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Photographs by courtesy of the National Art Gallery, Adelaide.

MARIE TUCK

by Ruth Tuck

"Aunt Marie" was a legendary figure in my early childhood. Her name came up on those few occasions when some little drawing of mine impressed my parents. They would whisper about hereditary talent and some connection with this mysterious artist in the family who had recently returned from years in Paris.

Then when I finally became a full time student the South Australian School of Arts and Crafts, I went along to the life room to meet this fascinating relative.

I can still remember my first impression of her—sitting on the edge of the model's dais in the long narrow "life" room on the south-western upstairs corner of the old Exhibition Building, drinking a cup of tea. She was a little dumpy figure, dressed in a "shift" which looked as though it was made from an old curtain—quite shapeless, buttoned down the front with loose, three-quarter length sleeves.

Her very white hair was combed out round her head like a Japanese doll's. Her face was pale and freckled, her hands too, and her lips pale and thin, but what you really noticed were her eyes. Faded by this time to a very pale luminous greeny grey, the iris seemed to be edged always with a ring of light. All of this added to the quiet, beautiful voice and very correct speech gave me the feeling she was completely dedicated to her cause—art.

Looking back on those days, I now realise that she did her best at that time to kindle some of that dedication in me. She told me how she had worked as a girl in a florist's shop to earn money for art lessons at night from James Ashton. Then in 1896, at the age of twenty-four, she went to Perth where she taught painting for eight years and saved madly until in 1904 she could go to Paris.

Here she attended art school (I don't know which one) and studied under the Australian Rupert Bunny. She paid for her lessons by working at the school. She told me of winter mornings when she had to arrive at the school while it was still dark and sweep the snow away from the door before the other pupils arrived, and then she must clean out the stoves and light the fires and keep them going all day!

I think she was disappointed that I didn't immediately embark on a similar course with the same dedication, but she continued as long as she lived to loan me French books and to make me converse in French with her.

Marie Tuck was born at Mount Torrens in the Adelaide Hills in 1872. The Tuck family had very close associations with this area. Her father, Edward Tuck, was a school master who arrived from England with his brother (my grandfather) in 1850. He opened a private school in Mount Torrens, and taught in it at least for 25 years. Later he was assisted by Marie's sister Sophie, who also carried on

for 25 years, although the school was during this time, "taken over" by the South Australian Government.

There were seven children in the Edward Tuck family—four daughters and three sons. A younger daughter Francis was a well-known piano teacher, and a brother Harry, headmaster of various state schools (Unley for many years), and another brother Bernard, city surveyor for Unley.

The old Tuck homestead at Mount Torrens was destroyed in the 1939 bush-fires, but I have vivid memories of it before the fire, with its enormous oak trees and cows wandering through the gardens.

Marie achieved some success in Paris where she exhibited at the Paris Salon and received Honourable Mention for her picture "Toilet of the Bride". While there in 1908, she sent home a picture for the Society of Arts Exhibition. This exhibition was actually called the "11th Federal Exhibition of the Society of Arts". The picture, "The Fish Market" was very large—108 inches by 76 inches—and it was bought by the National Gallery of South Australia for 100 guineas. It must have been quite an undertaking in 1908 to pack and send a picture this size—remember it was nine feet by more than six feet. But 100 guineas in those days was a lot of money, and no doubt went a long way towards keeping her for the remaining six years in France. During the long summer holidays she would go to Etaples in Brittany where she lived amongst the peasants and painted them.

She returned to South Australia in 1914 on the outbreak of war and began teaching at the South Australian School of Arts and Crafts. Also she was busy finishing pictures she had started for the Rheims Cathedral. My cousin, Mrs. Myrtle Arnold, delivered these pictures for her in 1919, and Aunt Marie afterwards received a letter of thanks from the Archbishop.

In 1945, after the bombing of Rheims Cathedral in World War II, she started painting large biblical pictures which she told me were to replace those destroyed in the Rheims Cathedral.

She worked her students very hard. No talking was allowed in the class—not even in rest periods. Before the ten-minute half time rest period, the model had to do a "one-minute" pose, and the students spent the next ten minutes drawing feverishly while the model rested. Most students will remember her Saturday afternoon studio parties in her Frewville studio and her mulberry wine. We would sit on the big property box and look at the large religious pictures which usually had recognisable portraits of my various cousins dressed from the property box and posed against the Glen Osmond hills. Sometimes we would be allowed to tinkle for a minute on her silver-stringed spinet, which she assured us had been played by Handel. After her death this spinet mysteriously disappeared.

I was sometimes embarrassed in the way teenagers are when she took me with her to the theatre. Looking back now, I feel very ashamed of these feelings, as I realise that she must have deprived herself of necessities to take me. For these theatre outings she would choose her costume from the property box and managed to make her usually demure little self quite bizarre. I remember the gorgeous black



Left: The drawing taken from the catalogue of Marie Tuck's 1919 exhibition. The top price she asked was 200 guineas for an oil entitled "Sheep-shearing". Below: Marie Tuck at the age of 24 when she went to Perth to teach and save for her trip to Paris.



silk shawl covered with pink and red silk roses, and the beautiful gold net which covered her sparse hair (pink rose on top).

I also remember the stooped little figure emerging from her studio gate after we had visited her when she was poorly—maybe we had taken her soup or cakes, but as soon as she had judged us to be safely away she would take the offerings to her still worse off neighbours.

