





JOSHUA REYNOLDS, Miss Susannah Gale, detail, Felton Bequest.

The acquisition through the Felton Bequest of Lady Frances Finch adds a second portrait by Reynolds to our collection<sup>1</sup>. Both our portraits represent ladies of rank and wealth; Miss Susannah Gale was the heiress of a Jamaican merchant and later became the wife of Baron Gardner of Uttoxeter, a famous admiral. Among the many distinguished members of the Finch family we will mention here only Anne Finch, Lady Winchelsea, d. 1720, the

well-known poetess and friend of Pope's, and Isabella Finch, daughter of the Seventh Earl of Winchester, who in 1742 commissioned the only surviving town house of William Kent's (No. 44 Berkely Square, London), noted for its dramatic baroque staircase<sup>2</sup>. In 1782, Lady Frances married George Legge, Lord Lewisham, who later became Earl of Dartmouth. Reynolds has depicted both ladies in natural attitudes and in contemporary dress, not in the symbolic attitudes and classical draperies which he used for his most official portraits. The landscape backgrounds evoke the parks of the great English country-houses in which the portrayed lived.

Stylistically the two pictures differ greatly from each other. Posed with much grace and dignity in the manner of certain van Dyck portraits, the figure of Miss Gale (painted 1764<sup>3</sup>) yet appears somewhat constrained and isolated<sup>4</sup>. The finest effect in the painting is the contrast created by the cool greyish white of the dress and the rich rose-pink of the skirt; the delicate treatment of the lace and ruffles rivals the art of Alan Ramsay.

The portrait of Lady Frances Finch, painted twenty years later (1782)<sup>5</sup> is a more harmonious composition, and shows greater ease and fluency of treatment. The colour scheme is subdued, blacks, silver-greys and a touch of yellow combine to a balanced whole. The brushwork is now more open, creating an illusionist effect of atmosphere particularly noticeable in the head. The greater naturalness of the pose reflects the mood in which Reynolds returned from his visit to Flanders made in the previous year, where he had admired the undramatic and restful portraits of Helena and Susannah Fourment by Rubens. Lady Frances' linked fingers bring to mind a similar motif used by Gainsborough for the Hon. Edward Bouverie in 1771; the motif adds to the informal yet graceful and dignified impression of the work.

URSULA HOFF.



JOSHUA REYNOLDS, Miss Susannah Gale, oil on canvas, 79½ in. x 46½ in. Felton Bequest.

1. The portrait listed in the 1948 Catalogue of the National Gallery of Victoria under Reynolds (Miss Theophila Palmer) has been proved to be a copy. Professor E. K. Waterhouse, letter 15.1.1951, kindly made available by Professor J. T. A. Burke.

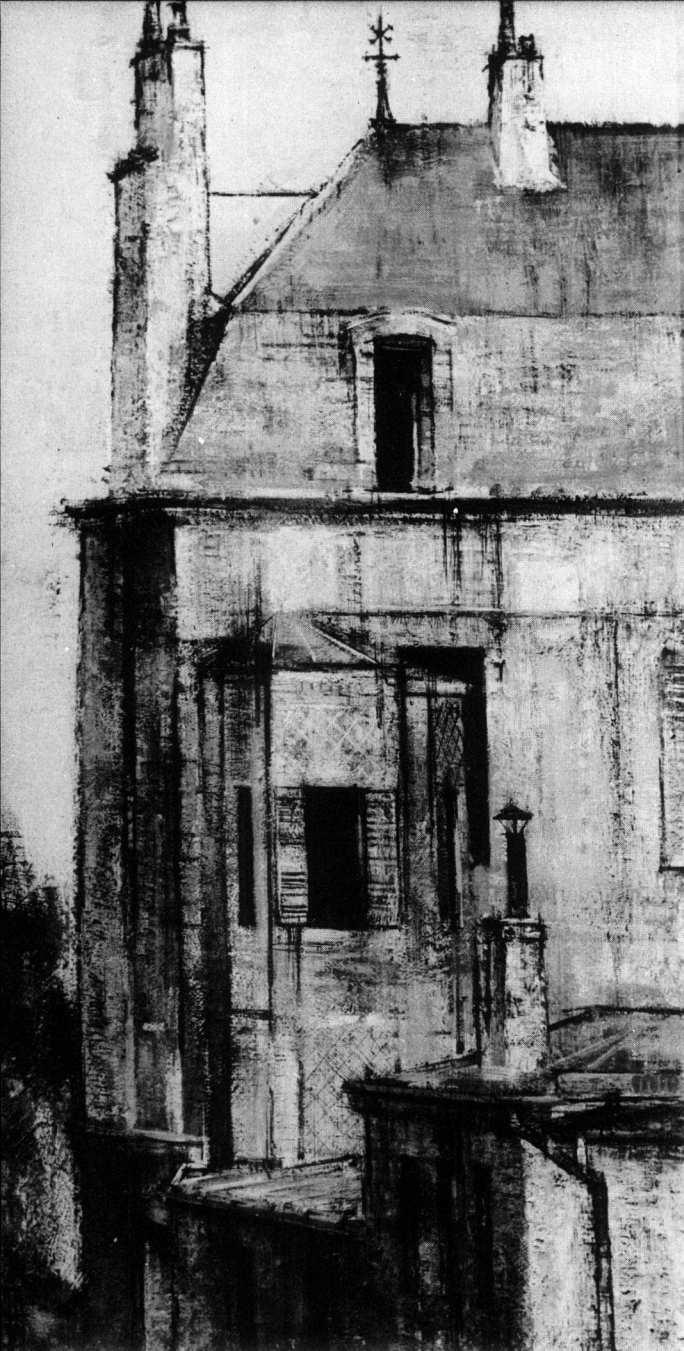
2. Margaret Jourdain, *The Work of William Kent*, London, 1948, p. 55. I am indebted to Professor Burke for this information.

