Baroque art made it seem natural to him to continue in the 'figurative' tradition. He had his first exhibition in Rome in 1946; since 1948 he has won many international awards and is represented in museums all over the world. Though only a small example the statuette has all the qualities of his life size figures. A network of engraved lines lends to the sensuously modelled form a highly wrought surface which, absorbing the light, gives full value to the warm golden tone of the material.

Another loan was Maurice Utrillo's (1883–1955) *Eglise de Leynes* (fig. 1) painted about 1914, one of a large number of small churches which Utrillo often, so it is said, painted from postcards. He seems to have been moved by these solid structures, not of any great architectural merit, but which have survived through the ages in a rough fashion, often, as here, massive and spacious, offering a refuge to the population of the small villages that surround them.

Anthony Caro's (b. 1924) *Sidestep* a major metalstructure of 1971 at present displayed in the Lindsay courtyard, offers a different facet of this English sculptor's work than *Piano* of 1968 in possession of the Gallery.

Three loans to the Department of Prints and Drawings hang on the walls of the Print Study Room as welcome specimens of early cubism and surrealism, neither of which trends were represented in the permanent collection by more than an isolated example.

Georges Braque's (b. 1882) *Fox* is a cubist drypoint of 1911, Picasso's (b. 1881) *Man with Dog* a cubist etching of 1914 and Paul Klee's *Tight Rope Walker* a surrealist colour lithograph of 1923.

On display for several months in the European Gallery was a charming wooden gothic relief of the *Nativity* of about 1490, of Austrian origin, which had previously been part of the Herbert B. Shaw collection the greater part of which is now in the gallery at Hamilton in the Western District of Victoria; two pieces of silver which Herbert Shaw had included in his bequest to Hamilton and which were on loan to us earlier last year are the subject of an article by Miss Zdanowicz in this issue.





# Additions to the Greek Vase Collection 1971-72:

## Attic white ground Lekythos; Gnathian Squat Lekythos

### A.D. Trendall

During 1971-2 the collection of Greek vases in the National Gallery received two very important additions, each of which provides an example of an ancient vase-painting technique not previously represented. One is an Attic lekythos of c. 460-50 B.C. decorated in the white-ground technique and attributed to the Achilles Painter<sup>1</sup>; the other, about a century later in date, is also a lekythos, but of the type known as squat because of the greater breadth and lesser height of its body, and comes from Apulia in South Italy. It is painted with several colours applied directly to the black glaze in what is known as the Gnathia technique<sup>2</sup> after the ancient town of that name (mod. Egnazia) where vases of this type were first discovered. It is vases such as these, decorated in colour instead of the more common black- or red-figure technique, that enable us to form some idea of what the lost mural and panel paintings of the ancient Greeks must have looked like and they are therefore of particular interest for the study of Greek art.

#### 1. Attic White-ground Lekythos<sup>3</sup>

##### Colour-frontispiece 1 a; Figs. 3-5

The technique of white-ground vase-painting, as seen in the Melbourne lekythos<sup>3</sup> (figs. 3-5), in which the surface of the vase is thinly coated with a white chalky slip upon which the painting is done instead of on the actual clay as with black- or red-figure, begins in Athens in the later sixth century B.C. and develops side by side with red-figure. The earliest vases are decorated in the black-figure technique, but the painters soon turn to outline for their designs instead of solid black, and this technique is found at first on vases of several shapes, especially in the interiors of cups. In the second quarter of the fifth century the black relief-line is replaced by the golden brown of diluted glaze-paint, and solid spaces, especially drapery, are filled in with various shades of red, ranging from a purple to a brownish tint. The friable nature of the white slip, however, and the fact that the added colours tended to fade made the white-ground technique unsuitable for the decoration of vases in general use and from about the middle of the century it was almost entirely restricted to funerary lekythoi, where the comparatively fugitive nature of the decoration was of less importance, since these vases were intended to be filled with aromatic oil and placed as offerings in the tomb or at the grave-monument, or else to be used in the funerary rites<sup>4</sup>.

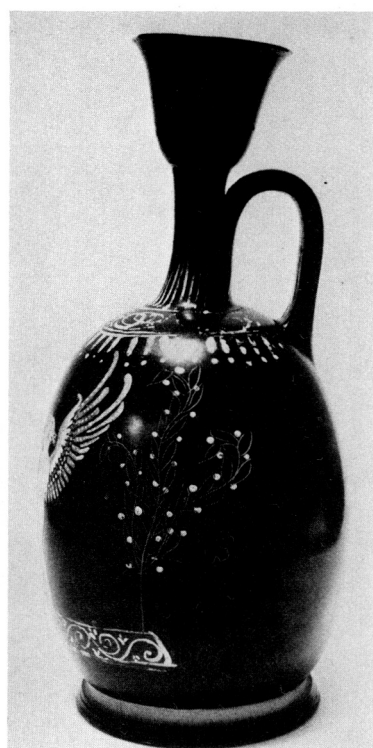
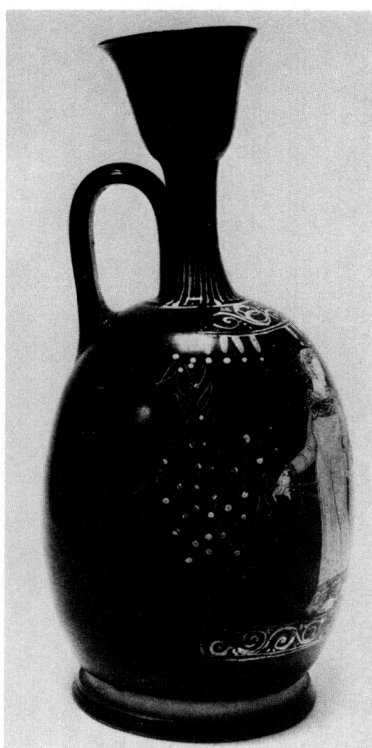
A lekythos was essentially a vessel for carrying oil and in what may be regarded as its canonical shape in the classical period<sup>5</sup>, with a tall, cylindrical body, a narrow neck and a cup-shaped mouth, it was admirably suited for this purpose, since the narrow neck allowed the oil to be poured out in a fine stream or in drops, and the mouth was so constructed as to prevent the oil from dripping. The disk foot is thick and solid, with a ridge between it and the body of the vase. The average height of these lekythoi is about 15 inches and, since the amount of perfumed oil required to fill such a vase was considerable, from about the middle of the fifth century B.C. onwards it was quite a regular practice to insert a small cup-like container into the vase, attached to the lower part of the neck<sup>6</sup>, which held only a few ounces and was completely invisible in the finished vase, though its existence may be detected by the presence of a small vent-hole on the shoulder, where it was often inconspicuously placed between the handle and the neck, or under the foot, or sometimes low down on the body. The vent-hole was necessary to prevent the body of the lekythos from bursting during the firing process, since the insertion of the container sealed off the bottom of the neck and thus created an airtight space in the rest of the body of the vase.

The shape of the body of a classical lekythos is well suited to the decoration usually put upon it: two, or at most three, figures in a setting either with a funerary context or else taken from everyday life, with perhaps a mere hint of the hereafter. Among the former we most commonly find mourners with offerings at the tomb or preparing for such a visit, and Hermes, as conductor of souls, bringing the deceased to Charon to be ferried across the Styx to the underworld. The others are mostly concerned with home life, mistress and maid, mother and child, husband and wife, the last often in a context which suggests the final parting. Sometimes a scene from daily life may be placed side by side with the tomb, leaving us to draw our own conclusions.

3. *White-ground Lekythos, obverse, Attic, h. 35.5 cm (13 ins). Felton Bequest.*

4. *White-ground Lekythos side view.*





The standards for the decoration of white-ground lekythoi were largely established by the Achilles Painter<sup>7</sup>, whose career began about 460 B.C. and lasted for some thirty years. He was a pupil of one of the greatest of red-figure vase-painters, the Berlin Painter, and he takes his name from a large red-figured amphora in the Vatican<sup>8</sup> decorated, after the tradition of his master, with a single figure on each side, Achilles on the front and Briseis on the back. He painted over a hundred red-figured vases and about as many in the white-ground technique, of which he was perhaps the most distinguished exponent, his works ranking amongst the greatest masterpieces of ancient Greek drawing and leaving their imprint upon all subsequent white-ground vase-painting.

The Achilles Painter still uses diluted black glaze-paint for his outlines, except on a few of his very latest vases, but after him, when white-ground vase-painting became almost entirely a specialist art, few of his successors employing, as he did, the red-figure technique as well, matt red or black replaces it. The change is important since the new medium gives the artist greater freedom and the lekythoi of the later fifth century are more florid in style, with an almost impressionistic manner of drawing in which rapidly-sketched lines are used with much skill and sensitivity to suggest volume or give an illusion of perspective. White-ground vases barely outlast the century, and the technique was never adopted by the Greek colonists in South Italy for the vases manufactured there. It is interesting to note that, although white lekythoi are commonly found in Magna Graecia, especially at Taranto, Gela and Agrigento, they do not seem to have been imported into Etruria, having apparently no place in the funeral rites or tombs of the Etruscans.

The early white-ground lekythoi of the Achilles Painter (c. 460–50 B.C.) are characterised by the use of the so-called “second white”, clearly visible on the Melbourne vase, where the flesh of the two women is painted in a more intense, snowy white than that of the actual slip, which is a creamy shade. This mannerism, possibly borrowed from wall- or panel-painting, produces a rather unfortunate effect and was abandoned after a short period in favour of “pure” outline. It serves, however, as a useful criterion for the dating of our vase, which, in consequence, must be placed amongst the painter’s earlier vases before the middle of the fifth century. Supporting evidence for its early date will also be found in the *Kalos* (or love-name) inscription Δρόμιππος Καλός Δρομοκλείδο (Dromippos the son of Dromokleides is fair), since this inscription occurs also on five other of his vases<sup>9</sup> from this period, all using the “second white”. Love-names are regularly found on red-figured vases, but their appearance on funerary lekythoi seems rather strange, since they cannot signify that the vase was intended for that particular person’s tomb, and it is worth noting that they do not appear when the actual tomb is represented.

6 *Gnathia Squat Lekythos, obverse*,  
h. 23 cm (9 ins).  
Felton Bequest.

7 *Gnathia Squat Lekythos, side view*.

8 *Gnathia Squat Lekythos, side view*.

Several other love-names apart from Dromippos appear on the white lekythoi of the Achilles Painter<sup>10</sup> — those more frequently used are Diphilos son of Melanopos (14 times; always in the early period), Axiopeithes son of Alkimachos (5 times), Hygiainon (8 times) and Lichas (4 times; with 9 other occurrences on vases by other painters). We can but conclude that the Achilles Painter is only following a regular custom of the time, with no special regard for the purpose of the vase; in passing, we may admire the neat lettering of his three-line inscription which has an almost lapidary quality and admirably fills the space between the heads of the two women.

The shoulder, as with most classical lekythoi, is clearly set off from the body; at the join of the neck it is decorated with a band of egg-pattern, and on the shoulder itself are elegantly drawn palmettes and scrolls in matt black, enlivened with occasional touches of red. The body of the vase has a frieze of meanders and saltire squares in black running immediately above the picture but not right round the vase; below are two lines in diluted glaze-paint. The lower part of the body is black, but the outer edge of the foot is left in the natural red of the fired clay.

The scene represents two women, mistress and maid, with appropriate offerings — preparations for a visit to the grave. Both figures are comparatively well preserved: some of the added white has flaked off the head of the maid, and the colour of her garment, originally a creamy beige, not unlike the actual slip, has considerably faded, leaving only traces of the original; there is a tiny fragment missing from the upper part of the head on the woman to right, and the black of her hair has been repainted to hide it. The maid wears a long *peplos* reaching down to her ankles and caught up on the shoulder with a pin; she holds out a tray containing several looped white fillets, a red one (somewhat faded) and one of a chocolate colour, together with some leafy sprays. The fillets would be used for decking the shaft or the base of the grave-monument (cf. the stele on the reverse of the Ganymede Painter's volute-krater in the Gallery). Her mistress is more elaborately dressed and over a red tunic (*chiton*) with long sleeves wears a cloak of a brownish shade, carefully draped over her left shoulder, across the front of her body and over the left arm. Her right hand hangs downward, the thumb touching two of the fingers, and in her left she holds a white alabastron, or perfume-flask, exactly like those resting on the base of the tomb-monument on the Ganymede Painter's krater. On the wall behind, on each side of the two women, hangs a tall-handled black *oenochoe* (wine-jug), and on the right there is also a sash or fillet with tapes. At the ground level, partly concealed behind the women are two stools, of which only a portion of the seat and one well-turned leg are visible.

It is a simple scene, which might well be described in Martin Robertson's words as "serenity lightly touched with melancholy"<sup>11</sup>. Close parallels to the Melbourne vase will be found in several of the other early lekythoi by the Achilles Painter, notably three in Athens (1923, 1963 and 12744)<sup>12</sup> which all show scenes with mistress and maid holding similar baskets of looped fillets or other offerings and make use of the "second white" for their exposed flesh. The last bears the same *kalos*-inscription as ours; the other two honour Diphilos. At this stage the Achilles Painter has not yet acquired that complete mastery of outline or the combination of formal beauty with spiritual strength which characterises his finest work, but in the quiet dignity of the two women, in the harmony of the composition and in the effective use of colour we can easily see the promise which his later years will fulfil, as well as not a little of that *ethos* (nobility of character) which is the hallmark of the best art of Periclean Athens.

## 2. Gnathia Squat Lekythos<sup>13</sup>

### Colour-frontispiece 1 b; Figs. 6–8

On the neck of the large volute-krater in the National Gallery by the Ganymede Painter, published in colour on the cover of this *Bulletin* two years ago, will be seen a female head rising from the calyx of a flower in an extremely beautiful floral setting. The head and much of the floral work is not in the red-figure technique used for the main scenes on the vase but in colours, mainly white, yellow and brownish-red, applied directly to the black glaze-paint. It was probably decoration of this type, which appears regularly on the necks of volute-kraters and other large vases in Apulia from the second quarter of the fourth century B.C. onwards, that inspired the so-called Gnathia ware in which both figures and pattern-work are in applied colours, mostly in white and shades of red, orange and yellow. The Gnathia style as seen in the squat lekythos (figs. 6–8)<sup>13</sup> appears just before the middle of the century in a group of vases with applied polychrome decoration and continues in use in Apulia, later spreading to Campania and Sicily as well, until the second quarter of the third century, thus outlasting the red-figure technique by a generation or so. Only a comparatively small proportion of Gnathia vases is decorated with figured scenes, and these are mostly from the fourth century; heads of women or of Nike are among the more popular subjects, thus reinforcing the connexion with the similar representations on the necks of volute-kraters and on other red-figured vases. Eros and theatrical masks<sup>14</sup> are also frequently represented but by far the greater number of Gnathia vases is decorated only with pattern-work — ivy, vine-leaves with bunches of grapes, scrolls, rosettes, sprays, and the like. In the later phases the body of the vase is often ribbed, no doubt in imitation of metallic prototypes, and this brings about considerable modifications to both shape and decoration.





The Melbourne lekythos is of the squat variety, in which the body of the vase, instead of being tall and cylindrical as with the white-ground lekythos, is shorter and broader, with a curving shoulder. This form appears early in the fifth century, and is popular during the second half of that century and throughout the next. The foot is moulded in two degrees, with a reserved band where it joins the body.

Our vase has a white ray-pattern at the neck-join, a palmette surrounded by scroll-work on the shoulder, with a row of yellow pendants beneath it, and, immediately below the design a band of white scroll-work similar to that frequently found as a decorative motif on red-figured vases, and indeed on the hem of the garment worn by the flute-player on the vase itself. The picture is attractively framed between two fruit-trees, the trunk, branches and leaves of which are incised, with the actual fruits shown in added white and yellow. Such trees, more commonly laurel-bushes, are often used to frame the pictures on early Gnathia vases, no doubt adapted from the similar practice in vogue upon smaller red-figured vases like kantharoi<sup>15</sup>. To left is a woman with a two-reeded flute, wearing a long-sleeved robe that reaches down to her ankles; it is light orange in colour, with the fold-lines indicated in a slightly deeper shade; around the top and bottom, and on the cuffs of the sleeves, is a crimson border decorated with scrolls in white. Similar garments are worn by the women who often appear in the *naiskoi* on the large funerary vases of the period<sup>16</sup> and we may assume that they give us a fairly accurate picture of the actual colours. The woman, whose curly golden-brown hair is bound up in a sash tied with white ribbon, from which a small bunch emerges at the back, stands in a relaxed pose, her left hand resting on her hip with the palm outwards, and her right holding the two reeds of the *aulos* or flute, which are painted a deep red, with white dots to represent the holes running down them, and a white ribbon descending from the mouthpiece. She turns her head to the right to look at a small Eros, who stands beside her, naked, clasping a rectangular wooden box, decorated on the outside with simple geometric patterns. He has curly golden hair, again with a small bunch at the back emerging from the narrow sash tied round the head. His wings rise up behind him and the individual feathers are clearly indicated. They are in matt red and yellow, enlivened by white dots, with touches of black in the central area. We might imagine that after her performance the player is about to receive a present from an admirer conveyed to her by Eros in the box which he is holding.

Most of the early Gnathia polychrome vases with figured scenes belong to the Konnakis Group<sup>17</sup>, which takes its name from the inscription on a fragmentary bowl in Taranto<sup>18</sup>, showing a hetaira named Konnakis (Fig. 9) striding along, torch in hand, towards the half-open door of a house. It is a fairly extensive group and includes several vases very similar in shape and style to ours, among which two are particularly close, a squat lekythos in Taranto<sup>19</sup> showing a half-draped woman seated on a folding-stool with a mirror in her right hand, and another in Bowdoin College<sup>20</sup> representing a woman (perhaps a Muse) with a flute in one hand, which rests upon a rocky mass, while the other touches against her hip in precisely the same fashion as on our vase. On both the picture is framed by elaborate floral scrolls. The use of incision for the leaves of the framing trees on the Melbourne vase suggests an early date<sup>21</sup>, since on the later vases they are normally painted in added white, like the figures themselves<sup>22</sup>. The closest parallels in the use of colour (especially the orange for the woman's robe), the posing of the figures, and the pattern-work are to be found on the red-figured vases of the middle of the century, especially in the work of the Varrese Painter and his school, and our vase must therefore be dated no later than c. 350 B.C., and it certainly ranks as one of the best pieces of Gnathia from this period.

#### Footnotes

1

For white-ground vases see in particular:- A. Fairbanks, *Athenian White Lekythoi* (2 vols., New York 1907 and 1914); J. D. Beazley, *Attic White Lekythoi* (= *AWL*; Oxford, 1938); M. Robertson, *Greek Painting* (Skira, 1959), 107 ff. and 137 ff.; Arias, Hirmer, Shefton, *A History of Greek Vase Painting* (Thames and Hudson, 1962). Excellent illustrations will be found in W. Riezler, *Weissgrundige attische Lekythen* (1914) and lists of the painters and their works in Beazley, *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters* (2nd edn., Oxford, 1963 = *ARV<sup>2</sup>*), in which the Achilles Painter is dealt with on pp. 986 ff. Some additions and corrections are made in *Paralipomena* (1971). For the shape and the technique see Richter and Milne, *Shapes and Names of Athenian Vases*, 14–15 and J. V. Noble, *The Techniques of painted Attic pottery*, especially pp. 23–25 and 62.

2

For Gnathia ware see in particular:- Lidia Forti, *La Ceramica di Gnathia* (Naples, 1965); M. Borda, *Ceramiche apule*, 55 ff.; and the articles by T. B. L. Webster and J. R. Green in *Bull. Inst. Class. Stud.* 15, 1968, 1–50, where references to earlier studies are given on p. 1. Addenda to the latter will be found in *BICS* 18, 1971, 30–38. Good publications of Gnathia vases will be found in the *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*, Naples 3 (Anna Rocco) and British Museum 1 (A. H. Smith), and in *Vasi dello stile di Gnathia* (Museo di Lecce) by M. Bernardini.

