

COLLECTIONS



University of Melbourne Collections
Issue 5, November 2009

University of Melbourne Collections succeeds
University of Melbourne Library Journal, published
from 1993 to December 2005.

University of Melbourne Collections is produced by
the Cultural Collections Group and the
Publications Team, University of Melbourne Library.

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Published by the University Library
University of Melbourne
Victoria 3010 Australia
Telephone (03) 8344 0269
Email is-publications@unimelb.edu.au

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ISSN 1835-6028 (Print)
ISSN 1836-0408 (Online)

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Collections* are available for \$20 plus postage and
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Front cover: A selection from the books recently donated to Special Collections, Baillieu Library, by members of the Thorn and Sutherland families. See story p. 49. Photography by Lee McRae, Digital Media Services, University of Melbourne.

Back cover: Artist unknown [Umbria, probably Perugia, late 14th century], leaf from a Gradual (Pentecost), ink, coloured pigments and gold leaf on vellum, 52.6 x 38.8 cm. Purchased 2008, Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne. See story pp. 9–11.

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Introduction

Alex Chernov



Cultural collections are essentially about people. Although made up of inanimate substances such as paper, leather, clay, canvas, dried plants, photographic film and the like, collections embody the thoughts, memories, personalities, biographies and relationships of human beings past and present. This issue of *University of Melbourne Collections* vividly illustrates the point. Take these examples:

- Dr Ray Marginson's recollections of the forming of the University's collections tell us so much about the author's career as Vice-Principal, his active support for the preservation of our visual and architectural heritage, and his appreciation of their importance in the life of students, staff and the wider community. His article also provides glimpses into the motivations of benefactors and the idiosyncrasies of some artists, and demonstrates how the vision and determination of individuals and small teams can bring about major and lasting improvements.
- From Dr Vivien Gaston's discussion of portraits by the late Louis Kahan, we learn about the artist himself and how his eventful life contributed to his skill and

facility as a portraitist. The drawings themselves shed new light on the personalities of the illustrious literary, academic and artistic individuals whom Kahan depicted with such perspicacity.

- Meanwhile, the archives of Melbourne architect Arthur Purnell now reveal, through the investigations of Dr Derham Groves, the fluctuating professional and personal fortunes of one of Purnell's most loyal clients, the colourful but ultimately tragic Alec Barlow—car dealer, racehorse owner, property developer, entrepreneur and speculator.
- The substantial gift of Chinese children's books and educational texts recently received by the East Asian Collection in the Baillieu Library reflects more than the professional achievements and personal interests of its generous donor, Dr R.F. Price. Many of these titles were published by the tens or even hundreds of thousands and were compulsory reading for young people in China during the tumultuous years of the Cultural Revolution. As these children grew into adults, their political and ideological leanings and social

mores must surely have been affected in various ways by this type of literature.

- The Grainger Museum is perhaps the most literal representation of a person in a collection. This autobiographical museum is unique in Australia and, in many aspects, internationally. Its re-opening in 2010 will include a very engaging computer-based interactive research tool, generously funded by the Hugh Williamson Foundation and discussed here by Ms Monica Syrette.

Just as collections connect us to people from our past and present, they are preserved for the education and enjoyment of other people of the present and future. It is therefore particularly pleasing to see the University's cultural collections being used so actively to these ends.

The Hon. Alex Chernov AO QC is the 20th Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, where he originally graduated in law and commerce. He has had a distinguished career as a barrister and judge, while also playing a significant role in the leadership of the legal profession and legal education. Alex and his wife Elizabeth Chernov—also a law graduate of the University of Melbourne—have three children, all Melbourne alumni.

Intelligentsia

Louis Kahan's portraits of writers

Vivien Gaston

A recent exhibition at the Ian Potter Museum of Art provided the opportunity to view a remarkable group of drawings by the renowned portrait artist Louis Kahan AO (1905–2002), now in the Special Collections of the Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.¹ Depicting notable writers, the 129 portraits were gifted by Kahan over four years from 1979 to 1983, a benefaction arranged by the then Vice-Principal of the University of Melbourne, Ray Marginson. On 5 November 1981, at the University of Melbourne Gallery, Marginson launched a handsome book illustrating a selection of the works with an adroit estimation of the artist's career:

How can one say anything more about a man who has served in the French Foreign Legion, worked for thirty years at the heart of the Australian Literary and Artistic establishment, and not only survived both, but emerged universally loved and unscarred.²

Intelligentsia: Louis Kahan's portraits of writers ran at the Potter from 22 January to 19 April 2009 and brought together an array of portraits depicting poets, essayists, philosophers and political writers



created for the journal *Meanjin*. They provide a rich microcosm of Australian intellectual life from 1955 to 1974, depicting many of the key thinkers of the day who opened up for local Australian culture the contemporary international world of ideas. Kahan's inclusive vision was ideally suited to interpreting this extraordinary array of talent and intellect, which spanned writers from the right and left of politics, early female authors, edgy cultural commentators, novelists, speculative poets, and scholars of subjects obscure, refined and pioneering. Through his uncanny ability to capture likeness, this exhibition recreated the intensity and verve that animated these minds.

Trained as a tailor in his birthplace Vienna, Kahan worked for the couturier Paul Poiret, and as a theatre set designer in Paris in the 1920s where he encountered first hand the work of Picasso, Matisse and the School of Paris. With the outbreak of war he joined the French Foreign Legion and, after demobilisation, began his life as an artist in Oran, Algeria. After travel in the United States, he moved to Perth in 1947 where he was reunited with his family, had his first solo exhibition and began to gain recognition from the art world. In 1950 he moved to Melbourne where his talent for portraiture was recognised by the *Melbourne Herald* art critic Alan McCulloch, who introduced him to

Previous page: Installation view,
Intelligentsia: Louis Kahan's portraits of writers,
exhibition at the Ian Potter Museum of Art,
University of Melbourne, 2009,
photographed by Viki Petherbridge.

Below: Louis Kahan, *Clement B. Christesen*, 1960,
pen and ink on paper, sheet: 56.9 x 37.8 cm.
Reg. no. 1980.2044, gift of the artist, 1980,
Special Collections, Baillieu Library,
University of Melbourne.
© Louis Kahan (estate)/Licensed by VISCOPY,
Sydney 2008.

Clem Christesen, editor of *Meanjin*.
On a return trip to Perth in 1953 he
met and married Lily Isaac. His
contribution to Australian cultural life
was recognised when he was made an
Officer of the Order of Australia in
1993. Louis Kahan died in
Melbourne in 2002, aged 97.

Kahan's prodigious capacity for
swift summation of the human face
was honed in an unusual training
ground: the hospitals for wounded
soldiers in Oran, Algeria, where he
donated his time and talent to the
Red Cross, producing over 2,000
portraits of soldiers which the men
sent back to their families. With this
experience he was able to produce
portraits with a sense of spontaneity
under almost any conditions. The
majority of the *Meanjin* portraits
were drawn directly from life,
sometimes in the subject's home or
workplace, often in Kahan's own
home studio. Occasionally however
he was compelled to work from
photographs or even from television,
grasping the essentials of a face with
minimum input.

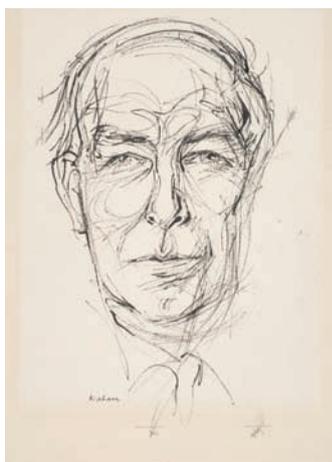
The portraits in this collection
were commissioned for the
provocative literary and cultural
journal *Meanjin* by its founding editor
Clem Christesen. *Meanjin* provided a
ready network for writers and a
platform for new writing, a resource

for innovative ideas and a forum for
debate at a time when the media in
Australia were at a rudimentary stage.
Meanjin exerted considerable power;
at its 21st anniversary dinner Arthur
Calwell, leader of the opposition
Labor Party, gave a speech and Prime
Minister Robert Menzies sent a
telegram. Contributors to *Meanjin*
represent a who's who of Australian
writing. Since 1945 the journal has
been supported by the University of
Melbourne and in 2008 it became an
imprint of Melbourne University
Publishing.



The exhibition *Intelligentsia*
demonstrated how the creative
interaction of literature and the visual
arts was integral to *Meanjin*'s broad
cultural purpose. While Kahan's
drawings gave a distinctive graphic
quality to the journal for nearly 20
years, other innovative work was also
featured, including sketches, prints
and paintings by Aboriginal artists
(usually unnamed) and artists and
designers such as Arthur Boyd, Roger
Kemp and Douglas Annand. Kahan's
portraits, however, played a special
role. Featured next to the subject's
writing or a review of their work, they
provided an unabashed tribute to
their subjects and their intellectual
and creative achievements. While
postmodern critics, whose theories
diminish the importance of the
author, might disparage this elevation
of individual identity, the effect of
these portraits is to illustrate the
personal engagement involved in
keeping such an independently
minded journal alive. The exhibition
paid homage to this spirit of free
speech that has motivated and guided
the journal. In his foreword to the
first issue of *Meanjin* (Christmas
1940), Clem Christesen wrote:

... at a time of war and transition,
we still strive to 'talk poetry.' ...
Literature and art, poetry and



Left: Louis Kahan, *A.D. Hope*, (c.1962), pen and ink on paper, sheet: 46.5 x 35.5 cm. Reg. no. 1979.2076, gift of the artist, 1980, Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.
© Louis Kahan (estate)/Licensed by VISCOPY, Sydney 2009. First published with A.D. Hope, 'The young girl at the ball', 'A Blason', 'On an early photograph of my mother' and 'Letter from the line', *Meanjin Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 2, June 1962.

drama do not spring into being at the word of command. Their life is a continuous process growing within itself, and its suppression is death.³

Kahan's portrait of his patron, Clem Christesen (illustrated opposite), head resting on his hand with cigarette, book and glasses, is both determined and contemplative, almost melancholy. It makes a remarkable comparison with van Gogh's wistful portrait of his physician Dr Gachet (1890, now in the Musée d'Orsay). By contrast, *Meanjin's* second editor, Jim Davidson, who took over in 1974, is portrayed as gently benevolent. This group of drawings also includes some of the wider field of experts who contributed to *Meanjin*: Asian studies expert C.P. Fitzgerald; politician, diplomat and academic Neal Blewett; agricultural chemist Geoffrey Leeper; and geographer, geologist and writer Marcel Auroousseau.⁴

As editor of *Meanjin*, Clem Christesen was supported by his wife Nina who founded the Department of Russian Language Studies at the University of Melbourne. Kahan's portrait of Nina, depicted next to Professor R. Douglas (Pansy) Wright, is one of several group portraits drawn at *Meanjin's* 21st anniversary dinner in 1961, when the artist wove

through the crowd recording the lively interactions of guests such as professor of English Ian Maxwell, eminent art historian Dr Ursula Hoff, Labor leader Arthur Calwell and writer Frank Dalby Davison. In another, Christesen darts a glance at *Overland* editor Stephen Murray-Smith, with literary historian H.M. Green in the background.⁵ Kahan relished the aesthetic possibilities of the occasion's collegiality, commenting: 'A chance group—so often its members complement minds while their bodies compose a study for the artist.'⁶

Kahan's forte was to depict the creative mind at work. This is especially apparent in his portraits of the poets—established, mid-career and upcoming—who chose to publish in *Meanjin*. Instead of a static record of facial features, his pen and ink lines fly and coalesce around nodal points in the face correlating with the workings of the active mind within; the poet's synthesis of free, disparate thoughts at high velocity. In his depiction of A.D. Hope (illustrated above), a long prophet-like face conjures up the oracular cadence of his poetry with its mythic themes and, for the 1950s, provocative sensuality. Described by Clive James as 'the leading poet of his day', Hope was also known as 'the antipodean

Below: Louis Kahan, *Dame Mary Gilmore*, 1960, pen and ink on paper, sheet: 54.0 x 37.7 cm. Reg. no. 1979.2068, gift of the artist, 1979, Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.
© Louis Kahan (estate)/Licensed by VISCOPY, Sydney 2009. First published with Robert D. Fitzgerald, 'Mary Gilmore: Poet and great Australian', *Meanjin*, vol. 19, no. 4, December 1960, and subsequently with W.H. Wilde, 'Mary Gilmore: The hidden years', *Meanjin Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 4, December 1973.

Augustan' and was a scathing critic of unstructured modernism. With T. Inglis Moore he introduced the first degree course in Australian literature as professor of English at the Australian National University.

Kahan was equally insightful in his depiction of the legendary Dame Mary Gilmore (illustrated below). Her highly popular poetry was bound up with her activism, her concern with urban poverty, the rights of women, children and indigenous Australians and her patriotism. Her politics were radical; she was the first woman member of the Australian Workers Union and worked as editor of the *Australian Worker*. In 1937 she was appointed Dame Commander of the British Empire for her





Left: Louis Kahan, *Patrick White*, (1960), pen and ink on paper, sheet: 36.0 x 28.4 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2042, gift of the artist, 1980, Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne. © Louis Kahan (estate)/Licensed by VISCOPY, Sydney 2008. First published with Peter Wood, 'Moral complexity in Patrick White's novels', *Meanjin Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 1, March 1962.

Below: Louis Kahan, *Katharine Susannah Prichard*, (c.1961), reed pen and ink on paper, sheet: 57.0 x 38.5 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2052, gift of the artist, 1980, Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne. © Louis Kahan (estate)/Licensed by VISCOPY, Sydney 2009. First published with Katharine Susannah Prichard, 'The grey horse', *Meanjin Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 4, December 1961.

contributions to literature and in 1993 she was depicted on the Australian ten-dollar note. Kahan emphasised the active life of his subjects. His empathetic depiction of Gilmore evinces her vital determination with eyes fixed on a vision beyond, despite the age apparent in her stiffly folded hands. The drawing can be compared with the theatricality of William Dobell's portrait of Gilmore of 1957 (entered in the Archibald Prize) and with Kahan's own more reflective painted portrait of 1960.

Later in his career Kahan was to depict the poet Fay Zwicky. She responded with an evocation of Kahan's method of working:

to sit
and let the master work his miracle,
humming away over black pots
and nibs,
the sunny room, the light, the
harmless ease of it.
Portrait (Louis Kahan, 1992)⁷

Zwicky's words indicate Kahan's unusual rapport with his sitters. Besides the poets, these included many other luminaries of Australian literature, including Patrick White, Christina Stead, Miles Franklin and Alan Marshall.⁸ Avoiding simple idealisation, Kahan created images that reveal the psychology of his

sitters as well as contributing to their mythic stature.

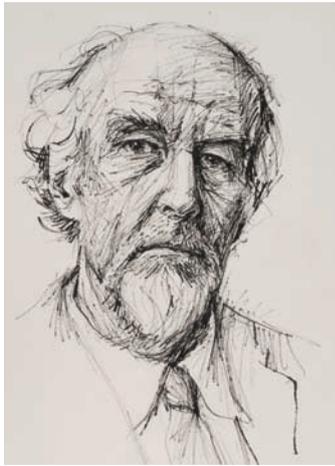
His frontal depiction of the novelist Patrick White (illustrated above) floats like an icon on the page with a mesmerising stare and ruminating mouth, aptly illustrating Kahan's response to 'those unforgettable, unforgetting seer's eyes, looking through you, and beyond ...'⁹ This sketch laid the basis for his depiction of the writer that won the Archibald Prize in 1962, a work that intensifies the emphasis on prophetic vision, a 'behind-the-scenes Voss' as Alan McCulloch put it,¹⁰ surrounding the head with a turbulent sky and desolate landscape.

Equally powerful is his semi-abstract depiction of Katharine Susannah Prichard (illustrated right), whose evocative novels of Australian country working life attracted national and international recognition. Active as a journalist, she helped found the Communist Party of Western Australia in the 1920s and remained committed to her political causes, campaigning for the peace movement and social justice. Kahan captures her steadfastness in a face of monumental structure, the eye socket a bony crevice, the hands a supportive plinth for the head.

Kahan's depictions anticipate recent analysis of the facial 'micro-

expressions' that indicate personality. The face with its numerous working muscles is a complex arena of forces. Rather than expressing one emotion or attitude at a time, there can be several. His depiction of Kylie Tennant, for example, whose novels portray life in the Great Depression, combines judiciously narrowed eyes, empathetic smile, and assertively clasped hands.¹¹ His unusual skills in creating a convincing likeness out of scant information was especially useful for providing *Meanjin* with representations of international writers, whose work was published or reviewed in the journal. The depictions of James Joyce and Alexander Solzhenitsyn, based on photographs, hold their own in





sparkle and liveliness against those made from first-hand experience of their subjects.¹²

The subjects of Kahan's portraits for *Meanjin* also include some of the most significant, vocal and controversial of Australian intellectuals and reflect the editor's commitment to diversity of opinion. Manning Clark (illustrated above left) was the controversial author of the epic six-volume general *History of Australia* published between 1962 and 1987, criticised by conservatives for its declamatory rhetoric. In Kahan's memorable portrayal he is aloof and enigmatic. Clark addresses the viewer with sombre deliberation, the lines in his forehead converging on the furrow between the eyebrows, a sign of concentrated thought since ancient portraiture. By contrast, the face of maverick historian Geoffrey Blainey (illustrated above right), author of the influential *Tyranny of distance: How distance shaped Australia's history*, is open, engaged and curious. Modelled with incisive angular lines, the drawing demonstrates Kahan's incubation in the quasi-abstract circles of post-cubist artistic circles. Blainey mused after sitting for Kahan: 'When I left I had a slight feeling that I had been X-rayed.'¹³

Typically for the time, three of the academics portrayed by Kahan are

smoking. T. Inglis Moore, writer, literary historian and indefatigable advocate for Australian literature, and Ian Maxwell, professor of English and expert in Old Norse, clutch their pipes as essential aids to thinking. The scholar of French literature, A.R. Chisholm, nervously gestures with a cigarette in hand, while a wild flurry of lines around his head evokes a frenetic intellectual force.¹⁴ Yet, despite his remarkable ability to capture the distinct individuality of his subjects, Kahan's portraits never verged on caricature. He always moderated his feel for expressive forms with observation of subtle detail. Commenting on the striking appearance of A.A. Phillips, critic and inventor of the phrase 'cultural cringe', Kahan wrote: 'A crowded literary party; here there is this remarkable profile, nose and chin trying to meet. My pen couldn't resist them.'¹⁵

The exhibition also included four of Kahan's painted portraits of academics, revealing another dimension of his contribution to the cultural life of the University of Melbourne. His use of vigorous brushwork and rich colour are evident in depictions of George W. Paton, Vice-Chancellor 1951–1968; Zelman Cowen, Dean of Law 1951–1966; Victor M. Trikojus, Head of the

Left: Louis Kahan, *Manning Clark*, 1973, reed pen, ink and felt-tip pen on paper, sheet: 57.1 x 38.5 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2037, gift of the artist, 1980, Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne. © Louis Kahan (estate)/Licensed by VISCOPY, Sydney 2008. First published with Manning Clark, 'The years of unleavened bread: December 1949 to December 1972', *Meanjin Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 3, September 1973.

Right: Louis Kahan, *Professor Geoffrey Blainey*, (1967), pencil on paper, sheet: 49.0 x 35.1 cm. Reg. no. 1981.2024, gift of the artist, 1981, Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne. © Louis Kahan (estate)/Licensed by VISCOPY, Sydney 2008. First published with Geoffrey Blainey, 'Godzone 7: The new Australia: A legend of the lake', *Meanjin Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 4, December 1967.

School of Biochemistry 1943–1968; and Warwick Eunson, Principal of Melbourne Teachers' College until 1972.¹⁶

Kahan's portraits continue to play a crucial role by documenting the diversity of the intellectuals who have been embraced by *Meanjin*. Lively and seemingly spontaneous, his depictions usually occupy a full page and are positioned next to the text, bringing the speaking voice and its ideas to life. With Kahan's inspired contributions over 25 years, *Meanjin* became, in Geoffrey Blainey's words, 'an illuminating mirror of Australian cultural life'.¹⁷

Dr Vivien Gaston is an Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne. A widely published art historian and critic in the fields of 19th century, Renaissance and contemporary art, her special research interest is portraits and self-portraits. Currently she is curator of forthcoming exhibitions for the National Gallery of Victoria and Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery and most recently curated *Intelligentsia: Louis Kahan's portraits of writers* for the Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne.

