

ЖИТІЕ СВЯТЫХ АПОСТОЛЪ И СВЯТЫХЪ





TWO SMALL FIGURES, WOODLARK IS.

presented by Dr. Clive Stephen.

THE NATIONAL GALLERY SOCIETY.

On the 30th September, 1953, the National Gallery Society of Victoria completed its sixth year. All of those members who formed the original Council of the Society have now finished their term of office and it is an appropriate time to set down the history of the Society, how it was formed, the purposes and ideals of its founders, and its achievements.

The idea of a Gallery Society in Victoria came from the Director, Mr. Daryl Lindsay; doubtless he was inspired by the success of similar bodies in the United States, where they are commonly called Friends of the Gallery. As always during his association with the National Gallery, Sir Keith Murdoch, the Chairman of the Trustees, was ready to help. On 23rd April, 1947, he convened a meeting of fifteen representative citizens. In Sir Keith's introductory remarks and in the informal discussions which followed, great emphasis was laid upon the value that such a Society could have in promoting an interest in the Gallery, and in bringing the citizens of Victoria to it more often and in increasing numbers. Plans were shown of the centre to be built around a new Art Gallery on the site set apart south of the river, just over Princes Bridge. The hope was expressed that the Gallery Society might play a part in bringing this great civic project into being.

Further meetings were held and on 28th August, 1947, the originating members unanimously carried a motion "that a Society now be formed to be known as the National Gallery Society of Victoria"

Letters setting out the aims of the proposed Society and accompanied by invitations to a reception to be given by Sir Keith and Lady Murdoch in the National Gallery on 9th October, 1947, were sent to a large number of citizens. About 400 attended and were addressed in the Stawell Gallery by Sir Keith Murdoch, Professor Joseph Burke of the School of Fine Arts in the University of Melbourne, and Dr. Clive Fitts, the President of the National Gallery Society.

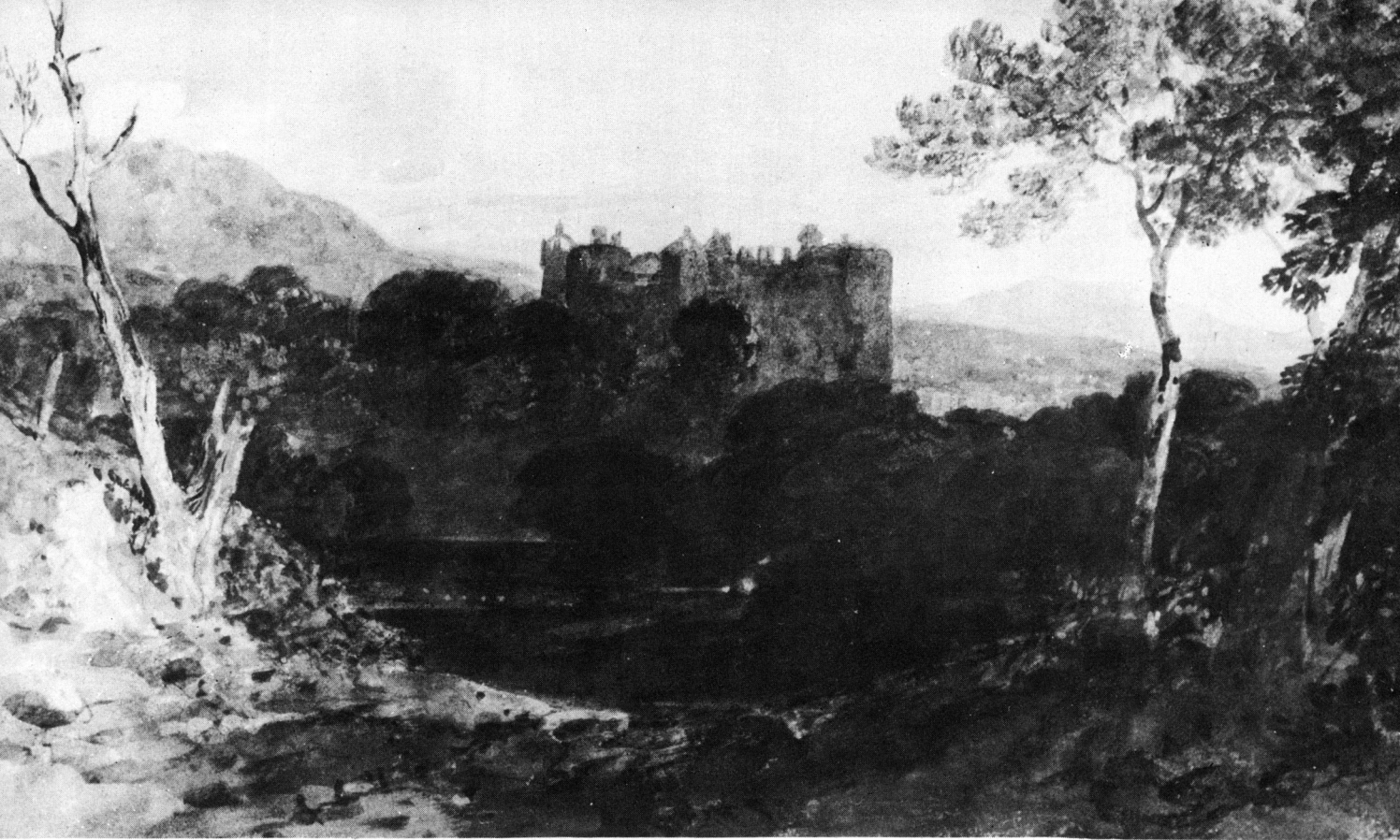
Following this meeting, the Society began its first year with a membership of 246. Six years later at the Annual Meeting in November, 1953, the total number of financial members was 1,559. This may be regarded as adequate justification of the faith of the founders.