3

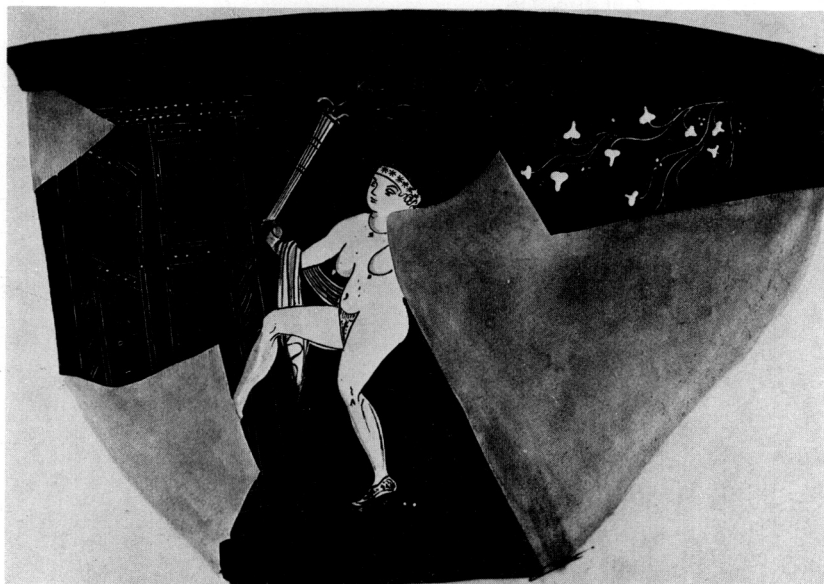
Accession no. D 93/1971. Ht. 35.5 cm (= 13.15/16 ins.); diam. of mouth 6.9 cm. (= 2.11/16 ins.), – of shoulder 11.2 cm. (= 4.7/16 ins.), – of foot 7.8 cm. (= 3.1/16 ins.). Felton Bequest.

4

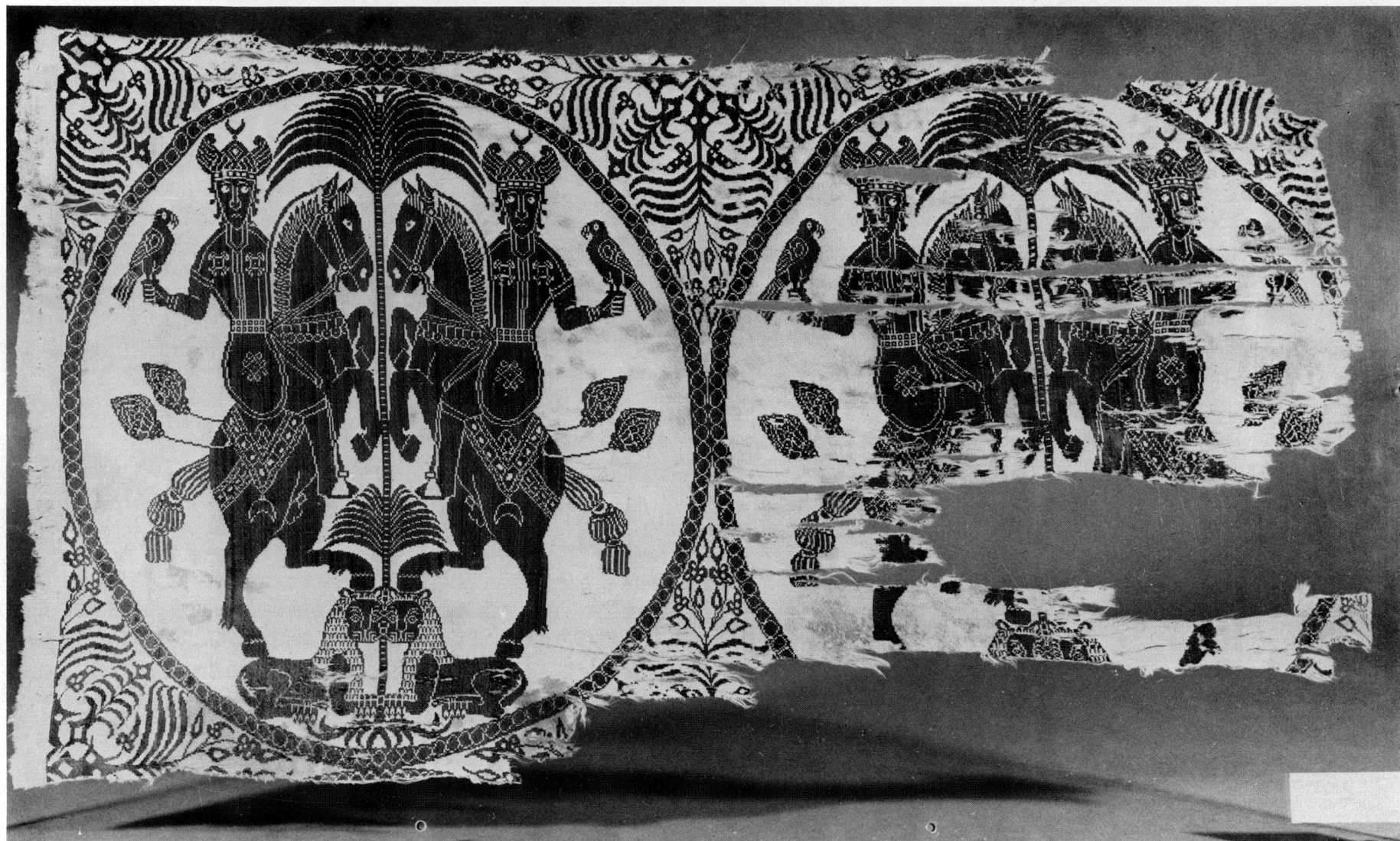
See Kurtz and Boardman, *Greek Burial Customs* (Thames and Hudson, 1971), esp. pp. 102–105.



- 5  
Richter and Milne, *Shapes and Names*, figs. 96–7; Noble, *Techniques*, figs. 146 and 149.
- 6  
Noble, *Techniques*, fig. 150.
- 7  
Beazley, *AWL*, 13–14.
- 8  
*ARV*<sup>2</sup>, 987, no. 1; Arias, Hirmer, Shefton, pl. 188 and colour-plate XL.
- 9  
*ARV*<sup>2</sup>, 1576 and 995–6, nos. 118, 126–7, 130–1.
- 10  
*ARV*<sup>2</sup>, 995 ff.; 1574–5 (Dipilos); 1568 (Axiopeithes); 1586 (Hygiainon); 1594–5 (Lichas).
- 11  
*Greek Painting*, 137.
- 12  
*ARV*<sup>2</sup>, 995, nos. 119, 122 and 126 (with bibliographies).
- 13  
Accession no. D 17/1972. Ht. 23 cm. (= 9.1/16 ins.); diam. of base, 8.5 cm. (= 3.3/4 ins.), – of mouth 5.1 cm. (= 2 ins.). Felton Bequest. I am most grateful to Professor Webster and Dr. Green for giving me their help and advice in regard to this vase.
- 14  
See in particular: Webster, in *Journ. Hell. Stud.* 71, 1951, 222 ff. and in *Antike Kunst* 3, 1960, 30 ff.
- 15  
E.g. Ruvo 1364 (Sichtermann, *Gr. Vasen aus Unteritalien*, K 88, pl. 143, 1).
- 16  
E.g. Taranto 8922 and 8924; Bari 3405.
- 17  
On the Konnakis Group see Webster, *BICS* 15, 1968, 4 ff.
- 18  
Borda, *Ceramiche apule*, pl. 18 (colour); Forti, op. cit., pl. 10 b.
- 19  
Inv. 54745. *CVA*, Taranto 3, pl. 19, 1; Charbonneaux, Martin and Villard, *Hellenistic Art*, fig. 88 (colour). For the shape cf. also Matera 9962.
- 20  
Inv. 15.48. Herbert, *Ancient Art in Bowdoin College*, no. 228; Webster, *JHS*, 71, 1951, 227, fig. 3.
- 21  
Webster, *BICS* 15, 1968, 8–10.
- 22  
Cf. Bari 6701 (Forti, op. cit., pl. 27 d), and other vases listed by Webster (loc. cit.) in his Kf Group, especially a squat lekythos in Taranto (Kf (iii) 3) showing an Eros, not unlike ours, holding a wreath and a phiale with a crimson sash.



9. *Gnathia Bowl, fragment, with figure of Konnakis, Taranto.*





# Silk and Chevaliers

## William Culican

The renaissance of minor arts in Persia under the patronage of the Buyid rulers of the Daylaman province in the tenth century A.D. is a well-known phenomenon depending very largely on some forty or so fragments of silk.<sup>1</sup> It was a renaissance essentially of Sassanian artistic tradition. At the time of the rise of the Buyids to rulership in their north-western provinces of Iran (about 932 A.D.) they had been converted to Islam only a few generations back, and that rather superficially. Instead of expressing the new religious atmosphere, the Buyid craftsmen fell back on the traditions of weaving and metalworking which had flourished under the Sassanians in the Caspian region, evidence of which has recently come to light in undocumented finds of Sassanian silverwork from the Mazanderan and Daylaman regions.<sup>2</sup>

How long and in what forms Sassanian art survived in Caspian provinces under early Islam can only be speculated upon. A 'Post-Sassanian' period has been postulated (though the evidence is meagre) to accommodate certain pieces of silverware which, though strongly Sassanian in tradition, nevertheless show accoutrements and experiments in perspective which are uncharacteristic, or else look plainly decadent.<sup>3</sup> We are on firmer ground when a piece of metalwork of Sassanian derivation carries a Kufic inscription, and firmer still when the inscription attributes a piece to a specific ruler. But without specific names, the lines drawn between 'Post-Sassanian' and the ensuing Buyid and Seljuk styles are faint. With the textiles they cannot yet be clearly pointed up.<sup>4</sup> It is not only the difficulty of style, but also the mobility of the Persian weavers, who are known to have taken their craft to both Baghdad and Byzantium as well as having northern and southern centres (Shiraz) within Iran itself.

A few original Sassanian textile pieces have survived in the Christian reliquaries of Europe: many more survivors woven in Constantinople and the West plainly copy Sassanian patterns as we know them on the clothing of Sassanian royalty depicted on the Taq-i-Bostan relief. Here is represented cloth covered with roundels each containing the *Senmurv* (a purely Sassanian mythical beast) exactly like the *Senmurv* silk in the Vatican Museum and its equivalent in Brussels and Paris.<sup>5</sup> The custom of roundel-decorated cloth goes back to Achaemenian times and can be seen at Persepolis in the reliefs of Artaxerxes' palace. Whilst all surviving securely Sassanian pieces have roundels or medallions with a single animal, there is good reason to believe that, since Achaemenian and Median art favoured antithetical themes, Sassanian weavers employed them also. Quintus Curtius (III, 3) described the cloak of Darius III as having a pattern of two hawks beak-to-beak; and whilst there is no surviving Sassanian example of it, the widespread use of this pattern in both Byzantine and Arab textiles makes it virtually certain that Sassanian weavers transmitted it.<sup>6</sup>

The piece of reversible triple-woven silk recently acquired by the National Gallery (fig. 10) depicts two antithetical horsemen on each side of a palm-tree in medallions: it is thus the heir of a very long general decorative tradition.<sup>7</sup> It has been classified as 'Buyid',<sup>8</sup> and indeed has certain close parallels in design among a group of inscribed silks which are either Buyid or Seljuk. Of this small group, the Melbourne silk is by far the closest to Sassanian iconography. It is either therefore 'Post-Sassanian' or stands at the very beginning of the Buyid artistic resurgence. The chevaliers have the trappings of the many Sassanian royal huntsmen depicted on Sassanian embossed silver bowls.<sup>9</sup> Their mounts are the plump, deep-faced Iranian pony-like horses familiar from both Achaemenian and Sassanian reliefs: no Arab steeds. Their tails are bobbed in Sassanid fashion and their tassels fly up from the saddle-cloth, exactly the formula for the dash and gallop of Sassanian horses. Yet their stirrups cannot have been known until Arabs introduced them from the steppes<sup>10</sup> in the seventh century A.D. Falconry too was an Arab art. It is absent from Sassanian hunting reliefs and was generally unknown in the Pre-Islamic Near East.<sup>11</sup>

The chevaliers wear belted kaftans over trousers and on their heads a simplified version of a type of Sassanian royal crown. The winged crown topped by a crescentic device was worn by a number of the later Sassanian kings – Peroz, Khusrow II, Ardashir III and Yazdagird III.<sup>12</sup> The influence of one of these monarchs on Sassanian iconography – most likely Khusrow II from what we know of his patronage of the arts – established its survival in Buyid art, where, as M. Bahrami has shown in relation to an inscribed medallion of Adud-ad-Daula, it was part of official Buyid regalia.<sup>13</sup> Its stereotype passed far afield: fig. 11 shows the royal falconer on Fatimid glaze-ware from Cairo dated to the twelfth century A.D.

Since the Sassanian crowns were of individual designs peculiar to each monarch, it appears unexpected that regal ideology should permit the doubling of the royal image, especially if, as is possibly the case here, the design was in its prototypical form commemorative of a royal religious ceremony involving the numen of Khusrow II. There is plenty of evidence in European derivatives, however, to suggest the Sassanian origin of the royal 'double', including an eighth century silk in Lyons with doubled Byzantine 'emperors'.<sup>14</sup> And now a Post-Sassanian sample has come

10. *Woven Textile, silk, Persian, 10th century 43.8 x 78.75 cm (17¼ x 31 ins). Purchased. (reverse)*

to light in the form of a silver disk of the greatest significance for the understanding of our silk.<sup>15</sup> Two mounted 'kings', wearing winged crowns with crescent finials (fig. 12) face inwards towards each other, holding up between them the traditional Sassanian coronation circlet. Between them is a seated figure (the recipient of the circlet?) and above them in the field a lion attacks a stag. The flying ribands, quilted and pleated clothing are all Sassanian: the faces of the figures are clearly not; neither is the poor attempt at three-quarter view which contrasts so markedly with the established tradition of side-view relief on almost all Sassanian bowls.

The nearest parallel to our silk is a piece divided between the Textile Museum of the District of Columbia and the Detroit Institute of Arts (formerly Loewi Collection).<sup>16</sup> The figures are in entrelacs, with the design much less simple. It is triple-woven; fig. 13 showing the negative, fig. 14 the positive side. The turbans of the horsemen, the crescentic pendants hanging from the haunch-straps,<sup>17</sup> the scroll-work of the tree-roots and interlaces, especially the quartered hares in the interspaces — all these show the direct influence of Islamic art on the design. This piece has been studied in great detail by Gaston Wiet and others.<sup>18</sup> Wiet ascribed it on grounds of its inscription, which mentions the administrative title 'Ispahbad', to Northern Iran (Tabaristan) in the Buyid Period, arguing on historical grounds for a Buyid origin. The link with the Melbourne silk is not only in layout and the close similarity of the couchant frontally-facing lions at the base of the tree, but also in the curled fronds of the palm-tree itself, which correspond to the curled parallel fronds in the composite vegetal designs in the corners of the Melbourne medallions. This is a small point, but the comparison stands alone in the existing published repertoire of early Islamic textiles. The fact that both silks have a *palm* tree is also significant in view of the rarity of palms in Islamic ornament; indeed, the total absence of even remotely naturalistic ones, as Wiet has pointed out.<sup>19</sup> It appears likely therefore that both silks are derived from a single cartoon-type, the Melbourne silk being closer to the Sassanian prototype, the Columbia-Detroit further removed. In adaptation the dash and vigour of Sassanian horsemanship have been lost. A static and serene decorativeness has taken its place, a toylike quality, but not devoid of meaning.

That such a cartoon existed in Sassanian times can be conjectured on the evidence of reminiscences of it in dated Persian-type silks in the West. The outstanding examples are the two silks once in Berlin's Museum des Kunstgewerbes,<sup>20</sup> the 'Yazdagird silk', probably Persian, and a silk with hunters, which is a western copy. In the former, two figures wearing winged crowns are mounted on Sassanian-type winged griffons. As they gallop towards a central tree, each 'king' attacks a horned lion. At the base of the tree crouch two frontally-facing lions, totally undisturbed by the scene above them.<sup>21</sup> This repeated design is broken by two ibex on each side of a tree. The Huntsman Silk is more complicated: the 'kings' are mounted on winged horses, again of Sassanian design, and grasp the branches of the central tree. In their other hands they hold aloft lion cubs. Below them are two leaping lions, Roman in style, but in the 'heraldic' position of their Persian counterparts beneath the tree. The rest of the lower part of the medallion is occupied by a scene of lions and lions-attacking-stags. It is important to note that the 'kings' have no weapons and are not hunting. Nevertheless this design cannot be separated from a group of equestrian silks in which armed bowmen ('Dioscuri') in mirror image attack lions, which in turn attack cervid animals. On the seventh-century Dioscuri Silk in Maastricht<sup>22</sup> they are disposed on each side of a conventional tree in an apparently protective role. Better known is the eighth-century silk from the shrine of St. Kunibert in Cologne,<sup>23</sup> in which the central tree is a combination of date-palm and vine, protected by two mounted archers, who shoot their arrows at stag-devouring lions. Note here too the miniature beasts at the foot of the tree. Other examples can be quoted, but these are enough to show that the West copied and adapted a design whose layout and meaning were Iranian, and had even retained occasional details of the original Persian trappings. Nor is there need to stress the importance of the tree-with-lions motif in western fabrics: it was current enough in early Islamic art in its own right.<sup>24</sup> But we may draw attention for our immediate purposes to a ninth-century silk<sup>25</sup> (probably Mesopotamian) in which the tree is a naturalistic, tall and slender date-palm (Nancy Museum) and the famous Cape of Count Roger II of Sicily (1133 A.D.) in which tigers attack camels on each side of a date-palm with curled fronds.<sup>26</sup> From Persia itself there is an example (fig. 16) which is said to belong to a group of Buyid silks from Rai, which will be discussed below.<sup>27</sup>

In discussing silks of Iranian origin with kings-and-tree motifs Phyllis Ackerman has related the ritual to the Mazdaean sacred tree (the Goakarena, white haoma, or 'tree of seeds').<sup>28</sup> The point of her discussion was to give a meaning to a silk in the Hobart Moore Memorial Collection, Yale Art Gallery (fig. 18) of which further pieces are now known.<sup>29</sup> Here the chevaliers are mounted on winged elephants. Between them they grasp the forepaws of a rearing lion, facing front. The lion spouts three seeding buds from the head: his tail is divided like the root of a tree. His belly is opened, with a further part of the tree showing through. It is difficult to deny a conceptual fusion of the lion with the tree in this case: Dr. Ackerman is probably correct in supposing that the point of fusion is not only in the general life and strength associations of both lion and 'sacred tree' of the ancient Near East, but more specifically in the links of the haoma-plant with the Sun and the lion in Mithraic mythology. It is important to notice that both the 'kings' and the elephants *grasp* the lion-tree: there is no sense conveyed of 'hunting', even though the motif of a lion attacking a stag is repeated below them. The sense seems to be that traditional grasping of the sacred tree by genii, priests and kings,<sup>30</sup> current in the ancient Near East since at least the second millennium B.C.<sup>31</sup> Together with it goes a more specifically Persian life-renewal motif, the symplegma of the lion attacking the bull or the cervid,

11. *Fatimid Plate Fragment, Cairo Museum.*

12. *Part of the design of a Post-Sassanian silver disk.*

13. *Silk Fragment, Textile Museum of the District of Columbia, Washington.*

14. *Silk Fragment, Detroit Institute of Arts, formerly Loewi Collection 56 x 25.4 cm (22 x 10 ins).*

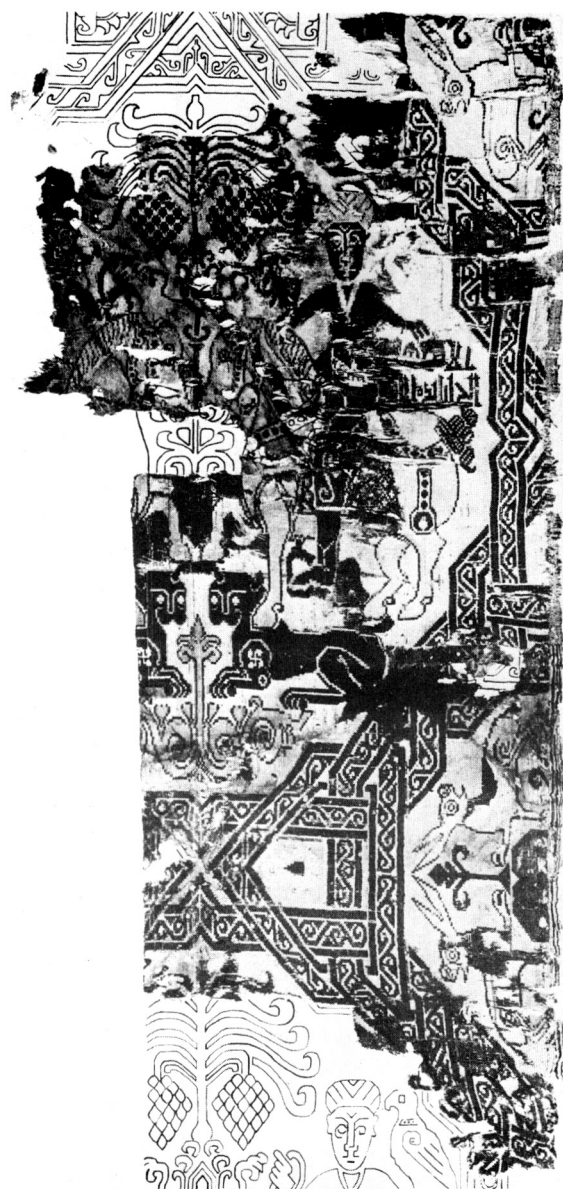




11.