A staunch member of the Church of England (her paintings still hang in St. Saviour's Church, Glen Osmond), when she realised she was dying she asked to be taken to the Little Sisters of the Poor Convent at Glen Osmond, for she said she had found in France that the Roman Catholics know how to treat death with dignity.

"ANONYMOUS"

by *Tom Thompson*

Surely "Anonymous" has one of the most impressive records in art. Museums and galleries throughout the world boast of their prized works from the past, created by anonymous painters and artisans. In our celebrity-conscious age, they stand as a rude challenge.

Our precious claims of identity and fears of being considered a nonentity are so much part of our environment, that we claim our own historic importance and even presume the judgments of the future. A rush of art histories (histories of our own generation!) testify to this. During recent years they have been falling thick and fast, like autumn leaves at the end of the season.

Such fearful effort is quite unwarranted; the anonymous work loses nothing. Each preserves its own individualism and it also gains the further attribution—the association with the whole growth of aesthetic aspiration. Consider also the attributed works. For instance—when admiring the magnificent works of Giotto or Rembrandt, do you feel yourself attracted towards the study of the artists' biographies? Within each particular painting it is more probable that you will be led toward a discovery of yourself. It could appear as though the painting was created by your other hands. I feel it would be quite appropriate for such paintings to be attributed to Anonymous. In the opposite case, I find it strange that some writers (Berenson, for instance), should show such enthusiasm for "rescuing" some artist from obscurity. Anonymous' record is most impressive.

Anonymous never had it so good as he has it today. While the celebrities are preciously handled within the confines of the art-conscious, Anonymous has been given a free hand, and is busily decorating our cities. The posters and hoardings, the electric signs and other commercial advertisements that blaze from every possible vantage point—all these constitute the art of the city.

This type of decoration cannot be shrugged off by calling it mere commercial art, as opposed to real "fine" art. It maintains itself as our most impressive display—the art of every-day. It is the "natural for our type of society, the "significant" art of today; it "keeps up with the times", reflects the spirit of the age.

A future generation might assess this age as supremely materialist, and in the study of our art, attach more importance to our display of posters and advertisements than we are prepared to admit. Anonymous would again dominate the cultural study.

Absurd prospect? Such a humble character? But yet, what an impressive record!

ALII ALIA

● Raphael drawing "rescued"

A study for the picture of the entombment which hangs in Rome is now in the possession of the British Museum after an American bid £27,000 for it and failed. The Museum was out-bid at the auction, but took successful steps to prevent the sale and keep the picture in Britain. The Raphael drawing had been in the possession of a family in Tiverton, Devon. A friend, thinking it may be important, brought it to the attention of the British Museum.

● £10 Renoir

Before World War II, Mr. Pierre Stuart-Layner paid £10 for an eight and a half inches by six and a quarter inches painting of a woman seated in a woody glade. When he took it to be cleaned, a small "R", the mark Renoir put on paintings he liked, was found in the corner. When the picture was shown to Renoir's son Pierre, he recognised it. The picture may fetch three to five thousand guineas at a Brisbane auction.

● I.A.A.C. Meets in Adelaide

The next Annual General Meeting of the International Association of Art Critics is in Adelaide. It opens on March 7, and has been arranged to coincide with the Festival of Arts. Mr. James Johnson Sweeney, Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Huston, Texas, and former vice-president of the I.A.A.C. is unable to attend this meeting, but spent five days in Melbourne, late last month. While he was in Melbourne, Mr. Sweeney acted as advisor to the judging panel of Georges Art Prize. He also opened the prize exhibition and gave talks.

● Archibald Prize

This year's winner of the Archibald Prize, Jack Carrington Smith passed through Adelaide last month on his way to Europe. His winning portrait was of Professor McAuley, one of the inventors of Ern Malley in Max Harris's *Angry Penguins*. Born in Launceston, Jack Carrington Smith studied at the East Sydney Technical College, and after winning the New South Wales travelling scholarship in 1936, continued his studies at the Royal Academy Schools, London, and in Paris and Italy. Head of the Art Department at the Hobart Technical College since 1941, he is represented in galleries in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, Broken Hill and Ballarat.

THE ARTIST SPEAKS

The artist interviewed in this issue of Kalori is Adelaide born Jacqueline Hick, who has taught at the South Australian School of Art for several years, where she studied before going to England in 1940. Miss Hick travelled and painted in England, France and Italy and returned to Adelaide in 1951. She has received many prizes in the Dunlop Art Competition, and was awarded the Cornell Prize in 1958, and the Melrose Prize in 1959. Last year she had a most successful exhibition at the Bonython Art Gallery, North Adelaide.

JACQUELINE HICK

When did you first notice the influence of the new art movement of this century?

South Australia had traditional art training schools in the thirties, but we knew little of the overseas movements. Eddies from these movements began to flow in, as far as I was concerned, at the S.A. School of Art through the teaching of Miss G. Good and Miss M. Harris. Then the Murdoch show (about 1937 or 1938, I think) burst upon us all. With a bang, painting was alive and present. Other shows followed, with books and prints, and then, of course, it was war time with all the emotions of urgent immediacy. A group of us formed the South Australian branch of the Contemporary Art Society. We had close links with the literary field through Max Harris and his Angry Penguins, and Dave Dallwitz knew his jazz and "moderns".