Notes

- 1 For their generous assistance in researching Kahan's portraits I want to thank Ray Marginson, Chris Wallace-Crabbe, Lily Kahan, Belinda Nemeec, Chen Chen, Bala Starr and Joanna Bosse.
- 2 Ray Marginson, Speech notes for the launch of Louis Kahan's book *Australian writers: The face of literature*, held on 5 November 1981 in the

Installation view, *Intelligentsia: Louis Kahan's portraits of writers*, exhibition at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, 2009, photographed by Viki Petherbridge. Visible are photographs of Kahan in his studio at Kew by Henry Talbot (1984) and an unknown photographer. In the showcases are copies of *Meanjin* from Special Collections, Baillieu Library, while a video plays of the ABC television program *Panorama* (episode on *Meanjin*, originally broadcast 8 December 1960).

University of Melbourne Gallery. Copy held on office file in Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.

- 3 C.B.C. [Clement B. Christesen], 'Foreword', *Meanjin Papers*, vol. 1, no. 1, Christmas 1940, facing p. 1.
- 4 Louis Kahan, *Jim Davidson*, 1972, felt-tip pen on paper, sheet: 55.7 x 38.0 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2065, gift of the artist, 1980; *Prof. C.P. Fitzgerald*, (n.d.), felt-tip pen and ink on paper, sheet: 38.7 x 57.5 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2063, gift of the artist, 1980; *Dr Neal Blewett*, 1973, felt-tip pen on paper, sheet: 55.8 x 38.1 cm. Reg. no. 1981.2035, gift of the artist, 1981; *Prof. Geoffrey W. Leeper*, 1971, felt-tip pen on paper, sheet: 56.2 x 37.9 cm. Reg. no. 1981.2029, gift of the artist, 1981; *Marcel Aurousseau*, (n.d.), pencil on paper, folded sheet: 51.2 x 35.0 cm. Reg. no. 1981.2033, gift of the artist, 1981. Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.
- 5 Louis Kahan, *Nina Christesen*, *Prof. R. Douglas Wright*, *Dr E. Macwhite*, *Col. Aubrey Gibson*, (n.d.), pen and ink on paper, overall sheet: 38.0 x 56.2 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2079.00A.00C, gift of the artist, 1980; *Prof. I.R. Maxwell*, *Dr Ursula Hoff*, *Arthur Calwell*, *Frank Dalby Davison*, (n.d.), pen and ink on paper, sheet: 28.2 x 38.3 cm. Reg. no. 1979.2081, gift of the artist, 1979; *H.M. Green*, *C.B. Christesen and S. Murray-Smith*, (n.d.), pen and ink on paper, sheet: 38.9 x 29.3 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2051, gift of the artist, 1980. Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.
- 6 Louis Kahan, *Australian writers: The face of literature*, Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1981, no. 40.
- 7 Fay Zwicky, *The gatekeeper's wife*, Rose Bay, NSW: Brandl and Schlesinger, 1997, p. 29.
- 8 Louis Kahan, *Christina Stead*, 1973, felt-tip pen on paper, sheet: 45.5 x 38.4 cm. Reg. no. 1979.2067, gift of the artist, 1979; *Miles Franklin*, (n.d.), felt-tip pen on paper, sheet: 55.8 x 37.5 cm. Reg. no. 1979.2073, gift of the artist, 1979; *Alan Marshall*, (n.d.), felt-tip pen on paper, sheet: 49.2 x 38.9 cm. Reg. no. 1979.2075, gift of the artist, 1979; *Alan Marshall*, (n.d.), felt-tip pen and ink on paper,



- sheet: 55.9 x 38.0 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2047, gift of the artist, 1980. Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.
- 9 Kahan, *Australian writers*, no. 38.
- 10 Alan McCulloch, 'Every(lay)man's simplified guide to the Archibald', *Meanjin Quarterly*, vol. 22, no. 1, March 1963, p. 111.
- 11 Louis Kahan, *Kylie Tennant*, (n.d.), pen and ink on paper, sheet: 53.9 x 38.0 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2043, gift of the artist, 1980, Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.
- 12 Louis Kahan, *James Joyce*, (n.d.), conté on paper, sheet: 38.3 x 38.5 cm. Reg. no. 1981.2054, gift of the artist, 1981; *Alexander Solzhenitsyn*, (n.d.), felt-tip pen on paper, sheet: 56.0 x 38.1 cm. Reg. no. 1982.2078, gift of the artist, 1982; *Alexander Solzhenitsyn*, (n.d.), felt-tip pen on paper, sheet: 56.0 x 38.4 cm. Reg. no. 1982.2081, gift of the artist, 1982. Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.
- 13 Geoffrey Blainey, 'Introduction', in Kahan, *Australian writers*, p. ix.
- 14 Louis Kahan: *Prof. T. Inglis Moore*, (n.d.), felt-tip pen and ink on paper, sheet: 50.7 x 35.5 cm. Reg. no. 1979.2069, gift of the artist,

- 1979; *T. Inglis Moore*, (n.d.), felt-tip pen and ink on paper, sheet: 55.8 x 38.1 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2071, gift of the artist, 1980; *I.R. Maxwell*, (n.d.), felt-tip pen on paper, sheet: 50.6 x 37.8 cm. Reg. no. 1979.2077, gift of the artist, 1979; *Professor A.R. Chisholm*, (n.d.), pen and ink on paper, sheet: 55.0 x 38.0 cm. Reg. no. 1980.2045, gift of the artist, 1980. Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.
- 15 Kahan, *Australian writers*, no. 30.
- 16 Louis Kahan, *Sir George W. Paton*, 1968, oil on board, 116.8 x 88.9 cm. Reg. no. 1968.0003, commissioned 1968; *Professor Zelman Cowen CMG*, 1968, oil on composition board, 122.0 x 91.5 cm. Reg. no. 1968.0004, commissioned by Maurice Cohen on behalf of friends of the Professor, 1968; *Professor Victor M. Trikojus*, 1968, oil on board, sight: 120.6 x 90.2 cm. Reg. no. 1968.0005, commissioned by colleagues and friends of the School of Chemistry, 1968; *Warwick Eanson*, 1972, oil on canvas, 89.7 x 67.2 cm. Reg. no. 1972.0091, commissioned by Melbourne Teachers' College, 1972. The University of Melbourne Art Collection.
- 17 Blainey, 'Introduction', p. viii.

Two Gradual leaves

Gwen Quirk

The Baillieu Library in 2008 purchased two illuminated parchment leaves from a late 14th century Umbrian Gradual. A Gradual contains the chants for the celebration of the Mass, and takes its name from the practice of singing the chant of the same name on the steps of the ambo, or *gradus*, before the reading of the Gospel. The sequence of choral chants in the Gradual matches their order in the Missal, in which the complete text of the Mass is set out according to the arrangement of the liturgical year. Two distinct series of parallel annual celebrations co-exist in the calendar of the Catholic Church. The Temporal cycle is divided into seasons beginning with Advent and Christmas and culminating in Paschaltide. These celebrate the coming of Christ, his saving life, death, resurrection and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost which signals the continuation of Christ's mission in the life of the Church. The Sanctoral cycle commemorates the feasts of the saints.

One of the Baillieu Library's newly acquired leaves contains the music and words for the Introit (or entrance chant) for the feast of Pentecost in the Temporal cycle. The other leaf is from the Sanctoral cycle of the same Gradual and celebrates

the feast of Saints Peter and Paul on 29 June. The vellum leaves, decorated in ink, coloured pigments and gold leaf, come from what must have been a splendidly illuminated choir book of large dimensions (the leaves now measure 52.6 x 38.8 cm and 53.0 x 38.7 cm respectively). The identity of the illuminator is not known, but the



book was probably produced in Perugia, an important artistic centre in the 14th century, and may come from the circle associated with Matteo di Ser Cambio, a panel painter and illuminator active in Perugia between 1356 and 1424.¹

We may well ask why a book for the sole use of choristers was

illuminated at all. The answer lies largely in the evolution of written forms of music. Before music was written down, the chants of the Mass were taught and learned by rote, resulting in widely divergent regional practices. After Guido of Arezzo's invention of precise music notation in the 11th century it became possible to standardise liturgical chant throughout the west, and the religious orders of the 13th and 14th centuries helped to expedite this process by producing large numbers of chant books in their scriptoria and encouraging their use. Feasts were added to the liturgy, and chants became longer and more complex. Consequently a larger and more demanding repertoire required increased performance skills, and groups of professional cantors were engaged who read from a single choir book propped on a lectern before them. This occasioned the enlargement of books, and often the need for several volumes, inviting decoration of these now impressive and valuable choral books. Illumination appears to have served both a practical and devotional purpose. A hierarchy of initials not only reflected a feast's importance in a carefully graded ranking system, but also possibly operated as a signpost for both cantor and choir, functioning

Previous page: Artist unknown [Umbria, probably Perugia, late 14th century], leaf from a Gradual (Pentecost), ink, coloured pigments and gold leaf on vellum, 52.6 x 38.8 cm (detail). Purchased 2008, Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne. The full leaf is illustrated on the back cover of this magazine.

as a mnemonic association for the recall of both melody and text. As well as signalling major feasts, historiated (illustrated) initials probably also acted as a devotional aid whereby the theme of the feast could be evoked immediately, its theological intent recollected and possibly communicated more effectively by the singers.

That these books also attracted large-scale illumination such as decorated initials and elaborate borders appears to indicate that, along with liturgical vessels, vestments and older liturgical books, they were considered sacred items. The major feasts invited the most elaborate chants and the largest and most beautiful illustrations. This phenomenon is particularly noticeable in Italy, where sets of choir books, often illuminated by the most gifted artists of the day, became a source of ecclesiastical and civic pride, and were placed on public display.

In the Gradual, the Introit (or entrance chant) for the most significant feasts was singled out for the most generous illustration and decoration. The feasts of Pentecost in the Temporal cycle and of Saints Peter and Paul in the Sanctoral cycle are both major feasts. In the Baillieu leaves they are introduced by illumination of the highest quality.

A large historiated initial (illustrated on page 9) occupying the height of two music staves illustrates the initial opening the Introit for Pentecost, *Spiritus Domini replevit orbem terrarum ...* (Wisdom 1:7, 'The Spirit of the Lord fills the whole world ...'). In the upper section of the letter 'S' the dove of the Holy Spirit plunges earthwards from a fire-rimmed blue heaven containing an eight-pointed star—the number of perfection frequently associated with God's creation of the world—perhaps a symbol here of the birth of the Church at Pentecost. The bird's halo incorporates a wide green cross which represents the salvation offered by the crucifixion of Christ, and from its mouth issue the red flames symbolic of the power of the Spirit. The heads of the 12 apostles, haloed in gold and outlined in black, appear in the lower half of the initial. Some members of the group look towards the source of divine grace while others appear to exchange glances, and several raise their hands in prayer. Faces and hands are lit by the radiating divine flames, and spatial depth is subtly implied by the curve of the 'S' which intercepts the fiery rays and creates the illusion that the scene is occurring behind the initial.

A large historiated initial 'N' (illustrated above) introduces the



Introit for the Mass, *Nunc scio vere, quia misit Dominus Angelum suum: et eripuit me de manu Herodis, et de omni expectatione plebes Judæorum* (Acts 12:11, 'Now I know in very deed, that the Lord hath sent His Angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews'). This text refers to Peter's imprisonment by Herod for preaching the Gospel, and his miraculous release by an angel. The initial celebrates the dual leadership in the Church of the two Apostles, who are identified by their characteristic attributes. Saint Paul holds a sword, symbol of his martyrdom by beheading. This was considered the most merciful method of execution, and was an option open only to Roman citizens. Saint Peter displays the keys, the mark of the authority conferred on him by Christ.² Distinctive in the composition is the way in which these saints gaze at each other and firmly grasp hands, while the Lord, holding a scroll, blesses them from above.

The burnished gold grounds of both historiated initials are pounced with a variety of designs and the haloes of the figures are also incised with distinctive patterns. These impressions serve not only as decoration, but function in a manner analogous to mosaic tesserae; their

Opposite and below: Artist unknown [Umbria, probably Perugia, late 14th century], leaf from a Gradual (St Peter and St Paul), ink, coloured pigments and gold leaf on vellum, 53.0 x 38.7 cm. Purchased 2008, Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.

placement at varying angles tends to intensify the reflection of light from the gold surfaces. Use of this tooling technique over an entire gilded area is unusual in manuscript illumination at this time, and may indicate that the artist was also experienced in panel painting.

The elegant, restrained border decoration with its fine decorative scrollwork is characteristic of Perugian illumination, in contrast to the more freely meandering foliate sprays found in much Tuscan and northern Italian manuscripts of this period. This is particularly apparent on the page depicting Saints Peter and Paul, where the acanthus leaves are strictly disciplined into a formal geometric design ending in individual finials (illustrated right).

Entwined around the lower edge of the border on the Pentecost folio (illustrated on back cover) is an elegantly drawn stork whose feathers and underlying body are rendered in fine long black brushstrokes over a mid-brown base. This may be a late Gothic grotesque, together with the two facing crows and disembodied bovine head which also inhabit the border. On the other hand, medieval bestiaries link storks with crows which supposedly guided them in their migratory flights across the oceans to Asia,³ so they therefore may

refer to the universal mission of the Apostles received at Pentecost. A connection has also been discerned between Saint Luke as the writer of the account of Pentecost in the Acts of the Apostles and the head of the ox placed at the top of the border adjacent to the frame of this initial.⁴ The evangelists were traditionally associated with the four winged beasts around the throne of God in the Apocalypse, and of these the ox is identified with Saint Luke whose Gospel emphasised the sacrificial aspect of the life of Christ. Both folios also have small bas-de-page illustrations. The Pentecost leaf depicts a pair of butting rams, while on the other folio the ants carrying seeds—now partially erased—may

relate to the bestiary interpretation of the ant as an exemplar of industry and communal co-operation.⁵

In addition to functioning as a mnemonic marker, the illustrations in medieval choir books added a further level of exegesis to the texts and their chants. In Italy particularly, the illumination of the choir book reached impressive heights, with paintings executed by major artists, and these books were valued as church treasure far beyond the function they fulfilled for the choir. The Baillieu Library's Gradual leaves are splendid examples of the fine painting lavished on these books.

Gwen Quirk completed a Bachelor of Music in 1964, followed by a Diploma and Graduate Diploma in education. In 2007 she completed a Postgraduate Diploma in art history. She is a member of the Friends of the Baillieu Library.

Notes

- 1 Sotheby's, *Western manuscripts and miniatures*, (catalogue for auction held in London on 8 July 2008), London: Sotheby's, 2008.
- 2 Matthew 16:19, 'I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'
- 3 Stephen A. Barney and others (eds and translators), *The etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 264, Book XII.vii.16.
- 4 Sotheby's, *Western manuscripts and miniatures*.
- 5 Sotheby's, *Western manuscripts and miniatures*. See also *The Medieval bestiary*, <http://bestiary.ca/beasts/beast218.htm>, accessed 30 November 2008.



'High drama and ... comedy'

Developing the cultural collections of the University of Melbourne

The second in a series of interviews of Ray Marginson, speaking with Robyn Sloggett

Robyn Sloggett: *Ray, I feel we have only begun to touch on the 'high drama and comedy' of your involvement with the development of the University cultural collections.¹*

I remember the period when you were Vice-Principal as one of very active support for the University's cultural development, and this was a broad support. You were interested not just for the gallery,² although I think this may have been your special passion, but of course the development of the grounds and the more general sense of the cultural identity of the University. In our last talk you indicated that there were other aspects of the gallery development you would like to cover.

Ray Marginson: Yes, Robyn, there is much to recall over the two decades plus of my involvement. The problem is the work in the grounds and the gallery interwove quite a bit, so you might have to bear with me if I slip from one to the other.

On the gallery itself, from early on we received many significant gifts. I have already mentioned Sir Joseph Burke and Colonel Aubrey Gibson. However, there were two most

significant elements in the building of our collection; the first was the continued generosity and careful selection of works by the late Dr Joseph Brown, the other, the wealth of Australian material included in the bequest of Sir Russell and Mab, Lady Grimwade.

Joseph Brown was a major supporter of our gallery initiative, and a frequent and considered donor, who knew weaknesses in our collection and, whenever possible, filled them. In 1982 we gave him a special exhibition of the 33 works he had given us to that date. I have many memories of the unexpected appearance of many of his gifts; none more memorable than the telephone call that said, 'Ray, I have a painting for you, it is Leonard French's *The trial* from his 1960 Campion paintings' (illustrated opposite). My involuntary reply was 'I didn't think you owned it.' His reply was, 'I bought it this week.' The explanation was that the police had just returned several works from his collection that had been stolen. This was his celebratory gift. Later, when Daryl Jackson and his interior designer Jan Faulkner asked what colour should be used in the new conference room in Old Physics, my answer was 'coagulated blood', the predominant note in *The trial*, which would hang there.

The placing of this significant work in the new conference room, with its splendid full-length red drapes that can cover the large sash-hung windows, its red carpet and its specially designed 32-person table and chairs, was not without irony. The room was provided to give the University what it did not have up to then (apart from the council chamber), a meeting room capable of accommodating the extremely large professorial selection committees. The trial indeed.

Of all Dr Brown's gifts I think my favourite is the beautiful small version of Bertram Mackennal's *Salome* (illustrated opposite, above).

I can see you can go on indefinitely about the gallery, but I would like at this point to draw you back to a focus on the grounds and buildings, and enhancing the overall quality of the site. There are a large number of probably apocryphal stories about your role in protecting and developing the heritage architecture on campus. What were the most successful battles you undertook on this front?

The answer here relates to the much wider topic I have already mentioned, the then state of the grounds. I had a completely different view from that which I heard at Cambridge later, that said it didn't matter how broken down or inconvenient the building



Left: Bertram MacKenna, *Salome*, (c.1900), bronze, height: 27.0 cm (excluding base). Reg. no. 1980.0010, gift of Dr Joseph Brown, 1980, University of Melbourne Art Collection.

Below: Leonard French, *The trial*, (1962), enamel on hessian on hardboard with spackle and plastic flowers, 228.5 x 183.5 cm. Reg. no. 1979.0043, gift of Dr Joseph Brown, 1979, University of Melbourne Art Collection. © Leonard French, 1962. Licensed by VISCOPY, Sydney 2009.

was in which you worked, it was the work that was central. The reference here, I think, is to the tin sheds, which were Rutherford's laboratories, where the fundamental experiments that were part of the work that ended in nuclear fission, were carried out. I could not have disagreed more. The state of our grounds was abysmal and depressing and buildings were haphazardly located without a coherent plan and many were run-down. There had been many attempts to plan but all, in the end, were frustrated by individual interest and advocacy about the placing of particular buildings. I felt that something must be done to demolish the war-time fibro huts and other 'temporary' buildings that were all over the site (including a two-storey one north of Wilson Hall that housed the accounts branch and other administrative functions); also to get rid of the asphalt which was everywhere, the swamp that existed in winter (on the site of the old lake) between the Union and Old Commerce, the uncontrolled car parking and speeding traffic. Further, that everything was to be gained by creating a pleasant working environment for staff and students and by restoring and improving the many older architectural treasures on the campus. Somehow we had to get



Michael Meszaros, Pair of commemorative plaques, 1975 and 1977, bronze, each plaque height: 45.3 cm. Reg. no. 1979.0097.002, commissioned 1976, University of Melbourne Art Collection.



quality back in the grounds and make it a pleasant place in which to work and learn. I was not the only one who felt like this and many who did so, like Professor Carrick Chambers in Botany, Professor Max Hargreaves, Hume Dow, John Anwyl and others, were later to play a vital role in changing things dramatically. It was a time (1969 to 1972) when capital funds, on the advice of the Australian Universities' Commission and following the Murray Report, were being allocated by the Commonwealth on a reasonably generous basis to universities. This made it a feasible plan. It was a period of major building construction and planning of siting was clearly essential.