In order to enhance the significance of the Gallery as a cultural centre, the Society has presented a great variety of programmes to its members; notable were the musical evenings with chamber music performed by members of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the Melbourne Sinfonietta, The Paul McDermott String Quartet, and others. This form of



TWO CARVED FIGURES. ADMIRALTY IS.

presented by Dr. Clive Stephen.



J. M. W. TURNER, "LINLITHGOW CASTLE" (*Watercolour, 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.*).

presented by Sir Thomas Barlow.

entertainment in which the pleasure of hearing music is combined with that of seeing works of art, has proved extremely popular. Lectures on art, architecture and archaeology alternated with stage performances and filmshows. The most ambitious project undertaken by the Society was the production of Milton's "Comus" in 1952. A regular series of Open Nights has enabled members to view the collection, sometimes assisted by short guide talks from members of the Gallery staff.

Important Exhibitions, such as the Jubilee Exhibition, the Blake Prize Exhibitions, "French Painting To-day", and recent acquisitions, have been made available to members in specially arranged previews.

Excursions to Ballarat, Castlemaine, and Geelong were organized to bring members into touch with country galleries.

Among other activities of the Society have been the publication of the Gallery Guide and yearly Christmas Cards for members. 6,000 cards were sold in 1953 alone.

All these activities have met with encouraging success and the attendances at functions have often been far in excess of the expectation of the organizers.

As the National Gallery has devoted this number of the Bulletin to an account of the progress of the Society, it is appropriate to record that some members have shown a practical interest in our National Collection by presenting valuable works which have been acceptable to the Trustees, and a number of these have been used to illustrate this issue. These include the important water-colour drawing "Linlithgow Castle" by J. M. W. Turner, which is a handsome addition to our group of works by this great English landscape painter, and was presented by Sir Thomas Barlow, an Honorary Life Member of the Society. The fine gouache "Head of a Native Woman" and the primitive woodcarvings presented by Dr. Clive Stephen, and other gifts, are listed on the last page of this issue.

From 1948 to 1951, the Council of the Society was under the Presidency of Dr. Clive Fitts, with Dr. Leonard Cox as Chairman of the Executive Committee. Particular mention should be made of the sterling work done by Dr. Cox during the formative years of the Society. Under his wise and imaginative leadership, with the help of Mr. Kenneth Myer as an Honorary Secretary (1948 to 1953) whose energy and organizing ability contributed so much to the success of the Society's functions, much has been achieved in a short time. Dr. Cox followed Dr. Fitts as President in 1951. Mr. Tristan Buesst, a foundation member of the Society, succeeded to the position in 1953.

Among other members of the Executive, Miss Margaret Sutherland has given fine service in the organization of musical activities, and Mr. Len Annois in the realm of publication and design.