I like the interchange of sensations between the arts—the scream that echoes round a Goya war print, the smell of a Soutine painted carcass, the dry astringent colour of Prokofiev became valid points of appreciation. This was the time of discovery for me.

This happened after your traditional art training?

Yes.

Do you think a formal art training is necessary today?

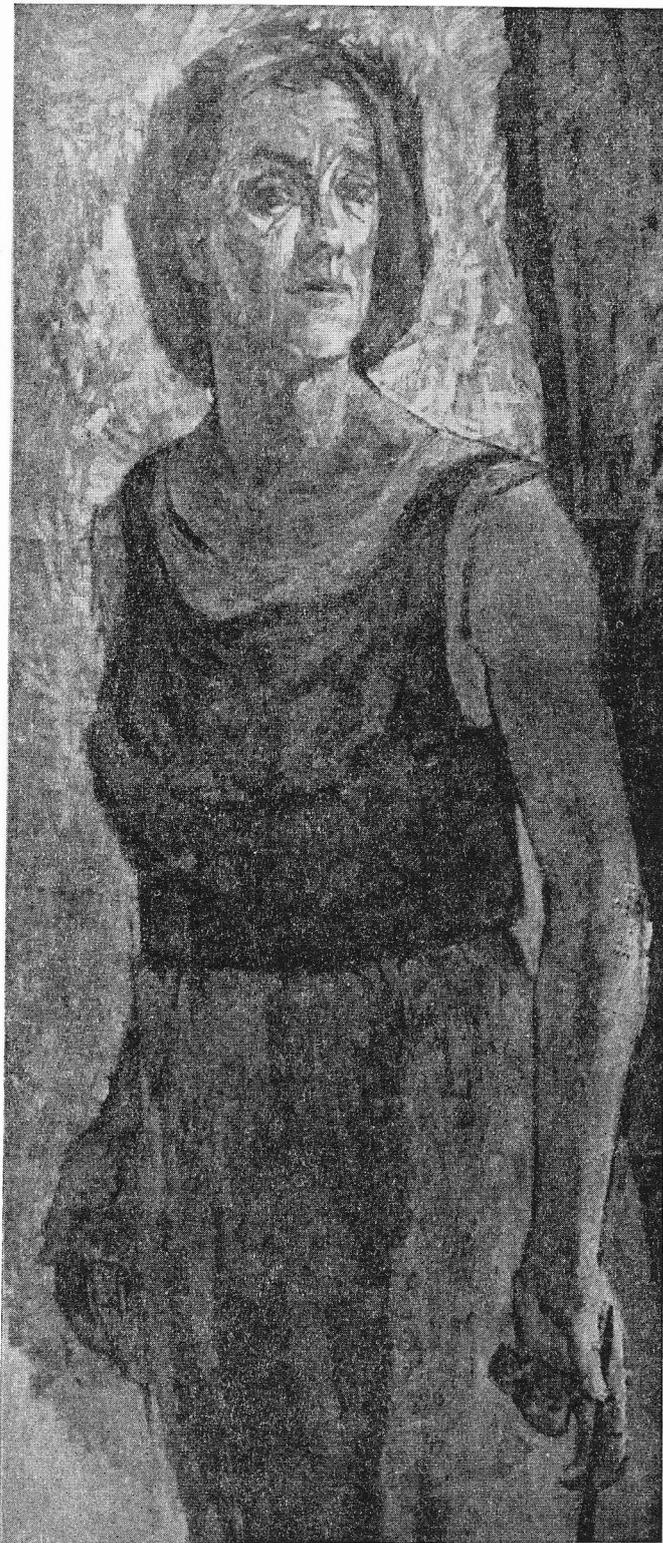
The discipline and control of a medium of expression is always necessary, but it can be gained in many different ways. I don't think it matters which way as long as the emphasis is on permanent principles and not on the end products of any age. We can't develop by reproducing "Mike Angelo's" masterpieces any more than we can explore space with pre-Copernician conclusions. But understanding and control of media (in this case composition for a purpose, tone and texture values, colour behaviour) is necessary.

But this leads only to technical skill?

Heavens, I don't want a display of technique capable of expressing creative ideas—see Wilenski in the last Kalori.

Let's leave art training. What do you look for in a painting?

A bit of buried treasure, something exciting found and expressed. Artist and prospector have much in common you know—the constant search for that alluring treasure in the mind or in the earth.



Jacqueline Hick, a self portrait, which hangs in the S.A. National Art Gallery.

Is it the search or the possession?

Both, possession makes the search more exciting.

This is getting too vague, besides I have lost my Miners Right. How do you begin a canvas?

In many ways, sometimes intuitively, sometimes in a calculated way. I usually need visual stimulus—several spontaneous canvases may result on the spot, but more often I make quick notes. From these notes trains of ideas develop, sometimes far removed from the original stimulus. When these “thin out” I need more visuals.

What do you mean by “calculated way”?

Sounds terrible, but it's not as premeditated as it seems. I work from an abstract composition which expressed the “idea” of the picture and retains the character of the “visual”. For example the “emptiness” of the desert, the “loneliness” of a figure, the “speed” of a horse. This abstract structure must hold the realistic forms and, in fact, is more important than the forms.