I had been fortunate to be nominated as the Australian Fellow for the Eisenhower Fellowship to the USA in 1968. This was an extraordinarily generous scheme where the recipient is fully financially supported and ensured access to any areas in North America in your field of interest. At the end of the first two years in my role, and having dealt with some of the urgent financial problems and the initial reorganisation of the administration, I was able to spend seven months looking at old and new universities in the USA and Canada, with a quick three weeks in the UK on my way

home. The newly appointed Vice-Chancellor, Sir David Derham, fully supported my visit. It was then our further great good fortune to have, in the first person to occupy the co-ordinating role of Controller (Buildings) that I established to draw together the physical side, the late Bill Curlew, a highly experienced ex-army engineer. Whilst I was away he busily straightened out and structured his area, with the help of Maurie Pawsey, later himself Controller, and a key figure in the implementation of all the site and buildings work that followed.

Again a long-winded preamble, but again a necessary one, to understand where I was at the end of 1968. My thinking had firmed on the need to draw together, protect and improve the physical assets of the University, its grounds, buildings and of course the substantial holdings in the cultural area. As I said in our first interview, it was at the end of 1968 when I returned from the Eisenhower Fellowship that we appointed our first curator for the gallery.

I find it difficult to separate the elements that drove my thinking at that time. The cultural holdings to me were important; to establish a gallery to show them was important; equally important were the state of the fabric and the decay of the stonework on the

historic buildings, the appalling state of the grounds, and dangerous car traffic in the parking-choked roadways.

So I feel compelled to talk of all this as comprising a single objective; that is, to get our University up to scratch in all these areas. I must emphasise however that all of this was to a substantial extent subordinate to the major financial problems facing the University. The history, in particular, of the critical years 1968 to 1975, of the addressing of the dire budgetary problems, and the fundamental role of Sir David Derham assisted by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor David Caro, is covered fully in Poynter and Rasmussen's *A place apart*.³ The tackling of the problems I am talking about was achieved in many ways: by Commonwealth capital grants, by borrowing (e.g. for the south lawn and underground carpark); and by generous gifts and support from individuals and foundations.

So, when I returned we speedily moved to appoint the master planner, Bryce Mortlock, a Sydney architect. Thus came, in 1970, the *Master Plan Report* that told us, among other recommendations: to enclose spaces, close off the central area to traffic and introduce controlled and coherent planting. Finally, and most

Brian Dunlop, *The Old Physics Building*, (1980), oil on canvas, 213.5 cm x 427.5 cm (triptych).
Reg. no. 1980.0029.000.A.000.C,
purchased from the artist, 1980,
following his term as artist-in-residence,
University of Melbourne Art Collection.
© Brian Dunlop, 1980.
Licensed by VISCOPY, Sydney 2009.

importantly, the master plan did not give us a rigid blueprint, but firmly showed where we should not build buildings.

Perhaps here we should get back to the gallery?

In the early 1970s we extensively renovated the Old Physics Building, funded with the assistance of donations, to the design of Daryl Jackson. It was to here we moved from our gallery in the John Medley Building in 1975. It was opened by Sir John Rothenstein CBE. Among

those who made the gallery section of the work possible, by generous gifts, were the Myer Foundation, the estate of John F. Hughes, the Ian Potter Foundation, Middletons, the Edward Wilson Trust, North Broken Hill and the Australian Government. As is clear we were getting better by 1975 in attracting funding. At this stage we also had funding support on an annual basis from the Australia Council's Visual Arts Board and the State Ministry for the Arts.

The gallery with its three exhibition spaces and offices and store

was a dream come true. Structurally it had its problems. The upper floor had a load limit of 150 people and the basement had a depth of water, but we were finally in a position to undertake the major exhibitions that the curator Betty Clarke and the Works of Art Committee had in mind. In the east entrance to the old physics gallery are placed two splendid half-moon shaped bronzes by Michael Meszaros (illustrated opposite, above). These celebrate the gift by Norman and May Macgeorge of their Desbrowe Annear designed



Arts and Crafts style house 'Ballangeich' at the junction of the Yarra River and Darebin Creek in Ivanhoe. In addition to a capital sum to maintain the house, we also received a significant collection of Norman's and other artists' works.⁴ Patrick McCaughey, then fellow in fine arts, and his brave family were the first occupants of the house before it was renovated—a process much drawn out, as we had to accumulate income from the bequest before tackling vital restoration. Generously Norman had given his copper roof to the war effort and the external fabric, the domestic facilities and the grounds needed much work. Professor Carrick Chambers worked with Maurie Pawsey and the staff to restore the garden, which was originally designed by Blamire Young.⁵

As a result of this major bequest and the terms the Council established to carry out its intention, we were able to commence a program for appointing artists-in-residence. Through contact with the Australia Council (principally through Jean Battersby, the then General Manager) and by Maudie Palmer (the latter had joined the gallery staff in 1975) we obtained an annual grant of \$10,000 (later increased to \$12,000) to sustain an artist to live in the house, with

family, and to work in a studio on the campus. The first appointment of this very successful venture was William Delafield Cook. He became available to be visited in his studio in Old Physics (at this stage in an unrenovated old laboratory) by all and sundry on Wednesdays. Bill was a slow painter and after one visit to him a month or so after he started I saw him one third of the way through a typical work of meticulously painted leaves. The next week he was standing in front of a blank canvas. 'It wasn't working' was his comment.

I learnt much from the successive artists; from Brian Dunlop whose *Old Physics Building* (illustrated on page 15) won the Sulman Prize and which we were able to acquire (reasonably); also from Christine O'Loughlin whose *Cultural rubble* adorns the Swanston Street façade of our Ian Potter Museum of Art.⁶ Christine took off for the Forestry Department at Creswick shortly after her arrival and sweet-talked the department into delivering her a large eucalypt trunk for installation in her first exhibition/installation. Too many memories for this short piece: of John Hoyland the great British abstract painter, with every art student in Melbourne packing out the lecture theatre when he gave a two-hour review illustrating the whole of his oeuvre up to the

work of that very week. Of his giving us a suite of coloured etchings, five abstract compositions and two paintings; also selling us five coloured etchings for a risible price; the arrival back in Australia from New York at our invitation of the impeccably stylish Robert Jacks to commence his substantial middle period contribution, also in the abstract field (illustrated opposite). Each artist-in-residence brought their own particular and special contribution to the University and to the increasing sophistication of our whole operation and exhibitions.

The program continues today as the MacGeorge Fellowship, although without Commonwealth or State support. It was a major and significant element in the success and reputation of the gallery over succeeding years. An outstanding and personally satisfying feature of my retirement year was that Frances Lindsay mounted a superb exhibition showing works of the 13 artists-in-residence up to 1988.⁷

You also oversaw some substantial additions to the art in the grounds. Yes, one significant feature of Deakin Court is the ceramic mural by John Olsen, *Eastern world*.⁸ Tom Sanders, who had already produced the tiles, accepted the commission to make

Robert Jacks, *Past unfolded 5*, 1987, oil on canvas, 167.7 x 251.0 cm. Reg. no. 1987.0022, purchased 1987, University of Melbourne Art Collection.
© Robert Jacks, 1987.
Licensed by VISCOPY, Sydney 2009.

several rows of sympathetic tiles to fill the vertical space. It was an intensive and strange exercise for me, fixing the price in a three-way negotiation with John, the wily Rudy Komon and Tom, who was not an easy personality. The collection still houses the scrap of paper on which John sketched out the original design.⁹ The final twist to the project was the culmination of the considerable antagonism that developed between Betty Clarke and Tom Sanders. Tom had the last word by making a tile with his signature (the second on the work) located conspicuously by the entrance to Betty's office, where she could not

help seeing it as she passed in and out. Frances Lindsay later embellished the court by acquiring two of Bruce Armstrong's monumental red gum carvings.¹⁰ The ambience was added to by Daryl Jackson saving finials from the apex of the gables on the demolished sections of the building. We mounted them on a stone platform to carry the naming plate of Deakin Court. Their installation immediately resulted in the students dubbing the area 'Prick Court'.

As to Old Physics, we eventually, with University funds, renovated the rest and created the fine major conference room already mentioned,

named for Jim Potter, my colleague as former Registrar.

We could perhaps come back to the grounds and buildings later. However, you have referred to two significant sources of gifts to the gallery and outlined the late Dr Joseph Brown's generosity. Would you like to say something about the Grimwade bequest?

I have already written elsewhere about two earlier substantial gifts of works to the University, that of Dr Samuel Ewing and of Norman Lindsay.¹¹ I was not able at that time, within the brief period of my talk at the Felton Centenary Symposium in November 2004, to give a similar account of the extraordinary generosity of Sir Russell and his wife Mab, of their home 'Miegunyah' in Orrong Road, Toorak, and its artworks and library including the important collections of Australian material. For that I am extremely sorry. However, this interview may be a means of making some amends. The problem posed by the house was squarely on me as the officer responsible for advising the University Council on its property. Our early problem with the gift of the house was the nature of the governing wills. Sir Russell had been a great benefactor to the University and the School of Biochemistry (now



demolished) bore his name. He had wide interests in the eucalypt, of which he had a flourishing grove in his grounds, in wood generally (with close connection to the CSIRO), in photography, in carpentry (in which he was very skilled), as well as in collecting Australian art and classic glassware. His Australian book collection was significant, particularly in the area of exploration. With all of this he set out in his bequest to achieve certain ends, some of which were difficult to implement. The most difficult was that the house was to be a residence either for the professor of fine arts, then Sir Joseph Burke, or the manager of the Melbourne University Press, then Peter Ryan. The difficulties involved were substantial. Tax laws meant a heavy penalty for anyone enjoying residence, and the suggestion that the MUP should establish a printery in Sir Russell's (remarkably equipped) workshop was not one to contemplate. I did not relish making an application to the then Prahran council to establish a light industry in Toorak. All this meant interim arrangements were necessary whilst the situation was sorted out. My colleague Professor Carrick Chambers and his family generously occupied the house with some discomfort for some time, ensuring

security for it and its valuable contents. We then proceeded to try and find a use for the property consistent with the Grimwades' intentions. Some formal entertaining took place there and other minor uses were developed. Finally I conceived of the idea of proposing to Joseph Brown that he might consider housing his great historical Australian art collection there in a professionally staffed art museum. There had been several proposals considered by Dr Brown for his collection, including, I think, some from interstate. Through talks with the Ian Potter Foundation with the help of its CEO Pat Feilman (a significant figure in supporting the University's gallery) it was thought a substantial capital sum might be found to carry out the necessary alteration, security and other works, together with the construction on the Orrong Road frontage of a new building to house the contemporary works. Patrick McCaughey at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) thought it was possible that his trustees could enter into a joint venture. They had recently closed a branch at Heidelberg, 'Banyule', and some staff could perhaps be found. A solution seemed almost possible. One Saturday morning I walked around the site with my good friend Joe Brown, pacing out the dimensions of

the new wing, indicating the demolition area of the external rear of the house. With what I recall now as real embarrassment he turned to me and said a family discussion had resulted in them not wishing to proceed further, that there were too many difficulties, the site was too far from the city, etc. It was a great disappointment but the essential thing is that a solution was later found by Dr Gerard Vaughan and the trustees of the NGV. The collection is now housed at Federation Square and is available for the public to appreciate.

One almost successful concept was that the Commonwealth Government would lease the property as a Melbourne residence for the Governor-General. Sir John Kerr even hosted a party to celebrate this. The Whitlam Government was ousted the day before the agreement was signed.

Despite effort, no other use could be found for 'Miegunyah' and I had to quit stalling and agree with David Derham that it had to be sold. We had to go to the Supreme Court to obtain a ruling confirming that a substantial number of Sir Russell and Lady Grimwade's wishes could not be met. Further, that we could sell the property to implement some of their intentions regarding the University Press, the library, the art collection

George Lambert, *Untitled (The Tirranna picnic race meeting)*, 1929, oil on canvas, sight: 74.8 x 151.0 cm. Reg. no. 1973.0036, gift of the Russell and Mab Grimwade Bequest, 1973, University of Melbourne Art Collection.



and the School of Biochemistry. As you would expect, the auction was a gala day in Toorak and the property was bought by the Holmes à Court family, minus the four blocks on Selborne Road which had already been subdivided. After the death of Robert Holmes à Court it was later on-sold.

The blocks to the north meant the 2.1 acres were reduced and the rose garden, the small pool, the silver birch wood and the flowering gum wood were lost. The gum wood was where Sir Russell had photographed and later developed prints showing a nut,

flower and leaf for eucalypt specimens he used to illustrate his beautiful work *An anthography of the eucalypts* (illustrated on page 20). He also crafted the fine cabinet to hold eucalypt specimens, still in possession of the University.¹² We then commenced the major task of removing the artworks to the University Gallery, transferring the large 18th and 19th century glass collection to the Ernst Matthaei Memorial Collection of Early Glass, in the care of University House, and identifying which of the furniture was historically important. Russell's great

wood-working facility meant that he would purchase old black oak board and, in his workshop, construct a piece for the house. With the help of experts we sorted out the originals from the constructs. Some pieces went to the gallery, some to University House. Lesser pieces (nonetheless handsome) went to Medley Hall and to International House. A fine piece is in the walk-through of Old Physics from Deakin Court to Cussonia Court. The library was culled over by the Baillieu Library staff and the balance, with unwanted furniture, sold. The

Russell Grimwade, *An anthology of the eucalypts*, Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1930, plate 16. Sir Russell's own copy is now held in Special Collections in the Baillieu Library, as part of the book collection that he and Lady Mab bequeathed to the University.



charming statue of Amanda Grimwade as a young girl, which stood in the lily pond, was copied for the interior court of Old Arts,¹³ the original remaining with the family. The marble bench and the 15th century wellhead from the garden went to the west garden of University House.

The library collection of course enriched the Baillieu Library and the benefit to the University Art Collection was substantial. A number of exhibitions of the Grimwade collection have been mounted. All have borne this out. The William Strutt *Busbrangers in St Kilda Road* is an icon,¹⁴ as is *The Tirrana picnic race meeting* of 1929 by George Lambert (illustrated on page 19) and the small, delightful Tom Roberts *A road at Sherbrooke* of 1920 (illustrated opposite), but of course the benefit to the University does not stop there. The funds from the sale and the rest of the bequest monies now reside within the University trust funds and the use of the substantial income is administered on the advice of a representative committee, on which we are fortunate to have Sir Andrew Grimwade.

We have covered a great deal of ground in this interview. I hope at a later date we can continue and perhaps draw you

out on the background to the acquisition of some of the sculptural works in the grounds and buildings.

I would very much like to do so. At a later stage I would also like to pay tribute to the successive members of the Works of Art Committee over the two decades of my time with the gallery, and to the significant role of my deputy, the Controller (Buildings) Maurie Pawsey.

Dr Ray Marginson AM graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Melbourne in 1946. After working for the Commonwealth Public Service, in 1965 he was appointed Vice-Principal of the University of Melbourne, with responsibility for financial policy, accounting systems, budgets, building, maintenance, grounds and property, until his retirement in 1988. His many other roles have included Chairman of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (Melbourne Water), President of the Museum of Victoria, a director of Geotrack International, Vice-Chairman of the Melbourne Theatre Company, member of the Howard Florey Institute and founding President of the Victorian Jazz Archive.

Associate Professor Robyn Sloggett is Director of the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation at the University of Melbourne. The Centre provides conservation services to the cultural collections of the University and to the public, manages an internationally renowned research program and delivers the only comprehensive postgraduate conservation training program in the Australasian-Pacific region.

Notes

- 1 The first of this series of interviews appeared in issue 3 (December 2008) of *University of Melbourne Collections*.
- 2 The name and location of the University's art

museum have changed over the years. Upon its establishment in the early 1970s it was referred to as the University Gallery, University Art Gallery or University of Melbourne Art Gallery, and was housed on the fourth floor of the east tower of the then new John Medley Building. In 1975 it was relocated to the Old Physics Building, south of the Union Building. In 1988 additional accommodation was found in the former Physics Annexe on Swanston Street. At this point the overall institution became known as the University of Melbourne Museum of Art, with the Swanston Street space accommodating the Ian Potter Gallery and Art Conservation Centre, while the University Gallery continued to operate in Old Physics. The Physics Annexe was incorporated into the new Ian Potter Museum of Art, designed by architect Nonda Katsalidis, which opened in 1998 to house the entire museum and conservation facilities. Some of this earliest history is explained in the first of this series of interviews.

- 3 John Poynter and Carolyn Rasmussen, *A place apart: The University of Melbourne: Decades of challenge*, Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1996.
- 4 For more about the collection see John Pigot, *Norman Macgeorge: Man of art* (exhibition catalogue), Melbourne: Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, 2001.
- 5 One of Young's original plans for the garden is held in the University of Melbourne Archives: Blamire Young, *Garden plan for 'Fairy Hills'*, 1911. Accession no. 75/111, Norman Macgeorge Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.
- 6 Christine O'Loughlin, *Cultural rubble*, 1993, reinforced polyester resin, in four panels, overall: 149.5 x 319.5 cm. Reg. no. 1993.0019.000.A.000.D, commissioned by the University of Melbourne with funds provided by the Ian Potter Foundation, 1993, University of Melbourne Art Collection.
- 7 *The University of Melbourne artists-in-residence, 1975-1988* (exhibition catalogue), Parkville: University Gallery, University of Melbourne, 1988.

Tom Roberts, *A road at Sherbrooke*, 1920,
oil on canvas on wood panel, 28.2 x 19.3 cm.
Reg. no. 1973.0062, gift of the Russell and
Mab Grimwade Bequest, 1973,
University of Melbourne Art Collection.

- 8 John Olsen (designer); Tom Sanders (ceramicist), *Eastern world*, 1971 and 1975, glazed ceramic tile mural, 325.0 x 915.8 cm and 595.0 x 559.2 cm. Reg. no. 1975.0050, purchased with assistance from the National Bank of Australasia Ltd, the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council, the Myer Trust and the Charles Duplan Lloyd Trust, 1975, University of Melbourne Art Collection.
- 9 John Olsen, *First sketch for 'Eastern world'*, (1975), watercolour and pencil on paper, sheet: 56.0 x 76.3 cm. Reg. no. 1985.0006, gift of Tom Sanders, 1985, University of Melbourne Art Collection.
- 10 Bruce Armstrong, *So its come to this*, 1986, red gum, 90.5 x 80.5 x 163.5 cm. Reg. no. 1986.0283, on loan from the artist, 1986; and Bruce Armstrong, *She would like to be left with it*, 1986, red gum, 101.7 x 98.0 x 122.6 cm. Reg. no. 1986.0182, purchased 1986, University of Melbourne Art Collection.
- 11 Ray Marginson, 'One hundred and fifty years of gifts to the University of Melbourne', in Andrew Grimwade and Gerard Vaughan (eds), *Great philanthropists on trial*, Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press and the National Gallery of Victoria, 2006, pp. 101–112.
- 12 Sir Russell and Lady (Mab) Grimwade, Timber eucalypt specimen cabinet, (c.1919–1920), eucalypt timber with brass handles, 85.0 x 72.3 x 53.0 cm. Reg. no. 1973.0755, gift of the Russell and Mab Grimwade Bequest, 1973, University of Melbourne Art Collection.
- 13 Sculptor unknown (re-cast by Michael Meszaros), *Gosh says Amanda*, 1930, re-cast 1973, bronze, overall height: 84.0 cm. Reg. no. 1973.0764.000.A.000.B, gift of the Russell and Mab Grimwade Bequest, 1973, University of Melbourne Art Collection.
- 14 William Strutt, *Bushrangers, Victoria, Australia 1852*, (1887), oil on canvas, 75.7 x 156.6 cm. Reg. no. 1973.0038, gift of the Russell and Mab Grimwade Bequest, 1973, University of Melbourne Art Collection.