12.



14.

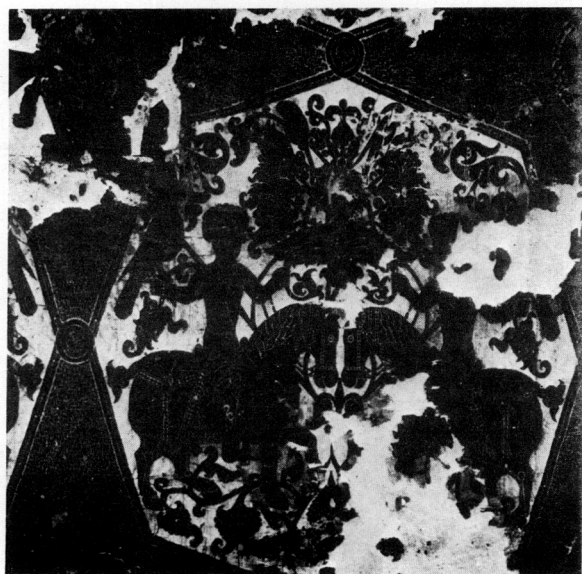
13.



which had been chosen as a royal symbol by the Achaemenian kings at Persepolis and which, as has recently shown, appears to be an astronomical and zodiacal sign related to the date of the spring equinox (the zenith of Leo concurring with the setting of Pleiades (the 'Stag') in Taurus),<sup>32</sup> thus symbolising — in what to European eyes must have been an unsuitable way — the annual renewal of life, the lion despatching the stag. There appears to be little to support Dr. Ackerman's idea that the royal chevaliers are themselves participating in a spring equinoctial ceremony.<sup>33</sup> The Goarkarena does not appear in the Yashts in this role. But we can have little doubt of the juxtaposition of life-renewal motif in the Yale silk, for between the larger diamond shapes of the design appears the age-old Near-Eastern symbol of the ibexes or goats browsing on or sitting beneath the Tree-of-Life. The Sassanians also used this theme;<sup>34</sup> and to the evidence of surviving Sassanian examples we must add the implicit evidence provided by its popularity in late Buyid and Seljuk silks.<sup>35</sup> Whether in fact the Yale silk is Sassanian (as Dr. Ackerman argues) or Post-Sassanian (as in Ghirshman *loc.cit.*) it is impossible to say.<sup>36</sup> We can certainly, however, take it as being very close to Sassanian prototypes.

It appears then that the Byzantine workshop took from Persian cartoons a range of motifs relating to topocosmic renewal, mixed and garbled them. Quite possibly late and Post-Sassanian weavers had also introduced their own degree of confusion. The Royal Huntsmen hunting their lions on the silver Sassanian bowls were turned into the knights-archers of the West and confused with the kingly benefactors of the Sacred tree, its guardian lions and the symplegma symbols, which became not their benisons but their prey. On the whole it is agreed that the motifs chosen to decorate the Sassanian textiles were protective devices conferring blessing by apotropaism or association. The continued and conscious use under Islam of the symbolic animals of Sassanian art (eagles, lions, leopards) has been shown by Karabacek from the Arabic inscriptions woven into Islamic fabrics of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.<sup>37</sup> That is how, in the final analysis, we must see the pattern of the National Gallery silk: the falconers and lions protect and bless the sacred tree of life. It is not, as Schmidt (*loc.cit.*) suggested in discussing the Detroit silk, 'a simple ornamental formula' in which the Iranian lion-strangler has assumed a monumental rigidity upon the backs of couchant lions. Nor yet is it Miss Weibel's contrast between the shining horsemen and the black lions of evil (*loc.cit.* p.113). If the posture of our horsemen is rigid, it is at the same time hieratic. The chevaliers on the Detroit and Washington pieces (figs. 13, 14) also grasp the branches of the tree, as do the curly-haired chevaliers on a little-discussed silk in the Acheroff Collection,<sup>38</sup> (fig. 15) which provides yet a second comparative piece to the theme of the Melbourne silk. It purports to be one of the silks discovered in a dynastic tomb at a hill called Bibi Shahr Banu at Raiy discovered in 1925 (figs. 16, 17). These tombs were looted: consequently there is no guarantee that the pieces fed to collectors at a later date actually all came from this sepulchre, or indeed that all the burials in it were of the same date. Nevertheless, the Bibi Shahr Banu silks collected together by Gaston Wiet in his *Soirées Persanes* (Cairo 1948) posed for the scholarly world the problem of the existence of rich silk manufactories under the Buyids, even though some denied their authenticity or Buyid attribution.<sup>39</sup> The florid style of the Acheroff silk certainly points to a later date than that of the Melbourne silk. If therefore it is Buyid or Seljuk, then there seems ample justification on stylistic grounds to attribute the Melbourne silk to an earlier date either at the beginning of the Buyid period, or indeed to 'Post-Sassanian' weavers of the ninth century, quite possibly working in the provinces or outside Iran.

15. Silk in Acheroff Collection, Wiet no. XXX.



16. Silk from Bidi Shahr Banu, Raiy, Wiet no. II.





The very simple form of the pearled medallions of the National Gallery silks goes back to the Sassanians<sup>40</sup>: all other fabrics attributed to early Islamic times have medallions of far more elaborate design. The wall paintings of Samarra in Iraq provide abundant evidence, however, for the retention of medallions with simple dotted borders by the weavers of folk-textiles in ninth century Mesopotamia.<sup>41</sup>

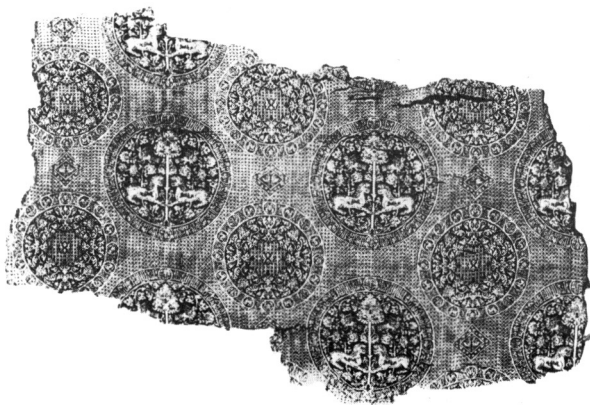
The interstices between the medallions are filled by a floral pattern *à quatre*. It combines, rather incongruously, tight, heavy palm-like elements with slender finial stems bearing leaves and four-petalled flowers. It is thoroughly un-Iranian in design and shares none of the retorted frond and palm-work of Sassanian patterns. The closely-set palm fronds, which recapture the heaviness of the central palm-tree, are more at home in vernacular Abbasid art of the ninth century A.D. in Mesopotamia, which also combines light with heavy elements.<sup>42</sup> The simple florets (roses) together with the heart-shaped leaves and trilobate 'fruits' also were features of ninth century Mesopotamian design.<sup>43</sup> Such simple flowers were popular in the architectural design of the Islamic West where Abbasid influence was strong.

The possibilities seem to be therefore that some Post-Sassanian weavers transferred their art to Baghdad either in the ninth century or perhaps under Adud-ad-Daula in the tenth.<sup>44</sup> When we compare it with the only piece of silk which can be related directly to Sassanian horseman reliefs, a piece said to come from Baku,<sup>45</sup> (fig. 16) and which retains the elaboration and fuss of late Sassanian reliefs, we can appreciate that the costume of the National Gallery chevaliers is closer to the stiff and heavy garments of the Buyids. Had the Baku silk survived beyond a mere fragment, we might also have been able to look to it for a partial parallel in motif, since its chevalier seems to be part of a double composition flanking a tree (of which only the ends of fronds can be seen). Its use of two colours (in contrast to the polychromy of most Sassanian textiles) open style and triple weave also make it an important comparative piece, together with the braided kaftan and wispy hair of the chevalier himself.

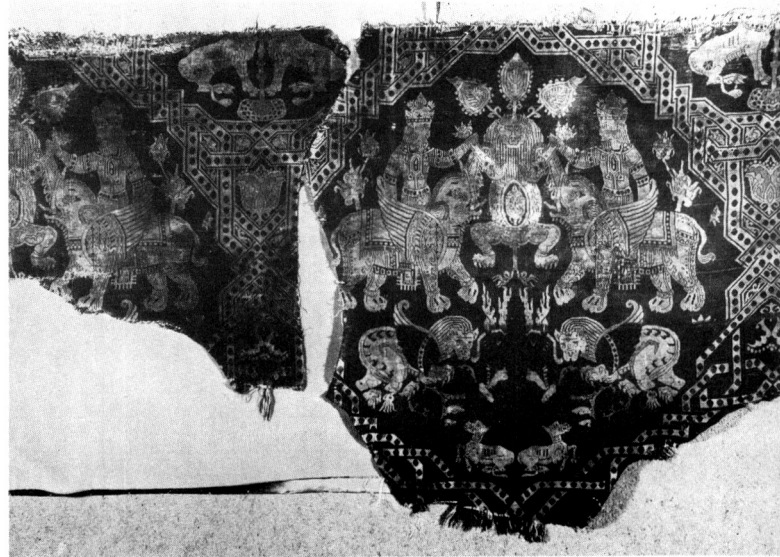
The treatment of the face of the chevalier of the National Gallery piece, the separated short locks of hair, as well as the spade-shaped braided collar, all find their closest parallel in a Buyid silk in the Cleveland Museum (fig. 19) to which reference has already been made.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand this same piece treats the internal folds of the draperies in the same fashion as the Baku silk. The Cleveland silk is said to come from the Bibi Shahr Banu find,<sup>47</sup> and taken together with the Acheroff silk provides the strongest grounds for associating the Melbourne silk with the *range* of silks found there. However, the Baku silk extends the date of certain elements of this range backwards, perhaps a century. Thus the Buyid origin of the Gallery silk cannot be forced.

Some of these elements of design bring yet another recently discovered silk into the discussion (fig. 20), a well-preserved narrow strip in the Dolores Selikowitz collection,<sup>48</sup> attributed to the twelfth century. Even to this late date (if it is correct) extends the influence of Sassanian cartoons, especially in the purely Sassanian hair-style of the placid falconers. It is a grave-cloth inscribed 'My god, all in Thee is generosity and mercy, whilst I am full of sin: be merciful to me'. And that same hope of life renewed in Paradise is surely that which symbolically covered him who took our chevaliers to his grave. More specifically there might exist behind the original iconography a hope of life renewed in *Mithras*. Certainly there is nothing parallel to the design of our silk in the copious iconography of

17. *Silk with lions at tree, Bibi Shahr Banu, Wiet, pl. XV.*



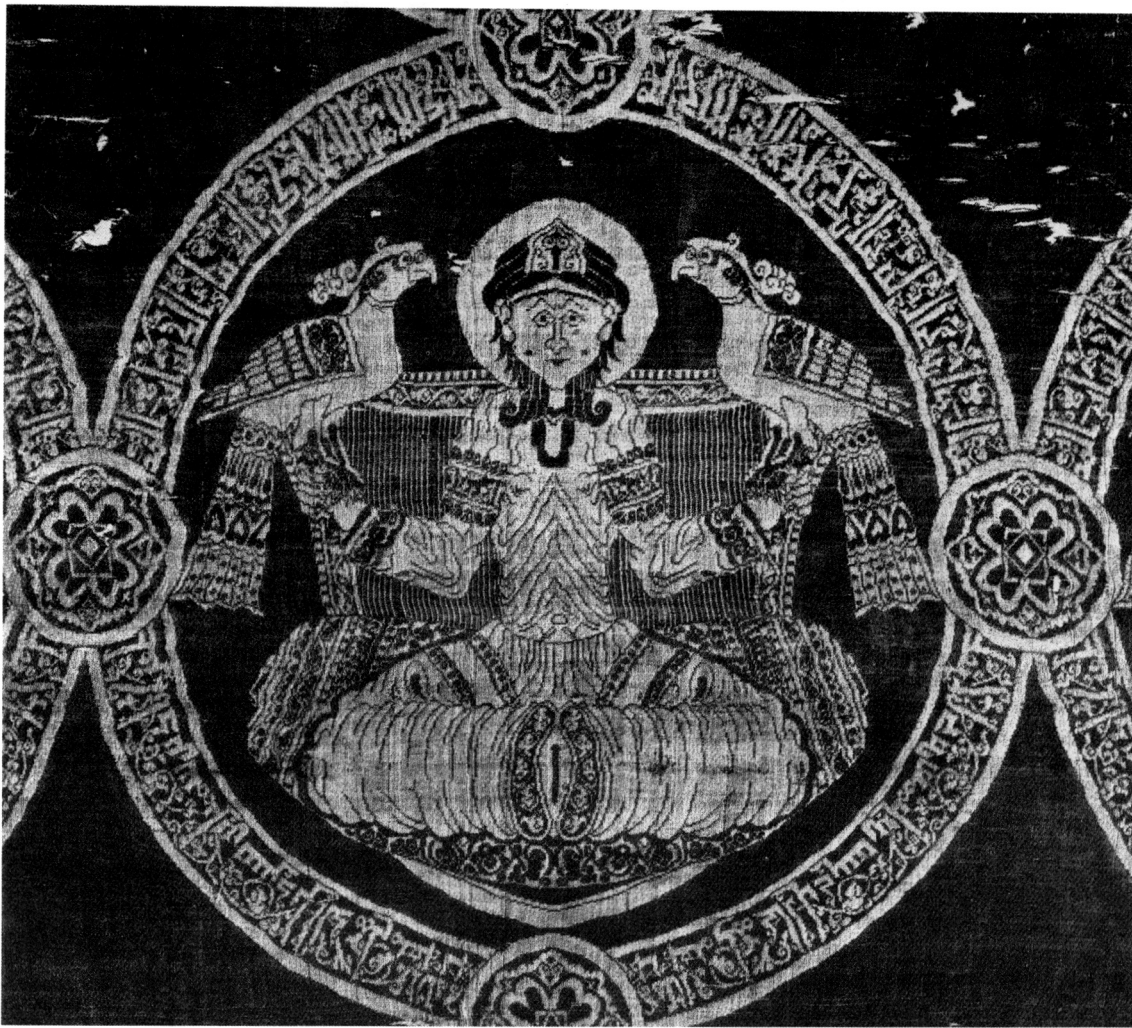
18. *Two pieces of compound twill, Yale University Art Gallery, The Hobart Moore Memorial Collection, gift of Mrs. William H. Moore. Persia ca. 630 A.D.*



Mithraism in Europe. At the same time we must bear in mind that the iconography of Mithraism in its oriental homelands is unknown to us. A case has been made out that in the simple symbolism of Zoroastrian mythology the animal and vegetal equivalents of Mithras are the lion and the palm tree (parallel to the bull and cypress of Ahura Mazda), that he is the young prince, further associated with sun, gold, soil and fire.<sup>49</sup> The suggestion that the horsemen of 'hunter' silks draw on Mithraic iconography is not a new one: Iranian iconographic and, more important, literary sources supporting it are lacking. It should certainly be mentioned as one of the possible further dimensions in which our silk is to be understood.

#### Footnotes

- 1  
Though brief, the fullest overall treatment of Buyid art is in Ernst Kühnel's article, 'Die Kunst Persiens unter den Buyiden', *Zeitschrift d. Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 106, 1956, pp. 78–91.
- 2  
R. Ghirshman, *Iran; Parthians and Sassanians*, 1926, p. 268.
- 3  
e.g. A. U. Pope (ed.), *A Survey of Persian Art*, pls. 217, 218.
- 4  
P. Ackerman, 'Textiles through the Sassanian Period' in Pope, *Survey*, Vol. I gives the most detailed analysis.
- 5  
E. Porada, *Ancient Iran, the Art of the Pre-Islamic Times*, London 1965, pl. 59.
- 6  
F. E. Day suggests, however, *loc.cit.* note 16, that the technical difficulties were solved by the Abbasid weavers in Mesopotamia.
- 7  
Accession no. D204/1971, size: maximum measurement: W. 31 in (78.7 cm.). H. 17¼ in (43.8 cm.).  
The colours are creamy white and a deep purplish brown. Mr. John Beckwith has described it as an early diasper weave, 3/1 twill ground; 1/2 twill pattern. 1M warp, every 5th main warp tying the pattern; 2 wefts S, natural or white; pattern wefts S, natural or white and brown. I am grateful to Miss Marion Fletcher, Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts in the National Gallery for helping me with these details.
- 8  
It was exhibited at the Geneva exhibition, *Trésors de l'Iran Ancien*, catal. no. 814 (Musée Rath 1966) when in a private collection. R. Ghirshman, *Iran; Parthians and Sassanians*, 1962, fig. 288, shows another piece of this same silk in the Rabenou Collection, New York. He dates it tenth–eleventh century with a question mark.
- 9  
The bowls with royal hunters with few exceptions show the king's head in side view: the exceptions attempt a three-quarter view. Our horsemen derive from late stucco panels of the 'frozen style' as in R. N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, 1963, Pls. 98–100, in which the head faces front.
- 10  
On the problem of the date and origin of stirrups see A. D. H. Bivar 'The Stirrup and its Origins', *Oriental Art*, I, 1955, pp. 61–65, where its absence from Sassanian representations is stressed. It appears on silver dishes of probable Buyid date, Pope, *Survey*, IV, pl. 218. On the horse-type see Mary Aitken Littauer, 'The Figured Evidence for a Small Persian Pony' *Iraq*, XXXIII, 1, 1971, pp. 24–30.
- 11  
See G. Wiet, *loc.cit.* note 18, p. 175. Besides examples quoted here, tame hawks appear flanking the throne of a Buyid queen on a silk in Cleveland, *Bulletin Cleveland Mus. of Art*, Sept. 1966, no. 130.
- 12  
E. Herzfeld, 'Khusraw II Krone: Al-Tadj al-Kabir', *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, IX, 2, 1938 p. 101 ff.  
The winged crown probably also worn by Hormuzd V, K. Erdmann, 'Die Entwicklung der Sassanidischen Krone' *Ars Islamica*, 16, 1968, p. 87 ff (a revision of Herzfeld).
- 13  
M. Bahrani 'A Gold Medal in the Freer Gallery of Art' *Archaeologia Orientalia in Memoriam E. Herzfeld*, N.Y. 1952, p. 5 ff, pls. 1–2; also E. Kühnel, *loc.cit.*, p. 85. Quite possibly Adud-ad-Daula revived the Sassanian crown of Persia's last great Sassanid monarch Khusrow II when he took the title Shahan-shah in Baghdad in 953 A.D. to signify the Buyids' claim to sovereignty and autonomy in relation to the Abbasid Caliphate. Cf. W. Madelung, 'The Assumption of the Title Shahan-shah by the Buyids etc.' *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 28, 1969, p. 168 ff. Perhaps the best example of the crown is the silver embossed dish in Leningrad showing the Buyid ruler surrounded by musicians and courtiers, Pope, *Survey*, pl. 208 A; Orbeli-Tréver, *Orfèvrerie sassanide*, Moscow-Leningrad 1935, pl. 18; also J. Beckwith, *Caskets from Cordoba*, Vict. and Albert Mus. 1960, p. 21.
- 14  
Musée Historique des Tissus; illustrated in colour, J. Hubert *et.al.*, *Europe in the Dark Ages*, 1967, fig. 169.
- 15  
Musée Rath, Geneva, *Trésors de l'Iran Ancien*, Exhibition Catalogue, 1966 no. 808. For the continuation of Sassanian investiture scenes into early Islamic art in Iran, cf. the silver bowl said to be from Rashi, Gilan, illustrated by R. Ettinghausen, 'The Case for Traditionalism in Iranian Art', *Forschungen zur Kunst Asiens In Memoriam Kurt Erdmann*, Istanbul 1969, p. 97, fig. 11.
- 16  
Illustrated in colour by A. C. Weibel, *Two Thousand Years of Textiles*, Pantheon, 1952, fig. 112, taken to be Seljuk, as also by the important review of this work by F. E. Day, *Ars Orientalis*, I, 1954, p. 242.