But once this structure is settled, in sketches or in my mind, the actual painting is freely executed in a most uncalculated way.

It is said that the artist is a poor judge of his own work.

We all pick up a bit of fool's gold in the beginning. Sorry! But I hope that the practised painter is honest and capable enough to discriminate in his own work.



“Australian Landscape” by Jacqueline Hick which won a Caltex Prize.

FESTIVAL OF ARTS EXHIBITIONS

Friday, March 6:

Sir Edward Hayward will open an exhibition of work by Horace Trenergy in the South Australian School of Art, North Adelaide, at 5.15 p.m.

An exhibition of work by Thirteen Australian Painters will be opened in the Osborne Art Gallery, city, by Brig. W. W. Wearne, at 3 p.m.

Lady McEwin will open an exhibition of Australian Paintings in Cox-Foys, at 3.30 p.m.

Saturday, March 7:

Robert Helpmann will open the Festival Exhibitions in the National Art Gallery, at 4 p.m.

Sunday, March 8:

An exhibition of African Paintings by Sidney Nolan will be opened in the Bonython Art Gallery, North Adelaide, by Alan Moorehead, at noon.

A retrospective exhibition of paintings by Robert Campbell will be opened by Sir Charles Moses in the Hahndorf Gallery, Hahndorf, at 3.30 p.m.

James Gleeson will open an exhibition of ceramics by Alex Leckie in the White Studio, Gawler Place, at 6 p.m.

Monday, March 9:

The R.S.A.S.A.'s exhibition, Art in Ceramics, will be opened in the Institute Building, North Terrace, at 4.30 p.m.

A display by the Adelaide Potters' Club will open in the clubrooms, Liston Street, Parkside, at 10.30 a.m.

John Shaw will open the International Exhibition of Children's Art in John Martins, at 3 p.m.

Paintings by Alastair Gray will be opened by Ian Bruce at 3 p.m., in the Walkerville Gallery, Walkerville.

WHAT IS ART?

Whereas the art of the ancients was a willing vehicle for any and every sort of message—ideas, beliefs, religious dogmas, even narratives—today's art, in its eagerness to purify itself, has banished everything that can be expressed by means other than its own. Whatever can be narrated is dismissed as anecdotal; whatever can be translated into words is rejected as literary. The nineteenth century began this trend when it limited art to the expression of nonrational states or states inaccessible to analytical approach, when it exalted the restless, ever-changing sphere of the emotions, of what is felt rather than what is thought. The twentieth century, going even further in this direction, has made a clean sweep. Fauvism and Expressionism lingered in a world of feeling, but feeling reduced to its crudest, rawest states. Surrealism went down into the cellars and subcellars of the conscious, bringing back a human stuff that was murky and absurd, but that could still produce shock. Abstract art demanded thoroughgoing asepsis: every element capable of evoking an appearance of reality was excluded. In the end, lines and colours were turned away even from the formal constructions the predecessors of the Abstractionists had cherished since Cubism. Technique had been reduced to the recording of quasi-organic impulses, which translate the obscure sense of life that links man to matter. Thus, by a steady, relentless process of cutting down—today carried to its furthest extreme—art seems to have got rid of every vestige of what used to be called "content", to have broken every last link with thought, even with conscious life. It remains to be seen whether this negation of consciousness in the most unorganised forms of painting anticipates a new consciousness of the world.

—*From Art and the Spirit of Man by Rene Huyghe.*

What then was painting by way of becoming now that it no longer either imitated or transfigured? Painting! And this it was coming to mean even in the museum, now that the museum, crowded to overflowing, was no longer more than a challenge to research. For artists had decided that henceforth painting was to dominate its subject-matter instead of being dominated by it.

—*From "The Voices of Silence", by Andre Malraux.*

PENNY THOUGHTS

Reading Penny?

Yes, Applejohn.

What's this, Kalori, eh?

Yes, Applejohn.

Are you enjoying it?

It's alright, only I'm not with it all the way.

Don't use Americanisms, Penny. What don't you understand.

Well here it says "abstract" and "non-representational" What's that?

What used to be called "abstract" and is now called "non-representational" for short, is the sort of art that isn't trying to look like anything.

What shapes and things and all that jazz?

Yes all that jazz, Penny—dig it?

Yes, Applejohn, and that's American anyway.

Sorry, Penny, anything else.

Yes. What's still life?

A still life is the sort of picture that shows things grouped together such as fruit and pots and all kinds of objects.

Is still life non-rep— what you said?

Non-representational? No, Penny.

Well here it says that some rocker has won a still-life prize with a non-thing picture; can a non-thing picture win a still life prize?

The judges evidently thought it could.

Would the judges give a non-what-do-you-call-it prize to a picture of apples and things.

No, Penny, that wouldn't be with it at all.

Well, I don't think its fair.

Hush, Penny, the judges decision is final.

You can say that again, Applejohn, I think it's the end.

BOOK REVIEWS

The four sculpture books under review are all fine additions to the library, and I regret that as a result of receiving them when Kalori was due to go to the printer, I have not had as much time as I would have liked before writing them up.

Two of them "Oceanic Sculpture" and "Gothic Sculpture" are part of "The Acanthus History of Sculpture" series edited by Sir Herbert Read and H. D. Molesworth and published by Oldbourne.