Conservation of a Cypriot vessel

Carmela Lonetti

Provenance and materials

This incomplete Cypriot vessel, accession number 1987.0157, dates from the Early Bronze Age (2500–2000 BCE). Comprising the neck and upper body of an ear-lug pot, the vessel is a low-fired, pink buff clay body with a burnished red oxide slip.¹ It was excavated in 1937–1938 by Professor James R. Stewart of the University of Sydney, from the Vounous site, a series of underground burial chambers in the foothills of the Kyrenia Mountains in northern Cyprus. The vessel came into the Classics and Archaeology Collection in 1987, one of 240 artefacts purchased that year by the University of Melbourne from the Australian Institute of Archaeology.²

Condition

Although examination revealed degradation associated with the ceramic fabric and slip, the stability of the vessel was most at risk from the unintended effects of previous repairs. Chemical testing confirmed that white salt deposits distributed unevenly on its surface were calcium carbonate.³ The slip was weakly adhered, powdering and in some areas displaying regular fine scratches characteristic of objects that have been brushed to remove burial soil. The fabric was soft and crumbly due



to its low-fired nature.⁴ Some fragments were poorly aligned, partly due to loss of original material from break edges.

Previous adhesive repairs

Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) analysis confirmed that the adhesive previously used for reconstruction was cellulose nitrate. This result is consistent with the historical and widespread use of cellulose nitrate for the repair of archaeological pottery.⁵ The adhesive was severely discolored (an opaque dark yellow) and embrittled; failure of at least one joint had resulted in loss of a fragment. Delamination at the break edges, caused by the adhesive pulling the ceramic fabric away from the main body as it degrades, was evident at the failed joint. Chemical spot testing of the sellotape using diphenylamine was positive for cellulose nitrate.⁶



The adhesive on the tape had yellowed, shrunk and embrittled. The tape had deposited adhesive accretions on the interior surface and caused extensive staining and delamination of the ceramic surface.

The conservation treatment

The tape was removed by solubilising the adhesive with acetone. Accretions were softened with acetone-dampened cotton wads placed directly onto the surface. The softened adhesive was removed with a scalpel and some staining was reduced. Salt deposits were mechanically removed with picking and brush-vacuuming.

Excess adhesive in the joints was also softened with acetone-dampened cotton swabs, then lifted using a scalpel and pulled from the break edges using tweezers. Removal of excess adhesive from the exterior of the joint allowed greater access to the



Cyprus, Early Bronze Age (2500–2000 BCE), ear-lug pot (neck, rim and handles), pink buff clay body with a burnished red oxide slip, height: 33.0 cm. Accession no. 1987.0157, purchased from the Australian Institute of Archaeology, 1987, Classics and Archaeology Collection, Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne.

Opposite, left: Front view, before treatment. All photography by Carmela Lonetti.

Opposite, right: Front view, after treatment.

Left: Interior view from below, before treatment.

Right: Interior view from below, after treatment.

interior of the join. Joins were loosened by applying acetone with a syringe and then gently pulling apart the fragments. This process caused some minimal damage to break edges, and some slip in areas surrounding break edges was dislodged.

The adhesive remaining on sherd edges was removed by applying acetone to the surface with a medium hard bristled brush, to soften and remove some of the adhesive from the pores. The softened adhesive was mechanically removed by scalpel and picking, but the highly porous nature of the ceramic meant that it was impossible to remove all the adhesive.

Consolidation of sherd edges with ten per cent weight/weight Rhom & Haas Paraloid® B-72 in acetone was undertaken to avoid the new adhesive from being sucked into the surrounding porous fabric, which would result in a weak bond.⁷ This consolidant was applied with a small brush to within 2 mm of the sherd edge to avoid 'ghosting' on the extremely porous fabric.

The sherds were re-adhered using 40 per cent weight/weight Rhom & Haas Paraloid® B-72 in acetone. The adhesive was delivered using a plastic syringe with a large-gauge needle to maximise working properties by reducing solvent evaporation and by providing good control of application.

Consolidation of whole sherds was considered unnecessary as the strength of the sherds appeared sufficient to withstand stresses at the joins and the vessel was to be returned to a controlled museum environment.⁸ Further, although the slip is unstable, consolidation would stain the porous fabric and possibly produce gloss. A recommendation for minimal handling of the vessel will protect the delicate slip.

Ethical considerations

Removal of the degrading adhesive resulted in the loss of some original material and slight damage to the slip in some areas. The after treatment images illustrate the significant improvement to the aesthetic value of the object, in particular the reduction of adhesive staining. The benefit of the treatment—stabilisation of the object—outweighed the resulting minor damage and slight loss of original material.⁹ Stabilisation of the object ensures its longevity and contributes to the preservation of the collection as a whole, which has been developed primarily as a teaching and research resource.¹⁰

Carmela Lonetti undertook this treatment as part of her Master of Arts (Cultural Materials Conservation) at the University of Melbourne, which she will complete by the end of 2009. She is presently employed by the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation objects conservation laboratory.

Notes

- 1 Sally Salter, *A catalogue of Cypriot antiquities at the University of Melbourne and in the Ian Potter Museum of Art*, Melbourne: Macmillan Art Publishing, 2008, pp. 251 and 253.
- 2 Salter, *Cypriot antiquities*, p. 215.
- 3 Soluble salts more commonly associated with salt efflorescence are chloride, nitrates and phosphates (S. Buys and V. Oakley, *The conservation and restoration of ceramics*, Oxford and Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1993, p. 24).
- 4 Cypriot Bronze Age vessels were baked in coal-heated pits reaching temperatures of probably less than 600°C, insufficient to oxidise all the elements in the clay and resulting in low-fired earthenware (Salter, *Cypriot antiquities*, p. 20.)
- 5 Early archaeological conservation manuals—such as H.J. Plenderleith, *The conservation of antiquities and works of art: Treatment, repair and restoration*, London: Oxford University Press, 1956 (2nd edition 1971)—recommended cellulose nitrate for the reconstruction and consolidation of archaeological ceramics. Such materials are no longer recommended, due to undesirable consequences such as those described here.
- 6 Nancy Odegaard, Scott Carroll and Werner S. Zimmit, *Material characterization tests for objects of art and archaeology*, London: Archetype Publications, 2000, p. 164.
- 7 Stephen P. Koob, 'The use of Paraloid B-72 as an adhesive: Its application for archaeological ceramics and other materials', *Studies in Conservation*, vol. 31, no. 1, February 1986, pp. 7–14.
- 8 Buys and Oakley, *The conservation and restoration of ceramics*, p. 102.
- 9 Barbara Applebaum, *Conservation treatment methodology*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2007, pp. 362–367.
- 10 Peter Yule, 'Classics, Cypriot and Middle Eastern Collections', in P. Yule and C. McAuliffe (eds), *Treasures: Highlights of the Cultural Collections of the University of Melbourne*, Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press, University of Melbourne Publishing, 2003, p. 17.

The Barlow file

Another adventure in building

Derham Groves

Between 1900 and 1910 Arthur William Purnell (1878–1964), an Australian architect from Geelong, lived and worked in China. In 1904 he and Charles Souders Paget (1874–1933), an American civil engineer from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, established the architectural and engineering firm Purnell & Paget in Guangzhou (Canton). Purnell designed many impressive buildings in Guangzhou, including the Arnhold-Karberg & Company building on the tiny island of Shamian (spelt ‘Shameen’ in his day), which was one of the earliest reinforced concrete buildings in China;¹ the competition-winning Imperial Customs House also on Shamian; and the South China Cement Factory in Haizhu District, which was later requisitioned by the revered political leader Sun Yat-Sen for his headquarters.² At least a dozen of Purnell’s buildings still exist in China, including the three mentioned above. However, only recently has Purnell been ‘rediscovered’ by the Chinese and acclaimed as a major architect there.³

Purnell returned to Australia in 1910 and maintained a busy architectural practice in Melbourne—both on his own and in partnership with others—until he retired in the late 1950s. Over this time he



designed hundreds of buildings, ranging in size from the Olympic stand at the Melbourne Cricket Ground to a ticket box. The University of Melbourne Archives is now the custodian of thousands of Purnell’s architectural drawings that span this eventful period of Melbourne’s history.⁴ In the preface to *The Honeywood file: An adventure in building* (1929), a fictional account of correspondence between an architect, James Spinlove, and his client, Sir Leslie Brash, the book’s author H.B. Creswell wrote:

Although *The Honeywood File* is designed to engage aspirants to

architectural practice with lively presentment of the adventures that await them, a picture in which men and women rather than architects and builders occupy the canvas, and which is more concerned with the fabric of life than with the fabric of houses, will perhaps amuse those who have fallen under the spell of bricks and mortar or who are curious of the unexplored.⁵

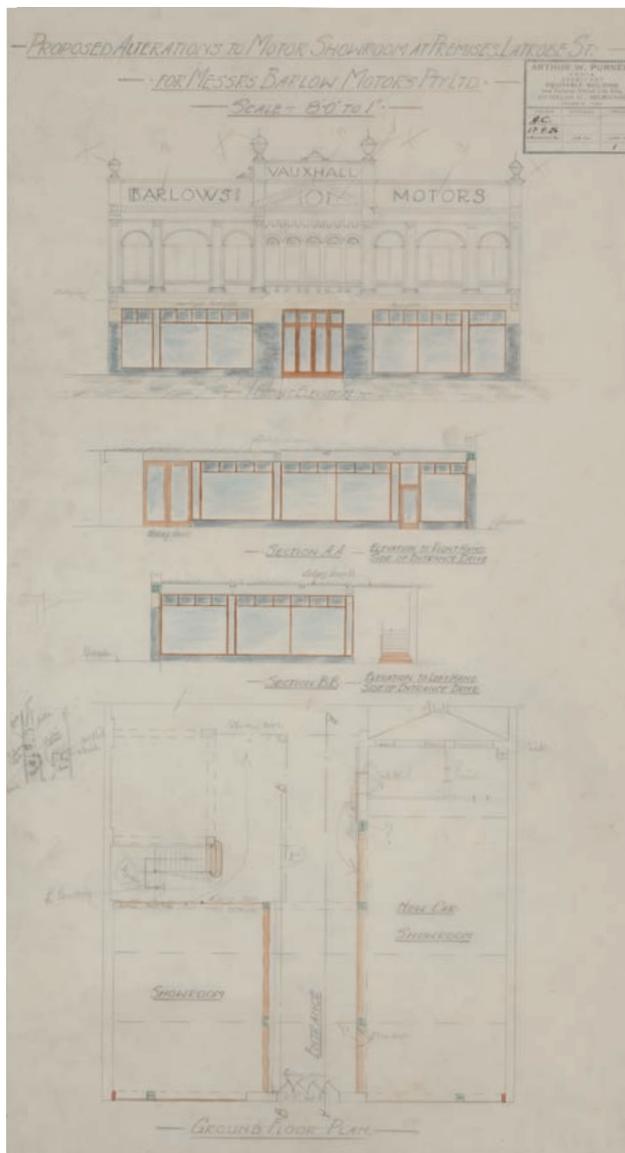
The same can be said for the University’s Arthur Purnell Collection. One difference is that Spinlove’s architectural practice was made up, whereas Purnell’s was real. And I seriously doubt whether Creswell—talented writer that he was—could have invented a client quite like Alexander George (‘Alec’) Barlow (1880–1937), a trailblazing—albeit shady—Melbourne car dealer. However, just as Spinlove and Brash come to life through their letters in *The Honeywood file*, so the personalities of Purnell and Barlow emerge from Purnell’s drawings in the Arthur Purnell Collection.

In 1915 Isidor George Beaver (1859–1934), a Melbourne architect originally from Manchester in England, and Purnell established the architectural firm Beaver & Purnell in Melbourne. Despite being the junior

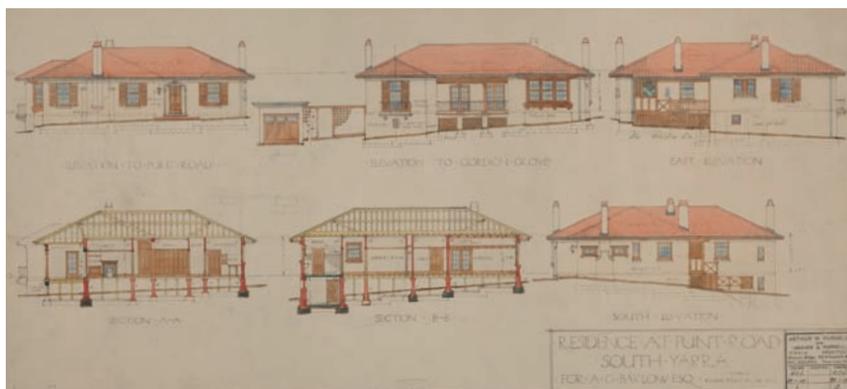
Opposite: Arthur Purnell and his wife Jane
at home in Guangzhou.
Photograph courtesy of Jan Parkinson.

Below: Arthur W. Purnell, *Proposed alterations to
motor showroom at premises La Trobe St: For Messrs
Barlow Motors Pty Ltd* (construction drawing),
17 September 1926. Arthur Purnell Collection,
University of Melbourne Archives.

partner in the practice, Purnell seems to have taken the lead concerning design. In 1923 Beaver & Purnell designed 'Proposed additions to residence [at 378] St. Kilda St. Brighton for Mrs. Barlow', which involved enlarging the lounge room and the verandah and adding a loggia and a pergola.⁶ Purnell seems never to have refused architectural work, regardless of how fiddly or insignificant it was, and in this case—as in so many others throughout his long career—one small job led to several much bigger ones: Mrs Barlow's son Alec turned out to be one of Purnell's best and most colourful clients. In 1922 Alec Barlow rented 20–28 La Trobe Street in Melbourne (previously occupied by the Howitzer Battery Co.) and opened Barlow Motors Pty Ltd. While the company sold new and used cars, the majority of its business consisted of servicing and garaging privately owned vehicles. Barlow Motors claimed to run 'the most modern and up-to-date garage in Melbourne—as near fireproof as possible. This is the garage to place your cars for safety and cleanliness. Filtered petrol. Filtered oil. Free air. Cars washed and polished lowest rates.'⁷ Barlow Motors got off to a flying start: soon after the company opened, all but 18 of its 150 on-site



Arthur W. Purnell, *Residence at Punt Road South Yarra for A.G. Barlow esq.* (construction drawing), 28 November 1924. Arthur Purnell Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.



car parking spaces had been leased by the public.⁸

In February 1924 Barlow bought the La Trobe Street building for £16,000,⁹ and hired his mother's architects to redesign the premises. In April Beaver & Purnell began work by drawing plans and elevations of the existing two-storey Victorian-style building. On the ground floor were a new car showroom, five offices and a workshop equipped with a car pit, car wash and petrol pump. A car ramp led to the first floor where an office, paint shop, trimming shop and toilets were located. An undated drawing of alterations to the building apparently done early in 1924 shows that on the ground floor the offices were demolished and the car showroom was extended, while on the first floor the paint shop and trimming shop were demolished and six offices, a waiting room, phone room, storeroom and lunchroom were constructed. These changes reflected Barlow Motors' shift from mainly caring for cars to primarily selling cars. The company sold Clyno, Stutz and Vauxhall cars, White trucks, and Bean cars and trucks.

Beaver and Purnell parted ways late in 1924. Barlow followed Purnell and for the rest of the car dealer's life they had a remarkably close and cordial client-architect relationship.

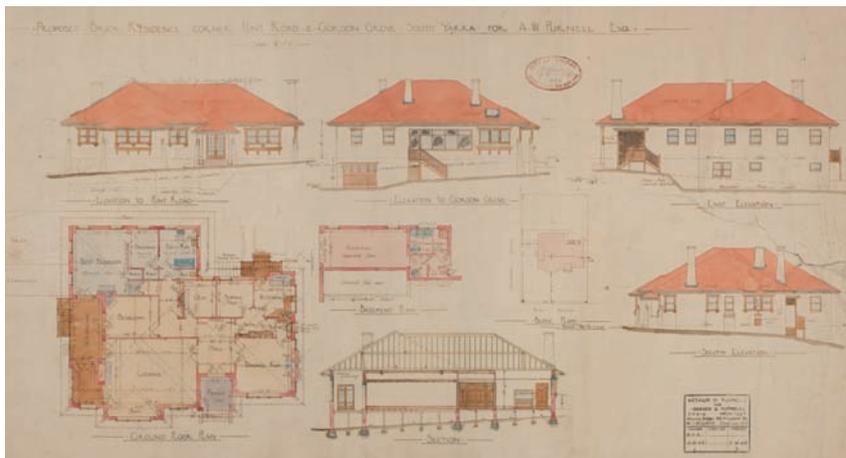
Purnell designed a number of cosmetic changes to 20–28 La Trobe Street over the next few years, including putting large display windows in the car showroom in September 1926 (illustrated on page 25). But despite trying to modernise the first floor façade several times, he only succeeded in having the archaic Greek-style urns removed from the parapet.

'Overwells', a 30-room mansion on a large parcel of land at Punt Hill in South Yarra, was subdivided and sold in March 1920.¹⁰ Barlow purchased the vacant block on the corner of Punt Road and Gordon Grove. In November 1924 Purnell (now 'Late of Beaver & Purnell') designed for Barlow a one-storey house at 488 (the number later changed to 492) Punt Road (illustrated above). With cream roughcast exterior walls, stained timber louvered shutters on the windows, twisted 'barley sugar' columns around the front door, and a hipped red 'Cordova' tile roof, the house was an early example of Spanish mission-style architecture in Melbourne.¹¹ Compared to some houses in South Yarra, a fashionable inner suburb, Barlow's was modest in size with a living room, dining room, den, main bedroom, spare bedroom, maid's bedroom, kitchen, main

bathroom, and a second bathroom located in an undercroft that was accessible only from outside the house. A separate garage with an attached laundry faced Gordon Grove and was connected to the house by a wooden trellis. Soon after the house was finished however, Barlow sold it to Purnell and went to live in his mother's house in Brighton. When I discovered this unexpected turn of events my first thought was there must have been something wrong with the Punt Road house.