19. Buyid silk, Cleveland Museum of Art, 66. 23.

17

These crescentic haunch-pendants are seen in Raiy pottery of the twelfth century, e.g. A. Lane, *Early Islamic Pottery*, pl. 52 C. The vertical haunch-strap first makes its appearance in the Post-Sassanian silver dish in Leningrad, illustrated in D. Talbot Rice, *Islamic Art*, 1965, fig. 47, and Pope, *Survey*, pl. 233 B. These crescents do not necessarily have an Islamic connotation.

18

G. Wiet, 'Un tissu musulman du nord de la Perse', *Revue des Arts Asiatiques*, X, 4, Dec. 1936, pp. 173–9; also H. Schmidt, 'Persian Silks', *Burlington Mag.* LVII, Dec. 1930, p. 290, pl. III A. There is a third small fragment in the Columbia District Mus. Catal. no. 3.253. It was illustrated also by Ackerman, *loc.cit.*, note 28, who derives its motif from Khusrow I – without explanation. See also *Woven Treasures of Persian Art*, Exhibition Los Angeles County Museum 1959, no. 5, p. 27.

19

*Loc.cit.*, p. 175.

20

O. von Falke, *Decorative Silks*, New York. 1922, pls. 68, 69.

21

Two miniature figures lean out of the tree in a manner reminiscent of the dual twins 'born' from the shoulders of the sky-god in prehistoric Iranian art, see W. Culican, *The Medes and Persians*, 1965, p. 34.

22

von Falke, pl. 44.

23

von Falke, p. 10, fig. 54.

24

Cf. Seljuk examples, Tamara Talbot Rice, *The Seljuks*, pls. 52, 64.

25

von Falke, pl. 103, no. 103. See also fig. 165, no. 168.

26

G. Migeon, *Les Arts du Tissu*, 1909, pp. 54 ff.





27.  
G. Wiet, *Soireries Persanes*, Cairo 1948, p. 78, pl. XV.
- 28  
P. Ackerman, 'An Unpublished Sassanian Silk', *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute of America*, Dec. 1946 pp. 42–50.
- 29  
Put together by Ghirshman, *op.cit.*, on pl. 290.
- 30  
eg. Ward, *Cylinder Seals*, figs. 680 ff.
- 31  
G. Lechler, 'The Tree of Life in European and Islamic Cultures', *Ars Islamica*, 5, 1968 pp. 369–416. On the lion association *ibid.*, p. 389.
- 32  
W. Hartner, 'The Earliest History of the Constellations of the Near East and the Lion-Bull Combat' *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, XXIV, 1965, 1–2, pp. 1–16.
- 33  
Cf. also her views in 'Persian Textiles, Three Significant Masterpieces' *Ciba Review*, 98, 1953, pp. 3521–4. Cf. J. A. MacCulloch and G. F. Moore (eds.) *The Mythology of All Races*, Boston 1932, VI, pp. 265, 281.
- 34  
E. Porada, *op.cit.*, pl. 58.
- 35  
eg. Cleveland Mus. of Art piece illustrated by Kühnel, *loc.cit.*, fig. 20.
- 36  
An especially Sassanian motif is the riding *astride* elephants as in Taq-i-Bostan reliefs, R. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, fig. 97.
- 37  
J. Karabacek, *Die Persische Nadelmalerei*, Leipzig, 1881. The contrast of von Falke's 'Animal Salad' is pointed out by G. Lechler, *loc.cit.*
- 38  
G. Wiet, *op.cit.infra*, p. 5, no. 30. The florid structure of the tree on this piece is comparable to that on the silk *ibid.*, pl. XII, and to the Bibi Shahr Banu piece T. 184, 1930 of the Victoria and Albert Mus., on which the tree holds two falcons and is guarded by two lions (dark blue on white).
- 39  
See the review of Wiet by F. E. Day in *Ars Islamica* XV–XVI, 1951, p. 231 ff.
- 40  
e.g. E. Porada *op.cit.*, p. 224, fig. 125.
- 41  
E. Herzfeld *loc.cit.infra*.
- 42  
In general they call to mind some of the loose floral designs of Mesopotamian pottery of the tenth century: for the palms particularly F. Sarre, *Die Keramik von Samarra*, Berlin 1925 pl. VII, 2 (second half ninth century A.D.). Kairouan examples; H. Glück, *Die Kunst des Islam*, Berlin 1925, pl. 404. See also its use of Mesopotamian folk-pottery, G. Reitlinger, 'Unglazed Relief Pottery', *Ars Islamica* XV–XVI, 1968, pp. 11–22.
- 43  
Cf. E. Herzfeld, *Die Malereien von Samarra*, Berlin, 1927, pl. XLIII and on a painted representation of a textile pl. LXIX; also limestone capitals from Madinet az-Zahara, Coroba, built in the tenth century A.D. in Persia the plaster niche paintings of the ninth century A.D. also combine heavy with light floral motifs (including roses) M. Dimand, *A Handbook of Muhammedan Art*, 1947, fig. 12. Naturalistic branches of heart-shaped leaves are painted on a mid-ninth century Mesopotamian bowl in the Victoria and Albert Mus. (C45. 1952) and on a similar bowl, British Mus. 1968. 10–151. There is a possibility that these derive from Sassanian designs used in Mesopotamia, such as the stucco plaques of late sixth century date from Ctesiphon in Berlin, O. Reuther *Ktesiphon*, I, p. 33, n. 35.
- 44  
On the textual evidence for textile manufacture in Baghdad under 'Adud-ad-Daula, cf. R. B. Serjeant, 'Islamic Textiles', *Islamic Art*, IX, 1968, p. 75 ff.
- 45  
Wiet, *Soireries*, no. II.
- 46  
Cf. note 11.
- 47  
Wiet, *Soireries*, pp. 72–78, pl. XV.
- 48  
*Kunstschätze aus Iran*, Exhibition Kunsthhaus Zurich 1962 no. 452. The same inscription occurs on one of the Bibi Shahr Banu pieces, Wiet, *Soireries*, p.187.
- 49  
Cf. Y. Zoka, 'New Light on Achaemenid Religion' Proceedings, *Sixth Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology*, Oxford, 1972 forthcoming.





# Gum-Nut Art Nouveau

## A Suite of Furniture

### By Robert Prenzel

### Terence Lane

Gum-nut Nouveau is the title which has been bestowed upon one of the most fascinating manifestations of the Art Nouveau style in the architecture and applied arts of Australia in the early years of the 20th century. The name is derived from the fruits or seed capsules of the Eucalyptus tree, a genus which occurs all over the continent of Australia in more than five hundred species. Although many other Australian motifs were used during the period, none made such a wide appeal to the popular imagination as the leaves, flowers and fruits of the gum-tree.

At the turn of the century three factors combined to produce the great flowering of the Gum-nut Art Nouveau style: Nationalism; the impact of the English Arts and Crafts Movement; and the wide acceptance of the European Art Nouveau style.

Whilst craftsmen had incorporated Australian motifs into their designs as early as the second quarter of the 19th century, it was not until the latter part of the century – when a more vigorous sense of nationalism began to develop, and when the various colonies started to move rapidly towards federation – that Australians generally came to take a special pride in their flora and fauna, and to delight in seeing them depicted upon their buildings, furniture, pottery, textiles and metalwork.

The early years of the 20th century were perhaps the heyday of Australian nationalism. Federation had been achieved by 1901, and for at least a decade the country exalted in its new-found nationhood. The interest in the Australian flora and fauna became more widespread, and was reinforced, in the field of the decorative arts, by the impact of the English Arts and Crafts Movement. Inside the cover of the first issue of the Melbourne *Arts and Crafts* magazine appeared a list, couched in distinctly Morrisian terms, of the aims or goals of the publishers. Aim No. 6 of that list was the following: “To give greater encouragement to the use of our national material in the equipment of the home, and to show how the native flora and fauna can be adopted to its adornment”.<sup>1</sup> As William Morris and his followers had turned for inspiration to England’s mediaeval past, so Australian craftsmen, lacking any such heritage, were encouraged to look to the indigenous flora and fauna of their country.

Also under the influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement many Australian women had begun to exchange some of the more rarefied hobbies – such as shell work, fish-scale work and fancy embroidery – which had occupied the idle hours of their mothers and grandmothers, for the more invigorating crafts of furniture making and carving, metalwork and art embroidery. In the early years of this century it was considered an accomplishment for a young woman to be able to carve a “spinning” chair or firescreen, or make a beaten-copper glove box.

In Europe by the end of the 19th century the Arts and Crafts Movement had become inextricably linked with the Art Nouveau style: the same union occurred in Australia in the early years of this century – perhaps more easily than in Europe, for the full implications of both styles were very rarely appreciated here.

The bulk of Gum-nut Art Nouveau furniture consisted of small pieces of furniture (chairs, pedestals, occasional tables, wood boxes, bellows, miniature cabinets); accessories (glove and handkerchief boxes, picture and photograph frames); and decorative panels. Most of it was made by amateur lady carvers. But the backbone and vanguard of the movement was a group of professional cabinet-makers and carvers, many of whom had been born and trained in Germany. Of these, Robert Prenzel of Melbourne was undoubtedly one of the greatest, whilst his “Mathias” suite, the subject of this article, must certainly be placed amongst the masterpieces of the Gum-nut Art Nouveau style.

Robert Prenzel was born in Elling, Prussia in 1866. After completing his apprenticeship as a cabinet-maker and carver, he left his native town and toured Europe for some years. In November 1888 he came to Australia to view the great Centennial International Exhibition, then being held in Melbourne’s Exhibition Buildings. The incredible wealth and prosperity of the city at that time – experiencing, barely fifty years after its foundation, the heady delights of a great land and building boom – must have impressed him, for he decided to settle here and establish himself as a furniture-maker. Before going into partnership with a fellow German and cabinet-maker, J. Treede, he worked for a short time as a modeller of terracotta architectural ornaments and fittings.

The partnership of Treede and Prenzel lasted from about 1890 until after 1896. During this period the two men produced cabinet furniture in their highly elaborate version of the German Renaissance and Rococo revival styles, and worked on such major projects as the carving of the ceiling and walls of the west wing of St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Melbourne.

25. Robert Prenzel, *Wash-stand (Mathias suite)* 51 x 42¾ ins. Purchased 1971.



During the 1890's, also, Treede and Prenzel worked together for Nunan Bros., one of the city's largest and most prestigious furniture showrooms. It seems that Treede's position at Nunan Bros. was primarily as designer, and that Prenzel was responsible for translating his elaborate designs into drawing-room furniture and other luxury items. Both men obviously delighted in the use of lavish ornament, and their work at this time featured formalized leaf motifs, griffins and grotesque masks.

In the late 1890's the partnership of Treede and Prenzel was dissolved, and by 1901 Prenzel had set himself up in his own business at No. 4 Sturt Street, South Melbourne. Between 1904 and 1909 he is listed in directories as "Robert Prenzel, Carver, 7 City Road, South Melbourne". Shortly after 1910 he again moved, this time to the corner of Toorak Road and Punt Road, South Yarra — an address which he retained until c. 1930, when he transferred his business to a studio he had built some years previously in the grounds of his house at Black Rock. He died at Black Rock in July 1941, at the age of 74 years.

Prenzel was a prolific craftsman, and during his long working life produced great quantities of cabinet furniture — much of it in the Gum-nut Art Nouveau style.<sup>2</sup> In addition to this he specialized in making church furniture and fittings, and many of the churches of Victoria possess pulpits, lecterns, altars or reredoses of his manufacture. His church furniture, whilst being superbly executed, is generally of less interest than his domestic furniture, and is largely traditional in character and derivative of English or European designs.

The Mathias suite was made in the year 1906, whilst Prenzel was working at City Road, South Melbourne. It was commissioned by a Mrs. Mathias of Montreal after a visit to her sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Black, at their property, "Glenormiston", at Terang, in Victoria's Western District. Mr. & Mrs. Stuart Black were early patrons of Prenzel, and it was probably through them that Mrs. Mathias came in contact with his work. The suite may have been commissioned as a memento of her visit to Australia.

The exact number of pieces which comprised the Mathias suite is a little uncertain at this stage. Prenzel's photograph albums record that a bed, a large wardrobe, a gentleman's wardrobe, a dressing-table and a wash-stand (figs. 22–25) were made in 1906,<sup>3</sup> and that at a later date, and most probably as part of the original commission, another bed (fig. 26) of almost identical design to the first was supplied.<sup>4</sup> Further, in October 1908, Prenzel wrote to Mrs. Mathias to inform her that work on a second dressing-table and wash-stand had been completed, and that these two pieces, together with a tripod table, were now ready for consignment to Montreal.<sup>5</sup>

Shortly before receiving the commission for the Mathias suite Prenzel had made a "waterlily" suite for another client. This, like most bedroom suites of the period, consisted of a bed, a wardrobe, a dressing-table and a wash-stand.<sup>6</sup> But by 1908 the Mathias suite comprised two beds, a large wardrobe, a gentleman's wardrobe, two dressing-tables and two wash-stands — enough furniture, in fact, for two complete bedroom suites. It is not known, however, whether Mrs. Mathias actually divided the pieces in this way.

The Mathias suite is lavishly decorated with Australian floral and faunal motifs. (Appendices 1, 2) All of the most famous of the curious animals which inhabit this continent — the kangaroo, koala and platypus — are depicted, together with the lesser-known sugar or squirrel glider and cuscus of northern Australia (and, on the wash-stand and dressing-table of 1908, the Tasmanian devil, the wombat, and the Tasmanian wolf). From amongst the Australian birds, the emu, the cassowary, the lyrebird, the sulphur-crested cockatoo and the Major Mitchell cockatoo were chosen. These were depicted, like the rest of the fauna, with flora appropriate to their habitats. Some obvious discrepancies resulted, however, from Prenzel's practice of pairing the floral panels, and the koala of the dressing-table is shown perching rather improbably on a hakea branch — a shrub which it is not known to frequent, but which is one of the favourite haunts of the Major Mitchell cockatoo depicted on the companion panel.

Regarding the "iconography" of the Mathias suite, it can be presumed that Mrs. Mathias either stipulated or suggested what motifs were to be used for the decoration of the first six pieces of the suite. The letter of 1908, however, indicates that the choice of motifs for the second dressing-chest and wash-stand was left almost entirely to Prenzel himself.<sup>7</sup> Although isolated Australian motifs had appeared on his furniture as early as 1901<sup>8</sup>, a display of Australian animals, birds, plants, trees and shrubs as extensive and representative as that which we see carved upon the Mathias suite was certainly unprecedented in his oeuvre. But soon after 1906 Prenzel began to specialize in making this type of furniture, and it is suggested here that Mrs. Mathias' commission constituted the turning point of his career.

Much is now known about Prenzel's actual methods of working: the Prenzel Archives of the National Gallery of Victoria contain albums of photographs of most of his executed works, an early sketchbook, large numbers of working and finished drawings for domestic and church furniture, and a wide selection of printed material ranging from books on the Australian flora to trade catalogues of overseas furniture manufacturers. In addition to this, there is the published account of the visit of the naturalist, Crosbie Morrison, to the craftsman's studio in 1931:

21. *Robert Prenzel, Detail of headboard and footboard of Bed I (Mathias suite) 49.3/8 x 50¼ ins; 41¾ x 50.1/8 ins. Purchased 1971.*



"The library in the studio contains many illustrated books on animals and plants. Cuttings from illustrated papers, albums of photographs, and scientific journals, all aid in the first drawing of the design and are referred to constantly in the course of the work. Figure carvings are completed from living models or plaster casts. When there is not a cast available Mr. Prenzel models one carefully in clay before beginning to work on the wood . . . "9

The animals and birds which Prenzel carved upon the Mathias suite show little trace of stylization, and were most probably derived fairly directly from printed or photographic sources, reinforced, wherever possible, by actual field observation. Much more interesting, however, is his treatment of the Australian flora. Soon after building his house at Black Rock in c. 1903, Prenzel had planted its grounds with wildflowers, shrubs and trees from all over the continent. Crosbie Morrison saw the remnants of this garden — one of the first of its kind to be established by a private person in this state — when he visited Prenzel in 1931. He recorded his impressions of it in his article on Prenzel in the *Argus*: "A straggling garden, in which may be seen specimens of many rare and beautiful Australian shrubs and wildflowers . . . On the way up the garden path I passed a rare acacia and a New South Wales waratah, struggling for life in this unaccustomed latitude. Ahead was a magnificent flowering gum . . . "10

Prenzel is also known to have been a close friend of the botanist P. R. H. St. John (1872-1944) of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens and to have exchanged with him seeds of rare Australian plants and trees. Another indication of the level of his interest in this subject are the numerous sketches which he made of Australian flowers. These were obviously drawn from nature, and are all clearly labelled with the scientific names of the species depicted.<sup>11</sup>

Prenzel's thorough knowledge of the Australian flora served him well when he came to make designs for the various panels which decorate the Mathias suite. Although many of the leaves, flowers and fruits selected must have seemed, initially, quite unamenable to such treatment, he managed to dispose them into delightfully ingenious Art Nouveau patterns. At the same time he maintained such a high level of scientific accuracy that most of the motifs are identifiable down to species level today. (Appendix 1) He also showed a real awareness and understanding of the art of botanical draughtsmanship: his forms are disposed upon the panel with utter clarity; and in several cases — as, for example, in the depiction of the Southern Blue Gum (fig. 21) — his inclusion of the leaves, buds, flowers and fruits of a species makes positive identification possible.

But the liberties he took with the Australian flora are also notable. The exigencies of pattern-making were probably responsible for his highly stylized depictions of the Queensland black bean tree on the large wardrobe (fig. 22) and the Queensland fire-wheel tree on the gentleman's wardrobe (fig. 23). In both cases he grafted leaf sprays onto



22. Robert Prenzel, *Large Wardrobe (Mathias suite)*  
87¾ x 91¾ ins. Purchased 1971.

slender, elongated trunks which are quite atypical of the species. The technical limitations of his medium were probably responsible for his failure to depict the spectacular and distinctive, but very intricate, flowers of the latter tree.