"Oceanic Sculpture" is more accurately sub-titled "sculpture of Melanesia" as the book only deals with work from New Guinea and associated islands, and is not concerned with the other Pacific cultures. The thirty-two plates are large, beautifully photographed in black and white, and well selected from exhibits in European museums. It is not an exhaustive work, but is a fine gallery of pieces that illustrate well the powerful school native to this area, and so tragically in decline in our day.

"Gothic Sculpture", whose thirty-two plates are confined to intimate works in ivory, wood and bronze, is mainly of German and French work, although there is some Flemish and one interesting English alabaster mask. The virtuosity of Gothic, with its baroque tendencies, has never appealed to me as much as Romanesque, but there are some charming things here, and being small for the most part unpretentious. They are the sort of thing that one covets so in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

In both of these books, picture and description are on opposing pages, which is convenient, and visually effective, and a great improvement on some recent books where information about the illustrations is infuriatingly buried in the text.

One tends to think of Christianity as something peculiarly European and to forget that it is and has been for hundreds of years the faith of many people outside Europe. That these people should adorn their beliefs with art forms traditional to them should not be surprising, but somehow it is, and "Ecce Homo", a book devoted to images from all parts of the Christian world, is full of curiosities and delights. The range is extraordinary. In addition to the well-known European schools, which naturally form a large part of the collection, there are brass castings and carvings from Nigeria recalling gold weights and fetishes, but perfectly adapted to Christian needs. There is a Chinese plate of the baptism that is almost willow pattern, many from India and Japan, an eighteenth-century painting by American Indians, and many more. Though some of the illustrations are sentimental and Sunday schoolish, most are fine works of art, and one does not have to be specially interested in religious art to find it stimulating as well as entertaining. The African pieces are particularly strong, and have an astonishing similarity to Romanesque works.

"Modern Italian Sculpture" is a lush volume published by Oldbourne, covering the period from Modigliani and the Futurists to the present day, and showing the Italian return to world prominence in sculpture. The seventy-three plates are very

glamorous pieces of presentation which do more than justice to the works. Over half are in colour, and comparing these with the monochrome plates facing them, one is made very aware of the importance of colour to the delight of sculpture. Some of the work is not especially Italian in character, and some of it shows the specific influence of foreigners, such as Richier, Picasso, Moore and Chadwick (surely this must be the first time that English art has influenced Italian), but there is amongst these trends a strong native development which could now be called a school. Marini, Manzu, Greco, Gallo, Fazzini, and some others have a similarity of outlook which stamps their work as Italian, and it is this group which has had most influence outside Italy.—Butler's recent work being a notable example. It is surprising to find that Giacometti is not mentioned in this book.

—*John Dowie*

The Society's Festival Exhibition

The Council decided to hold an "Art in Ceramics" exhibition as the Society's effort for the 1964 Adelaide Festival of Arts.

The foremost potters in Australia were approached and asked to send work for this important exhibition, and the response has been gratifying.

After making the decision, the Society was asked to include the Australian and New Zealand pottery exhibition organized by the National Gallery of Victoria for circulation throughout Australia during 1963-1964, and the Council was happy to make our Festival effort a combined exhibition.

This exhibition is important because it is the first time that a considerable body of work by New Zealand potters has been seen here and, combined with pottery by Australian craftsmen, it provides an admirable opportunity both to assess the work of our own potters and to compare the work being done in each country.

—*Allan Glover, Secretary.*

Page Sixteen

"Only one faker in forty is discovered"

THE ART FAKERS

By John Berger

This article, "The Art Fakers", is reproduced from a July, 1962, issue of the London Sunday newspaper, the "Observer".

Who will get the Leonardo cartoon in the end? Who stole the Goya? And why? Was it a crime for crime's sake—*l'art pour l'art*—or does some millionaire keep it locked away in his remote house, the object of his lonely passion? What made Somerset Maugham sell?

Such are a few of the questions nowadays raised almost every week by front-page headlines. Merely to say that art has become news is to underestimate what has happened during the last 10 years. Art has become wondrous. Art has become a solace. Art, as one colony after another is lost, has become an empire. Art has become the noblest and most beautiful image of saved prestige. Art has become a necessity for the rich.

This is not, of course, a new function for art. Art began to offer the possibility of an inexpressible *something* as soon as patrons were no longer able to commission artists because they did not know what they wanted art to do.

CLEARING HOUSE

But never before has art been so elevated, never before has the priceless been sold for so much. And we have reason in this country to be a little proud, for it is London that has become the stage for art's culminating triumph. It would not be too much to say that in this special and rich field, London has become the spiritual clearing-house of the world.

Nearly 10 years ago a French art-journal carried out a poll on why people bought paintings. (I must emphasise here that when I say buying paintings I mean buying paintings. I do not mean saving up for a lithograph, helping an artist, encouraging a friend, or buying something that you yourself have found. I don't mean anything that costs less than £1,000.) The poll showed that 17 per cent of those who bought paintings did so for love of art.

How different that figure would be in London today! At a guess, I would say that 95 per cent. now buy for love of art. One has only to hear them talking in front of the pictures. They constantly employ such words as pretty, original, personal, incredible and expressive. Furthermore, it is clear that many collectors today have the aesthetic courage to sell when they feel that they have passed the zenith of their experience: if this were not so, the salerooms would have nothing to offer.