3. Early provenance recorded by A. Graves and W. V. Cronin, *History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1899*, vol. 1, p. 342. In 1872 the picture was sold by the Rev. Alan Gardner to Bertram Currie. Catalogue of the works of Art at Coombe Warren, p. 35. (Reference received from Professor E. K. Waterhouse, see note 1). It passed to Laurence Currie. Acquired by Mr. Randall Davies for the Felton Bequest in 1933 from A. H. Spink, London.

4. This effect must have been even more striking before the picture was cut down. For an account of the two accidents in which the portrait was involved see Graves and Cronin, *loc.cit.*; recent investigation by Mr. Harley Griffiths has disclosed many skilfully mended cuts and tears all over the canvas; the damage must have been particularly heavy along the top of the painting. The canvas is re-lined and evidence of its being cut down lies in such passages as the skirt on the r. hand side, where the brush strokes have been cut mid-way; the stretcher does not seem to be an 18th Century stretcher.

5. See Graves and Cronin, *loc.cit.* vol. 1, p. 303/4 for the provenance of the work, which remained in the family of the sitter until after 1900 when it was sold to America; E. K. Waterhouse, *Reynolds*, London, 1941, pl. 227, Cat. entry p. 73. It was acquired for the Felton Bequest by Mr. A. J. L. McDonnell from Thomas Agnew & Son this year.





JAMES TAYLOR, *The House of Derain*, oil on panel, 39 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. x 19 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. Felton Bequest.

painter who is not being bundled into a search for novelty, and it is significant that in choosing the house of the late André Derain as his subject, he pays an indirect tribute to the modern French artist who was more concerned with tradition than any of his contemporaries.

Alan Reynolds' *Spring* is one of a group of four large pictures devoted to the seasons which were first shown in London, but which, by the eagerness of galleries and collectors, are now scattered through the world. Reynolds is in the great tradition of English 19th Century landscape painting and indeed in his devotion to the Shoreham Valley in Kent, he allies himself geographically, as well as spiritually, with Samuel Palmer. With the exception of Victor Pasmore's *The Thames at Chiswick* this work is surely the most poetic modern evocation of place and season to be found in the Gallery.

It is probable that the names of three English artists whose works have just entered our collections for the first time are unknown to most Gallery visitors, although two of them, Edward Middleditch and Alan Reynolds, have become widely known in England and in the United States in the last few years. The third member of this young trio (they are all about thirty years of age), James Taylor, has yet to make a reputation, but this would seem to be assured. The first and most obvious fact about all three painters is that they are realists. The use of this word leads us into immediate difficulties, for it is hard in the 20th Century to say exactly what we mean by it. However, it is clear that there is a sharp difference of attitude between painters who are primarily concerned with colour, shape and texture as ends in themselves, and those who regard painting as a means of describing and commenting on the world and its ways. In the last forty or fifty years this latter attitude has been highly suspect, and indeed the word "literary", meaning such elements in painting as visual description and social comment, has been used by some critics almost as a term of abuse. Faced with the trivialities of 19th Century anecdote one can see the reasons for this recent suspicion of realism, but the reaction against it has led us into the opposite danger of incomprehensibility. It is of this danger that these three painters would seem to be highly conscious.

Middleditch, together with Derek Greaves and Jack Smith, is one of the leaders of the group known facetiously as 'The Kitchen Sink School', and in the sense that the large *Summer Landscape* in our collection contains no direct social comment it may be said not to be typical. But the effort to describe sunlight in the eye and heat on the skin as well as the exact structure of wild flowers is particularly English and these painters are not ashamed of their national characteristics.

It is hard to say why Taylor's modest picture impresses one except, rather lamely, that it is well-drawn, firmly constructed and beautifully controlled in colour. Here is a sensitive

ERIC WESTBROOK.