In later years Prenzel was to make a series of highly realistic portraits of members of the aboriginal races of Australia. Carved with great technical virtuosity, these portrait panels were very much admired and eagerly sought after by his contemporaries. The presence on the pediment of the wash-stand of the Mathias suite (fig. 25) of a trophy of aboriginal weapons is an early indication of this interest. The weapons — a boomerang, bulbous-headed club, parrying shield, halfted axe, double-barbed spear and single-barbed spear — are clearly identifiable as being of Victorian origin.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the trophy of weapons, the aboriginal words “Kuumpeenyang-o” and “Kuumbee-an” are carved upon the headboards of the two beds (figs. 21, 26). The first word had been recorded in Dawson’s *Australian Aborigines* (1881)<sup>13</sup> as meaning “good night” in the language of the Chaap wuorong tribe of south western Victoria<sup>14</sup> — the very area in which “Glenormiston”, the property of Mrs. Mathias’ sister and brother-in-law, was located. It has been pointed out, however, that the literal translation of this word is “we’ll go to sleep”, whilst that of the second, “Kuumbee-an”, is “I’d like to go to sleep”.<sup>15</sup> While Prenzel was obviously aware of these shades of meaning, it seems that in both cases he intended Dawson’s loose, non-literal reading. The inscription “good night” appears in English on the headboard of a bed which he made shortly before receiving the Mathias commission, and is completely in character with the homely sentiments which he carved upon the backs of three hall settees he made at that time: “Salve”, “Welcome” and “East and West, Home is Best”.<sup>16</sup>

Coupled with Prenzel’s fascination with the Australian flora and fauna was his interest in the indigenous timbers of this country. The predominance of European, especially English, furniture styles in Australia right throughout the 19th century had done little to promote the use of the country’s native timbers. Neither had it stimulated the growth of indigenous furniture styles. Although cedar and blackwood had come into use in the early years of the settlement, the other Australian timbers had been very much neglected and confined to only local or isolated usage. Even cedar and blackwood and the few other woods, such as Huon-pine, which Australian cabinet-makers used in considerable quantities, owed much of their popularity to their marked similarity to certain well-known European and American woods: Australian cedar, carefully selected and properly treated, is often visually indistinguishable from good quality and finely-figured mahogany; blackwood resembles, and is often confused with, European walnut; and Huon-pine is sometimes similar in appearance to bird’s-eye maple. But even these resemblances had failed to prevent the wholesale destruction of great stands of superb cabinet timbers for such menial purposes as firewood and fencing. The virtual razing of the ancient cedar forests of New South Wales during the 19th century is one of the most scandalous and shameful events in the history of the Australian timber industry.

Australian woods were considered to be inferior to the foreign timbers which were imported into the country in enormous quantities — a situation which the poor processing and incomplete seasoning of the former did little to change. Furthermore, the great amount of research which had been carried out since the middle of the 19th century by herbaria, technological museums and other related public institutions had been of only limited practical value. The fruits of the labours of these institutions had been exhibited overseas as early as 1851 (at the Great International Exhibition, London), and had been prominently featured at most of the International and Inter-colonial Exhibitions which were held in Australia in the second half of the 19th century. These efforts were, it seems, primarily contributions to the great bodies of encyclopedic knowledge which the Victorian age delighted in assembling.

It was, therefore, against ignorance and disinterest — often coupled with a prejudice against all things Australian — that a few cabinet-makers, timber experts and nationalists fought at the end of the 19th century in their campaign for the popularization and appreciation of Australian timbers. The importance of nationalism must be stressed here, for in the years immediately preceding and following the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia, nationalism was one of the first sentiments to which writers on Australian timbers appealed. This appeal was invariably reinforced by a demonstration of the economic disadvantages of importing foreign timbers when their near equivalents or superiors were readily available here.

Also important in this context was the impact of the English Arts and Crafts Movement upon Australian craftsmen. As William Morris and his followers had turned to the native timbers of England, so the Melbourne *Arts and Crafts* magazine, in a feature article on the Australian timbers in its first issue, encouraged Australian craftsmen to use their own indigenous woods.<sup>17</sup>

Very soon after his arrival in Australia Robert Prenzel seems to have discovered the beauty and excellence of Australian timbers. The first issue of *Arts and Crafts* illustrated a red gum frame by Treede and Prenzel, made in or before 1895.<sup>18</sup> Throughout his long career as a cabinet-maker Prenzel used, apart from the more familiar cedar and blackwood, such lesser-known woods as jarrah, Queensland rosewood, Queensland black bean, silky oak,



23. *Gentleman's Wardrobe.*



24. *Dressing Table.*



mountain ash and pittosporum. He did much to remove or mollify the very strong prejudices against these woods as cabinet timbers. It appears, in fact, that most of his domestic furniture after about 1905 was made from Australian timbers. For his church furniture, however, he continued to use imported oak.

Prenzel's obvious enthusiasm for Australian timbers is recorded in the letter which he wrote to Mrs. Mathias regarding his intended visit to "the wildest part of East Gippsland":

*"I have studied our Australian timbers for several years (and am convinced that we have) some of the finest timbers in the world here – but altogether neglected."*<sup>19</sup> The purpose of his visit was to investigate the possibility of setting up a saw mill which would make the timbers of the area available to cabinet-makers and carpenters. Prenzel had hoped to do this with the financial assistance of "some wealthy gentlemen" of his acquaintance, but, through lack of governmental co-operation, the project came to nothing.

The timber selected by Prenzel for the Mathias suite was Queensland black bean<sup>20</sup> – a most interesting choice for a cabinet-maker working in Melbourne in the early years of this century to have made, and one which is indicative of Prenzel's wide knowledge of, and belief in, the Australian timbers. Better known in Queensland and New South Wales, in which states stands of it occur naturally, it must have been unfamiliar to most Victorian cabinet-makers at that time. Prenzel might have known Maiden's description and recommendation of it in *The Forest Flora of New South Wales*, a copy of which was amongst the books in his studio library:

*"It is easiest described by stating that it strongly resembles walnut. I have always endeavoured to urge moderation in advocating the claims of colonial timbers, feeling sure that our timbers have received a good deal of harm from indiscriminate praise; but, having kept black bean under observation for a number of years, and having caused large quantities of it to be worked up into various articles, I think very highly of it. I look upon it as scarcely inferior to walnut. People sometimes complain of it that it warps and splits a little, but it does not do this if it receives the seasoning that cabinet woods receive in the northern hemisphere. Let black bean be felled when the sap is down, and given a reasonable amount of seasoning, and I do not hesitate to say that it may be pitted against walnut without disgrace. Black bean is easier to dress than even cedar; in fact, it is almost perfection as regards the ease with which a surface can be got on it. It polishes readily, but the grain is inclined to rise under polish. This timber often shows a beautiful figure; planks which have the figure in bands, like marking of an agate, are really gorgeous."*<sup>21</sup>

The enthusiasm which Maiden and Prenzel obviously shared for the timber of the black bean tree has been vindicated by the fine condition and lasting beauty of the Mathias suite today – after exposure to the rigours of more than sixty Canadian winters<sup>22</sup> – and by the fact that the wood is now one of Australia's most expensive and highly-prized.

As we have seen, Prenzel completed work on a "waterlily" suite shortly before receiving the commission for the Mathias suite. A comparison of the two suites demonstrates immediately the stylistic unevenness of the latter – an unevenness which is only emphasised by the presence of a multitude of motifs on the Mathias suite. The design of the large wardrobe and wash-stand of the Mathias suite (figs. 22, 25) were, in fact, borrowed from the corresponding pieces in the "waterlily" suite, and differed from them only in the substitution of Australian motifs for the waterlily motif. These two designs show more strongly than any of the other pieces in the suite the impact on Prenzel of the European Art Nouveau style. The treatment of the compartmentalized central section of the wardrobe and the linear fluidity of its pediments, is very French in character, and reminds one a little of the furniture of the great French designer, Louis Majorelle, of Nancy. Prenzel was familiar with the work of Majorelle and of most of the great furniture designers and interior decorators who were working in Europe in c. 1900, for he had in his possession a copy of *Meubles de Style Moderne*, the lavishly produced and profusely illustrated catalogue of the furniture exhibited at the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1900.<sup>23</sup> This exhibition has been recognised as one of the great climaxes of the Art Nouveau style in Europe, and was one for which many of the contributing artists and craftsmen produced some of their finest work. Prenzel's ownership of the catalogue provides a most fascinating link between the European and Australian Art Nouveau styles.

Also definitely Art Nouveau in character are the wash-stand – with its asymmetrical arrangement of cupboard door, drawer and open shelf – and the upper stage of the dressing-table (fig. 24). The gentleman's wardrobe (fig. 23) and the lower stage of the dressing-table, however, show little trace of the style apart from the carved panels which decorate their doors. It is here that we are reminded of an important fact about Australian Art Nouveau furniture: that the style was essentially one of surface decoration, and that only very rarely, except in the oeuvres of Prenzel and a few other masters, was it extended to structural form. Never was Majorelle's superb fluidity of line achieved here, and never, of course, did the society of Edwardian Sydney and Melbourne match in sophistication that of fin-de-siècle Paris.

But in the design of the beds (figs 1, 6) Prenzel excelled himself, arriving at a most interesting solution to the problem of satisfying the demands of surface area and structural form. Here we see the two in complete harmony, with neither intruding upon the other or attracting too much attention to itself. The smaller size of the panels

23. Robert Prenzel, *Gentleman's Wardrobe (Mathias suite)* 69.3/8 x 54 1/4 ins. Purchased 1971.

24. Robert Prenzel, *Dressing-table (Mathias suite)* 68 x 54.1/8 ins. Purchased 1971.

seemed more manageable, too, and did not call for the use of such daring devices as Prenzel had felt obliged to employ in decorating the enormous surfaces of the two wardrobes. The twelve designs which he made for the headboards and footboards of the Mathias beds must certainly be numbered amongst his most successful – the paired side or flanking panels, in particular, being little masterpieces of the Gum-nut Art Nouveau style.

The design of the beds also provides a link with the English Arts and Crafts Movement and with A. H. Mackmurdo, one of its leading figures. Mackmurdo had used the prototype of Prenzel's flanking columns as early as 1884 in his highly original design for a desk.<sup>24</sup> The legs of this desk were square in section and sharply tapered towards their very prominent feet. But by the late 19th century Mackmurdo's innovation had been appropriated by such designers as Charles Rennie Mackintosh, and had, in fact, become one of the favourite motifs of British Art Nouveau designers generally. These legs – or columns, as they so often became – were frequently featured in designs for chairs, mantel-pieces and other articles of furniture in the early years of this century. In his design for the Mathias beds Prenzel used them in combination with an interesting arrangement of projecting shelves and supporting brackets.

The stylistic complexity and iconographic richness of the Mathias suite are unparalleled in Prenzel's oeuvre. Although he was to make many other suites and individual items of furniture in the Gum-nut Nouveau style after 1906, none can be assessed without reference to the Mathias suite – his first, most complete and most fascinating essay in this uniquely Australian style.

#### Footnotes

I wish to acknowledge my great debt to Mr. Rudolph Prenzel. The information which he has given me regarding his father's life and work has been invaluable in the preparation of this article.

<sup>1</sup> *Arts and Crafts*. An illustrated Australasian Magazine of Arts, Handicrafts and Sanitation. Vol. 1, No. 1, October, 1895. Although an examination of the manifestations of the Gum-nut Art Nouveau style in painting and the graphic arts is not within the scope of this article, the stylized gum-nut and gum-leaves on the cover of the *Official Catalogue of the First Annual Exhibition of Works*, (Arts and Crafts Society of Victoria, Melbourne, December 1908) should also be noted.

<sup>2</sup> The Art Nouveau style had a long currency in Australia. Prenzel produced designs in the Gum-nut Art Nouveau style as late as the 1920's.

<sup>3</sup> Prenzel Archives, National Gallery of Victoria. *Album No. 1*, May 1901-c.1907, pp. 51–54. An armchair appears in the photograph of the wash-stand. It is possible that one or a pair of these chairs was included in the first consignment of furniture.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. *Album No. 2* (undated) p. 7

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. An undated photograph of the dressing-table is included amongst a group of loose photographs in the Prenzel Archives. The dressing-table, wash-stand and a tripod table (see photograph of dressing-table) are mentioned in a letter from Prenzel to Mrs. Mathias, dated October 26, 1908. I am indebted to Mr. F. David Mathias and Mr. Sy Baron for making copies of this and two other letters from Prenzel to Mrs. Mathias available to me. The original letters are in the possession of Mr. Mark Larratt Smith. A pedestal table with an adjustable top, and two wash-stands (one in the form of a sulphur-crested cockatoo perching on a log, and the other representing an aboriginal mia-mia or camp) were supplied before May 25, 1911. They are referred to in a letter of that date (the third of the above-mentioned letters) and are illustrated in *Album No. 2* of the Prenzel Archives, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. *Album No. 1* pp. 40–41. No photograph of the bed exists. It was probably of brass, and supplied separately.



26. Robert Prenzel, Detail of headboard and footboard of Bed II (Mathias suite).

## Appendix 1

### List of Floral Motifs

I am indebted to Mr. A. B. Court (Senior Botanist, National Herbarium, Melbourne), Mr. S. L. Everist (Director, Queensland Herbarium, Indooroopilly) and Miss. M. A. Todd (Botanist, National Herbarium, Melbourne) for their help and assistance in the preparation of this list.

#### 1. Bed 1 - headboard

left and right panels: *Acacia decurrens* (Black Wattle)  
centre panel: *Banksia serrata* (Saw Banksia)

#### footboard

left and right panels: *Eucalyptus globulus* (Southern Blue Gum, Tasmanian Blue Gum)  
centre panel: *Acacia pycnantha* (Golden Wattle)

#### 2. Large Wardrobe - side sections

pediments and rounded corners: *Telopea speciosissima* (New South Wales Waratah)  
left door (top): *Castanospermum australe* (Black Bean, Moreton Bay Chestnut)  
left door (bottom): *Crinum pedunculatum* or *Doryanthes* species  
right door (top): *Castanospermum australe* (Black Bean, Moreton Bay Chestnut)  
right door (bottom): *Xanthorrhoea* species (Grass Tree)

#### central section

cresting: *Telopea speciosissima* (New South Wales Waratah)  
left and right doors: *Grevillea hilliana* or *Buckinghamia celsissima*

#### 3. Gentleman's Wardrobe

rounded corners: *Telopea speciosissima* (New South Wales Waratah)  
left and right doors: *Stenocarpus sinuatus* (Fire-wheel Tree)

#### 4. Dressing-table - upper stage

side brackets: *Brachychiton acerifolius* (Flame Tree)

#### lower stage

left and right doors: *Hakea* species (*H. laurina*, *H. eriantha* or *H. dactyloides*).

#### 5. Wash-stand - upper stage

pediment: *Eucalyptus ficifolia* (Red-flowering Gum) or *E. calophylla*

#### lower stage

rounded corners: *Telopea speciosissima* (New South Wales Waratah)  
cupboard door: *Cyathea* species (Tree-fern)

#### 6. Bed 2 - headboard

left and right panels: *Pittosporum undulatum* (Sweet Pittosporum)  
centre panel: *Acacia longifolia* (Sydney Golden Wattle)

#### footboard

left and right panels: *Eucalyptus calophylla* or *E. ficifolia* (Red-flowering Gum)  
centre panel - unidentified.

7

Letter from Prenzel to Mrs. Mathias, dated October 26, 1908 (See footnote 5).

8

Prenzel Archives op. cit. *Album No. 1*, p. 2.

Sprays of black wattle, southern blue gum and waratah decorate a pair of bellows made in July, 1901.

9

"An Artist in Wood: The Work of Mr. R. Prenzel" by P. Crosbie Morrison in *The Argus Saturday Camera Supplement*, January 24, 1931, p. 4.

10

Ibid.

11

Prenzel Archives op. cit. *Sketch Book No. 1* (dated 1887, but most of the floral sketches appear to be later).

12

I am grateful to Mr. Alan West (Curator of Anthropology, National Museum of Victoria, Melbourne) for identifying these weapons.

13

Dawson, James. *Australian Aborigines*. (George Robertson, Melbourne, 1881) p. XV1.

14

"Results of the Harvard-Adelaide Universities Anthropological Expedition, 1938-1939. Distribution of Australian Aboriginal Tribes: A Field Survey" by Norman B. Tindale in Royal Society of South Australia, *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia*, Vol. 64, pl. 1, July 26, 1940, (for location of Tjapwurong (Chaap wuurong) tribe). I am indebted to Mr. Alan West for providing this and the preceding reference.

15

I am grateful to Mrs. Louise Hercus for providing literal translations of these two words.

16

Prenzel Archives op. cit. *Album No. 1*, pp. 21, 23, 29, 32, 33 and 44.

17

*Arts and Crafts* op. cit. "Australian Timbers for use in the higher Decorative Artistic work, Cabinet-making, Fittings, Dadoes, etc. with a list of the Genera and Species suitable for Railway, Building, Engineering and Harbour Construction works, etc." by George S. Perrin, F.L.S., F.R.G.S., F.R.H.S. (London), pp. 10-15.



- 18  
Ibid, p. 14
- 19  
Letter from Prenzel to Mrs. Mathias, dated May 25, 1911 (see footnote 5).
- 20  
Castanospermum australe.
- 21  
Maiden, J. H. *The Forest Flora of New South Wales*, (Government Printer, Sydney, 1904) Vol. 1, pt. V111, No. 24, p. 150.
- 22  
A wide crack has appeared in the panel of the left-hand door of the central section of the large wardrobe; joins have opened in the panels of the doors of the gentleman's wardrobe; and there has been some movement of the timbers of the headboards and footboards of the two beds. Otherwise, condition fine.
- 23  
Prenzel Archives op. cit. Schmid, Charles (ed.) *Meubles de Style Moderne*, Exposition Universelle de 1900, Sections Française et Etrangères.
- 24  
Illustrated in many books on the Arts and Crafts Movement, the Art Nouveau Style and 19th century Furniture. See, for example, Aslin, Elizabeth, *Nineteenth Century English Furniture* (Faber and Faber, London, 1962) pl. 99.

## Appendix 2

### List of Faunal Motifs

I am indebted to Miss Joan Dixon (Curator of Vertebrates, National Museum, Melbourne) and Mr. A. R. McEvey (Curator of Birds, National Museum, Melbourne) for their help and assistance in the preparation of this list.

#### 1. Bed 1 - headboard

centre panel: Dacelo gigas (Laughing Kookaburra, Laughing Jackass)

#### footboard

centre panel: Menura novae-hollandiae (Superb Lyrebird)

#### 2. Large Wardrobe - side sections

left door: Casuarius casuarius (Cassowary)

right door: Grus rubicundus (Brolga)

#### central section

left door: probably Petaurus norfolcensis (Squirrel Glider) or P. breviceps (Sugar Glider)

right door: probably Phalanger orientalis (Grey Cuscus or Phalanger)

#### 3. Gentleman's Wardrobe

left door: Dromaius novae-hollandiae (Emu)

right door: Macropus species (Kangaroo)

#### 4. Dressing-table - lower stage

left door: Phascolarctos cinereus (Koala, Native Bear)

right door: Kakatze leadbeateri: (Major Mitchell Cockatoo, Pink Cockatoo)

#### 5. Wash-stand - lower stage

cupboard door: Ornithorhynchus anatinus (Platypus)

#### 6. Bed 2 - headboard

centre panel: Ninox novae - seelandiae (Boobook Owl)

#### footboard

centre panel: Kakatze galerita (White Cockatoo, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo)

## Appendix 3

### Measurements

#### 1. Bed 1 - headboard

Height 49.3/8" (125.4 cm)

Width 50.1/4" (127.6 cm)

Depth 8.5/8" ( 21.9 cm)

#### footboard

Height 41.3/4" (106.1 cm)

Width 50.1/8" (127.3 cm)

Depth 8.1/4" ( 21.0 cm)

length of bed 89" (226.0 cm)

#### 2. Large Wardrobe

Height 87.3/4" (222.9 cm)

Width 91.3/4" (233.0 cm)

Depth 23.1/2" ( 59.7 cm)

#### 3. Gentleman's Wardrobe

Height 69.3/8" (176.2 cm)

Width 54.1/4" (137.8 cm)

Depth 25.1/2" ( 64.8 cm)

#### 4. Dressing-table

Height 68" (172.7 cm)

Width 54.1/8" (137.5 cm)

Depth 21.1/16" ( 53.5 cm)

#### 5. Wash-stand

Height 51" (129.5 cm)

Width 42.3/4" (108.6 cm)

Depth 20.1/2" ( 52.1 cm)

#### 6. Bed 2 (N.B. The feet of this bed have been cut)

##### headboard

Height 53.5/8" (136.2 cm)

Width 49" (124.5 cm)

Depth 8.3/4" ( 22.2 cm)

##### footboard

Height 38.1/2" ( 97.8 cm)

Width 49" (124.5 cm)

Depth 8" ( 20.3 cm)

length of bed 86" (218.4 cm)



# Castlemaine Art Gallery

## History of the Gallery

### Beth Sinclair

By 1973 when additions, at present in the planning stages, are completed the Castlemaine Art Gallery will be eminently suited for the special exhibitions planned to celebrate its sixtieth anniversary which falls in that year.

The Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum was founded in 1913 by an interested group of citizens. From the beginning the Gallery received steady support from artists and art lovers, and pictures given or loaned were housed temporarily until 1931 when a building was erected consisting of a main gallery and two smaller ones, with a basement housing the historical museum. By this time the collection had grown to over 150 pictures.

The cost of the original building (£3,250) was met by a gift of £500 from W. J. Whitchell of Castlemaine and money raised by public subscription.

Between 1931 and 1960 the Gallery received substantial help from legacies from the estates of T. H. McCreery and T. C. Stewart, as well as many smaller legacies and donations, and Sir John Higgins bequeathed his collection of pictures, china, glassware and furniture.

In 1959, with a bequest from Catherine Higgins, sister of Sir John Higgins, and with government assistance on a pound for pound basis, the committee were able to consider the building of extensions costing £16,000. The Presbyterian Church generously made available a small strip of land to give necessary access to the new rooms at the rear. In 1961 the work was completed, doubling the display space. Meldrum & Partners, architects (successors of the original architect Percy Meldrum), were the designers. The original style of the building with overhead natural lighting was maintained. The practical management and care of the building and collection was kept well to the fore and a storeroom equipped with sliding storage racks and work table was incorporated in the new extensions.

The latest additions have been made possible by a generous gift of \$9000 from the S. R. Stoneman Foundation, and once again the government has come to the Gallery's assistance with a grant, this time on a \$2 for \$1 basis. Provision will be made for temporary exhibitions and extra storage space and work areas. The architects are Eggleston, Macdonald and Secomb.

Until 1962 the management of the Gallery had been carried out mainly by voluntary workers. In that year, with a substantial increase in the annual government grant and with the prospect of greater activity, it was both desirable and practicable to appoint a full-time secretary/supervisor, later to become director. A woman was chosen for the position, unusual at that time, but in character with the Gallery's long standing tradition of women always well represented on the committee.

The Gallery has a tradition of benefaction from artists and art patrons, and its collection has been enriched by such famous personalities as Dame Nellie Melba. The Gallery has always specialized in Australian art, with separate displays of oils, watercolours, and prints and drawings, and works by well-known artists from the traditional landscape painting period are a feature of the collection.

The Museum is primarily an historical one concerned with local history and development and is being added to continually.

Annual government and municipal grants, together with subscriptions and donations, enable the Gallery and Museum to open to the public every day in the year except Good Friday and Christmas Day.



# Geelong Art Gallery

## Ken Leveson Pottery

### Katrina Rumley

Whilst we are inclined to think that the word pottery implies useful wares — cups, bowls, plates, tureens — this is only one aspect of the use to which clay has been put but, in fact, the making of articles for domestic use and ceramic sculpture have always been parallel activities for potters. The first articles which man made are likely to have had some figurative connotation but it is true that since the end of the nineteenth century at least we have thought of potters as being the providers of wares which we may use daily with pleasure.

However, in the last few years potters have been concerned to extend these narrow limits and have begun to look again not only at the plastic qualities of their medium, a plasticity which makes it highly appropriate to sculpture, but also to the possibility of combining clay with other materials. It is this latter area into which craftsmen are moving that seems to be almost without precedent.

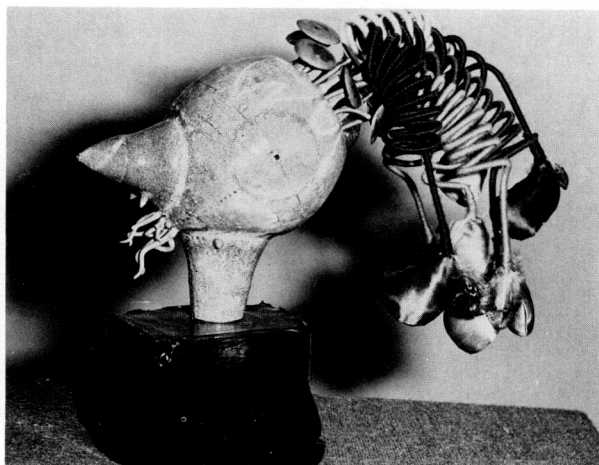
An Invitation Pottery Exhibition — to which twenty-six Victorian potters were invited to send work — held at Geelong this year clearly demonstrated the two vigorous movements in which potters in the state are now engaged.

Epitomising the departure from the idea of the “purposeful pot” were the works by Ken Leveson of which the Geelong Art Gallery purchased “Surface Dwellers 1 and 2” in the series “Fragments from Related Organics” (fig. 30). Employing earthenware, resin, cane, wool and satin, Leveson clearly reveals in his work a competence in the handling of mixed media and tactile awareness in form and surface values. It is surely from his experience in gold and silver-smithing that he obtains a jewel-like effect in these ceramics, in fact metal is often incorporated into his work. The subtle and painterly colourings of ceramic areas are obtained by vegetable and acrylic dyes in a “craze glaze” process, being low fire glaze, fired at 750–800c, but in this case the kiln is set at 1050.

In both versions of the “surface dwellers” the earthenware forms have been set into translucent blocks of resin which give the pieces their elegance and lightness. Traditional pottery making methods have not been disregarded entirely for the wheel was used almost exclusively for ceramic parts, though used as an expediency, not as an end in itself.

Leveson conceives and creates most of his ceramics in series form, particular series having a special concept and story. He regards individual works as being fragments of a story, thus arriving at the title “Fragmented Organics.”

Aged twenty-six, Leveson has studied jewellery and graphics at the Caulfield Institute of Technology and later at the Technical Teachers' College and then pottery at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. He has contributed work to several group shows of pottery and jewellery in private galleries in Melbourne and is represented in private collections in Australia and overseas.



30. Ken Leveson (b. 1945 Australian) *Surface Dweller I*, pottery and mixed media, Geelong Art Gallery.

# Shepparton Art Gallery

## 'The Old Road' by Arthur Streeton

### Keith Rogers

During the years 1889–90 Arthur Streeton painted a number of poetic twilight scenes with the moon in ascendance, with which he anticipated the Heidelberg moonlight paintings of David Davies. These works would seem to have sprung from the artist's admiration for the late, lyrical, feathery paintings by Corot which he knew from reproductions in art journals. Painted in pink and lilac and umber tones on an eccentrically high and narrow canvas, *The Old Road* has affinities with *Twilight Pastoral* of the same year, in the collection of Oliver Streeton.<sup>1</sup> The Shepparton picture is more sketchy however, the forms of the trees being broadly laid in with a dry square brush, relying for effect on harmony of tones and colours rather than on detail. Acquired in 1958 *The Old Road* is the earliest of four works by Arthur Streeton in the Shepparton Collection,<sup>2</sup> the others being *A Venice Sketch*, sepia drawing; *Granite Boulders*, *Mount Buffalo*, oil on canvas, and an untitled watercolour.

<sup>1</sup> Ann Galbally, *Arthur Streeton*, Melbourne 1969, p. 12, pl. 5

<sup>2</sup> acquired at Decoration Co., Nov. 21, 1958, lot 242, as *The Old Road*; re-titled on acquisition by the Shepparton Gallery as *Moonrise Impression*; re-catalogued in recent years under the old title. The work is possibly identical with *The Long Road*, no. 124 in the 9 x 5 *Impressionist Exhibition* of 1889. The picture is signed in red, l.r. *Streeton* 89.



35. *Arthur Streeton (1867–1943 Australian) The Old Road* 24.76 x 10.76 cm (9¾ x 4.3/8 ins), Shepparton Art Gallery.

# News from the National Gallery Society

R. R. Mc Nicoll

The Society's 1971 programme ended with the usual illustrated survey of the year's art, this time by Mr. Laurie Thomas. Events in 1972 have included lectures by Professor Bernard Smith on Dr. John Power's bequest and the Power Collection; by Mr. Alec Clifton-Taylor on 'The English Cathedrals'; by Professor Jamalpur on 'The Spirit of Persian Architecture'; by Mr. Lenton Parr on 20th Century sculpture; by Mr. Robert Hughes on 'Heaven and Hell in Western Art'; and by Professor Trendall on 'Three New Greek Vases'.

The Society's second festival of the arts is planned for October. With the Trustees' permission, this will be called the National Gallery Festival. It is hoped that it can become a two-yearly fixture.

A number of amendments to the 1965 memorandum and articles of association were adopted at a special general meeting on 24 August 1972. The changes included the regularisation of family membership, the introduction of institutional membership for unincorporated bodies, the lowering of the upper age limit for junior membership, and the dropping of the requirement for proposer and seconder of a new member.

It was as a result of the General Secretary's visit to Barcelona that the National Gallery Society of Victoria was appointed to be the Australian Secretariat of the Friends of the World's Museums. The inaugural international congress of this body was held at Barcelona in June 1972. Several members of the Society were at the scene, including Mr. Brian Stonier (Immediate Past President) who presented a brief report on the Australian art Museums and their auxiliary bodies.

The increasing activity of other gallery societies (notably the Art Gallery Society of New South Wales and the Newcastle Gallery Society) and the foundation of several new societies within Victoria prompted the Council to take an initiative towards the formation of a body which could foster exchange of information, reciprocity of membership, and co-operation in arranging activities. The Association of Australian Gallery Societies was founded at a meeting in the Society's rooms on 27 March. The National Gallery Society of Victoria is providing the secretariat for the first year, and the Art Gallery Society of New South Wales will be taking over for the second year.

R. R. McNicoll

**Honorary Secretary**





33. *Salver, silver gilt, Danzig.*  
 34. *Matthäus Merian (1593–1650 German) Abigail before David, engraving (from Meinhold, p. 110).*

# Hamilton Art Gallery: Seventeenth Century German Silver

## Irena Zdanowicz

On his death in 1957 Mr. Herbert Buchanan Shaw of "Kiama", Grassdale via Hamilton, bequeathed his entire collection to the City of Hamilton. This bequest was largely instrumental in the formation and building of the City of Hamilton Art Gallery – opened in 1961 – and formed the basis of that Gallery's collection.

The Shaw Bequest included a number of pieces of plate which form the most interesting and important small group of continental silver in any public collection in Australia.<sup>1</sup>

They had been purchased in 1947 from the auction rooms of Leonard Joel Pty. Ltd., Melbourne, who sold them on behalf of the previous owners, Mr. & Mrs. S. Langer. The Langers had been noted art dealers in Krakow, Poland, where they had been involved in a business collaboration with Antoni Potocki, son of Count Adam Potocki who not only possessed valuable connections with important families but was himself a member of a family who had collected works of art for many generations.<sup>2</sup> It would therefore be quite possible that the two items of plate to be discussed have at some period been in royal collections. However this fact is yet to be verified.

The places of origin of both the Hamilton tankard (figs. 31 and 32) and the salver (fig. 33) lie in the Baltic region of Northern Europe: stylistically they are dissimilar.

The tankard (fig. 31), which is parcel gilt, bears the St. Petersburg hallmarks for 1736 which are struck just below the rim and another two, only partly completed, struck on the edge of the skirting foot. The number N 349, possibly an ancient inventory number is engraved underneath. The arms engraved on the lid are probably those of the Rechenburg family.

The marks which appear on the rim of the foot, not the Russian marks, are the original ones. What is obviously the townmark consists of an architectural detail depicting three pointed towers set on a wall. The shield is rounded at the top but tapers where it follows the contours of the towers. Had the mark been completed, it would appear that the lower part of the shield would have formed a semicircle.

This description corresponds with the mid 17th century townmark of Hamburg as recorded in par. 2348 and 2349 in Rosenberg<sup>3</sup> and No. 4321 as recorded in Beuque.<sup>4</sup> However, the other mark – the mark of the maker – is that which is listed as No. 4909 in Rosenberg<sup>5</sup> and grouped under the Wittenberg heading. Rosenberg himself points out the similarity between the townmarks of these two cities and he is unable to ascribe this maker with certainty to Wittenberg.<sup>5</sup>

It would now appear certain that this unidentified mark belongs to a silversmith who worked in Hamburg not Wittenberg.

The long and narrow cylindrical body is reminiscent of Scandinavian tankards whilst the cartouche which surrounds the oval engraving still has some resemblance to Dutch auricular ornament: grotesque human features are suggested in the bottom section as well as on either side just above the middle where they are cleverly insinuated into the interlocking scrolls. It is, however, the handle which most obviously relates to the auricular style:- the effect being that of wrinkled skin and knob-like growths.

The Hamilton tankard therefore dates from the second half of the 17th century and probably from the earlier part of that half century.

The body is plain except for an engraved scene in an oval cartouche surrounded by interlocked scrolls with a winged cherub's face above (fig. 32). This depicts *Abigail before David* (1 Sam. 25, 2–42) and is based on an engraving by Matthäus Merian (b. Basel 1593, d. 1650) from a set of illustrations of the Old Testament which he executed between 1625–1627,<sup>6</sup> illus. 34.

The engraving as it is depicted on the tankard differs slightly from the original. This is to a large extent due to the more confined space of the vertical oval ground. The illustration by Merian, on the other hand, is horizontally composed. However, the picture is well adapted to metal engraving. Matthäus Merian had worked with Theodor de Bry in Oppenheim and Frankfurt, married one of his daughters and, after de Bry's death, assumed the managing

position of the latter's successful publishing concern.<sup>7</sup> It is quite possible that Merian had assimilated de Bry's skill in metal engraving which could account for the particular suitability of the Old Testament illustration to the depiction on the metal surface of this tankard.

How this tankard eventually found its way to Russia and was additionally stamped is not known. However the varied manoeuvrings of the Northern Wars were possibly instrumental in bringing it there.

Unlike the tankard, the gilt salver (fig. 33) from Hamilton's collection is quite clearly marked. The marks are struck on the outside of the rim on either side of the upper central medallion. They indicate that the piece was made in Danzig by Jakob Beckhausen who, having attained his master goldsmith qualifications in 1678, held the position of Alterman from 1682 to 1705 when he died.<sup>8</sup> Such decorative salvers enjoyed wide popularity throughout Germany and the Baltic states during the 17th century. As in the case of the Hamilton salver, they were made of thin gauge metal. This allowed for an increased ease in embossing and was thus an excellent medium for the display of baroque motifs. The influence of Dutch baroque motifs, which spread even across the Channel to England, is clearly evidenced. Bunched fruit and flowers (including the tulip) – motifs originating in Holland – were widely assimilated into 17th century stylistic vocabulary throughout Northern Europe. Indeed the popularity of embossing in the 17th century owes much to Dutch silver-smiths.

The Hamilton salver has a central embossed oval which depicts Esther before Ahasuerus (Esther 5, 1–2). Esther, crowned, kneels before the King, her outstretched left arm touching the sceptre which Ahasuerus extends to her. Behind her are four kneeling handmaidens. The apparent similarity of this scene with representations of the story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba must be discounted on iconographic grounds. One of the more important aspects of the depiction of the story of Solomon and Sheba is that which refers to her role as the bringer of gifts. These are not shown in the Hamilton salver.<sup>9</sup> Another point which might be contended is that Esther appears crowned. However, other representations of this scene which show Esther wearing a crown are recorded.<sup>10</sup>

The wavy-edged rim which surrounds the biblical scene is embossed with bunches of fruit and flowers alternating with eight circular portrait medallions. The six lateral medallions contain idealised classical busts of emperors while the two medallions of the upper and lower rim bear the portraits of contemporary persons. The lower medallion depicts John III Sobieski (1629–1696) King of Poland from 1674 till his death. He appears characteristically moustached, crowned with a laurel wreath in the apotheosizing manner of the six classical busts, his hair cut short, his shoulders cloaked with fur. The identity of the upper medallion is not as certain, however it is probably that of Augustus II (1670–1733) Elector of Saxony and King of Poland between 1697–1706 and again from 1709. These



31. Tankard, parcel gilt, Hamburg, 2nd half 17th century, h. 21.3 cm (8.3/8 ins). Shaw Bequest, Hamilton Art Gallery.



32. Abigail before David, after Merian, Tankard, detail.



two kings appear in the midst of their classical counterparts and this imagery is further insisted upon by their classicizing costume. It is significant that the elaborately wigged Augustus is the only one who is not crowned with laurels. In this context he may be considered the only living member of the distinguished imperial circle – but one whose apotheosis has not yet been consolidated pictorially.

After John III's death the problems of succession in a kingdom which upheld the principle of elected kings was indeed a great one. However, events following a double election to the throne in 1697 were more favourable to Augustus. Danzig, which supported Augustus, played an important role in the early years of that King's reign. The juxtaposition of these two portrait heads might thus be considered, in part, as an expression of support for Augustus' accession to the throne.<sup>11</sup>

It would therefore indicate that the salver was made between 1697 (the beginning of Augustus' reign) and 1705 (when Jakob Beckhausen died).

The embossing is executed in very high relief. The effect of fullsome baroque plasticity is more marked on the rim due to an emphasis on rounded shapes; luscious fruits, in particular the bursting pomegranates, are executed with more facility than the central scene. It was clearly easier to suggest the effects of Baroque sumptuousness than to depict them.

I gratefully acknowledge the help given me in the writing of this article by Mr. John S. Ashworth, Director, City of Hamilton Art Gallery, Mrs. Carol Bishop, Research Librarian, State Library of Victoria and Colonel A. G. Puttock of Melbourne to whom I am indebted for information concerning the armorials of the tankard.

<sup>1</sup>  
Ref. City of Hamilton – 'Some Continental Porcelain' by John S. Ashworth in the *Annual Bulletin of Victoria* 1969/70, pp 32–33.

<sup>2</sup>  
I am indebted to Mr. John S. Ashworth for this information.

<sup>3</sup>  
Marc Rosenberg, *Der Goldschmiede Merkzeichen*, Frankfurt 1922–28, vol. II, p. 130.

<sup>4</sup>  
Émile Beauque, *Dictionnaire des Poinçons*, Paris 1928, vol. II, p. 128.

<sup>5</sup>  
Marc Rosenberg, *op cit*, vol. III, p. 378.

<sup>6</sup>  
Peter Meinhold (ed.), *Matthäus Merian – Die Bilder zur Bibel*, Hamburg 1965, illus. p. 110.

<sup>7</sup>  
Peter Meinhold, *loc. cit.* introduction.