TOO MANY ARTISTS

All this is obvious. Let us go a little deeper. How does the present state of affairs benefit the artist? To answer this fairly, we must first face a problem: there are too many artists.

Another French art-journal made a survey of Paris and found that there were at that time—also about 10 years ago—as many artists in the city as prostitutes. That is to say, about 80,000.

Now, too many people wanting to paint pictures is obviously not in the interests of great art such as we love. And so the first advantage of the present situation is that it emphatically discourages anybody from believing that art can be picked up for a song. Perhaps I should qualify this by adding that it depends on what you mean by a song. But the result is the same whatever you mean.

No painting that does not run into four figures (I speak now of the price, not the subject) is worth having. Consequently and fortunately, well over 95 per cent. of those who call themselves artists cannot live by their art.

The second advantage is that the very gifted few, who have been tested and have been made more gifted by a term of poverty, are then paid so well that they have not got a care in the world and can concentrate all their energy on creating out of nothing. To sum up, the present situation makes it quite impossible for the artist to be paid as though he were merely doing a routine job—as doctors or teachers are paid. He is given every encouragement, whether he is ground down or lifted up, to think of himself as being quite different.

MASQUERADING AS ART

The situation could not be more fundamentally healthy. But I must now come to the one danger inherent in it. Wherever there is wealth, there is crookedness. Wherever there is a pure love of art, there are those in the modern world who will exploit this love. It is impossible to exaggerate the need of warning those who justifiably seek solace and the inexpressible. The truth is that there are hundreds and thousands of fakes masquerading as art such as we love.

It was said of Corot that he painted 3,000 paintings, 10,000 of which were sold in the States. Lest a subversive Civil Servant seize upon this as an argument, let me quickly add that there are another 30,000 Corots in Europe.

Readers may recall the case of the faked frescoes in the cathedral of Lubeck. It was thought by all the experts that the thirteenth-century frescoes, damaged by fire in the late war, had been restored by Herr Lothar Malskat. Adenauer went to the unveiling. The restored national heritage was proudly reproduced on postage stamps. Then Herr Malskat confessed that the frescoes were a complete forgery and proved it by photographs he had taken while painting them.

Naturally, the restored national heritage was then proudly wiped off the wall. But—and this unfortunately is more relevant to our present purpose—Herr Malskat also confessed to faking 600 paintings by Watteau, Chagall, Matisse, Vlaminck, Modigliani.

TOTAL CYNICISM

In 1948, at a time when art was at only the base of the spiral of its ascendancy, an official public inquiry in Paris stated that at least one faked Utrillo was sold every week at the Salle Drouot. The Salle Drouot is what one might term the French saleroom *par excellence*.

More recently, indeed only last year, a young Frenchman called Jean-Pierre Schecroun admitted that during two years he had been able to put on the market, to be eventually sold in London, Geneva and Cologne, 80 faked paintings and drawings by Picasso, Miro, Léger, de Stael, Pollock, Kandinsky.

The only shred of comfort that I can offer is that both these impostors, both these men who, with a total cynicism about the true value of art, exploited our good faith, were condemned to prison. It is only a shred.

I am of the opinion myself that this is one of those crimes for which the cat should be brought back. But here, of course, I may find, at least in our own country, the Home Secretary opposing me.

What is quite clear is that, if it is true that only one murderer in four is convicted, it must be even truer that only one faker in 40 is ever discovered. They fake in our midst unbeknown.

And so we must face the appalling possibility that so far as late nineteenth-century and modern art is concerned, there may be as many fakes as genuine works. Our only way round this conclusion is to doubt the history books and to argue that there are too many Modiglianis for him to have died so young: to argue that, in fact, Van Gogh was flier than they allow because he deliberately held a lot of stuff back from his brother so as not to flood the market. Yet, however we argue, we need to face the probability that, at the absolute minimum, one in four is a fake.

Who is to tell us which one? We reach what I admit is a terrifying realisation. It seems that when we stand in front of a work of art we are alone. It appears as though, when confronted with a masterpiece such as we love, we can look to nobody for any help whatsoever. The records are not reassuring.

The notorious and infamous Van Meegeren painted in the late 1930s Vermeer's "Supper at Emmaus". It was hailed as a previously unknown masterpiece by the master's own hand. It was tested by the chemists, it was passed by the radiographers, it was deemed genuine by those who look through microscopes. It was awarded golden superlatives by the aestheticians. And it was sold for 520,000 Dutch florins—which, on reflection, was more than the Rembrandt Society could afford for a Van Meegeren.

EXPERTS v. EXPERTS

If the art experts can be so wrong about a faked seventeenth-century painting, how much more easily may they be confused by a nineteenth-century one? Mr. William Goetz, the American collector, bought a Van Gogh. Monsieur M. J. B. de la Faille, a well-known scholar in Paris, considered it was authentic. Van Gogh's own nephew said it was a fake. Four experts summoned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art also thought it was false. Five more experts in Europe later examined the picture and decided it was genuine. Imagine the suffering all this must have caused Mr. Goetz. Transported from the heights to the depths and back again, like Vincent himself—if indeed it were he who painted it.

It is known that a faked Cézanne deceived Cézanne. And it is said that Picasso has, in good faith, signed drawings which were in fact not by him. Nobody need be ashamed of himself for not recognising a good fake. Or, to put it the other way round, nobody need be ashamed of himself for not recognising a genuine work of art such as he loves.

