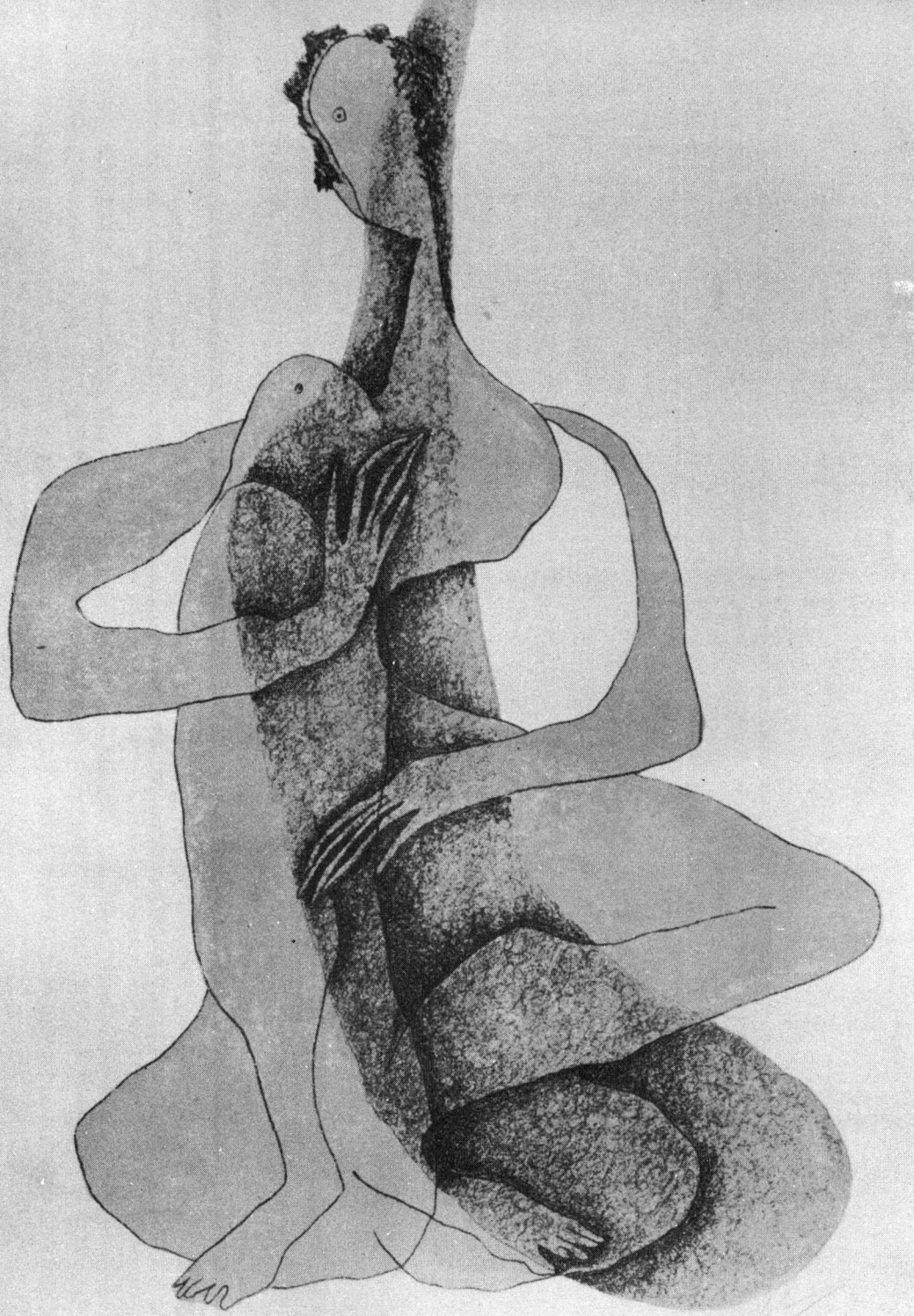


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National Gallery of Victoria



PETER FOLDES, VASE AND FLOWERS, watercolour, 18 inches X 26 inches

Purchased

Each of these recently purchased watercolour paintings by contemporary artists stresses design though they differ greatly in individual style and subject matter. "Vase and Flowers," painted by Peter Foldes, appeals immediately with its effect of a decorative lacework of line. Line is used boldly, acting sometimes in delineation of the forms of objects, sometimes for the details of these, and also for the variety of patterns which carry the design, even to the mount itself. Washes of harmoniously planned colours play their part in the composition.