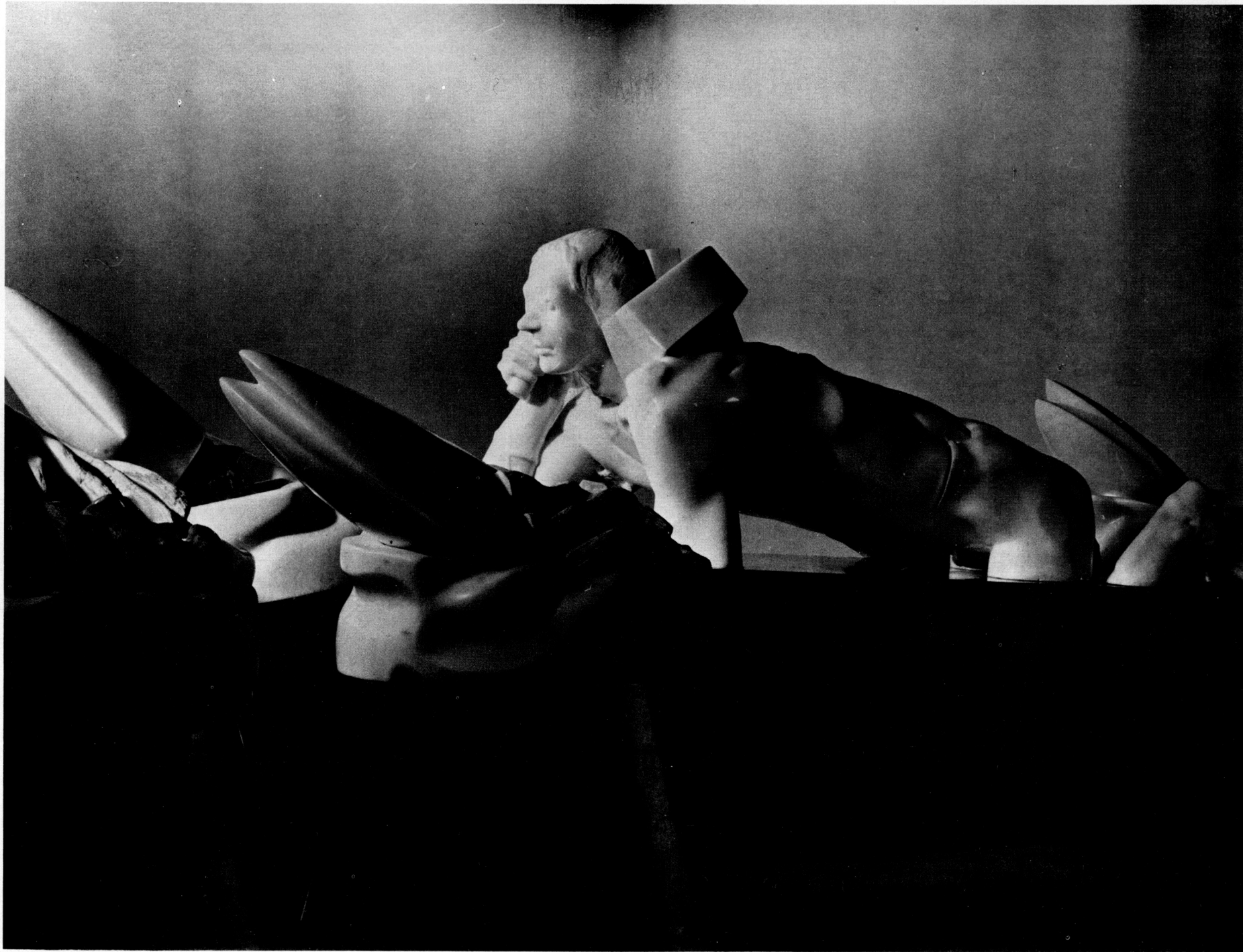
<sup>8</sup>  
Marc Rosenberg, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 10, para. 1571, nos. 1497–1499.

<sup>9</sup>  
E. Alfred Jones, *A Catalogue of the Objects in Gold and Silver and the Limoges Enamels in the Collection of the Baroness James de Rothschild*, London 1912, cf. pl. XLVII.

The central oval section of this salver made in Augsburg in circa 1660 represents the Queen of Sheba kneeling before the enthroned Solomon. The gifts she has brought as offerings figure prominently in this depiction.

<sup>10</sup>  
*Lexikon des Christlichen Ikonographie*, pub. Herder, Germany 1968, vol. 1, column 684.

<sup>11</sup>  
There is no necessary correlation between the embossed scene and the clearly implied connotations of the two portrait heads. Had the upper portrait been identifiable with one of Sobieski's sons, the figure of Esther may have been intended to signify Marie D'Arquien, wife of John III. However, her relations with the French court after Sobieski's death together with Danzig's implicit antagonism toward her plans for the Polish throne rule out this possibility (as well as the possibility of identifying the upper portrait medallion with one of the Sobieski family). In any case, the depiction of biblical and mythological scenes in the centre of salvers was a common practice.



*Ipousteguy. The Death of the Father.*

# Recent Acquisitions 1-

## Bequests and Purchases

### Asian Art

'I', bronze, Chinese, Chou Dynasty 10th century B.C.  
Felton Bequest

Jar from Togari-ishi, Nagano-ken, Central Japan  
fired brown clay, Jomon type pottery,  
Jomon period, c. 200 B.C.  
Purchased

Five Wayung Kulit, Leather puppets, Indonesian  
Purchased

Two Ryokia Mandalas, watercolour on silk,  
Japanese, Muromachi period, late 14th to early  
15th century  
Purchased

Two sixfold Screens, Japanese, by Chokuo Tamura,  
1688–1704, ink and colour  
Purchased

Five Fan Paintings, Chinese, Ink and watercolour  
on paper, late Ching Dynasty  
Purchased

### Australian Painting

Aby Altson (1867 – ?)  
*Contemplation* Oil on canvas  
Purchased

Jon Balsaitis (b. 1948)  
*Metron 2* Acrylic on canvas 10 x 13 ft. 305 x 396.5 cm.  
Purchased

"Metron 2" is the work of the young Melbourne artist  
Jon Balsaitis, who completed his art training by  
attending the Melbourne National Gallery School in 1969.



In this painting lyrical colour and textural surface counterpoint a relationship of spatial depth and reality of illusion. The contrast of the actual surface textures combined with the stippled and bled colour application over an incised linear surface command definite and close attention. By working these techniques into an overall movement of the gradual shadings and tonings of the colour field with the illusionary false perspectives and subtle optical effects a very lyrical and yet powerful work has been produced which successfully unites the distinctive styles and aims of both the Sydney and Melbourne contemporary movements.

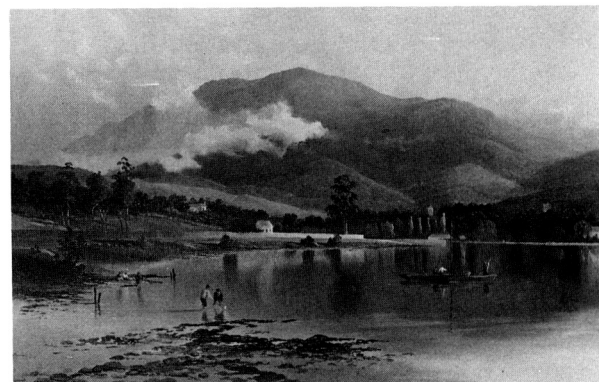
Peter Booth (b. 1940)  
*Untitled* Acrylic on canvas  
Purchased

W.C. Pigenit (1836–1914)  
*Mt. Wellington from New Town Bay, Tasmania 1872*  
Oil on canvas 18¼ x 27¼ ins. 46.4 x 69.2 cm.  
Purchased (Illustrated below)

W.C. Pigenit is the first important Australian born landscape painter. He was born in Hobart, Tasmania in 1836. He worked in the Tasmanian Survey Department from 1849 to 1872 and then joined an artists' and photographers' camp in the Blue Mountains, N.S.W. before settling in Sydney where he died in 1914. Pigenit, Von Guerard and Chevalier are the triumvirate of the Australian romantic landscapists who sought subjects of mountain grandeur and extensive plains, enhanced by the light and shade of misty or brilliant heavens.

"Mt. Wellington from New Town Bay" is a fine example of Pigenit's more serene subjects. Mt. Wellington is enhanced by a veil of cloud and is reflected in the tranquil waters of the Bay. In the centre of the middle ground is seen the grecian temple "folly" built for Lady Franklin.

May Vale (c. 1863 – c. 1939)  
*Spring at Mayfield* Oil on canvas  
Purchased





### Australian Sculpture

David Wilson (b. 1947)

*Untitled sculpture* 12.71 Welded steel and acrylic lacquer  
Purchased

### European Painting before 1800

Annibale Carracci (1560–1609 Italian)

*The Holy Family* Oil on canvas  
Felton Bequest

Daniel Mytens (c. 1590– before 1648 Dutch)

*Sir John Ashburnham* Oil on canvas  
Everard Studley Miller Bequest

### European Sculpture before 1800

Antonio Begarelli (late 15th century – 1565 Italian)

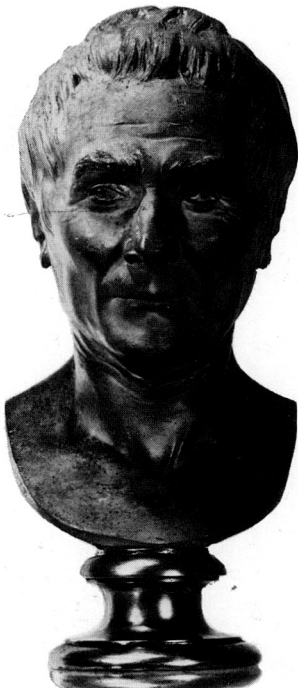
*The Virgin attended by three Holy Women* Terracotta  
Purchased

Jean Antoine Houdon (1741–1828 French)

*Jean Jaques Rousseau* 1778 Plaster bust H. 15½ ins.  
38.7 cm.

Everard Studley Miller Bequest

Houdon was the most celebrated French sculptor of the 18th century and one of the greatest portraitists of all time. His bronze bust of Voltaire, acquired under the Felton Bequest, has been in the collection since 1939. Owing to the Everard Studley Miller Bequest it has been possible to add to it a plaster bust depicting Jean Jacques Rousseau. The high quality plaster was taken in Houdon's studio from the original terracotta and finished by the master himself. It portrays the philosopher *en nudite heroique*. Though made posthumously, from a death mask (taken by Houdon himself), the head conveys with almost uncanny power the nervous sensibility at the core of Rousseau's personality



### European and American Art after 1800

Jean-Robert Ipousteguy (b. 1920 French)

*La Mort du Père* 1967/8 Carrara marble and bronze.  
length: 6 metres (18 ft. 10¼ in.)  
Purchased 1972

Composed of fourteen pieces mounted on pedestals designed for them by the sculptor, *La Mort du Père* (The Death of the Father) is assembled in a manner suggested by the plan of a basilica.

A youthful torso of the son rising, sphinx-like, in the centre, establishes the dominant direction of the group. The tools of the sculptor balanced upon his shoulders, he appears to be interrogating the finely delineated features of the father, while gazing, at the same time, beyond the group of mitres confronting him. Through the various mutations of form realized in the solemn procession of crowned heads, an impression of the passing of time has been conveyed.

This sculptural group was first conceived as a Death of the Pope, but Ipousteguy later expanded his theme by inserting the features of his own father, who died in 1967. (Illustrated on Page 48)

Hugo Demarco (b. 1932 Argentine)

*Relations Transformables* Stainless steel, multiple edition  
34/175 1970  
Purchased

### Prints and Drawings

#### Drawings

Pablo Picasso (b. 1881 Spanish)

*Man with Guitar* 1912/3 Pencil  
Felton Bequest

George Baldessin (b. 1939 Australian)

*Studies for Sculpture* 1964 Pen  
Purchased

George Baldessin (b. 1939 Australian)

*Personage and Window* 1967 Pen  
Purchased

William Dobell (1899–1970 Australian)

*Sketch for Boy with Dog* Pen over pencil  
Purchased

Henri Matisse (1869–1954 French)

*Les Fleurs d'Abricots* 1944, Pen  
Purchased

Auguste Rodin (1840–1917 French)

*Nude with Drapery* 1890 Pencil and watercolour  
Purchased

#### Prints

George Baldessin (b. 1939 Australian)

*Banquet for No Eating No. 2* 1971 Etching and aquatint  
Purchased

J.E. Millais (1829–1896 English)

*The Young Mother* 1857 Etching  
Purchased

Samuel Palmer (1805–1881 English)  
*The Sleeping Shepherd* 1857 Etching  
Purchased

Jan Senbergs (b. 1939 Australian)  
*Incoming Ministers* 1971 Screenprint  
Purchased

Tay Kok Wee (b. 1942 Chinese)  
*Dairy 5* 1968 Woodblock and screenprint  
Purchased

Tay Kok Wee (b. 1942 Chinese)  
*Dairy 8* 1969 Photo etching and screenprint  
Purchased

### Decorative Arts

Squat Lekythos, Earthenware, South Italian (Gnathian),  
c.350–250 B.C.  
Felton Bequest

Tazza, Glass, Italian (Venice), Early 16th century  
Felton Bequest

Goblet, Glass, English, c.1735 with Dutch engraving  
c.1756  
Felton Bequest

### Ceramics

Fish Plate, Earthenware, South Italian (Campanian),  
330–310 B.C.  
Purchased

Bear Jug, Salt-glazed stoneware, English (prob.  
Nottingham), c.1740  
Purchased

Bear jugs such as this were made in Brampton, Chesterfield, Nottingham and Staffordshire in the early part of the eighteenth century and are a reminder of the cruel sport of bear-baiting popular in the countryside. The jugs, which were probably used for beer, are modelled in the form of bears sitting up on their haunches clasp a terrier which has been set to bait it. The detachable head forms a cup and the head of the dog forms the spout. The jugs are salt-glazed stoneware and vary in colour from pale yellowish grey to dark brown and black; the example acquired recently is pale grey and, in common with most jugs of this type, is roughened with applied fragments of clay from the turner's lathe whilst touches of brown slip are used to suggest teeth, eyes, collar and claws.

Bowl, Earthenware, by Alan Caiger-Smith, English,  
1970 or 1971  
Purchased

Dish, Stoneware, by Les Blakebrough, Australian, 1971  
Purchased

Bottle, Stoneware, by Vic Greenaway, Australian, 1971  
Purchased

Vase, Stoneware, by Col Levy, Australian, 1971  
Purchased

### Costume and Textiles

Woven Textile, Silk, Iranian (Buyid Period), 10th–11th  
century  
Purchased

Chasuble, Satin with silk and metal thread, Italian,  
c.1720  
Purchased



This finely embroidered chasuble, Italian, circa 1720, shows features of the late Baroque style in the formality and symmetry of the design and in the use of the spiral columns forming the orphrey. At the same time the trend towards naturalism favoured at the beginning of the eighteenth century is shown in the shading of the flowers, very skilfully worked in polychrome silks.

The architectural framework which includes the c-scrolls terminating in palmettes, is richly worked with gold threads in chevron and twill patterns with the use of plate to highlight the design.

The early eighteenth century was a period of magnificence in church architecture and decoration but the colours used in this vestment give it a feeling of delicacy as well as one of opulence.

Cut in Roman shape, it is made in white satin, and is lined with red silk.

Spencer, Silk, English, c.1820  
Purchased

Evening Dress, Satin and silk, English, 1911–12  
Purchased

Evening Dress, Silk with beads, French or English, 1925–30  
Purchased

Evening Dress, Taffeta, by Jacques Fath, French, 1945  
Purchased

Riding Habit, Twill, by Hermes of Paris, French, 1948  
Purchased

Dress and Apron, Velvet and wool, by Pierre Balmain, French, 1955  
Purchased

Evening Dress, Satin, by Madeline de Rauch, French, 1956  
Purchased

Dress, Silk, by Christian Dior, French, 1958  
Purchased

Hat, Straw, by Christian Dior, French, 1960  
Purchased

Tapestry ('The Red Tree'), Wool, by Charles Blackman, Australian, woven at Manufactura de Tapeçarias de Portalegre, 1971  
Purchased

Dress, Crepe with silk embroidery, designed by Ossie Clark, English, 1972  
Purchased

### Glass

Roemer, Dutch, c.1675  
Purchased

Beaker, German, 1800–1825  
Purchased

### Furniture

Two beds, large Wardrobe, Gentleman's Wardrobe, Wash stand, Dressing table, Queensland Black Bean, by Robert Prentzel (1866–1941), Australian, c.1906  
Purchased

Armchair ('LCI'), Tubular steel and leather, designed by Le Corbusier and Charlotte Perriand, French, 1928  
Purchased

Chaise Longue ('LC4'), Tubular steel and leather, designed by Le Corbusier and Charlotte Perriand, French, 1928  
Purchased

### Metalwork

Fireplace, Cast Iron, English, 1852  
Purchased

Umbrella Stand, Cast Iron, English, 1854  
Purchased

Umbrella Stand, Cast Iron, English, 1880  
Purchased

Pair of Andirons, Door Stop, Fireback, Pair of Garden Urns, Cast Iron, English, 19th century  
Purchased

Stove, Cast Iron, French, 19th century  
Purchased

Bracelet, Silver, by Helge Larsen and Darani Lewers, Australian, 1972  
Purchased

### Ethnic Art

Ceremonial Bowl, Wood, New Guinea (Tami Island), 19th century  
Purchased

Temes Nevinbur Figure, Fibre, bark cloth, tusks, New Hebrides (Malekula Island), prob. contemporary  
Purchased

Shield, Wood, Australian (Murchison River), prob. early 20th century  
Purchased

Woomera and Bull Roarer, Wood, Australian (Kimberleys), prob. early 20th century  
Purchased

Seven Pectorals, Shell and beads, Solomon Islands (Vella Lavella Island), early 20th century  
Purchased

### Photography

J.W. Lindt (b. 1845 Germany, settled in Australia 1862, d. 1926)

*10 Landscape Views*, Fiji and Australia, Sepia bromide

John Cato (b. 1926 Australian)

*Earth Song* Set of 52 nature abstracts in close-up, colour

Stan Ostojka-Kotkowski (b. 1922 Poland, Settled in Australia 1950)

*Inscape 871* 5 large panels, black and white and colour, created from experiments with Laser beams and use of infra-red and optical devices

Mark Strizic (b. 1928 Germany, Settled in Australia 1950)

*Derivations* 4 large colour panels, deriving from the urban environment





Grace Lock (b. 1902 Australian)  
*Various Subjects* 9 black and white

Gernsheim Photo Classics, Folio editions

- I. *Victorian Photography*  
(10 Sepia reproductions of classic photographs 1842–92)
- II. *Werner Bischof* (1916–54 Swiss)  
(10 black and white originals)
- III. *Erich Salomon* (1886–1944 German)  
(10 black and white originals)

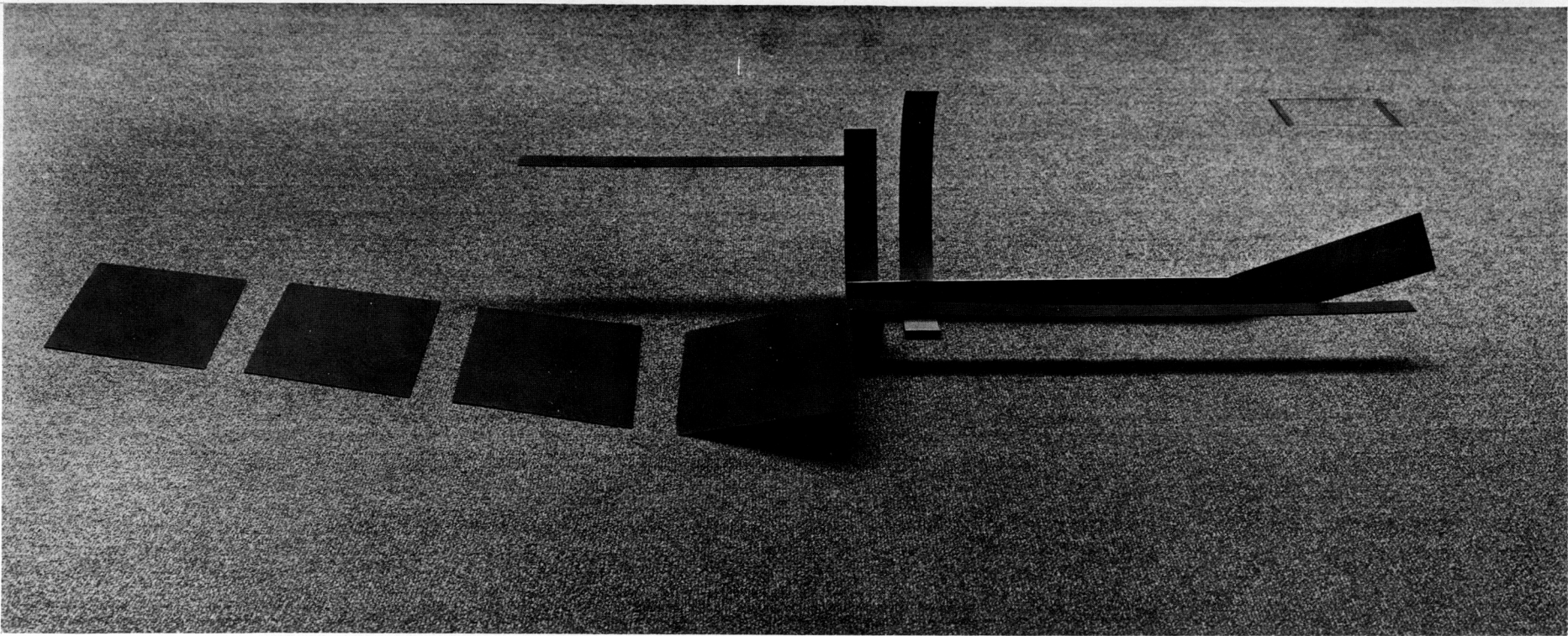
Folio I contains splendid reproductions of ten of the earliest photographs. These “pictures from life” no longer dazzle with the impact of novelty so we can judge them for what they are. There is a poise, common to

them all, which combines with their several qualities of delicacy, strength and felicity to impart a presence not to be found in any haphazard or accidental picture. These move us to a sympathetic response and not a little wonder that they were achieved by such primitive and cumbersome means.