Yet this is not to belittle the gravity of the situation. Imagine buying a little Monet for £35,000. It is a middle-period one, but with exciting prophetic hints that lead on to tachism. The whole freedom of the 1890's is summed up by it. The Museum of Modern Art want it. It's of a Dutch waterfront.

Overnight (Sir Kenneth Clark comes to dinner) it is discovered to be a fake. The experts agree. One has lost one's money and one's Monet. It is not middle period. There are no hints of tachism. It sums up nothing. The Museum of Modern Art certainly does not want it. One is left with a Dutch waterfront. If it were an abstract painting, one would be left with nothing.

Then, overnight (Sir John Rothenstein comes to dinner), it is discovered to be genuine. Experts agree. It is middle period . . . etc.

INTOLERABLE RISKS

I admit that this is not likely to happen to you or me. But it could happen, and very similar cases—think of Mr. Goetz—have happened. The risks run are intolerable, and the loss of money is the least of it. Art such as we love is in great danger of being utterly discredited. Then permanent values will disappear. Saved prestige will collapse. The inexpressible will be lost.

Is there a solution? After many months of thought, I believe I have found one. And I hope that all readers who love art will support me by bringing pressure to bear upon Her Majesty's Government to carry through the necessary legislation. Although, naturally, the last thing I want to do is to divide the forces at present campaigning against dogs' quarantine.

To find the solution one must first define the problem. What exactly is it that we value in art such as we love? What makes and unmakes the Monet for us? Surely it is the name. The beauty, the sustenance we derive, the life enhancement, comes to us through the name.

Can we call it a Monet or can we not? If this is true, it is the name that is sacred and so must be protected. It is time—and it surprises me considerably that no one has thought of it before—that we extended the patent principle, which in its turn grew up from legislation against heresy, to the field of art.

What I want to see our Government do is to draw up a list of the 500 best-selling artists and then to grant them, posthumously or otherwise, the total copyright of their styles. This will make it a crime for any painter to paint a painting in any way resembling a Monet, a Picasso, a Constable, etc. The Government must also be given power to destroy as worthless all pictures, past or present, which bear any resemblance to the work of any of the greatest, best-selling 500.

Every 10 years it will be necessary for the list of 500 to be amended according to the principles of current fashion. Thus, as can easily be foreseen, the number of paintings in existence will be progressively reduced and the value of those remaining progressively increased.

Thus too, as the future unfolds, art will be progressively less easy to discredit, the inexpressible will be made progressively more secure, and our grandchildren will eventually be left with—I am arrogant enough to suggest—the art our society today deserves. None.

THE SOCIETY'S EARLY HISTORY

With reservations, our State's metropolis has been characterized as a City of Culture, thus representing the rest of the territory. This claim has been challenged, if not derided, but the earliest records show that its foundations were laid by world-renowned celebrities, of whom even the Duke of Wellington—to whom, with Edward Gibbon Wakefield, it owed its beginning—did not tower much more notably than some of his colleagues in this enterprise. Artists were specially prominent in the days of juvenile South Australia, and later—in witness whereof may be mentioned among others the names of George French Angas, H. J. Johnstone, Mortimer Mempes, Shaw, S. P. Gill, and C. Hill, besides those instanced in this slight historical sketch, which has been compiled under the disadvantage of a break in the continuity of the minute books and other sources of reference which contain the annals of the Society. It is clear, however, that the special conditions tending to culture under which South Australia—never a colony, but until Federation a province of the United Kingdom—began its career were soon reflected in its aspirations after artistic and other intellectual recreations. This year the Society will celebrate its 108th Anniversary. It may well, therefore, take stock of its acquisitions in the past, and acquaint a new generation of its members and well-wishers with the aims of its founders and the measure of their fulfilment.

Less than twenty years after the founding of the new province on December 28, 1836, a group of enthusiasts, under the leadership of Mr. Charles Hill, conceived the project of launching an Association which should be to the new Community what the English Society of Arts, founded just a century earlier, had been to the Mother Country—the foster-nurse, in a large measure, of the fine and applied arts. Probably with this in view the pioneers of the colonial venture chose the somewhat ambitious title of their projected Society. Its aims, like those of its namesake, were mainly public-spirited and disinterested. They included the promotion, not only of painting and sculpture, but also of architecture, decorative design, and works in metal, wood, and leather. Indeed, the Society was to influence all the branches of industry which demand the exercise of skill, knowledge, and taste. This it proposed to accomplish by annual loan and competitive exhibitions, by lectures, and by the formation of an Art Library. From this latter portion of its programme it has never entirely departed; but in estimating its fulfilment of these aims it is needful to remember the very primitive condition of South Australia over a century ago.