(Architects have been known to buy their 'mistakes' before.) But if this was the case then why did Barlow continue to hire Purnell for many years to come? One possible explanation that certainly fits the personalities of the two men is that Barlow needed cash quickly and Purnell was happy to assist his client and friend and get a bargain at the same time. Purnell evidently liked the locality, because he was already living nearby at 520 Punt Road.¹²

In June 1925 Purnell extensively renovated Barlow's 'old' house for himself, adding a bedroom, dressing room, sunroom, laundry and incinerator room; enlarging the lounge room, dining room, main bedroom, bathroom and porch; relocating the den; and landscaping the garden (illustrated opposite,



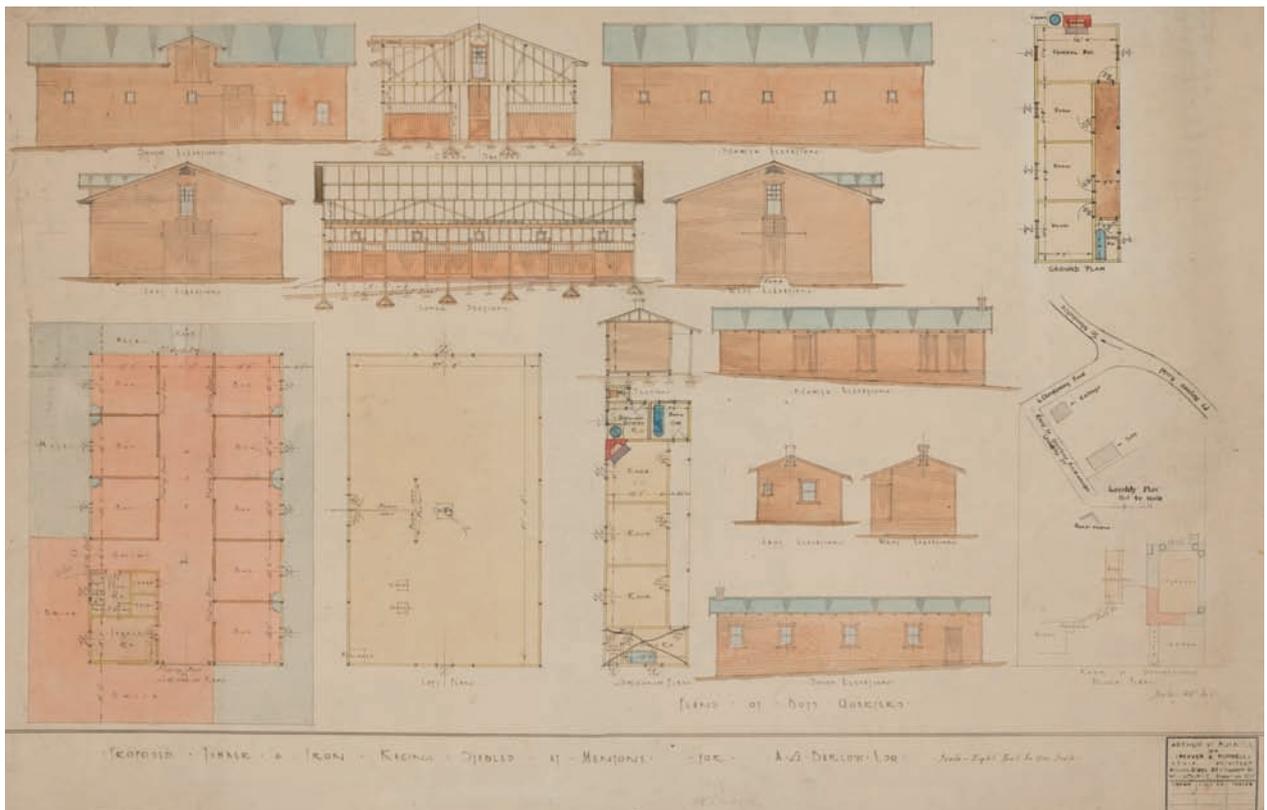
Left: Arthur W. Purnell, *Proposed brick residence corner Punt Road & Gordon Grove South Yarra for A.W. Purnell esq.* (renovations to 'Shan Teng'), 15 June 1925. Arthur Purnell Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

Below: Arthur W. Purnell, *Proposed timber & iron racing stables at Mentone for A.G. Barlow esq.* (construction drawing), (1925). Arthur Purnell Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

above). Purnell's wife Jane (née Farrell) was a keen gardener, so she may have asked for the circular, oval and eight-pointed-star-shaped flowerbeds dotted around the garden. However, what completely transformed the house and made it uniquely Purnell's was the new 'Chinese temple-style' hipped tile

roof that he designed. Surprisingly the roof's curved ridge appears to have been an afterthought, because Purnell only sketched it in pencil on the completed drawing of the renovations to the house. He also designed oriental-style chimneys, gate and pergola to match the roof. Initially Purnell named his new house

'Shameen', after the island where he had lived in Guangzhou, but since two of his previous houses had also been called that,¹³ he finally settled on 'Shan Teng' (Mountain Vines). Purnell's only child Joan Margaret Dickson (1918–2002) grew up in the house and remembered the family having Chinese servants who were



Right: A.G. Barlow's former 'brick factory' at 353 Exhibition Street in 2009. Photography by Derham Groves.

Below: Arthur W. Purnell, *Proposed brick factory premises 353 Exhibition St City for A.G. Barlow esq.* (construction drawing), 14 April 1926. Arthur Purnell Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

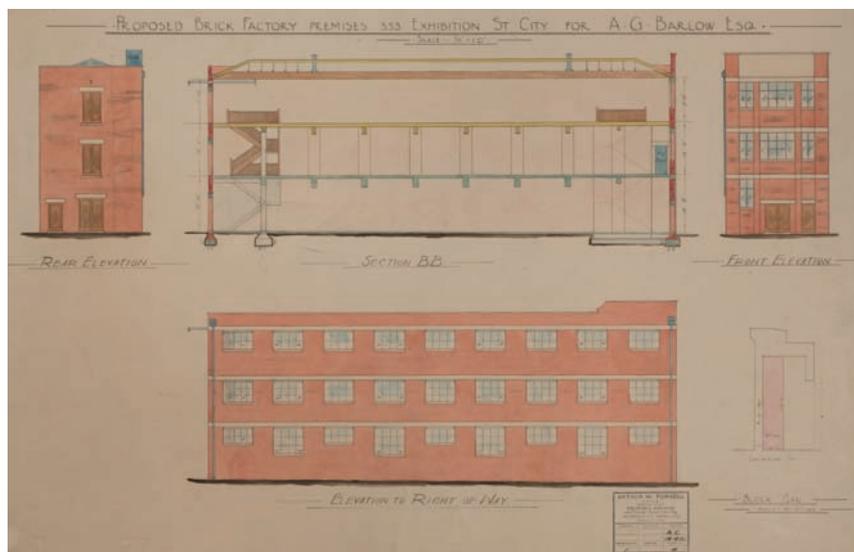
indentured through an American ship's captain. She also recalled that about the same time her father drove a glamorous Stutz Bearcat car, which she described as 'very Hollywood'.¹⁴ Since Barlow Motors sold Stutz cars, Purnell most likely bought it from there. 'Shan Teng' still exists as a private residence.

Barlow was a big spender who enjoyed the high life. During the 1920s he owned a string of promising racehorses, including Preposterer, winner of the 1925 Sandown Plate,¹⁵ Poetaster, winner of the 1927 Aspendale Plate,¹⁶ and Ambassador, winner of the 1927 Ormond Stakes.¹⁷

Furthermore, he would sometimes bet hundreds of pounds at a time on his horses.¹⁸ In 1925 Purnell designed new racing stables for Barlow in Mentone, an outer-Melbourne seaside suburb (illustrated on page 27). The two-storey weatherboard building with a gabled, corrugated-iron roof was on the corner of Lower Dandenong Road and Levanto Street. There were eight horseboxes and four rooms for chaff, feed, oats and horse tackle on the ground floor, and a large hayloft on the first floor. The latter was reached via a ladder, while the hay was pulled up with a rope through a pair of dormer

windows. There was also a long, narrow, one-storey weatherboard and corrugated-iron building where the horse strappers stayed, which comprised three bedrooms, a bathroom and a 'boiling down room' (i.e. a laundry). Barlow ominously sold all of his racehorses in March 1927,¹⁹ but he held onto the stables and leased them out.

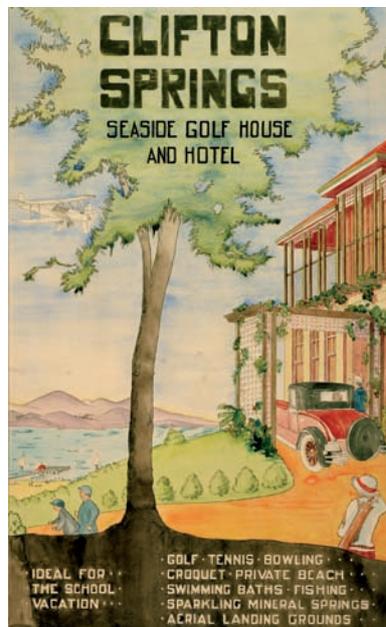
By the end of 1925 Barlow Motors needed more space. In January 1926 Purnell designed a plain one-storey 'brick store' for the company at 353 Exhibition Street in Melbourne, which had vehicle access at the front and rear and backed onto the east side of 20–28 La Trobe Street. In March Purnell's favourite builder Henry Eilenberg agreed to construct the building, but shortly afterwards Barlow had second thoughts about it. In April Purnell designed a three-storey 'brick factory' for Barlow on the same site (illustrated left), which had neither wide entrances nor car ramps between floors. Barlow later sold the building to George A. Bond & Co., the iconic Australian manufacturer of socks and underwear. It still exists and is currently a travel agency (illustrated above). Barlow may have changed his mind because he had his eye on another building: also in April Purnell did a 'Rough plotting of premises nos.



[blank] Clarendon Street, South Melbourne for Barlow Motors Pty. Ltd.', however nothing further came of it.

During the busy month of April 1926 Purnell also designed Barlow Motors' stand at the International Motor Show in the Royal Melbourne Exhibition Building. However, the show's stringent design guidelines stopped Purnell from doing very much. On his copy of the 'Rules governing the general conduct of the Show' he underlined (perhaps with a sense of frustration): 'No exhibitor shall erect any sign, stand, wall or obstruction which exceeds a height of three feet six inches [one metre]'.²⁰ Barlow Motors' stand was 24.5 metres long and nine metres wide, which was large enough to display eight cars: two Beans, two Clynos and four Vauxhalls. On the floor was brown carpet with a grey felt stencilled border; around the edge of the carpet was a rope fence; and on top of each square fence post was a spherical light fitting with 'Bean' written on it. Barlow Motors' stand was in one of the best locations, 'right under the dome' of the historic Royal Melbourne Exhibition Building.²¹

In 1926 Barlow Motors sponsored Barlow's son Alexander Arthur (also called 'Alec') Barlow (1907–1972), a car salesman with the company, and



the renowned Australian adventurer Francis Edwin Birtles (1881–1941) to drive a modified Bean car from Darwin to Melbourne in world record time. Barlow Jnr and Birtles started their 5,438 kilometre journey on 23 October and finished eight days and 13 hours later.²² They were followed all the way by a support crew in a Bean truck.²³ During the trip Barlow Motors ran a series of wonderfully over-the-top full-page newspaper advertisements to inform the public of the intrepid motorists' progress.²⁴ There were also periodic accounts of

their adventures in the papers. For example, *The Argus* reported:

As the Bean racing car was passing through North Goulburn flames were seen by residents to be leaping up from the rear of the car to a height of 20 feet. Mr. Barlow was asleep, and Mr. Birtles was driving, but did not know of the danger till people in the street yelled and pointed. He was travelling about 30 miles an hour at the time. When he jammed on the brakes Mr. Barlow woke up. At once he grasped the fire extinguisher, jumped out of the car before it had stopped, and quickly put the fire out. 'I have never before had such a bad scare,' he said. The pipes from the petrol tank were burned and 50 gallons [227 litres] of petrol were spurting out into the flames. When the fire had been put out the car was driven to a service station, where repairs were affected. 'If it had not been for the fire extinguisher we would have both been blown up,' Mr. Barlow remarked as he was making repairs, 'but fortunately we have escaped with very little loss.'²⁵

Barlow Motors received some great publicity from the trip. The Bean car driven by Barlow Jnr and Birtles is now on display at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra.



In May 1926 Purnell designed the 'Clifton Springs Seaside Golf House and Hotel' at Clifton Springs on the Bellarine Peninsula near his hometown Geelong. Purnell and Alec Barlow Snr were both directors of the company that built and managed the golf house and the 40-room hotel.²⁶ Since Purnell was the motivating force behind the ambitious project, he was probably responsible for getting Barlow involved. There was however more to it than simply their friendship, because the commercial viability of the new holiday resort depended heavily on the car. Consequently the wellbeing of drivers and vehicles was a high priority for the resort's management: 'Motorists have but two hours' comfortable driving over the perfect Geelong and Clifton Springs Roads, and will find on arrival at the Golf House a commodious garage which houses 25 cars in separate lock-up garages,' announced the *Prospectus of Clifton Springs Seaside Golf House (Limited)*:

Petrol, oil and other necessities for the car will be available, and eventually a Bowser petrol tank will be installed, while efficient attendance for washing, greasing, oiling, etc., will be provided ... Like the Genii of the Lamp, modern transport will whisk away

tired people to the relaxation of Clifton Springs, far removed as it is in quiet beauty from the grime and bustle of the cities, and with natural attractions so plentifully bestowed.²⁷

In July 1927 Purnell designed a two-storey house overlooking Port Philip Bay for Barlow on the corner of St Kilda and Wellington Streets, Middle Brighton. (Actually the house was at 146 Beach Road, which was the extension of St Kilda Street—Barlow's mother's street—in the neighbouring suburb.) Barlow's new house had roughcast walls and a hipped tile roof (illustrated above). At the end of the driveway was a porte-cochere to shelter people moving from their car to the front door of the house. On the ground floor were a lounge, smoke room, dining room, kitchen, maid's bedroom, maid's dining alcove, laundry-cum-maid's bathroom, cloak room, store room, telephone booth under the stairs, fuel room, two toilets, and a garage with a drained area in front for washing cars. The lounge and the smoke room opened onto a common veranda. Upstairs were three bedrooms, a sleep-out and a bathroom. Likewise the two front bedrooms opened onto a common balcony. The massing of Barlow's new

house was similar to that of some houses designed in America by Purnell's favourite architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. Barlow Motors was also expanding. In August 1927 the company opened a used car showroom at 442–448 Elizabeth Street in Melbourne (previously occupied by Cudlipp Motors Pty Ltd). Barlow was on top of the world—or so it seemed.

On 9 August 1928 at 3 o'clock in the morning Barlow's wife Frances May (née Hancock) disturbed an intruder inside the couple's Middle Brighton house. A report of the incident next day in *The Argus* provided a peek inside the house, as well as revealing another aspect of Barlow's character:

The man was first seen by Mrs. Barlow. She heard one of the stairs creak, and at once switched on the light at a landing. The intruder, who had been ascending the stairs, turned and ran. Mrs. Barlow's cry for help brought Mr. Barlow from his bedroom with an automatic pistol. He ran downstairs, and went towards the back door, believing that the stranger had escaped that way. The door was shut, however, and on making a search Mr. Barlow found that the



Arthur W. Purnell, *Elevation to La Trobe Street: Proposed alteration to premises at 20 La Trobe Str. Melbourne for Goodyear Tyre & Rubber Co. of Australia Pty Ltd*, (mid-1930s) (elevation, detail). Arthur Purnell Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

side door was ajar. A flowerbed nearby had apparently been trampled on. As there were no marks on the door it is thought that the intruder gained entrance with a skeleton key. Mr. Barlow communicated with the police, and in response to a wireless message the night patrol ... arrived from Moonee Ponds in less than 10 minutes.²⁸

Barlow later wrote to the editor of *The Argus* commending the police for their swift action.²⁹

By the beginning of 1929 Barlow Motors was in financial trouble. The company closed 20–28 La Trobe Street in March and then traded solely from its Elizabeth Street premises. The La Trobe Street building was next occupied by Temple Motors Pty Ltd and then later on by the Goodyear Tyre & Rubber Co. of Australia, which commissioned Purnell to design a third storey for the building. He had done similar work in China,³⁰ and proposed using the same technique here, which involved raising the existing roof en-masse and reusing it on the new addition. He also designed an Art Deco-style façade for the old-fashioned building (illustrated above). This bright new streamlined façade had pale yellow-ochre cement-

rendered walls with areas of green glazed and vermilion unglazed tiles; lemon yellow enamelled metal window frames with warm sepia heads and sills; and signs using vermilion enamelled raised metal letters and warm sepia cement letters. However, none of these changes was ever made to the building.

In October 1929 Barlow Motors spent £800 on a Gypsy Moth bi-plane that was supposedly for business, but was really for the amusement of Alec Barlow Jnr. He and his friend Hugh Hughes flew the plane for the first time to Portsea, a coastal town 97 kilometres southwest of Melbourne, to meet some friends at the Nepean Hotel. Barlow Jnr landed the plane safely in a paddock, but taking off after drinking at the pub was not so easy; the plane scraped a wire fence, knocked a telephone pole and hit a cypress tree before crashing into the veranda of Stringer's store. Miraculously nobody was seriously hurt—let alone killed—but the plane was a write-off.³¹ A fortnight after the accident Barlow Motors purchased another Gypsy Moth for Barlow Jnr to play with.³² No wonder the business was in difficulty. Remarkably the barnstorming pilot went on to fly professionally for several commercial airlines and ended up as manager of

Qantas' far eastern division.³³

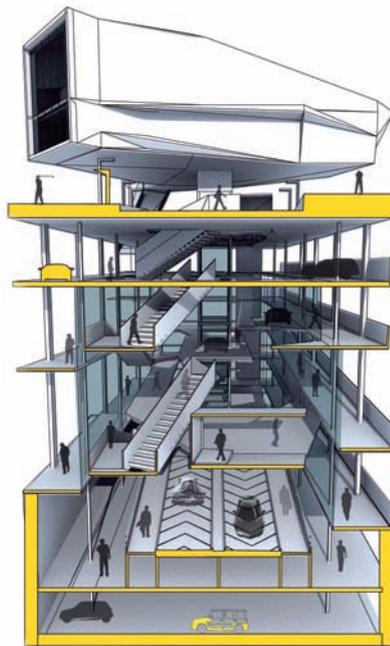
After Wall Street crashed in October 1929 the bottom fell out of the new car market around the world. (The parallels between then and now are chilling.) Barlow Motors continued trading until November 1930 when it was officially wound up with debts of £96,472.³⁴ But Barlow was undaunted. Miniature golf was the newest craze sweeping Australia and in December he leased the lower Melbourne Town Hall for £43 per week and controversially³⁵ set up a miniature golf course inside the building.³⁶ Typical of this sort of fly-by-night enterprise, the outlays were low and the hopes of striking it rich were high. However, Barlow's miniature golf course closed after only 20 weeks, losing the hapless businessman a further £798.³⁷ While I have found no evidence so far to indicate that Purnell designed the miniature golf course, he might very well have done so; in January 1930 Purnell (now in partnership with two of his former 'star' employees Eric Hazel Round and William Alfred Graham) designed an outdoor miniature golf course at Queens Wharf next to the Yarra River in Melbourne. Unfortunately it fared no better than Barlow's.³⁸

Following Barlow Motors' liquidation the company seems to

have transmogrified into Franklin Used Cars Pty Ltd, which also traded from 442–448 Elizabeth Street. However, this business struggled as well and to keep it afloat Barlow—in cahoots with his bank manager Maurice John Kelly—defrauded £164,000 from Edmund Harold Hunter, a wealthy retired merchant.³⁹ When Hunter's money finally ran out, Barlow shot himself at his Beach Road house. According to a report of the subsequent court case:

At the end of March or early April 1937, the snowball was getting bigger and bigger, and [Hunter] had told Barlow that he could not go on any longer. When Barlow could not get any more cheques from [Hunter] the balloon burst. [Hunter] had been notified by his bank that some of the promissory notes had not been met. He saw Barlow at his home and asked him what was the trouble. Barlow replied that two banks had turned him down, and he had not had any sleep for 48 hours. He told [Hunter] to come back, as he had to have some sleep. When [Hunter] returned about 5 o'clock Barlow was dead.⁴⁰

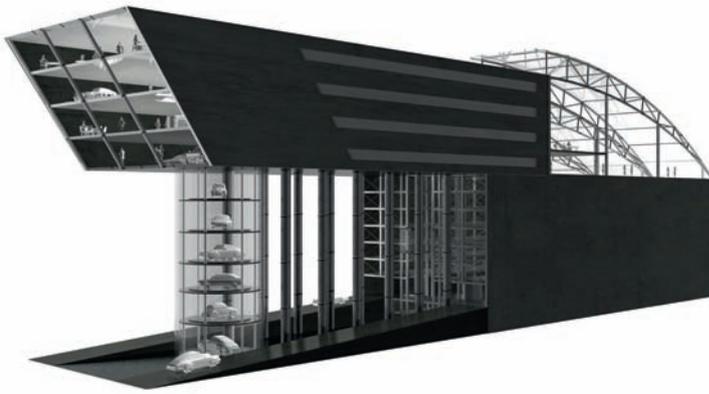
Being widowed and practically



minded, Mrs Barlow commissioned Purnell to convert the large Beach Road house into a pair of self-contained flats. It still exists as two apartments (illustrated on page 30). Ironically the 'Barlow file' opened with alterations to Mrs Barlow's house (i.e. Barlow's mother's house) and closed with alterations to Mrs Barlow's house (i.e. Barlow's widow's house). Purnell's architecture marked nearly every stage of the ill-fated car dealer's amazing rise and tragic fall.