Frank Hinder matches style and subject matter closely in his study. The rigorously angled and curved shapes of "The Hanger" relate directly to those of the structure itself, other buildings, an airplane and a patch of sky. Areas are accented, lapped, lost and found, and placed with colours to suggest the atmosphere and movement of the composition. The precise technique is analogous to the precision of surface and shape belonging to the elements of the subject material.

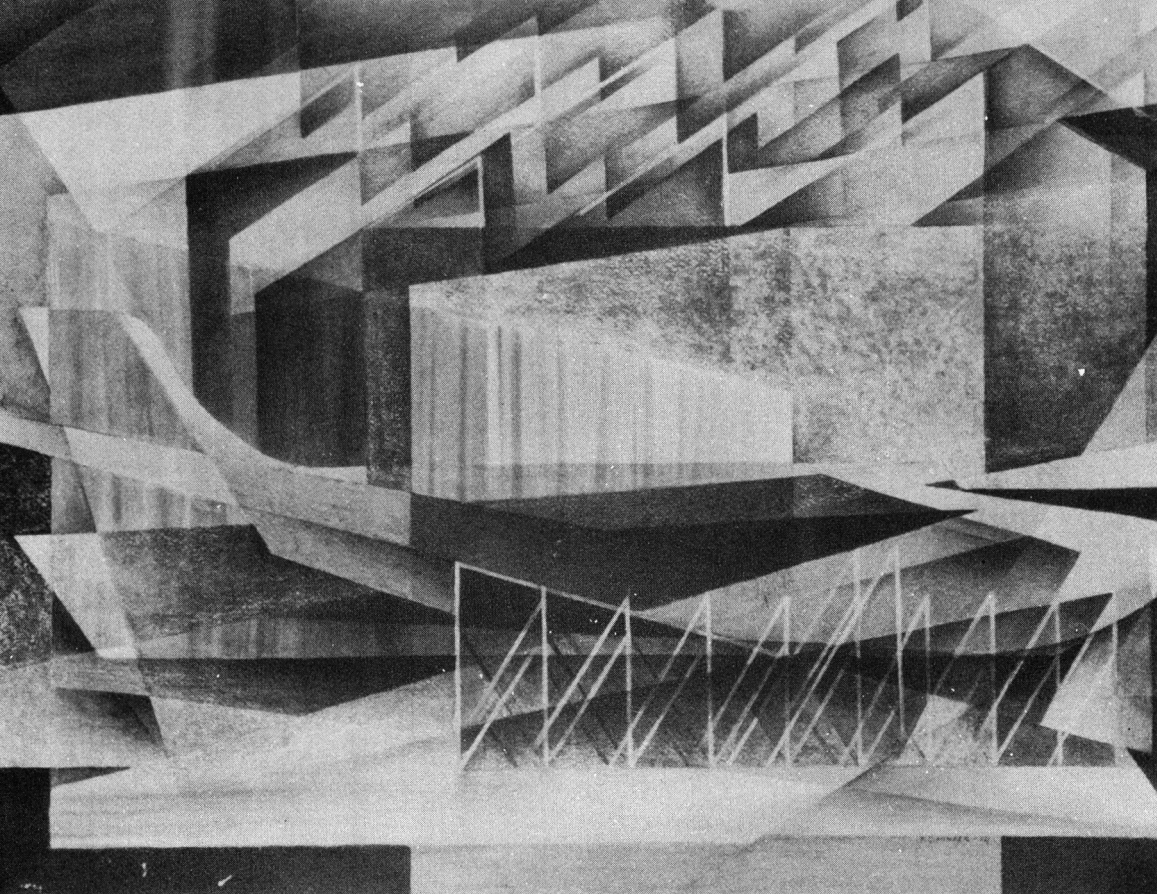
"Canal, Warwickshire" by Hector Gilliland, is a dynamic work which could only have been produced since Cézanne. The delicate harmony of closely related tones suggests an actual effect though the picture may have been painted from studies. Vitally placed three-dimensional forms are organized with a fine sense of movement which includes the subtle modulation of plane surfaces. Although extremely simple this is a very sensitive work.