ART PIONEERS

Of those who projected and materialized their vision of the State's aesthetic future, not one now remains alive, but a few words concerning the founder and first Chairman, Mr. Charles Hill, may be appropriate here. They were gleaned from personal acquaintance and the accounts of some of his students. His erect figure and resolute face suggested the soldier rather than the artist. An early inclination towards art led to his training as a line-engraver—the well-known group

of choristers, "We Praise Thee, O God," after the painting by Broad, is from his brush—but the primitive conditions of the infant province hindered his advancement. Failing to find scope for the practice of his art in Adelaide, he became eventually a teacher of drawing at St. Peter's College and other schools, and so had little time for original work. With the name of Mr. Hill, the founder, must be linked that of the first Secretary, Mr. James MacGeorge, to whose indefatigable exertion during its first years the Society owed much of its success, especially in obtaining on loan works of art brought by the pioneers from the old country. These were a great attraction to the public. Mr. MacGeorge also arranged for the diffusion, by means of an art union, of a large number of fine engravings of noteworthy English pictures and reproductions of classic sculpture. But, as this practice did not conduce to the promotion of a characteristic Australian school, and was based on gaining financial advantage rather than encouraging talent, it was abandoned through a construction of the Society, and has never been revived. Mr. MacGeorge's service to the Society was ably continued by Mr. R. F. Minchin, and after him for a long time by Mr. A. Abrahams, during whose occupancy of secretarial office a notably important change was made in the art life of the State by the founding in 1882 of the School of Painting and Design under the control of the Governors of the Public Library and Art Gallery, which lasted until the year 1909.

Among the earlier Presidents of the Society were two Governors, Sir Dominic Daly and Sir James Ferguson; later the presidential positions were held in succession by the first Bishop of Adelaide and the late Chief Justice (Sir Samuel Way), Gradually, however, experience convinced the members that the President, as a leader of artists, should himself be an artist—preferably a professional—and this rule has been applied since 1908.

EARLY EXHIBITIONS

Although the promoters of the Society included only one professional artist, they determined from the first to hold annual exhibitions. For several years these consisted largely of loan pictures and statues, generous contributions by those who had brought their pictorial home treasures to their new abodes or had acquired them in course of travel. The Society had at first no local habitation, and the first Exhibition, when it was only a year old, early in 1857, was held in the Legislative Council Hall, the use of which the Government granted for the purpose. The exhibits were naturally a motley collection, but the monetary results, at least, were most encouraging, for 1,069 people (quite one-tenth of the metropolitan population) paid their shilling admission fee, and so gave the Society much encouragement, as well as a substantial sum of £60. Of this amount £10/10/- was set aside as a prize for the best original painting illustrative of Australian life; and in the following year, Mr. J. Adamson gained this award for his "First Steamboat on the River Murray." The numbers of the Society now increased rapidly and this initial prize was supplemented by many others, presented by wealthy colonists. Thence forward the Exhibition became mainly competitive, a change which, if not conducive to the advancement of public taste, tended to bring to light much latent talent and to show the need for the thorough and up-to-date instruction and equipment of the rising artists of the community. The far-seeing leaders pressed on to a more

momentous object, the foundation of a School of Design, in which the native-born might enjoy the best training available. Meanwhile, the annual Exhibitions continued to draw numbers and increasing appreciation, but, owing to the imperfect knowledge of many contributors, copies of paintings often found a place where only original work should have been admitted. These Exhibitions were for more than sixteen consecutive years held in rooms granted for the Society's accommodation in the South Australian Institute, managed by a body which was the forerunner of the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery Board. In these premises, too, the first School of Design was eventually formed and housed under the direction of Mr. Hill. The parent English Society assisted the equipment of the new department by a donation of valuable casts and models, and presented also volumes dealing with antiquities to help in the formation of a library.

GALLERY BOOKING, 1964

- APRIL 14 to 24—KENNETH JACK (Prints and Drawings).
MAY 25 to JUNE 5—LISETTE KOHLHAGEN (Paintings and Prints).
JUNE 22 to JULY 3—J. P. SZCZEPANEK.
SEPTEMBER 5 to 18—A. T. BERNALDO (Paintings).
OCTOBER 3 to 16—LUCY AND HATTON BECK (Pottery).
OCTOBER 17 to 30—JOHN CORRELL.
NOVEMBER 14 to 27—INGRID ERNS.
NOVEMBER 30 to DECEMBER 11—PETER MEDLEN (Prints).

SOCIETY'S PROGRAMME

All members are invited to attend the social, film evenings and lectures to be held during the year.

These functions are held in the Society of Arts Gallery, Institute Building, North Terrace, Adelaide, at 8 p.m.

APRIL 14—PRESIDENT'S EVENING.

MAY 12—FILM EVENING.

JUNE 9—FILM EVENING.

The Council has decided to hold the following shows in 1964:

FESTIVAL EXHIBITION: MARCH 9 to 21—"ART IN CERAMICS".
TO INCLUDE THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND POTTERY
EXHIBITION (organised by the National Gallery of Victoria).

AUTUMN EXHIBITION: MAY 12 to 22.

SENDING IN DAY—FRIDAY, MAY 8, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

WHOLOHAN EXHIBITION: JULY 14 to 24.

Entry forms and conditions will be available during March.

PRINT AND DRAWING EXHIBITION: JULY 28 to AUGUST 7.

SENDING IN DAY—FRIDAY, JULY 24, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

SPRING EXHIBITION: SEPTEMBER 22 to OCTOBER 2.

SENDING IN DAY—FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ASSOCIATES AND LAY MEMBERS' EXHIBITION: NOVEMBER 3 to 13.

SENDING IN DAY—FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

CHRISTMAS EXHIBITION: DECEMBER 15 to 24.

SENDING IN DAY—FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.