The Arthur Purnell Collection at

the University of Melbourne Archives not only provides a unique view of architecture and life in Melbourne during the first half of the 20th century, but is also a valuable resource for contemporary designers. In first semester 2009 I asked 80 third-year architecture students from the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne, where I teach, to pretend that Alec Barlow was alive today and had commissioned them to design a new building for Barlow Motors at 20–28 La Trobe Street, consisting of a car showroom, car service centre, car park for 350 cars, bachelor's apartment for Alec Barlow Jnr and a miniature golf course with a car theme. Most students responded enthusiastically to the adventurous and flamboyant personalities of the Barlows. Many supposed that Barlow Motors sold luxury cars, such as Aston Martins, Bugattis, Porsches and Morgans. Because the Barlows were trendsetters, several students used the most up-to-date technology, like robotic car parking systems. A few wove a pathway through their buildings to commemorate the dash from Darwin to Melbourne by Alec Barlow Jnr and Francis Birtles in 1926. A number of students assumed that Barlow Jnr was a playboy and a womaniser and designed his



apartment accordingly; one woman for example based its shape on the Hope Diamond. Others created top-heavy structures to reflect the precarious state of Barlow's business. I feel that Purnell and the Barlows would have appreciated the students' designs, because I suspect they understood better than most that architecture is sometimes another form of biography.

Dr Derham Groves is a Senior Lecturer in Architecture in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne. Earlier this year Ramble House published his latest book, a collection of essays and images titled *Victims and villains: Barbie and Ken meet Sherlock Holmes*. He is currently working on a book about Arthur Purnell. He would love to hear from any relatives of Alec Barlow.

Notes

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- 4 I wish to thank the staff of the University of Melbourne Archives, especially Denise Driver and Sophie Garrett, for their assistance and patience. Also the Sidney Myer Fund, which in 2007 generously funded the conservation of architectural drawings in the collection.
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- 6 All architectural drawings referred to in this article are from the Arthur Purnell Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.
- 7 *The Argus*, 3 October 1922, p. 4.
- 8 *The Argus*, 12 September 1922, p. 4.
- 9 'Property Sales', *The Argus*, 1 February 1924, p. 8.
- 10 *The Argus*, 28 February 1920, p. 4.
- 11 Peter Cuffley, *Australian houses of the '20s & '30s*, Fitzroy: Five Mile Press, 1989, p. 96.
- 12 A.W. Purnell, 'State taxation. To the Editor of *The Argus*', *The Argus*, 8 December 1924, p. 13.
- 13 'Shameen', 17 Munro Street, Armadale (1914) and 'Shameen' on the corner of Huntingtower and Malvern Roads, Malvern (1916).
- 14 Joan Dickson, interviewed by Andrew Ward, architectural historian, 10 July 1992.
- 15 'Racing at Sandown Park', *The Argus*, 18 May 1925, p. 9.
- 16 'Winner of Aspendale Plate', *The Argus*, 10 January 1927, p. 9.
- 17 'Ambassador case. Explanation accepted. Owner reprimanded', *The Argus*, 19 November 1927, p. 19.
- 18 'Ambassador case'.
- 19 'Mr. A.G. Barlow's horses for sale', *The Argus*, 23 February 1927, p. 17.
- 20 'Rules governing the general conduct of the Show', typescript, 1926, in the Arthur Purnell Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.
- 21 *The Argus*, 15 May 1926, p. 17.
- 22 'Bean "brings home the bacon". Birtles & Barlow smash the record! Darwin to Melbourne', *The Argus*, 1 November 1926, p. 5.
- 23 'Transcontinental test. Bean truck and car', *The Argus*, 17 September 1926, p. 27.
- 24 'Across Australia! Off to Darwin', *The Argus*, 18 September 1926, p. 25. 'Southward Ho!', *The Argus*, 23 October 1926, p. 15. 'The Bean romps into Sydney burning up the miles from Darwin', *The Argus*, 29 October 1926, p. 5.
- 25 'Car in flames. Excitement at Goulburn', *The Argus*, 30 October 1926, p. 35.
- 26 *Prospectus of Clifton Springs Seaside Golf House (Limited)*, Melbourne: Keating-Wood Pty Ltd, (n.d.), p. 3. Arthur Purnell Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.
- 27 *Prospectus of Clifton Springs*, pp. 5 & 7.
- 28 'Intruder in house. Escapes from pursuer. Early morning incident', *The Argus*, 10 August 1928, p. 11.
- 29 Alec G. Barlow, 'To the Editor of *The Argus*', *The Argus*, 10 August 1928, p. 13.
- 30 This was for the Carlowitz & Company building on Shamian (see Groves, *From Canton Club to Melbourne Cricket Club*, p. 17).
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- 32 'Golden Quest the VH-UMR', www.lassteria.com/CYCLOPEDIA/110.htm, accessed 20 June 2009.
- 33 Malcolm Fredman, 'Brighton Beach and the Cutty Sark', *The Journal of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia Inc.*, vol. 35, no. 2, June 2004, p. 75.
- 34 'Barlow Motors Pty. Ltd. Deficiency of £96,472', *The Argus*, 22 November 1930, p. 18.
- 35 'Deceiving the unemployed', *The Argus*, 3 December 1930, p. 6.
- 36 'Midget golf in Town Hall. Leasing offer accepted. Rental of £43 a week', *The Argus*, 2 December 1930, p. 6.
- 37 'Midget golf course. £798 lost on Town Hall venture', *The Argus*, 19 May 1931, p. 7.
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- 40 'A.G. Barlow's seven bank accounts'.

A case for photographs

Jason Benjamin

The photographic collections held by the University of Melbourne are a rich resource for those interested in the history of photography in Victoria. Notable collections include those of the Grainger Museum, the Ian Potter Museum of Art and the University of Melbourne Archives (UMA), all of which contain works by some of Victoria's best-known photographers.¹ Of particular significance, however, is UMA's small but important collection of daguerreotypes and ambrotypes,² the first photographic processes widely practised in Victoria.

Often referred to as cased photographs, for the small protective boxes in which they were presented, these processes were in popular use in Victoria from 1845 until the mid-1860s, when albumen print *cartes-de-visite* began to dominate the photographic trade.

One aspect of daguerreotypes and ambrotypes of particular interest is the materials and techniques used in the sealing and casing of the images. Often demonstrating a high level of finish and design, the casing and sealing components form an important part of the overall object: a cased photograph.³ Although it is usually the image contained within the case that is the primary focus, the case and the sealing components are



elements of the work of art that deserve attention in their own right.

The UMA selection, although relatively small (three daguerreotypes and 22 ambrotypes), includes representative examples of the various case designs and sealing techniques used during the 1850s and 1860s, thus providing a good overview of the development of this art form. For the examples with a known Victorian provenance, these casing elements can also reveal important information on the origins of the photographic supplies being used locally. This in turn provides us with an insight into

the influences of the international photographic trade on early photography in Victoria.

UMA's largest single collection of cased images comes from the papers of the Armytage family, wealthy pastoralists who had established themselves in Victoria from the 1830s after moving from van Diemen's Land. They are best known today as the former owners of the historic house 'Como' in South Yarra. Consisting of two daguerreotypes and 16 ambrotypes (a number of which were separated from their cases prior to deposit at UMA), this collection is

Photographer unknown, Armytage family group, including Charles and Caroline Armytage and their eldest child, Charles Norman Armytage, at 'Fulham' near Balmoral, c.1858–1859, quarter-plate daguerreotype, housed in a wooden-based, leather-covered case, manufactured c.1857–1858, 8.1 x 9.3 x 1.5 cm. Armytage Family Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

Opposite: The embossed combination floral and geometric external case design is more intricate and dominates more of the case surface than the Strathfieldsaye Estate daguerreotype case of the early 1850s illustrated on p. 37. The use of gold borders, which became popular during the 1850s, further adds to the busy effect.

Below: Interior view, illustrating the casing components including mat, protector and embossed velvet pad. The leather hinge can also be seen as well as the more ornate nature of this example in comparison with the Strathfieldsaye Estate daguerreotype. The colour effects on daguerreotypes were achieved by applying dry pigment combined with gum arabic with a fine brush and then using heat and moisture generated by breathing on the image to adhere it to the surface.

significant for the many images, predominantly portraits, known to have been taken in Victoria.

A smaller collection of five cased images is held in the Strathfieldsaye Estate papers which chronicle the Disher family of Stratford in Gippsland. Among this collection is the oldest example of a daguerreotype held by UMA. Of particular note is a rare half-plate landscape ambrotype from the James Stewart Johnston papers, which depicts the National Trust and Victorian Heritage Register listed 'Glenara' homestead at Bulla.⁴

The daguerreotype was the first photographic process practised in Victoria and was introduced to the then Port Phillip District of New South Wales in August 1845 by George Baron Goodman (d.1851), Australia's first professional photographer. Perfected in 1839 by Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1787–1851), who built upon the work of earlier pioneers, the daguerreotype was the first practical photographic process to be widely used by professional photographers. Popular until the late 1850s, the daguerreotype image was formed on a highly polished silver-coated copper plate. The mirror finish made the image difficult to see at particular angles. As this process did not utilise a negative, the image created was



unique and could not be duplicated without re-photographing it.

Although it is unclear who first introduced the ambrotype process to Victoria, the first advertisement for the process by a professional photographer appeared in 1854.⁵ The basic ambrotype process was first made public in 1851 by its inventor, Frederick Scott Archer (1813–1857), and quickly gained popularity. The ambrotype is an under-exposed negative on glass that is made positive by covering the reverse of the glass with an opaque coating, usually a black lacquer. Once the reverse is coated the end result is a soft and pearly positive image without the reflective surface of the daguerreotype. As with the daguerreotype this process also produces a unique image.

The image surfaces of both the daguerreotype and ambrotype are highly sensitive to mechanical and environmental damage, which meant that protective sealing and housing methods were required for preservation. Depending on the region, certain protective conventions developed that, in concept, changed little throughout the period during which these types of images were produced. In continental Europe the most common practice was to adapt conventional picture framing methods using mats under glass that favoured

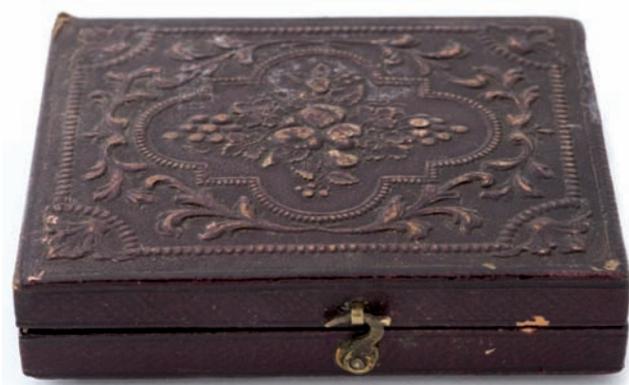
the displaying of images on walls.⁶ In Britain and North America, however, the most common practice was the adoption of small cases that had originally been designed for the housing of miniature portraits painted on ivory.⁷ In conjunction with these cases, protective sealing methods utilising mats, glass, tapes and preservers—a thin metal wraparound frame—were developed.

The art of case making and the manufacturing of sealing accessories for these formats reached its height in North America, where between the 1840s and 1860s millions of cases were manufactured annually for the photographic trade. As well as supplying the domestic market, the cases and sealing components were also exported. Advertisements for local photographic suppliers firmly establish that Victoria was a part of this trade.⁸ Although in many instances the origins of the cases and sealing components are unclear, a number of examples held by UMA confirm that America was the source for some of the cases being used in Victoria.

The most common form of case represented in the UMA collection is that of a shallow base and lid constructed from wood. Usually of a combined depth of several centimetres, these wooden-based

cases were manufactured in five standard sizes,⁹ and were the predominant style used internationally. Except for minor structural changes, these standard wooden cases were consistent in basic construction throughout their period of use. The skeleton structure of the earlier cases consisted of ten pieces of shaped wood, five pieces each for the base and lid. This structure was made up of a rectangular base of solid wood with four rails glued to the edges to form the side rim. In America from the early 1850s a design consisting of seven pieces of wood for each half of the case was introduced, to prevent the warping that was common with the earlier design. The additional two pieces of wood were used as cross-grain reinforcing of the two baseboards. The most common type of wood used was a soft North American native pine.¹⁰

It is rare to be able to see the underlying structure of these cases but a detached pad from the lid of an Armytage family quarter-plate daguerreotype affords us an opportunity to do so. This particular example demonstrates the seven-piece construction introduced in America during the early 1850s, with the cross-grain reinforcing plainly visible. The daguerreotype housed in this case (illustrated on pages 34–35) is



Photographer unknown, Portrait of an unknown woman, c.1850–1855, daguerreotype, housed in a wooden-based, leather-covered case, manufactured c.1850–1855, 7.5 x 6.1 x 1.6 cm. Bequest of Dr Harold Clive Disher, 1976, Strathfieldsaye Estate Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

Left: The case features a relatively simple combination floral and geometric embossed design. Note the visible joins in the leather along the case's edge which, in contrast with the Armytage family daguerreotype case, are quite obvious.

Below: Interior view revealing plain mat, lack of preserver and simple embossing of velvet pad.

also of particular interest as it is a rare surviving example of an external view. This group portrait, which includes Charles and Caroline Armytage and their eldest child, Charles Norman, standing in front of their homestead at 'Fulham', the family's property near Balmoral in Victoria's Western District, would have been taken in about 1858–1859 and is one of the later daguerreotypes produced.

The greatest change to the cases during their period of use concerned the design elements employed on the external surfaces. Earlier cases were generally plain with only a simple geometric design on the lid, but by the 1850s more intricate designs were favoured and usually appeared on both sides of the case. Geometric and floral designs were the most popular and all the examples held by UMA fall into these two categories.¹¹ The Strathfieldsaye Estate daguerreotype illustrated above is a good example of the early use of the intricate floral and geometric designs that became increasingly favoured. Dating from the early 1850s, this sixth-ninth plate brown leather case is embossed with a central motif of flowers and fruit surrounded by a combination of geometric and foliate borders. Although combining both common design elements, the overall effect is one of relative simplicity, which



contrasts with later embossing designs which are far more intricate and dominate more of the case surface. Gold borders—which further added to the busy appearance of many designs—also became popular during the 1850s.

The exterior finish of cases commonly consisted of leather (usually a paper-thin sheepskin), paper or cloth. The majority of the UMA's cases with a Victorian provenance are finished with leather, suggesting that this was the preferred style locally. From the early 1850s the finish was usually embossed prior to being glued to the case. This was achieved using a brass cylinder die,

cut with raised design features. The embossed layer, slightly larger than the case surface, was placed upon the already glued wooden surfaces of the top and base of the case, then repeatedly brushed with a blunt rubber stick until the glue set. This process was mechanised in 1854 by the use of a press which was able to glue embossed surfaces on to six cases at a time.¹²

The next step in the finishing process involved attaching a single strip of thin, high quality leather to the front rail, two side rails and partially to the back rail. The quality of the craftsmanship in paring and feathering the leather margins

Below: Thomas S. Glaister, Portrait of an unknown woman, c.1854, uncased ambrotype, 8.4 x 7.2 cm. Armytage Family Collection, University of Melbourne Archives. The Armytage Family Collection was gifted to the University in 1968 by Mrs Constance Fitzpatrick (née Armytage) and the estate of Miss Leila Armytage.

The brass mat and protector and the cover glass have been separated from the case, which has been lost. The portrait demonstrates the use of black lacquer to produce a positive image. This photograph is significant as one of few of the period to be identified with a photographer's name.

resulted in almost imperceptible joins in the different pieces of leather once they were glued down.¹³ The high quality craftsmanship in forming these joins is evident in many of the UMA's examples, although not in all. The rather obvious joins in the Strathfieldsaye Estate daguerreotype case illustrated on page 37 suggest that a more rudimentary approach was taken in these earlier examples.

The hinge joining the two halves of the case was generally manufactured from a single piece of heavier leather and was commonly called the 'inside-outside back'. It was attached to both the inside and the outside portion of the rear rails, concealing the exposed wood not covered by the rail strip.¹⁴ Later American cases also used cloth to form this hinge and at least one example of this can be found in the Armytage Family collection.

The pad used inside the lid was designed to further protect the image and generally consist of a cardboard mat, cotton wool wadding and, most commonly, a silk or velvet fabric which was folded over the cardboard and glued in place. In earlier cases the covering fabric was plain but from the late 1840s onwards the velvet was usually embossed with ornate designs. The most common colours were reds, pinks, rust and burgundy, although

Right: Photographer unknown, Portrait of an unknown man, c.1850–1859, daguerreotype, housed in a wooden-based, leather-covered case, manufactured c.1850–1859, 11.8 x 9.3 x 2.0 cm. Armytage Family Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

This case features a rare green velvet pad and heavily embossed mat.



the Armytage Family collection also has rare examples of purple and green (illustrated above right). A velvet-covered strip of cardboard, usually the same colour as the pad, was used to line the inside rails of the base to form a tight border to hold the image in place. The Strathfieldsaye Estate daguerreotype pad on page 37 is a good example of the simpler designs favoured in earlier years, with its single flower motive surrounded by a plain geometric border.

As noted above, the general structure of cases did not change significantly and it was largely the style of the decorative elements that altered. The sealing components used for the image, however, experienced a

greater level of stylistic and technical change. The earliest known sealing technique used in Victoria was the Wharton frame which was in currency until at least 1847.¹⁵ Named after its designer Thomas Wharton, a Birmingham brass founder, this frame consisted of a solid brass plate that was indented with a well to fit the daguerreotype plate and four edge flaps that were bent around the daguerreotype, mat and glass to seal the unit together before being fitted into the case.

The Wharton case seems not to have been used later than 1847 and until the introduction of preservers in the early 1850s only a thin tape was used to seal the image. This method had been standard convention in America since the early 1840s, and involved sealing the daguerreotype, along with the mat and cover glass, with tape manufactured from a heavy tissue or writing paper spread with gum Arabic.¹⁶ These tapes continued to be used after the introduction of preservers and can often be seen around the edges in less well-finished examples. A quarter-plate ambrotype depicting Caroline Armytage, without a preserver or case, affords us an opportunity to view this taping system in some detail, with its fine quality, lightly embossed sealing paper (illustrated opposite).



Photographer unknown, Portrait of Caroline Armytage, c.1860, quarter-plate ambrotype, mounted but without a case, 18.0 x 14.6 cm. Armytage Family Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

Embossed paper has been used as sealing tape. The border is of gilt card rather than the more typical brass mat. Also unusual is the use of white painted cover glass to perform the visual function of a mat.

Preservers were used in America as early as 1847 but were not common until about 1850,¹⁷ and not in Victoria until after 1851. The preserver was designed to hold the image unit together in the same manner as the tape but with the added advantage of providing an aesthetic frame. Preservers were manufactured from paper-thin, pliable sheet brass, cut to a rectangular shape with malleable flaps that were wrapped around the image plate, mat and glass. The preservers were generally embossed, at first with simple designs, but later, especially during the 1860s, with quite ornate elements that could encroach upon both mat and image. This evolution in design is evident in the UMA collections with later images demonstrating a tendency towards the more ornate, visible in a number of the Strathfieldsaye Estate ambrotypes.

Mats have been a consistent part of the sealing process for cased photographs since the early 1840s and are present in all intact examples held by UMA. The early mats were relatively plain with ellipse, double ellipse, oval and octagon being the shapes favoured for the viewing window. They were usually made of sheet brass or gilt card. Sheet brass appears to have been the most



common material used in Victoria, although there are two examples of gilt card used with ambrotypes in the Armytage collection. As with preservers, the later mats were usually more ornate and increasingly utilised embossing as a design element, which again is evident in the Strathfieldsaye Estate ambrotypes.

Although the covered wooden cases were the predominant format used in Victoria, an example of an ambrotype housed in a thermoplastic Union case in the Strathfieldsaye Estate collection confirms that this format was also in local use. Union cases were manufactured from an early type of moulded plastic made from shellac, wood fibres and tinting

agents, which allowed for much bolder bas-relief designs than those possible with embossing. Designs depicting historical events, people, animals and places became popular, as did an expanding range of the floral and geometric designs used with the embossed wooden cases.