ARNOLD SHORE.

PETER FOLDES born in 1924 in Budapest was trained at the Municipal Art School there and at the Slade School, London. He exhibited in Melbourne in 1954. Lives in London.

HECTOR GILLILAND was born in Launceston, Tasmania in 1911. Held positions as draughtsman with the New South Wales State Public Service and later the Commonwealth Public Service. Resigned in 1953 when he went on a trip to Europe. Is now engaged full-time in painting.

FRANK HINDER was born in Sydney in 1906 and studied at the Royal Art Society and at the East Sydney Technical College, as well as at several American Institutes. Resident in Sydney.



FRANK HINDER, THE HANGAR, watercolour, 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches X 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches

Purchased

HECTOR GILLILAND, CANAL, WARWICKSHIRE, watercolour, 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches X 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches

Purchased





ARTHUR BOYD, SAUL AND DAVID, coloured terracotta sculpture, height 28 inches

From Arthur Boyd's recent exhibition of ceramic sculpture the National Gallery purchased the Saul and David group. Entering the exhibition room where the work was first displayed, one felt like walking in a strange forest of gnomish beings, a world magically convincing yet imaginatively separate from ours; looking at the figures, singly, their gnarled, scooped-out forms, true clayforms in which the shaping impress of the artist's hand on the shapeless lump can still be sensed, they began to acquire a human significance, both moving and haunting. Amongst the major pieces of this exhibition, the David and Saul appeared as the calmest, perhaps the most humane work. Expressionist distortion—means of heightened expressive emphasis—link the group with its companions: heads and hands loom large; eyes and noses are accented, the arms become lithe linear tendons. Thus the left arm of Saul in a U-fold across the contour, carrying the eye back to the head with its beak nose and despairing eyes, to sink back again into the open vessel of the angled arm. The left hand too of Saul is significantly enlarged, weighing upon the head of the boy David, and most movingly conveying, what is one of the great inner dramas of the Old Testament (Samuel, I., 16, v. 14-23): the man of the lost mission and his

love and hate of the comforter and successor; he—David—sadly aware of the old king's tragic fate, but confident in the awareness of election. Note how the bust of David, together with the comforting hand, forms a stable triangular pedestal over which looms the downward gliding, insecure head of despair. But note too, how the contrasted shapes—antagonists of a fated tragedy—are indivisibly linked: the inward swinging loop of Saul's arm, is repeated in that of David, though in a broader and stabler angle, and the harp-playing arm and hand of David leads back to Saul's elbow—bottom angle of the U-fold and decisive joint of rhythmic circulation.

While some of Boyd's ceramic groups have no one dominating view or face, (especially the Kiss of Judas) the Saul and David group is conceived as essentially unifacial and could be placed in a shallow niche or against a wall. The main frontal view unfolds in clear and strong contour: two flat curves form the steep and closed right contour (seen from the observer); this breaks at the compositionally decisive joint of the elbow and is taken up again and brought down to the base; the left contour is set against the right one with its broader angle and dramatic cascade of three tense curves, the lowest (of David's arm) returning into the enclosing rhythm.

The National Gallery has also recently acquired the work of one of the leading Sydney sculptors, *Sleeping Bird*, by Gerald Francis Lewers. This very accomplished woodcarving provides a most interesting contrast to the Boyd ceramic group. The two basic modes of plastic expression appear thus before us in contemporary form: sculpture which creates form by "taking away" (to use Michelangelo's term) by carving out of the block of wood or stone;