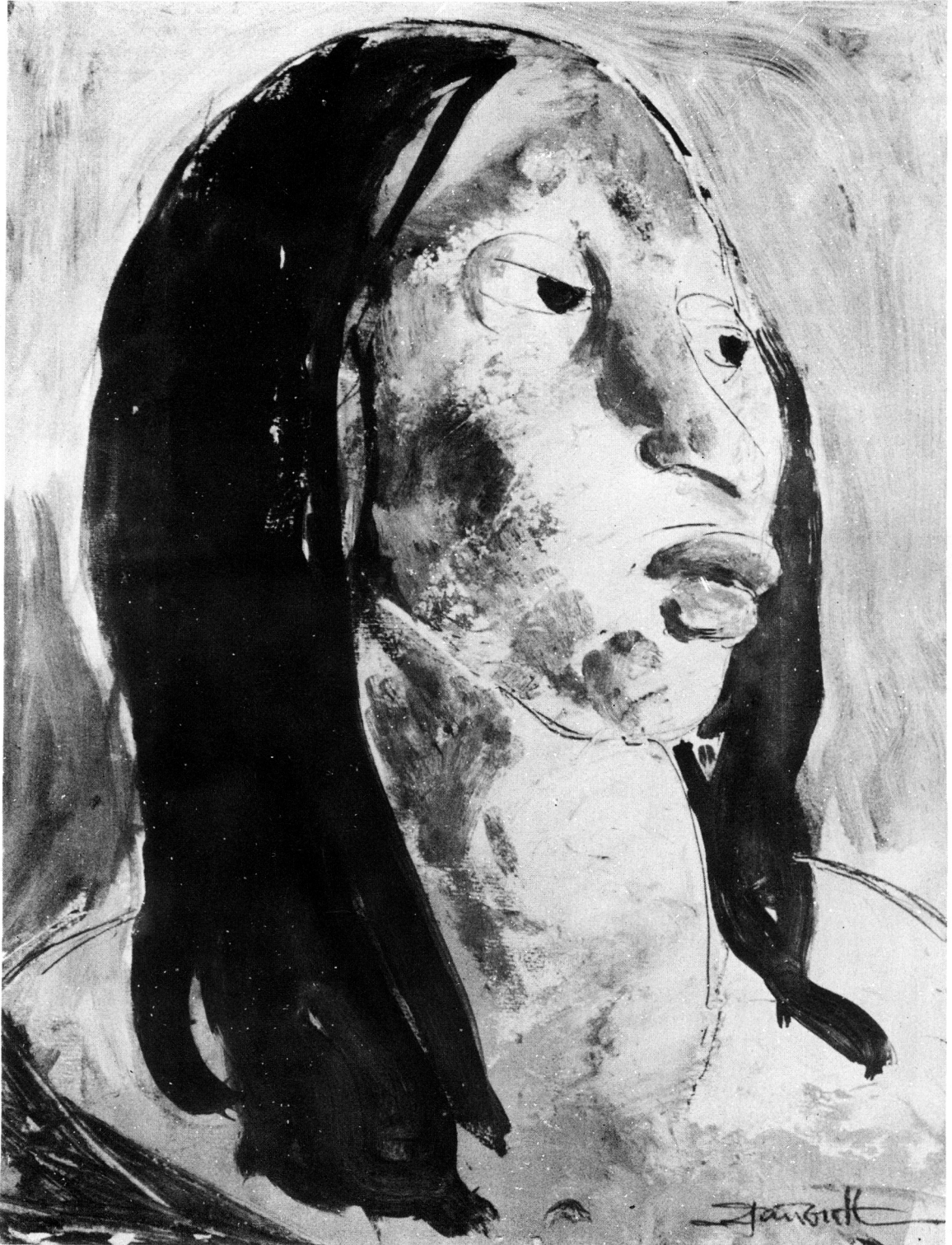
The enthusiasm and hard work generously given by these office-bearers and other members of the Council and Executive have played a vital part in the development of the Society. Many other members and especially the Director and staff of the National Gallery have given their support and active assistance.

Much of the success of the yearly functions has been due to the generous assistance given by lecturers, among whom were several distinguished overseas and interstate visitors.

DERWENT LEES, "GIRL IN A BLACK HAT" (Oil on panel. 16 in. x 13 in.).



presented by A. J. L. McDonnell, Esq.



IAN FAIRWEATHER, "HEAD OF A NATIVE WOMAN" (Gouache, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.).

presented by Dr. and Mrs. Clive Stephen.

Noted American lecturers were Mr. Charles Bennett, Professor John E. Burchard, and Miss Mary Cecil Allen. From England came Sir Kenneth Clark, Mr. Robert Speaight, and Mr. Anthony Quayle. Among noted interstate speakers were Sir Lionel Lindsay, Mr. C. P. Mountford, and Professor A. D. Trendall, who has been almost a yearly contributor. Among local lecturers, Dr. Leonard Cox and Professor Burke have addressed members on repeated occasions. These and a number of distinguished lecturers from the University and other organizations have given members a varied insight into the problems of art, architecture and allied subjects.