America was the primary manufacturer of the Union case, with the first patent for a specific manufacturing process being granted to Samuel Peck of New Haven, Connecticut, in October 1854.¹⁸ There was one known English manufacturer, John Smith of Birmingham, who filed a thermoplastic case patent in 1859,¹⁹ but most examples found in Australia were probably imported from America. This is supported by the Union case held by UMA (illustrated on page 40) which is identical to published images of American-made examples.²⁰ The Strathfieldsaye Estate example consists of a quarter-plate metal hinged black case with a 'C' scroll border and central Maltese cross design on both lid and base. Although the portrait of the unidentified gentleman is undated, his style of dress suggests the late 1850s to mid-1860s. This date range is further supported by the presence of embedded hinges, which were introduced in 1856.²¹

Photographer unknown, Portrait of an unknown man, ambrotype, c.1856–1866, housed in a moulded thermoplastic Union case manufactured in North America, 12.6 x 10.5 x 2.3 cm. Bequest of Dr Harold Clive Disher, 1976, Strathfieldsaye Estate Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.

This example of a Union case was manufactured in America after 1856 and demonstrates the use of embedded hinges.



Although daguerreotype and ambrotype photographs were produced in their thousands by professional photographers, their fragile nature has resulted in relatively few making their way into public collections.²² The University of Melbourne Archives' three daguerreotypes and 22 ambrotypes dating from the 1850s and 1860s are therefore valuable resources in the study of this period of photography.

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Notes

- 1 Spanning more than 150 years, these collections include works by Thomas S. Glaister, Charles Nettleton, Mina Moore, Jack Cato and Wolfgang Sievers, to name a few.
- 2 During their period of production in Australia, ambrotypes were commonly referred to as collodion positives or positives on glass. The term ambrotype (derived from the ancient Greek word for imperishable and first used to describe the process by its American patent holder, James Cutting) has subsequently become the widely accepted term for this process.
- 3 Although predominantly used for daguerreotypes and ambrotypes, cases were also used to house tintypes and early albumen prints. An example of a cased albumen print

- can be found in the Armytage Family Collection held by the University of Melbourne Archives. Measuring 4.7 x 4.3 x 1.2 cm, this leather-covered case was designed to fit a sixteenth-plate daguerreotype or ambrotype but has been used to house a trimmed albumen print portrait of a young woman.
- 4 Photographer unknown, View of 'Glenara' homestead at Bulla, c.1857–1860, half-plate ambrotype, housed in a wooden-based, leather-covered case, manufactured c.1857–1860, 13.3 x 18.4 x 2.5 cm. James Stewart Johnston Collection, University of Melbourne Archives.
- 5 Alan Davies and Peter Stanbury, *The mechanical eye in Australia: Photography 1841–1900*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 24.
- 6 F. and M. Rinhart, *American miniature case art*, New Jersey: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1969, p. 17.
- 7 M. Susan Barger and William B. White, *The daguerreotype: Nineteenth-century technology and modern science*, Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991, p. 202.
- 8 The Batchelder and O'Neill Daguerreotype and Photographic Portrait Studio was one of the main suppliers of photographic equipment and materials in Victoria from as early as 1857. The company's advertisement in the 1859 *Sands & Kenny's commercial and general Melbourne directory* lists both England and America as the sources of their goods.
- 9 The standard sizes were whole plate at 9¹/₈ x 7 inches, half-plate at 6 x 4⁷/₈ inches, quarter-plate at 4¹/₄ x 3³/₄ inches, sixth-ninth plate at 2⁷/₈ x 2³/₈ inches and sixteenth-plate at 2 x 1³/₄ inches.
- 10 Rinhart, *American miniature case art*, p. 18.
- 11 Cases decorated with historical scenes and portraits were popular in America, but the general lack of examples in Victorian collections suggests that they were primarily manufactured for the local market rather than for export.
- 12 For a more detailed description of this process see Rinhart, *American miniature case art*, p. 18.
- 13 Rinhart, *American miniature case art*, p. 19.

- 14 Rinhart, *American miniature case art*, p. 20.
- 15 Although no examples of George Baron Goodman's Victorian photographs have been identified, his surviving photographs produced during the mid-1840s in New South Wales are in Wharton frames. Victoria's second photographer, Douglas Kilburn, is known to have used Wharton frames for images produced in Melbourne during 1847.
- 16 Barger and White, *The daguerreotype*, p. 203.
- 17 A. Kenny, *Photographic cases: Victorian design sources 1840–1870*, Atglen, PA: Schiffer, 2001, p. 152.
- 18 C. Krainik, *Union cases: A collector's guide to the art of America's first plastics*, Grantsburg: Centennial Photo Service, 1988, p. 5.
- 19 J. Hannavy, 'John Smith and England's Union cases', *The Daguerreian Annual: Official Yearbook of the Daguerreian Society*, Eureka, CA: The Daguerreian Society, 1997, p. 47.
- 20 See Kenny, *Photographic cases*, p. 102.
- 21 The embedded hinge system, as demonstrated by this Union case, was patented by Samuel Peck in 1856. Peck's design resolved the problem of cases breaking during the hinging process (which up to this point involved drilling a hole through the case) by embedding the metal supports of the hinge into the thermoplastic while still in a plastic state.
- 22 In addition to the fragility of these formats, the fact that many were sent 'home' to family and friends by a largely immigrant population has also greatly contributed to their scarcity in Australian public collections. Helen Ennis muses that future histories of early Australian photography may in fact be written in Britain rather than Australia (Helen Ennis, *Photography and Australia*, London: Reaktion Books, 2007, p. 14).

The R.F. Price Collection

Bick-har Yeung

The R.F. Price Collection, held in the East Asian Library Rare Books Collection at the University of Melbourne, comprises Chinese educational and children's books published from the 1960s to the 1980s and is unique among western library holdings. It includes a comprehensive collection of primary and secondary school textbooks; books on a variety of educational disciplines such as educational theory, administration, systems, and educational history; biographies of educators; directories of educational institutions in China; and a rich collection of children's books, which are rarely found in Australian libraries. The collection, comprising over 1,000 titles, was donated to the University by Dr Ronald Francis Price in July 2007.

Dr Price is a scholar of comparative education. He has written widely on education in China, including the book *Education in Communist China*,¹ first published in the World Education Series edited by Professor Brian Holmes of the London Institute of Education. Born in the UK, Dr Price taught there, in Bulgaria, and in Ghana. In 1965 he went to teach English at the Second Foreign Languages Institute in Beijing, returning to the UK in the summer of 1967. In 1971 he took up



a post in the School of Education at La Trobe University, where he taught until his retirement in 1991. Some of the materials donated to the East Asian Collection were purchased by Dr Price during his stay in Beijing, others on subsequent visits to China, including periods spent teaching summer schools at the Xi'an Normal University (Xi'an Shifan Daxue) or in Hong Kong.

In 1966, during Dr Price's first period of teaching in China, Mao Zedong launched the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which led to ten years of chaos in China, with widespread suffering and loss of life. The Cultural Revolution was a struggle for power within the Communist Party between Mao, Liu

Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, and later with Zhou Enlai and Lin Biao, and was only ended by the arrest of the Gang of Four. Red guards were formed by Mao to smash the 'Four Olds' (old ideas, old culture, old habits and old customs).

During the ten chaotic years of the Cultural Revolution, China suffered from a severe shortage of books.² Publications during this period had a strong emphasis on politics: the propagation of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. The R.F. Price Collection has a good coverage of this type of political publication. One of the most important and popular works during the Cultural Revolution was the Little Red Book or *Quotations of Chairman Mao*, 毛主席语录.³ Produced in pocket size with a red plastic jacket, more than one billion copies were printed for the Chinese people to study in schools and at workplaces and to carry at all times. Mao's quotations were cited in boldface or in red in most editions. Other popular works were Mao's *Selected works* 毛泽东选集,⁴ and Mao's *Poems* 毛泽东诗词.⁵ From 1966 to 1969, nearly all schools in China were closed due to political instability. The schools gradually began to function again from late 1968, a process discussed by Dr Price

Previous page: *Chu chu you Lei Feng / hui zhe Guan Jingyu deng* (处处有雷锋 / 绘者关景宇等), Beijing: Ren min mei shu, 1973. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne. Image courtesy of the artist, Mr Jingyu Guan (图片由绘者关景宇授权引用).

Right: R.F. Price with summer school students at Xi'an Normal University (Xi'an Shifan Daxue), 1983. Private collection.

Below: *Pi Lin pi Kong meng kai pao: Shanghai hong xiao bing er ge xuan / Ben she bian* (批林批孔猛开炮: 上海红小兵儿歌选 / 本社编), Shanghai: Shanghai ren min chu ban she, 1975. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne. Image courtesy of the Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe (图片由上海人民出版社授权引用).



in his book *Education in modern China*.⁶

The collection is particularly strong in textbooks used in primary and secondary schools in the years concerned. There are several hundred of these volumes covering a variety of subjects such as history, geography, politics, arts, moral education, music, Chinese language, English language, biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, calculus, geometry, hygiene and women's health. There are texts and basic reference works for vocational groups such as the 'barefoot doctors', workers and peasants. Examination of the school textbooks shows the prevalence of the cult of Mao. For example, in lesson 30 of *Chinese language, v. 1* for primary schools, the text includes 'Chairman Mao loves us. Chairman Mao asks us to study hard ... We need to listen to Chairman Mao and be the Chairman's good Children.'⁷ In lesson 1 of *English, v. 1*, 'Learn to speak', the first and only sentence for the students to learn was 'We love Chairman Mao. 我们热爱毛主席'.⁸ In many secondary school textbooks, Mao's quotations are printed in black boldface, not only in the book's preface, but also in the content of the lessons. Even science textbooks, on subjects such as physics, chemistry and mathematics, include quotations

from Mao. The school textbooks collection is of great value for researching curriculum design and the personality cult during the Mao and post-Mao eras.

In addition to the textbooks, the R.F. Price Collection includes 250 volumes of children's books. Young children in Mao's time did not escape the Mao cult and communist ideology. Ranging from nursery rhymes to story-telling, children's books were used as propaganda to brainwash children into loving the Communist Party and Chairman Mao, thus promoting Mao's ideological campaigns. The children's book collection includes picture books and children's literature. There is a good coverage of books on anti-Confucianism and the anti-Lin Biao campaign of 1973–1974, books about revolutionary heroes such as Lei Feng (1940–1962), the Little Red Guards and anti-USA imperialism.

As well as this propaganda material, Dr Price collected a good sample of juvenile science literature. This aims to promote young children's exploration of scientific knowledge. *The 100 thousand whys* 十万个为什么 series,⁹ and the *We love science* 我们爱科学 series,¹⁰ both published by Shaonian ertong chubanshe in Shanghai in the 1960s and 1970s, were very popular

children's books. Critics considered *The sparking red star* 闪闪的红星 by Li Xintian, published by Beijing Renmin chubanshe in 1972, to be an excellent work.¹¹ During the Cultural Revolution there was very little literature for children. What was published was compiled under the political dictates of class struggle.¹² However, Dr Price's collection of children's books offers a rare insight into social and political trends in children's literature for researchers studying the Cultural Revolution and post-Cultural Revolution eras.



Gan Xiao, *Kong lao er zui e de yi sheng / bian wen Xiao Gan; hui hua Gu Bingxin, He Youyi* (孔老二罪恶的一生 / 编写萧甘; 绘画顾炳鑫, 贺友宜), Shanghai: Ren min chu ban she, 1974. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne.
Image courtesy of the Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe (图片由上海人民出版社授权使用).

The R.F. Price Collection is held in the East Asian Rare Books Collection in the Baillieu Library. Cataloguing of the collection was made possible by the generous support of the Russell and Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Fund and a cultural collections grant funded by the University's Annual Appeal. Bibliographic information on the books can be searched from the University of Melbourne library catalogue <http://cat.lib.unimelb.edu.au/>. Because of their rarity, the books are not available for loan, but may be used in the Cultural Collections Reading Room on the 3rd floor of the Baillieu Library. Material can be ordered at the East Asian Information Desk or by calling (03) 8344 5365, or by email to Bick-har Yeung on bhy@unimelb.edu.au.

Bick-har Yeung is the East Asian Librarian at the University of Melbourne Library.

Notes

- 1 R.F. Price, *Education in Communist China*, London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1970. Second edition published as: Ronald Francis Price, *Education in modern China*, London and Boston: Routledge & K. Paul, 1979.
- 2 Geremie Barmé, 'Notes on publishing in China 1976 to 1979', *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 4, July 1980, pp. 167-174.
- 3 For example: Zedong Mao, *Mao zhu xi yu lu* 毛主席语录, Beijing: Zhongguo ren min jie fang jun zong zheng zhi bu: Shanghai shi yin shua san chang yin shua, 1966. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne.
- 4 Zedong Mao, *Mao Zedong Xuan Ji* 毛泽东选集, 1964 nian 4 yue di 1 ban, Beijing: Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun zhanshi chubanshe, 1966. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne.
- 5 Zedong Mao, *Mao Zhu Xi Shi Ci* 毛主席诗词, Beijing: Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1966. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne.
- 6 Price, *Education in modern China*.
- 7 Ren min jiao yu chu ban she. Xiao xue yu wen bian ji shi, *Yuwen* 语文, Beijing: Ren min jiao yu chu ban she, 1963: Shandong ren min chu ban she, (1964 printing), p. 65. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne.
- 8 *Ying yu. Di 1 ce*. 英语, [Xi'an: s.n., 197-?]. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne.
- 9 *Shi wan ge wei shen me* 十万个为什么, Shanghai: Shao nian er tong chu ban she, 1965. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne.
- 10 Zhongguo shao nian er tong chu ban she, *Wo men ai ke xue* 我们爱科学, Beijing: [Zhongguo shao nian er tong chu ban she], 1960. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne.
- 11 Xintian Li, *Shan shan de hong xing* 闪闪的红星, Beijing: Ren min wen xue chu ban she, 1972. Gift of Dr R.F. Price, 2007, East Asian Rare Book Collection, University of Melbourne.
- 12 Mary Ann Farquhar, *Children's literature in China: From Lu Xun to Mao Zedong*, Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1999, p. 295.



Introducing Percy Grainger

Musician, designer, innovator

Monica Syrette

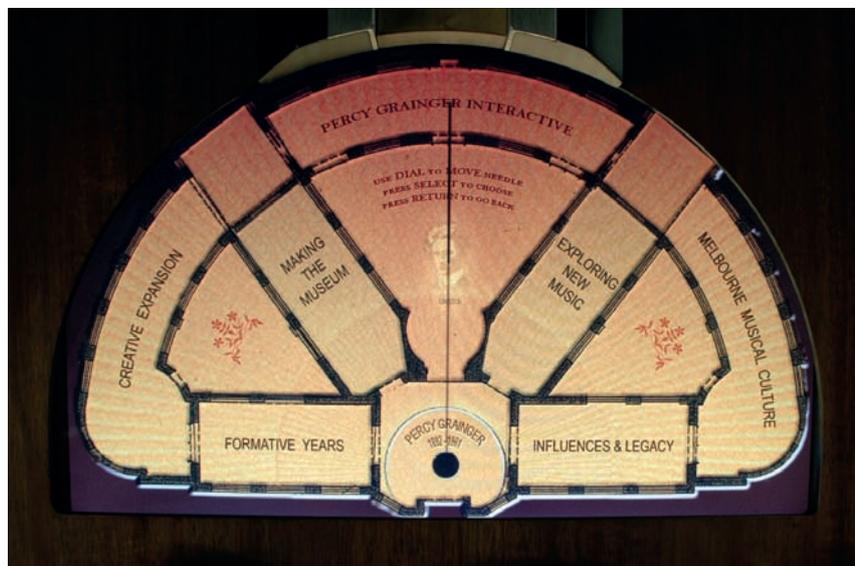
In June 2007 the Grainger Museum received generous funding from the Hugh Williamson Foundation to support the creation of a computer-based interactive research tool to promote Percy Grainger and his multi-faceted life. The interactive would serve two purposes: provide an 'add-on' multimedia experience for visitors and scholars at the museum, and in its DVD format, cater to those unable to visit in person, or preparing to visit the museum (especially secondary school students).

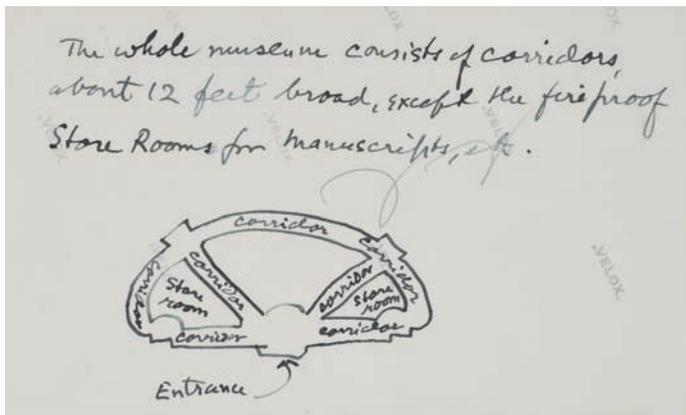
To get the project under way, an extensive briefing document was compiled. This was used in the tender process to assist in selecting a consultant for the technical development of the interactive. The award-winning multimedia company Megafun was selected to work with the University team on the project.

Grainger Museum curator Astrid Krautschneider and I, with input from curatorial assistant Jennifer Hill, met with Megafun general manager Ros Porter in 2008 to begin the complex process of shaping an interactive biography. Initial discussions centred on the public perception of Percy Grainger and how his wide-ranging interests and activities had been almost eclipsed by the popularity of his best-known arrangement, *Country gardens*, and

certain aspects of his unorthodox private life. The interactive would seek to redress this imbalance by weaving together the many strands of Grainger's life as composer, arranger, pianist, folk-music collector, artist, designer, teacher, inventor and social commentator. Rather than presenting Grainger's life along strict chronological lines, the themes, narrative and content of the interactive would reflect those aspects of his personality that defined him: his honesty and openness, a collecting and archiving nature, his curiosity and experimentalism, and his charisma and popularity.

Megafun proposed an interactive design that would echo the architectural footprint of the museum with six main screens corresponding to the galleries in the art deco building. The cabinet housing the interactive in the museum was designed by Deep in the Woods, a Melbourne furniture design and custom building company, to resemble a 1930s radiogram. It incorporates timbers appropriate to that era—Tasmanian blackwood and Queensland walnut—into the design. The radio theme is extended to the navigation style with the user 'tuning' into the screens by turning a radio dial.





Opposite: The first screen of the interactive *Introducing Percy Grainger: Musician, designer, innovator* allows the viewer to follow either a loose chronological narrative or select by thematic interest.

Left: Percy Grainger, Sketch of Grainger Museum, 1938, ink on photographic paper, 8.5 x 14.2 cm. Grainger Museum Collection, University of Melbourne. The design of the interactive was based on the Museum's floor plan.

Below: Percy and Ella Grainger at the Grainger Museum, 1938, photographic print, 10.8 x 8.2 cm. Grainger Museum Collection, University of Melbourne.

Selecting content was a protracted process as hundreds of images were needed. Museum staff combed through the archive and storage site for appropriate objects to accompany the milestones of Grainger's life and illustrate the chosen themes. This exhaustive process yielded both fresh perspectives into the collection and exciting discoveries of significant items that had not previously been on display.

There were also challenges in the selection process. For example, there was much discussion amongst the team about how best to present Grainger's theories, which were wide-ranging and often interconnected. Although he could contradict himself at times, Grainger displayed a lifelong commitment to his theories and fine-tuned them over many years in diaries, notebooks, correspondence, lectures and essays. Whilst there was a wealth of material to choose from, there were space limitations imposed by the interactive design. Thus in some instances a complex theory had to be represented by a single page. In these cases the text accompanying the image needed to be crafted with great care. Text revisions were a major aspect of the project for the entire Grainger Museum team and even in the final stages curator Brian Allison



and I found ourselves labouring over the editing, re-checking facts and tweaking sentences.