Folio II represents Werner Bischof, renowned for his meticulous observations as a photo reporter, who was killed in 1954 when his car ran off a road in the Northern Andes, in Peru. His work is lyrical and compassionate, stark in composition and strict of selection. It invariably makes a positive statement, whether from sheer strength of geometric form or the power of its emotional impact. Perceptive and responsive, Bischof immobilises a fleeting moment, and it is expressive for all time.

Folio III is a selection from the work of Erich Salomon, a German Jew who began his photographic career at 42. From that age Dr. Salomon devoted his life to gaining access (often by subterfuge) to the innermost chambers where Europe’s political crises were thrashed out during Hitler’s ascendancy and domination, and reporting them to the world. Without the aid of magnesium flare (then considered indispensable for indoor shooting) he made these extraordinary pictures of the tireless professionals, the national leaders and impassioned idealists who strained at the tug-of-war for peace in the thirties. He overcame contemporary technical limitations, even as he bluffed his way past security guards, to reveal the tensions and concentration, the deadlock and fatigue of those urgent meetings, leaving us not only a unique historical record, but some moving and dramatic human documents.





# Recent Acquisitions 2:

## Generous Presentations to the Collections

### Asian Art

Two Sake Bottles, Kosobe-Yaki  
Japan, Edo period 19th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Sake Bottle Seto, Heron's design  
Japan, Edo period 18th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Pair of Lacquer Stem-cups  
Japan, 17th to early 18th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Set of Five Tea Bowls, signed Toagaki  
Pengetsu, 1860–1870 Japan  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Kakiemon style tile,  
Japan, 19th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Basket with Netsuke and Ojime  
Japan, 19th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Sake Bottle, drip Glaze, Tamba  
Japan, 19th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Painting of Horses, by Sekkei (1644–1732)  
Japan,  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Painting of Puppies by Matsumara Keibun and  
Maruyama Oshin, early 19th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Painting of Three Warriors by Suzuki Manrei  
Japan, early 19th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Painting of a Madman by Tsuda Seifa  
Japan, 19th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Kogo, Sueki Pottery,  
Japan, Heian Period  
Purchased from funds donated by Col. A.H.L. Gibson

Coat, silk, embroidered  
Chinese, 18th century  
Presented by Mrs. Goding

Pair of six fold Screens, with cranes  
Japan, 18th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Kenneth Myer, Esq.

Pair of six fold Screens, with pine trees  
Japan, 18th century  
Purchased from funds donated by Kenneth Myer, Esq.

Sydney Long (1871–1955 Australian)  
Flamingoes

### Australian Painting

Henri Bastin (b. 1896)  
*Landscape* 1965 Synthetic enamel on hardboard  
Mr. Roderick Carnegie

Arthur Boyd (b. 1920)  
*Burning Off* Synthetic Enamel on hardboard  
Mr. Roderick Carnegie.

Sydney Long (1871–1955)  
*Flamingoes* Oil on panel 11 x 21¼ ins. 27.9 x 54.6 cm.  
Presented by the National Gallery Women's Association.

Sydney Long is one of the acknowledged masters of the 'Art nouveau' style in Australian art. Born at Goulburn, N.S.W. in 1871, he studied with Julian Ashton in Sydney and later taught at his school. He went to London in 1910 and was elected an Associate of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers in 1920. He returned to Sydney in 1925 and died in 1955.

'Flamingoes', 1916 is a striking example of Sydney Long's decorative style. The large birds depicted in blazing red are silhouetted against a green background. The surface flatness is emphasized by the horizontal shape, and by the forms of the birds which unify across the plane, their necks twisting with serpentine grace. This painting was generously presented to the collection by the National Gallery Women's Association.

W.B. McInnes (1889–1939)  
*Landscape* Oil on board  
Miss. D. Moore

Godfrey Miller (1893–1964)  
*Nude and The Moon* 1962–64, Ink and oil on canvas  
Mr. Roderick Carnegie

Albert Tucker (b. 1914)  
*Ascension* Oil and mixed media on hardboard  
Mr. Roderick Carnegie

W. Blamire Young (1862–1935)  
*Mountain Landscape* Watercolour  
Sir Harry Wunderly

W. Blamire Young (1862–1935)  
*Landscape* Watercolour  
Sir Harry Wunderly

W. Blamire Young (1862–1935)  
*Rural Scene* Watercolour  
Miss D. Moore

David Wilson (b. 1947 Australian)  
Untitled Sculpture 12.71  
Purchased 1972



### Australian Sculpture

Inge King (b. 1918)

*Marquette for A.M.P. Sculpture* Welded Steel  
A.M.P. Society

Norma Redpath (b. 1928)

*Marquette for A.M.P. Sculpture* Bronze  
A.M.P. Society

### European and American Art after 1800

Pino Conte (b. 1915 Italian)

*Life's Tree* 1961 Bronze, height 300 cm. (9 ft. 10¼ in.)  
Presented by Mrs. E. Balloul 1972. (illustrated below)

Life's Tree was included in two exhibitions of Conte's work, held in Melbourne in 1965 and at the Adelaide Festival in 1966.

The female body and particularly the theme of a small child, limbs splayed, clinging to the torso of his mother, were modelled for several earlier bronzes, notably the *Maternity* 1958.

The sculptor has chosen a columnar, totemic form for Life's Tree, which is simplified by the exclusion of the head and limbs.

In this synthesis of his figurative style, which precedes a more abstract approach to sculpture, Conte identifies the vitality of the bronze mass with the force of life.

George Boys (b. 1930 South African)

*Sea Forms* Acrylic on hardboard 1971  
Presented by Colonel A.H.L. Gibson



### Prints, Drawings, Watercolours

Muirhead Bone (1876–1953 Scottish)

*Stockholm* Drypoint

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Muirhead Bone (1876–1953 Scottish)

*Rabindranath Tagore* Drypoint

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Frank Brangwyn (1867–1956 English)

*Romantic Landscape* Etching & drypoint

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Gerald L. Brockhurst (b. 1890 English)

*Le Casaquin de Laine* Etching

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Noel Counihan (b. 1913 Australian)

*Head of a Child* 1948 Charcoal drawing

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Noel Counihan (b. 1913 Australian)

*Worker holding a mallet* 1948 Charcoal drawing

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

E.M. Euler (1867–1931 German)

*Badende Am Meer* Drypoint & mezzotint

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Sylvia Gosse (English)

*Edmund Gosse in his study* Etching

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

F.L. Griggs (1876–1938 English)

*Laneham* 1923 Etching

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

F.L. Griggs (1876–1938 English)

*The Almonry* 1925–6 Etching

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Augustus John (1878–1961 English)

*Girl's Head (E)* 1914 Etching

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Norman Lindsay (1879–1969 Australian)

*Panurge and the Lady of Paris* Pen drawing

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

James McBey (1883–1959 Scottish)

*The Squall, Kampen* 1923 Drypoint

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Samuel Palmer (1805–1881 English)

*The Lonely Tower* 1879 Etching

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Theophile Alexandre Steinlen (1859–1923)

*A French Soldier, with drooping moustaches*  
drawing - black crayon

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Ian Strang (b. 1886 English)

*A Sussex Farm* 1930 Etching

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Eric Thake (b. 1904 Australian)

*"Koepang! Bagoos"* 1946 Linocut

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Ethelbert White (b. 1891 English)

*The Old Barn* Wood engraving

Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Ethelbert White (b. 1891 English)  
*The Wood Shed* Wood engraving  
Presented by Dr. Leonard B. Cox

Heinrich Campendonk (1889–1957 German)  
*Weiblicher Akt Vor Bauernhof* c.1921 Wood cut  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Lyonel Feininger (1871–1956 American)  
*Rathaus Platz* 1918 Wood cut  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Lyonel Feininger (1871–1956 American)  
*Houses on a Hill* 1918 Wood cut  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Lyonel Feininger (1871–1956 American)  
*Rainy day on beach* 1921 Wood cut  
Presented by Mr. O. Hirschfeld

Lyonel Feininger (1871–1956 American)  
*Ship passing a volcano* 1921 Wood cut  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Paul Klee (1879–1940 Swiss)  
*Laternenfest Bauhaus* 1922 Lithograph hand coloured  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Franz Marc (1880–1916 German)  
*Schöpfungs Geschichte* 1914–1921 Wood cut  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Gerhard Marcks (b. 1889 German)  
*Die Katzen* 1920 Wood cut  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Gerhard Marcks (b. 1889 German)  
*Two Cats* 1921 Wood cut  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Oskar Schlemmer (1888–1943 German)  
*Head in Profile* 1924 Lithograph  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Darum (A young woman)* Pen drawing  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1919 Colour wood cut  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1921 Monotype drawing  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Fries* (undated) Lithograph  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Blutegel* Lithograph  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Stadt* Lithograph hand coloured  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Architektur* 1923 Lithograph hand coloured  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Pen Drawing* 1945 Pen Drawing  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition with Faces* Pen Drawing  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1940 *Tale of Man*, Watercolour  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1940 *Story of a Shell*, Watercolour  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1941 *Orange*, Watercolour  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964)  
*Composition* 1945 *Bubbling*, Watercolour  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1948 Watercolour over monotype  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1948 (?) *Fairy Tale*, Watercolour  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1949 Watercolour over monotype  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1952 *Whirlwind*, Watercolour over monotype  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1953 *Centred*, Watercolour over monotype  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1953 (Four Figures), Watercolour over monotype  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1957 *Two seconds before the accident*, Watercolour over monotype  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1957 *Fish Form*, Watercolour over monotype  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1958 *Figures*, Watercolour over monotype  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1958 *Head*, Watercolour over monotype  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)  
*Composition* 1959 *Bottle Form*, Watercolour over monotype  
Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Composition* 1959 *Blue Forms on Red*, Watercolour over monotype

Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Composition* 1959 *Lines and semicircles*, Watercolour over monotype

Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Composition* 1959 *Cylinder Forms*, Watercolour over monotype

Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Composition* 1959 *Figure*, Watercolour over monotype

Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Composition* 1961 *Between Two Worlds*, Watercolour over monotype

Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Composition* 1961 *Lost in Space*, Watercolour over monotype

Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Composition Vase Forms*, Watercolour

Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Composition with orange centre* Watercolour

Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Composition The Shadow of Militarism and Annihilation*, Watercolour over monotype

Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Composition* 1960 *Three Broken Forms*, Watercolour over monotype

Presented by Mrs. O. Hirschfeld

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Hay* 1940–1 Linocut

Presented by Mrs. Franz Philipp

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Tatura* 1941 Linocut

Presented by Mrs. Franz Philipp

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Tatura* 1941 Linocut

Presented by Mrs. Franz Philipp

Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1964 German)

*Untitled* Linocut

Presented by Mrs. Franz Philipp

Adolph Gottlieb (b. 1903 American)

*Untitled Drawing*

Presented by Contemporary Arts Society, London.

Ronald B. Kitaj (b. 1932 American)

*What is a Comparison?* 1964 Screen print

Presented by M. Georges Mora

## Conditional Gifts

Candelabrum-Centrepiece, Silver, by Geoffrey Gordon, Australian 1970

Mr. Kenneth Myer

Tapestry ('The White Cat's Garden'), Wool, by Charles Blackman, Australian, woven at Manufactura de

Tapeçarias de Portalegre, 1971

Mr. Kenneth Myer

## Ceramics

Four Examples of Recent Pottery, Stoneware, by the Bendigo Pottery, Australia, 1970

The Bendigo Pottery

Four Tiles, Tin-glazed earthenware, Dutch (Delft), 18th century

Mrs. D. Cockburn

Bowl, Stoneware, by John Wrattan (1941–1971), Australian, 1968

Miss D. Coultas

Pair of Cups and Saucers, Porcelain, prob. German, late 19th century

Mrs. Cilla Hecht in memory of her husband

Pair of Bowls with Stands, Porcelain, prob. German, late 19th century

Mrs. Cilla Hecht in memory of her husband

Dish, Tin-glazed earthenware, Italian (Nove), mid 18th century

Mr. Cyril Humphris

Suite of cups and saucers, plates, bowls, coffee-pot etc., (Design 711), Porcelain, German (Arzberg)

Incorporated Agencies Pty. Ltd.

Suite of cups and saucers, plates, bowls, coffee-pot etc., ("Karelia" design), Porcelain, Finnish (Arabia)

Incorporated Agencies Pty. Ltd.

Teapot, Coffee Pot, Tile, Earthenware, by Andrew

Fritsch (1808–1896), German-Australian, c.1840–50

Mr. W.G. Tuck

## Costume and Textiles

Pair of Shoes, Satin, by Pancaldi, Italian, 1960

Mrs. A.C. Abrahams

Textile Lengths, Wool, French or English, prob. early 1850's

Mrs. R. Blunden

Textile Length, Cotton, French or English, prob. early 1850's

Mrs. R. Blunden

Set of Bedhangings, Linen and Wool, English, 1700–50

Miss Mary Bostock

Robe, Silk embroidered, Chinese, c.1900

Mr. D. Climas

Shawl, Wool and silk, Scottish, 1860–65

Mrs. L. Cox



Pair of Shoes, Black suede, designed by Prue Acton, Australian, 1971  
Promotions Department, Georges of Melbourne

Cap Backs (Two), Linen Lawn, French (Breton), prob. late 19th century  
Mrs. E.N. Grace

Lace Cape, Cotton, French or English, 1860's  
Mrs. M.H. Grant

Sampler, Linen with silk embroidery, English, 1783  
Miss A.B. Kelly

Evening Cape, Silk and cotton, Australian or English, 1890–1904  
Mrs. Alexander McIntosh

Pair of Gloves, Kid, prob. French, 1890–1904  
Mrs. Alexander McIntosh

Apron, Silk, Embroidered, English, 1725–50  
Dame Ada McNaghten (through the Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

Evening Gown, Satin, English, c.1930  
Mrs. A. Masters

Knitted Bag, Cotton, by Rosetta Fox, Australian, 1850–1900  
Mrs. Shirley Schneisler

Kain (Skirt or Sarong) and set of jewellery, Indonesian, 20th century  
President and Madame Soeharto of Indonesia

Pair of Stockings, Silk; Garter, Velvet and silk, prob. English mid 19th century  
Mrs. Winterbottom on behalf of Opportunity Shop, Sandringham

#### **Glass**

Suite of Glassware, designed by Andrew Broadway and Annette Watt, Australian, 1971  
Adams Pacific

Wine Glass, English, c.1760–70  
Dr. S.G.L. Catchlove

Suite of Glassware ('Regis' design), designed by Edward Kayser and manufactured by Crown Crystal Glass, Australian, 1969–70  
Crown Crystal Glass

Platter, designed by Kaj Franck, vase and candelabrum designed by Oiva Toikka, Finnish, (Arabia)  
Incorporated Agencies Pty. Ltd.

Drinking glasses (seven), Austrian (Riedel), German (Wiesenthal), Finnish (Arabia),  
Incorporated Agencies Pty. Ltd.

Covered Goblet, prob. Bohemian, late 19th century  
Miss A.B. Kelly

#### **Furniture**

Chair, Plywood and steel, designed by Charles Eames, American, 1944–46  
Furniture City, Mobler Group

Armchair, Fibre-glass and steel, designed by Charles Eames, American, 1948–50  
Furniture City, Mobler Group

Chair, Plastic and steel, designed by Charles Eames, American, c.1953  
Furniture City, Mobler Group

Two Armchairs, Fibre-glass and steel, designed by George Nelson, American, 1956  
Furniture City, Mobler Group

Armchair, Dining-chair, Tutorial chair, Desk chair, Dressing Chest, Bookcase, Desk, Oak, designed by Walter Burley Griffin for Newman College, Melbourne, c.1916  
Newman College, University of Melbourne

Chair, Teak and calf, by Sol Shapiro, Australian, c.1964  
Mr. Sol Shapiro

#### **Metalwork**

Pair of Scissors, Steel, prob. German, late 19th-early 20th century  
Mrs. Cilla Hecht in memory of her father and father-in-law

Necktie Necklace, Silver and acrylics, by Alan Bacon, Australian, 1971  
Lady Lane

Two Medallions (Stations of the Cross), Silver, by Andor Meszaros, Australian, 1969 and 1970  
The National Gallery Society of Victoria

Sovereign Purse, Silver, English (Birmingham), 1904–5  
Mrs. A.B. Milic

Cutlery Set (6 pieces), Stainless steel, designed and manufactured by Carl Hugo Pott, German, 1962  
Incorporated Agencies Pty. Ltd.

Coffee pot, milk jug, teapot, cream jug, sugar bowl, Stainless steel, designed by Arne Jacobsen, Danish, c.1965  
Incorporated Agencies Pty. Ltd.

Coffee-pot on Stand, Silver, English, 1823–5 and 1826–7  
Mrs. A.E.J. Thomas

Cutlery Set (56 pieces), Sterling Silver and Stainless steel, 'Acorn' design by Johan Rohde, manufactured by George Jensen, Danish  
Mrs. A.E.J. Thomas

#### **Miscellaneous**

Brooch, Gilt and hair, English or Scottish, c.1853  
Mrs. R. Blunden

Scent Bottle, Onyx and silver, poss. Scottish, prob. late 19th century  
Miss Helen Calcutt

Fan, Paper with mother-of-pearl sticks, French, 1840–80  
Mr. Chandler Coventry

Fan, Silk, lace and mother-of-pearl, prob. English, 1880–1900  
Mrs. M.H. Grant

Valentine, Paper, Scottish, 1838  
Mrs. J. James

Pince-Nez, Steel frame with lenses, prob. English,  
1880–95

Mr. W. McQuillan

Tapa Cloth Wall Hanging, Fiji, c.1924  
Miss Frances Penington

Riding Crop, Wood, bone and leather, English, c.1885  
Miss J. Ritchie

Tutorial chair - Oak - American/Australian – designed  
by Walter Burley Griffin, c.1916

Presented by Newman College, University of Melbourne

In 1916 Walter Burley Griffin was commissioned by the  
Archdiocese of Melbourne to design the Catholic  
residential college at the University of Melbourne.  
Although only part of his original design – the present  
Newman College – was executed, the Archdiocese  
allowed him a considerable degree of scope and freedom  
in working on this project. The College, unfavourably  
received by the general public at the time of its erection,  
is now recognised as a key work in his oeuvre, and as  
one of the most significant buildings of the 20th  
century in Australia.

The furniture which Burley Griffin designed for Newman  
College formed an integral part of his overall concept,  
sharing with the architecture which enclosed it a  
thrusting vigour, bluntness and austerity. Whilst Burley  
Griffin's furniture design has interesting affinities with  
that aspect of the Art Nouveau style which is best  
exemplified by the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh,  
it constitutes, at the same time, an important precedent  
to the "Art Deco" style of the 1920's and 1930's.

This chair, one of a group of seven Burley Griffin  
designs acquired from Newman College, is illustrated.



## Photography

*Space Portfolio* 1965–66, 19 colour, 8 black and  
white, selected from the results of 9 manned Gemini  
flights

Photimport

Karsch of Ottawa (b. 1908 Turkey, Settled in Canada  
1924)

*Faces of Destiny* 58 black and white portraits of  
famous people

Miss Marion Scott

Val Foreman (b. 1939 Australian)

*Industrial Subjects* 6 black and white, 4 colour

Mr. Val Foreman

Unknown

*Sydney Harbour*, circa 1915, Panoramic view probably  
taken from Holtermann's tower, Sepia bromide strip

Mr. T. Cottier

Sir George Pollock (b. 1928 British)

*Colour Folio* Set of 23 abstracts made on Kodak High  
Speed Ektachrome 1964–66, prints by CIBA,  
Switzerland, 1966

The Gallery Society of Victoria

Geoffrey Smith (b. 1908 Australian)

*Untitled* (Woman's hands) Black and white

Dr. Geoffrey Smith

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