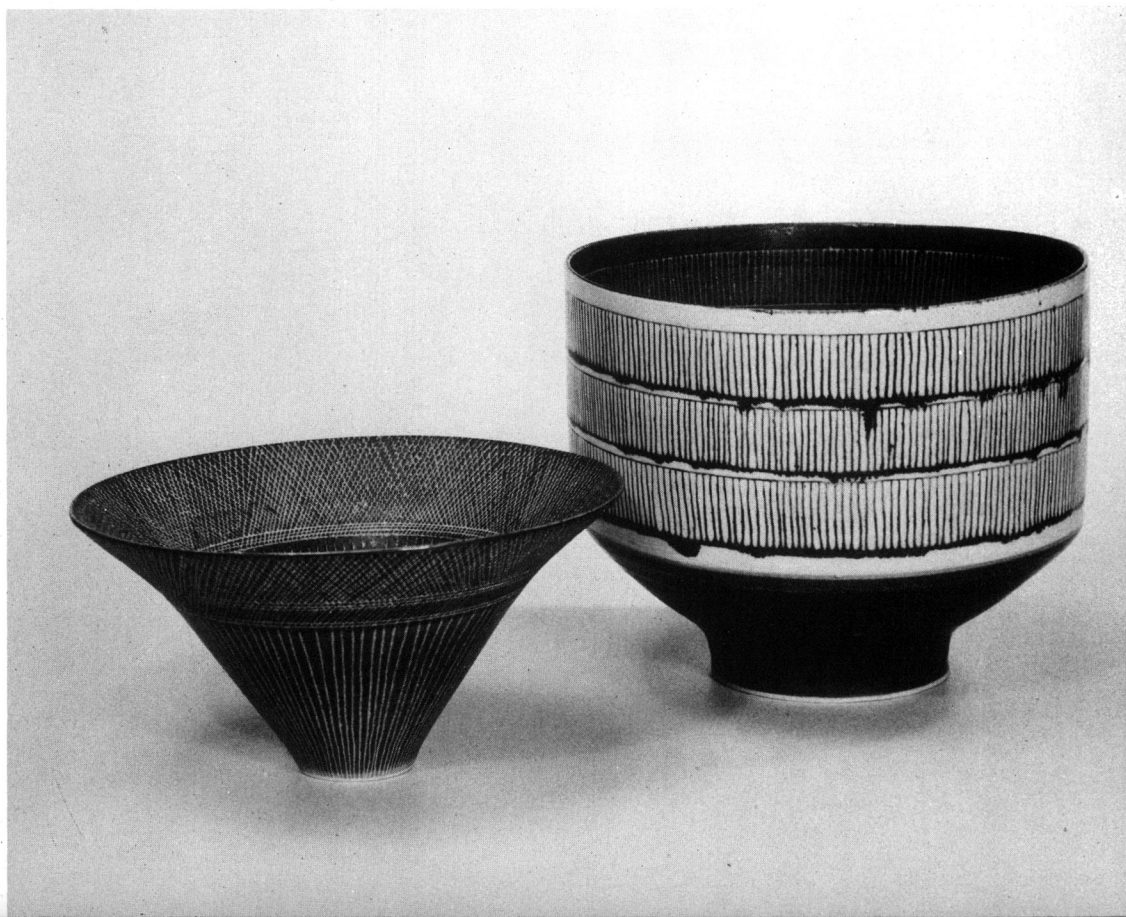


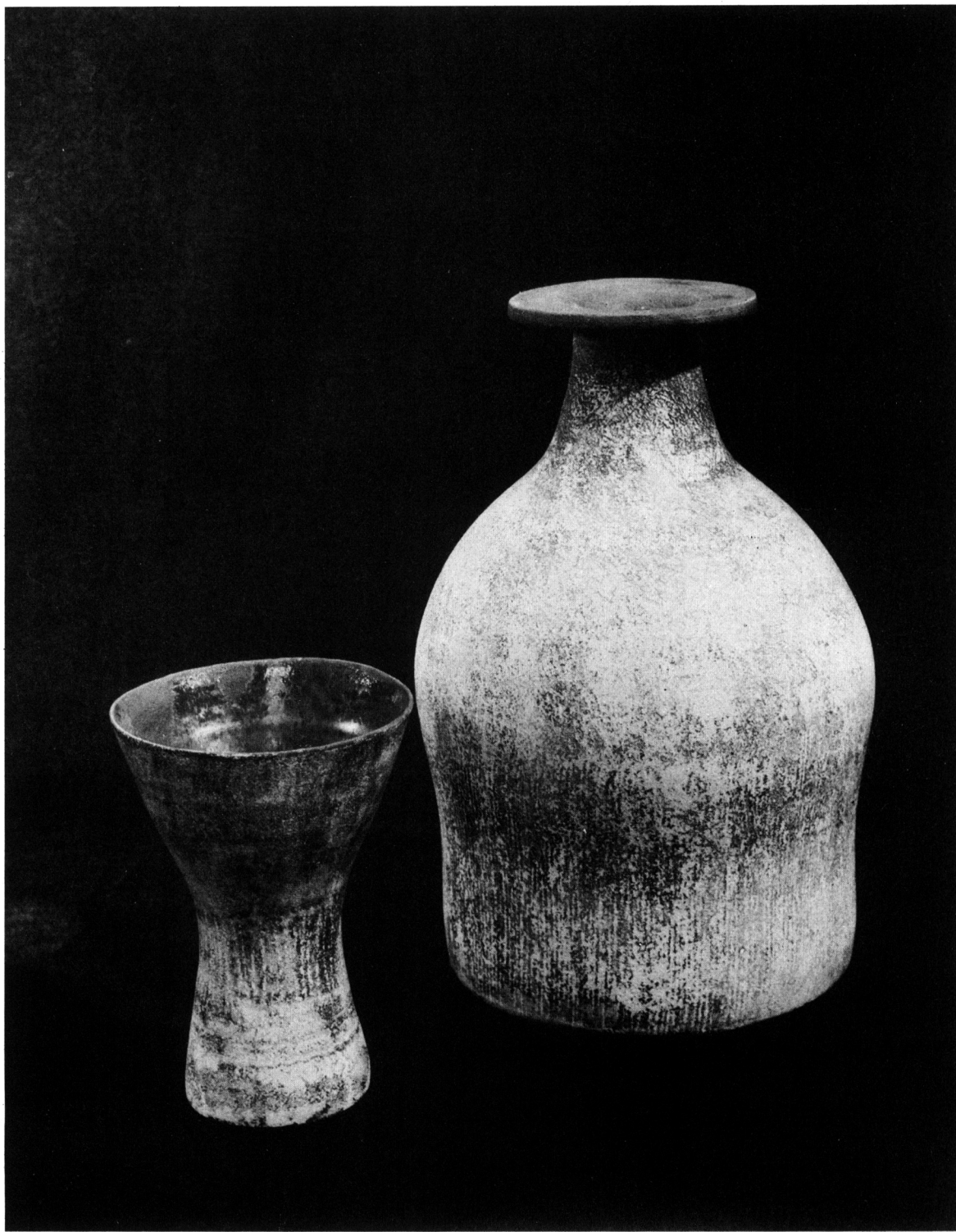
EDWARD MIDDLEDITCH, Summer Landscape, oil on canvas, 94 in. x 75 in. Felton Bequest.



ALAN REYNOLDS, *Spring*, oil on board, 45½ in. x 62 in. Felton Bequest.

Two Porcelain Bowls, by Lucy Rie — one conical, H., 3¼ in. (8.2 cm.), D., 6⅝ in. (16.1 cm.) — unglazed with hatched decoration incised through pigment; the other cylindrical, H., 5¼ in. (13.4 cm.), D., 7-3/16 in. (18.3 cm.) — matt cream and dark brown glaze with inverted design. Felton Bequest.





Two Stoneware Vases, by Hans Coper — the larger, H.,  $13\frac{3}{4}$  in. (35 cm.), D.,  $8\frac{7}{8}$  in. (22.6 cm.) — grey white with light ribbing, the mouth black purple. Unglazed. (Presented by A. J. L. McDonnell, Esq.). The smaller, H.,  $7\frac{1}{4}$  in. (18.5 cm.), D.,  $5\text{-}5/16$  in. (13.5 cm.) — grey-white with light ribbing outside, with brown pigment inside. Unglazed. Felton Bequest.



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It is with deep regret that we record the death on 18th June, 1956, of Mr. Alan Henderson who held office as a Trustee of the National Gallery since 16th March, 1945, and became Deputy-Chairman in 1952.

Always concerned with the welfare of the younger artists, Mr. Henderson founded in 1943 the Alan Henderson Donation for the purchase of contemporary work and in his will converted this donation into the Alan Henderson Bequest in which his intentions are perpetuated.

### The following publications and reproductions are on sale at the Swanston Street entrance:

Catalogue of the Gallery (5/-); Catalogue of Selected Masterpieces, with 30 illustrations (1/6); Thirteen large reproductions (25/- each). A selection of small reproductions, including Christmas cards.

### THEATRETTE:

**ART FILMS: on the third Tuesday of each month.**

**DOCUMENTARY FILMS: on Tuesdays, excepting each third Tuesday.**

**MUSICAL RECORDINGS: on the second and fourth Thursday.**

**All these activities are held at 1.15 p.m.**

The cover design in this issue is a painting by JOSHUA REYNOLDS, Lady Frances Finch, 1782, oil on canvas, 57 in. by 45 in., Felton Bequest.