This brief account of the origins and development of the National Gallery Society of Victoria suffices to show that it is worthy of its continued existence and that its Council has ever been mindful of its aims. It should be apparent to members that the privileges are many, but after all, membership also offers a way of fulfilling responsibilities.

I believe that the yearly programmes arranged by the Council stand for something much more than a series of pleasant entertainments for the benefit of the members, and serve the purpose of a rallying point for all who are vitally concerned with the beauty and cultural feeling of our city. To you members, with your widening knowledge and appreciation of these things, the Council looks with confidence for practical support in the development of a new Cultural Centre and a Gallery worthy to house our great and growing collections.

CLIVE FITTS.

The Russian ikon representing the Nativity, used for the cover, shows the strength of the Byzantine tradition in its similarity of motif to the 16th century Cretan Nativity already in the collection.

The Oceanic woodcarvings are part of a group of nine examples of native art from the South Pacific Islands.

"Linlithgow Castle" adds another notable example of Turner's work to the "Okehampton Castle" and "Red Rigi" already in the water-colour section.

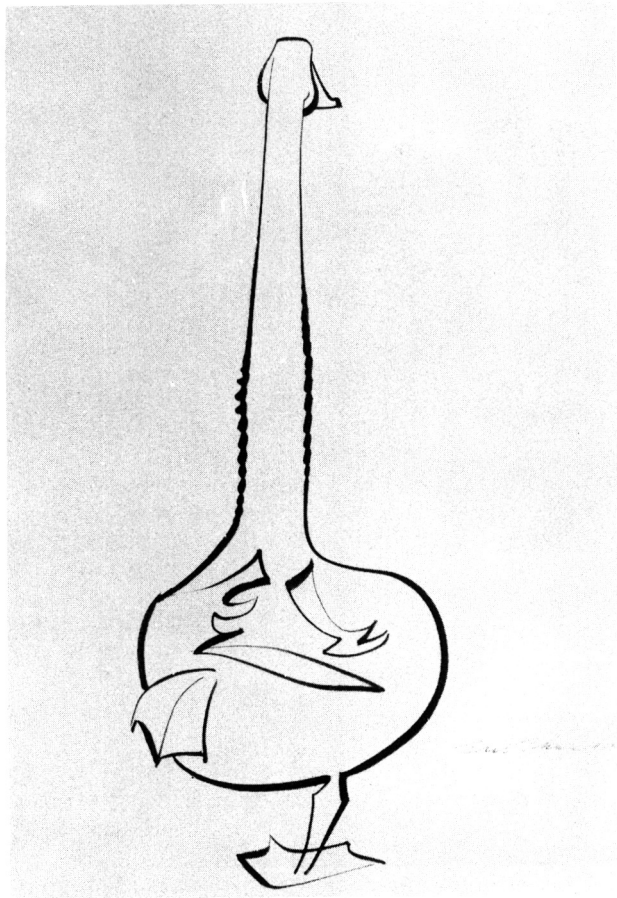
"Girl in a Black Hat" is by Derwent Lees, an Australian-born artist whose style reflects the influence of Augustus John.

Ian Fairweather, the English artist, had made several sojourns in Australia in between his stays in China and the South Sea Islands, where he found the motifs for his extremely personal style.

"Black Swan", a fine brush drawing by Eric Thake showing superb control of line, is one of a number of this artist's drawings in the Print Room.

The bronze mask handle of the T'ang period adds to the small but interesting group of Chinese bronzes in the collection.

ERIC THAKE. "BLACK SWAN" (Brush drawing, 12 in. x 8 in.).



presented by W. Ritchie, Esq.



MASK HANDLE (Chinese, T'ang dynasty. 4½ in. high).

presented by Dorothy. Lady Young
in memory of her father. Sir Baldwin Spencer.

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Arnold Shore
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Head of the National Gallery Schools,
Supervisor
Alan Sumner
Hector Williamson

Assistant Art Instructor
National Gallery Society
Charles Bush
E. Paton

The following publications and reproductions are on sale at the Swanston Street entrance :
Catalogue of the Gallery (5/-). Gallery Guide (1/-). Catalogue of Selected Masterpieces with 30 illustrations (1/6). Ten large colour reproductions (25/- each). A selection of small reproductions including Christmas cards.

THEATRETTE :
DOCUMENTARY FILMS : Every TUESDAY at 1.15 p.m.
LECTURES : NATIONAL GALLERY LECTURE—First Thursday.
PUBLIC LIBRARY LECTURE—Third Thursday.
MUSICAL RECORDINGS—Second and Fourth Thursdays.

The cover design in this issue is a Russian Ikon, presented by Mr. and Mrs Daryl Lindsay.