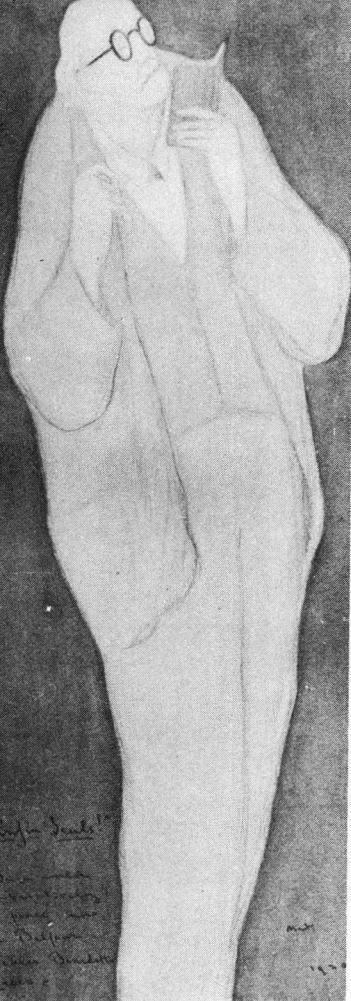
and sculpture which creates form out of the shapeless and pliable clay by "putting on" and which perpetuates this form by either glazing and firing—as in terracotta—or by casting in metal. Michelangelo, carver by inner compulsion, called the latter "similar to painting" and it is perhaps not accidental that painters like Picasso and Boyd have taken to the modelling medium.

But the contrast between the two works goes deeper: Boyd's Saul and David, like all his work, is essentially expressionistic, that is, it aims at emotional effects by means of free and spontaneous distortion (or exaggeration). Lewers' carving is near abstract work: the artist's interest lies, to quote his own words "in discovering the best form of expression for each material, with emphasis on movement". This is very much in accordance with the ideas of Henry Moore (and his continental forerunners). Among these principles are: pure plastic shapes (shapes expressing three dimensional form with only tenuous representational reference) and "truth to material" (that is, what Lewers' calls "discovering the best forms for each material"). The natural form thus is transposed or translated into forms, most appropriate to the sculpture medium. Thus in our carving the sinuous turning and twisting forms of wood, with their knobby swellings and whirlpools of grain, their smoothly curved flowing planes, return in unbroken sweep and describe a fluid plastic configuration. This plastic shape is penetrated by space—we can so to speak look through, visualize back and front planes simultaneously and it enfolds space which attains within its enclosing planes positive plastic shape. Such forms of contemporary sculpture (a corresponding work of Henry Moore is the bird-basket) have obviously a very strong affinity with modern architectural design: sweeping, uninterrupted planes, transparency of shape and the light, pivotal equipoise of our carving represent such common features.

FRANZ PHILIPP

G. F. LEWERS, SLEEPING BIRD, wood, length 31 inches





In the early nineties of the last century William Rothenstein noted some drawings by Carlo Pellegrini, hanging on the blue walls of Max Beerbohm's study at Merton College, Oxford. Pellegrini (Ape of Vanity Fair) was then the foremost master of portrait caricature in England, and the eminently telling gestures and revealing attitudes of his figures were Beerbohm's first inspiration.

In Oxford, too, Beerbohm met Aubrey Beardsley, who, giving a fin de siècle twist to the Pre-Raphaelite manner became the compelling influence behind the art of illustration of the period. Pellegrini's character-studies and Beardsley's style gradually led Beerbohm towards the subtle wit of interpretation and the studiously primitive manner of drawing which are such striking features of his mature art. Beerbohm, along with Gulbransson and Thomas Theodor Heine of the Simplicissimus, transformed caricature into the style of "Art Nouveau"

Beardsley, according to Rothenstein was one of the first to appraise Beerbohm's drawings at their true value. He brought him into contact with the publishers of the Yellow Book and the Savoy, and Beerbohm also drew for other periodicals such as The Strand, Pick-Me-Up and others. After 1900 he abandoned these periodicals and only occasionally went before a wider public with exhibitions of some of his work at the Leicester Galleries and with carefully selected editions in books of illustration. In these and in his many unpublished drawings he shows himself as the ironic commentator on the Edwardian era. Its writers and artists, its dandies and leading politicians form the circle from which Max drew his inspiration. Though later themes enter Beerbohm's work during his long life, his art was formed in the Nineties and his outlook retains the stamp of that decade. Already in 1895 he felt himself to be outmoded "I belong to the Beardsley period" . . . "Indeed I stand aside with no regret . . . For to be outmoded is to be a classic".