Another challenge we faced was how to capture the intangible element of Grainger's career—his performances? We wished to illustrate how devoted and enthusiastic Grainger's audience was, as this had such a strong impact on his life. He was highly ambivalent about his popularity, expressing bitterness about lost creative opportunities whilst pursuing commercial success on the touring circuit. The collection holds only one film of Grainger playing and it is

silent, so we looked instead to his diaries, reviews, scrapbooks, programs, publicity photos, correspondence, advertisements and audio recordings to tell the story.

Whilst the selection of objects was still in progress it was necessary to begin photographing them. Boxes containing everything from fragile folksong collecting maps to long plaits of hair regularly made their way to photographer Lee McRae's door. An array of objects was also chosen to be viewable on screen in three dimensions. To achieve this, Megafun director Keith Tucker organised for selected objects to be photographed on a turntable 36 times in ten-degree increments, a relatively simple approach, but one that produced remarkable results.

The digital image archive generated by the project has boosted the existing Grainger Museum digital image holdings significantly. This will assist staff in future when providing reference services both in Australia and overseas, and lessen the handling of fragile objects by staff and researchers, thus assisting in their preservation.

The audio used in the interactive contributes to an understanding of Grainger by building up a partial sound profile of his life, from music favoured by his parents to works that

Right: The interactive cabinet, designed to resemble a 1930s radiogram. It will be housed in the Grainger Museum, reopening in 2010.

Below: Trustees for the Hugh Williamson Foundation at the presentation of the completed interactive. From left to right: Denis Tricks, Martin Carlson, Harry Carrodus and David Ward. Photography by Fiona Willan.



influenced him, folksongs he collected and his own compositions and experiments. Many factors had to be taken into consideration when selecting the audio component, including the quality of the recordings, file size and copyright.

A project of this magnitude demands a comprehensive and efficient tracking system. Ros Porter devised a numbering system for the interactive layout that proved indispensable, whilst I created a colour-coded spreadsheet to list the objects; this ended up stretching to 63 pages. Project coordinator Georgina Binns (Music, Visual and Performing Arts Librarian) ensured the project ran smoothly and to schedule by liaising between Grainger Museum staff, Megafun and the Hugh Williamson Foundation.

Once the interactive was completed Brian Allison and I gave it a thorough road testing. We have endeavoured to achieve the highest possible level of accuracy and attention to detail. We went through each screen minutely, making note of all necessary changes, as Keith Tucker can wearily attest.

The project has been both challenging and rewarding in equal measure. Everyone on the team is delighted with the final product. For Grainger Museum staff the process of



creating the interactive has fed directly into exhibition planning for the newly refurbished building, due to re-open in 2010. The DVD-ROM will be available free of charge to music departments in schools throughout Victoria, and will also be available for purchase. The stand-alone interactive will be located in the Grainger Museum, with the capacity to act as a guide through both the exhibition space and Grainger's life. *Introducing Percy Grainger: Musician, designer, innovator* captures the intense curiosity and creative energy that Grainger brought to his life and

work and the depth and richness of his achievements.

For more information about *Introducing Percy Grainger: Musician, designer, innovator* please contact the Grainger Museum at grainger@unimelb.edu.au.

Monica Syrette is Assistant Curator at the Grainger Museum, University of Melbourne. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from Canberra Institute of the Arts and a Post Graduate Diploma in animation and interactive media from RMIT. Monica was Archivist at Arts Project Australia from 2004 to 2008 and is currently undertaking a PhD in the history and practices of art studios for people with intellectual disabilities.

Acquisitions

Barry Tuckwell Collection Evelyn Portek

The Louise Hanson-Dyer Music Library has recently acquired a substantial collection from the eminent French horn player and conductor Barry Tuckwell AC OBE. Tuckwell is widely recognised both as the foremost horn player of his generation and for extending the instrument's technical possibilities. The collection was acquired with the generous assistance of a grant from the Ian Potter Foundation, one of Australia's leading private philanthropic organisations, to support the linking of education and the arts.

Barry Tuckwell's career spans more than 60 years. During this time he has performed throughout the world as soloist, chamber musician and conductor; he is also a highly regarded teacher. Born in Melbourne in 1931, he joined the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra at 15 and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra a year later before leaving for England at 19. After playing with the Hallé, Scottish National and Bournemouth Symphony orchestras, Tuckwell was principal horn with the London Symphony Orchestra for 13 years. He was elected to the board of directors and was chairman for six years.

Resigning from the LSO in 1968 to pursue a career as soloist and

conductor, Tuckwell was chief conductor of the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra for four years, and founding conductor and music director of the Maryland Symphony Orchestra for 16. He has made more than 50 commercial recordings as a soloist and conductor and has received three Grammy nominations. He continues to have an active international career.

Tuckwell is a Professorial Fellow at the University of Melbourne and Honorary Patron of the Melbourne International Festival of Brass. His many awards include Honorary Doctor of Music from the University of Sydney, Fellow of the Royal College of Music, Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, the George Peabody Medal for outstanding contributions to music in America and the Andrew White Medal from Loyola College. He is also an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Music and the Guildhall School of Music in London.

The Barry Tuckwell Collection includes his own library of music scores, concert programs, press reviews, sound recordings, promotional posters and photographs, engagement diaries and some business papers and personal correspondence. Notable amongst the scores are works composed especially

for Tuckwell by Gunther Schuller, Alun Hoddinott, Don Banks, Thea Musgrave, Oliver Knussen and Richard Rodney Bennett. Unique items include scores and parts in manuscript, often heavily annotated by Tuckwell, and accompanied by correspondence with the composer which serves to illuminate the process of composition. Other documents chart Tuckwell's study of horn repertoire by Mozart and Richard Strauss in particular.

The concert programs span Tuckwell's career from the mid-1940s until his retirement as a performer. Many feature performing groups with which he was associated, such as the LSO, the Tuckwell Wind Quintet and the Jones, Tuckwell and Langbein Trio. Tuckwell's solo career is also fully documented.

As the collection is being catalogued and listed, conservation measures are being taken to improve its physical condition and ensure its longevity. The Barry Tuckwell Collection is a significant and comprehensive resource for research into any aspect of Tuckwell's professional career and 20th-century horn repertoire or performance practice.

Evelyn Portek is Music Librarian, Louise Hanson-Dyer Music Library, University of Melbourne.



Previous page: Advertising poster, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, 1974. Barry Tuckwell Collection, Louise Hanson-Dyer Music Library Rare Collections, University of Melbourne.

Left: Jon Cattapan, *Sister*, 1984, oil on canvas, 155.0 x 217.0 cm. Reg. no. 2008.0084, gift of Jon Cattapan, 2008, University of Melbourne Art Collection. © Copyright the artist.

Jon Cattapan's *Sister* and *The sister drawings*

Chris McAuliffe

In 2008, Associate Professor Jon Cattapan (Faculty of VCA and Music) donated 19 important works to the University under the Cultural Gifts Program. The works are of immense personal significance to the artist and have been kept in his possession since they were made. They represent a pivotal moment in his development, establishing interests that continue to shape his art: the exploration of personal and emotional responses to trauma, improvisation and the daily practice of drawing, and responses to key moments in modern art (such as surrealism and cubism).

In 1984, Cattapan's sister, Adriana, was suddenly killed when a fire engine collided with her car. The artist's response was both immediate and reflective. *Sister* is a rawly painted cry of anguish. *The sister drawings* are more controlled, revealing Cattapan's tendency to use a daily process of drawings as a contemplative exercise.

Sketched in red pencil (for pain) and black (for sorrow), the drawings were the most thoughtful and reflective works he had yet made.

I think there is a desire to set up a harmony in these works. I made them about three

months after my sister's death over a period of three weeks ...

I began to realise I was inventing a cast of characters that would stand for my family. My interest in primitivism and animism comes through fairly strongly.

Although they are expressive there is a level of control. ...

And of course there's the issue of the invention of the imagery—that automatic doodling that goes back to surrealism.¹

Averaging a drawing a day for three weeks, Cattapan couldn't help but see that improvisation generated its own kinds of regularity. Repeated motifs like the cross, the radiant head and the mourning figure might emerge from the unconscious but they are shaped by an acquired knowledge of Christian iconography.

In deferring his address to his sister's death, then attacking it as a daily exercise, Cattapan discovered something fundamental to his practice; time gave him the opportunity to digest emotion and distil it into a sustained program of imagery that was both cathartic and reflective. The drawings could achieve their premeditated role of mourning and, after the fact, could surprise the artist with unintended resonances.

Seeing the 'topsy-turvy space' of these works, Cattapan later noted, 'I've come to understand this as a representation of my sister's schizophrenia.'²

Dr Chris McAuliffe is Director, Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne.

Baillieu Library Print Collection

Kerriane Stone

It is with great excitement that the Print Collection at the Baillieu Library announces its first purchase of prints in a decade. The first of these acquisitions was 16 engravings by William Hogarth (1697–1764) which were printed after the artist's death, by James Heath in 1820. This group includes the series of 12 prints, *Industry and idleness*, depicting the fortunes of two apprentices. Also purchased was Hogarth's last print, *The bathos*.

The purchase of the Hogarth prints was generously supported by the Friends of the Baillieu Library, as was the purchase of a contemporary etching by Erik Desmazières (b.1948), *La Librairie Paul Jammes*. The acquisition of contemporary prints by artists like Desmazières, who are directly influenced by the work of the Old Masters, is a means of collecting with more vision and reinvigorating the Baillieu Library

Right: Fred Miller after Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Beata Beatrix*, published by Robert Dunthorne at The Rembrandt Head, 1892, photogravure, plate: 57.6 x 44.7 cm. Reg. no. 2009.0107, purchased 2009, Baillieu Library Print Collection, University of Melbourne.



Print Collection's core collecting area—Old Master prints from 1430 to 1850. The gift of more than 200 Lionel Lindsay prints in 1964 by Mrs L.I. Wright demonstrated at that time how well suited to the collection was the work of a contemporary Australian printmaker. We are pleased to add another of Lindsay's international prints, a drypoint etching *The Bassra Guard* (1929).

The acquisition of *Beata Beatrix* (1892), a photogravure after Dante Gabriel Rossetti's 1863 painting representing the figure of Beatrice Portinari, relates to other collections in the Baillieu Library such as William Morris and his Kelmscott Press books, while the recent acquisition of Lucian Pissarro's (1863–1944) drawing, *Willows at Eragny* (c.1885) complements the Library's holdings of the complete titles from the Eragny Press. Another purchase resulted from this year's celebration of the Baillieu Library's 50th anniversary. *Our future was ours* (2005), a lightjet print by Melbourne artist Darren Sylvester (b.1974) was recently on exhibition and is now a proud addition to the Library's Special Collections.

Kerriane Stone is Special Collections Officer (Prints), Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne.

Books from the Thorn family library Belinda Nemeč

Dr Peter Sutherland (MD, Melbourne, 1964) and his family recently donated 90 books from the library of his forebears, the Thorn family.

Dr Sutherland's grandparents, William Thorn (1860–1933) and Frances Elizabeth Mary Thorn (née Remington, 1869–1954), purchased a house in Hawthorn in 1911. The house has remained in the family and contains the extensive library of the Thorns and of Frances' sister, Catherine Remington (1872–1944, a schoolteacher), who lived with them in the latter part of her life. The collection as a whole covered a wide range of subject matter, reflecting the extensive interests of the three.

Included were collections of essays and poetry, classics, novels, writings on philosophy, psychology, religion, travel, biography, nature, geology, architecture and school books. Many contain pencil comments in the margin indicating serious consideration of the contents. Among the 90 volumes selected by Library staff for inclusion in Special Collections are works by H.G. Wells, George Meredith, Thomas Carlyle and Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Four successive generations of women in the Thorn/Sutherland

family have graduated with Bachelor of Arts degrees from the University of Melbourne, starting with Frances Remington in 1898, who became very active in the Australian Federation of University Women and other educational and civic organisations, and also Catherine Remington in 1904, founder of the Associated Teacher Training Institute, later known as Mercer House. Many of the men are also alumni, so the family felt that this was a fitting home for some of the books. The University Library is grateful to the Thorn and Sutherland families for their generosity.

Some of the books donated are pictured on the front cover of this magazine.

Dr Belinda Nemeč is editor of *University of Melbourne Collections*. This article draws on information kindly provided by Dr Peter Sutherland.

Notes

- 1 'A conversation between Jon Cattapan and Robert Nelson', *John Cattapan: Journal entries*, Melbourne: Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 1993, n.p.
- 2 'A conversation'.

News from the collections

Ian Potter Foundation supports Tiegs Zoology Museum

The Ian Potter Foundation has generously provided a grant to the Tiegs Zoology Museum, which is part of the Department of Zoology in the Faculty of Science, to purchase new, museum-quality display cases. Additional funds are being contributed by a private donor and by the Zoology Department itself.

The Ian Potter Foundation, established in 1964, makes grants for general charitable purposes in Australia that advance knowledge and benefit the community in the areas of the arts, community wellbeing, education, environment and conservation, health, medical research and science. It has generously supported many of the University's collections over the years, including the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University Library, the School of Physics Museum and now the Tiegs Zoology Museum.

When the Zoology Department moved from the Baldwin Spencer Building to its then-new building in 1989, there was not enough space to display all the interesting specimens in the Tiegs collection. Now additional space has been made available, to accommodate new showcases and enable the Tiegs

Museum to exhibit specimens which have not been on general display for the last 20 years, such as a lion skeleton and a mounted wedge-tailed eagle. In this way these generous donations of funds will bring about a significant and lasting improvement in the quality of exhibits. For more information on the Tiegs Museum see www.zoology.unimelb.edu.au/tiegs/

Ursula Hoff Internship

On 9 October 2009 the Ian Potter Museum of Art announced the awarding of the inaugural Ursula Hoff Internship, to Ms Stacie Bobele.

Dr Ursula Hoff AO OBE was born in London in 1909 and died in Melbourne in 2005. Her distinguished career encompassed art history, curatorship and museum management, both at the University of Melbourne and the National Gallery of Victoria. From 1975 to 1984 she was London advisor to the Felton Bequest. Educated in Hamburg, Munich and London, she was among the pivotal first generation of European-trained art historians who introduced the subject to Australian universities. Her significant legacy includes the development of the collection of prints and drawings at the National Gallery of Victoria, now one of the finest in the world.

This internship was established under the terms of Dr Hoff's bequest, in order to promote the study and promotion of prints held in the print collections of the University of Melbourne and the National Gallery of Victoria. Ms Bobele will research prints made by the Bauhaus artist Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1965), many of which are held in the University of Melbourne Art Collection at the Ian Potter Museum of Art.



Opposite: Norman Wodetzki, Queensberry Photography, Dr Ursula Hoff, on the occasion of being admitted to the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* at the University of Melbourne, on 10 December 1983. Photographic print, 18.5 x 14.5 cm. UMA/I/2310, University of Melbourne Archives.

Below: Mortar and pestle, Chinese, Qing Dynasty, c.1870s. Medical History Museum, University of Melbourne. This item was purchased by Professor Emeritus Sir Douglas Wright (1907–1990), former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, while travelling with his wife in China in 1971. It was donated to the Museum by Lady Wright in 1992. Although designed as a practical tool for the grinding of herbs, form and function have been marvellously combined to achieve great elegance of design.

New medical curator

Following the retirement of Ms Ann Brothers, the Medical History Museum has appointed Susie Shears as curator. Ms Shears has over 25 years' experience in museums and galleries, and comes to the University from the Victorian Tapestry Workshop where she was Director from 2004 to 2008. She has also worked at the National Gallery of Victoria, as Curator and then Director of the Geelong Art Gallery, as Manager of Design and Development in the Philatelic Group at Australia Post, and manager of the Australian Pavilion at the 1995 Venice Biennale.

The temporary closure of the Medical History Museum during refurbishment of the Brownless Biomedical Library is providing the opportunity for an upgrade of the collection database and other collection management and curatorial work which will result in a greater emphasis on outreach and collection access. Research inquiries will continue during the closure. The Museum is scheduled to re-open in March 2010 with an exhibition exploring the traditional tools of the apothecary, including highly decorative apothecary jars, mortars and pestles, rare books illustrating medicinal herbs and their applications



and botanical specimens. All the exhibits are from University of Melbourne collections.

School of Physics Museum official launch

In April the School of Physics held an official 'opening' for its museum. It may seem unusual to open something that has been around for a while, but the School felt that it was time to formally acknowledge the efforts of Associate Professor Ed Muirhead, former Chair of the School of Physics, and others in preserving the School's historic record through this unique collection of historical artefacts, photographs and

documents. In his address, Vice-Chancellor Professor Glyn Davis highlighted many of the School's achievements, and warmly welcomed back many alumni and former staff and associates, including Miss Betty Laby, whose father, Professor Thomas H. Laby (1880–1946), led Physics at Melbourne for nearly 30 years and whose sister, the late Dr Jean Laby, was also a physicist at Melbourne. The Vice-Chancellor praised the work of Dr Muirhead who for some 20 years supervised the cataloguing and care of the collection. Contributions from staff including Nick Nicola and Phil Lyons were also acknowledged, as was the generous

Mrs Fiona Caro and Professor David Caro AO OBE (former Head of School of Physics, Dean of Science, and Vice-Chancellor 1982–1987) with other guests at the opening of the School of Physics Museum in April.



support provided over the years by the Russell and Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Fund, the Ian Potter Foundation, the University's Cultural Collections Committee and the Friends of the Physics Museum.

***Tipitaka* presented to Library**

The University of Melbourne is the first institution in Australia to receive a Romanised edition of the Buddhist Pali canon, or *Tipitaka*. A delegation from the Dhamma Society, a charitable organisation with Thai Royal patronage, presented the 40 volumes in a colourful and formal ceremony in the beautiful Gryphon Gallery in the 1888 building on 21 October. The Chancellor, The Hon. Alex Chernov AO QC, accepted the gift on behalf of the University.

The *Tipitaka* is the earliest surviving collection of scriptures in the Theravada Buddhist tradition, which were committed to writing from an oral tradition during the early years of Buddhism (first century BCE) in the Pali language in what is now Sri Lanka. The scriptures were first printed in the 19th century and a copy of that 1893 edition was presented to the University in 1895 by a representative of His Majesty King Chulalongkorn of Siam (now Thailand), and preserved in the Special Collections of the Baillieu

Library. In 1999 the Dhamma Society began rendering the scriptures into Roman script. The project was completed in 2005, and the books are now being ceremonially presented at various locations around the world, to assist and enhance studies of Buddhist teachings.

Cultural Connotations Art Curatorship Award

The winner of the inaugural Cultural Connotations Art Curatorship Award, granted to the student who ranked first overall in the first year of the two-year Master of Art Curatorship program, was announced recently. The winner, Ms Chelsea Harris, commenced her course in 2007, and received an overall first class average during the first year. She recently travelled in Europe, especially Poland, researching public programs in museums in preparation for her thesis in 2010.

The Director of Cultural Connotations, Ms Annette Welkamp, presented the award in a ceremony at the Ian Potter Museum of Art in July. Ms Welkamp is an alumna of the University of Melbourne and her consultancy firm develops, implements and manages creative, cultural and heritage projects.

The Master of Art Curatorship Program (School of Culture and

Communication, Faculty of Arts), celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2010. Many of its students participate in the Cultural Collections Student Projects Program. Its alumni have gone on to work with museums, art galleries and other collecting organisations across Australia and internationally.

The perfect Christmas gift

The cultural collections feature on the University's desk calendar for 2010. Fascinating artefacts, illustrations and artworks from the Grainger Museum, University Art Collection, Earth Sciences Library Rare Book Collection, Classics and Archaeology Collection, Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology, Rare and Historic Maps Collection, Baillieu Library Print Collection, University of Melbourne Archives and the Medical History Museum illustrate this handy CD-size calendar. It makes an excellent gift which lasts until February 2011, and is available from the Melbourne University Bookshop for \$16.00. University staff can make bulk purchases of 20 units by emailing c.garrivan@unimelb.edu.au.



lu ya alle

nona d[omi]ni p[ro]missa;

In die pentecostes.

Init[ial]

lu ya:



Spiritus domini

in repleuit

orbem terrarum; alle lu ya

et hoc quod con tinent om

nia scientiam habet uoc