3. MR. HENRY JAMES RE-VISITING AMERICA. James who had returned for a visit to America after twenty years absence in 1904-5 had brought out his *The American Scene* in 1907. Beerbohm's drawing appeared in his *A Book of Caricatures* in the same year. Using the traditional comic formula of the large head and small body, Beerbohm stresses Henry James' dignity, sensitivity and dandyism, and contrasts them with the turbulence and aggressiveness of the Americans who fill the background and greet James with the following remarks: *Cowboy*: "Guess 'e ken shoot character at sight." *Indian*: "Hail, great white novelist. Tuniyaha, the spinner of cobwebs." *Negro woman*: "Why, its Masser Henry. Come to your old nurses' arms, honey!" † *Very large fat man*—: "What's the matter-with-James?" † *Fair Woman*—: "He's all right." † *Man with cigar and hat*—: "Who's—all—right." † *Short fat man*—: "James." Front row: *Little Girl*: "My, Ain't he cree-ative?" *Dancing Negro*: "We want yer mightly badly—Yas, we doo!"

Against this medley of rather inarticulate utterances is set what has been said to be Beerbohm's finest parody of James' style: Extract from his unspoken thoughts: "So that in fine, let without further beating about the bush, me make to myself amazed acknowledgement that, but for the certificate of a birth which I have—so quite indubitably—on me, I might, in regarding (and as it somewhat were, overseeing) a l'oeil de voyageur these dear good people, find hard to swallow, or even to take by subconscious injection, the great idea that I am—oh ever so indigenously!—one of them.!"

4. INSECURITY seems never to have been published. Augustus John to the right with his beard, hair and manner of dressing of his bohemian period disdainfully accepts the adoration of three "John" women, who testify to the artist's partiality for gypsies and fisherfolk. The figure of the art critic in the foreground is unidentified. The caption runs as follows: "Art Critic (under his breath) 'How odd it seems that thirty years hence I may be desperately in love with these ladies.' Max 1909."

1. ENFIN-SEULS is accompanied by the following caption: "In a world comparatively at peace now, Mr. Balfour tackles Benedetto Croce. Max 1920". Statesman as well as philosopher Arthur James Balfour added a taste for the arts to his diverse accomplishments. As Foreign Secretary he had taken part in the peace conference



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of 1919. Beerbohm's drawing shows Balfour returning to his favourite leisure time interest which according to William Rothenstein centred at that time in the "philosophical basis of taste". The drawing was exhibited at the Leicester Galleries in 1921 and published in *A Survey* in the same year.

2. Mr. LYTTON STRACHEY. Inscribed: "Mr. Lytton Strachey trying hard to see her with Lord Melbourne's eyes. Max November 1920." Strachey whose *Eminent Victorians* had brought him fame in 1918, was engaged in writing his *Queen Victoria*, when Beerbohm made this drawing. After the book had come out Beerbohm published the drawing in *A Survey* and added the following footnote to the word "trying": *—and contriving. M. B. 1921. Lytton Strachey was noted for his tall, emaciated figure and his red beard.

† These four figures are obviously portraits. The short fat man, closely resembles William Dean Howells, novelist, and close friend of Henry James. The others have as yet remained unidentified.

URSULA HOFF



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Prints and Drawings :

Five Christmas Card Designs, linocuts	..	Eric Thake	Purchased
Irish Legend, coloured lithograph	..	Tate Adams	..	..	..	..	Purchased
Native Dancer, coloured linocut	..	Barbara Brash	..	..	..	..	Purchased
Captain Blair's House, mezzotint	..	Kenneth Jack	..	..	..	..	Purchased
Landscape, drawing..	..	Lloyd Rees	..	..	..	..	Purchased
Landscape with Tree and Bridge, drawing	..	Claude Lorrain	Felton Bequest
Eleven Volumes of the Mangwa, woodcuts	..	Hokusai	Purchased

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Landscape, Tintalra, oil painting by Rupert Bunny.. Bequeathed by Janet Biddlecombe, Golf Hill, Victoria
Fifty-nine Pieces of Victorian Furniture, Silver, and other items	Bequeathed by Janet Biddlecombe, Golf Hill, Victoria
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 PUBLIC LIBRARY LECTURE—First Thursday.
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Cover design in this number is by Henri Laurens, *Sitting Woman*,
 coloured Lithograph, 24 inches X 18 inches
 Felton Bequest