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Photographs by courtesy of the National Gallery of S.A. and "The Advertiser".

HORACE TRENERRY

by Albert Smith

Horace Trenerry was born at Adelaide on the 5th of December, 1899, the son of a butcher. The Trenerry family, at this time, lived in a two-storied building in Franklin Street, Adelaide. The ground floor was occupied by the actual butcher's shop while at the rear of the building, Trenerry senior kept stables and a coach-house from which he operated a service for the hire of coaches, horses and drags. Unfortunately, this prosperous state of affairs did not continue when Mr. Trenerry turned his interests in horses to those at the race-tracks. There followed a number of moves, which included a period at Kadina in the mid-north, before settling in the Adelaide suburb of Parkside.

Horace Trenerry lived with his aunt, Mrs. Isabella Pridmore, from early childhood. It was his "Aunt Bell" who recognised his interest in art and who encouraged him to join a group of young people, who met regularly to draw and to paint, at the home of Miss Dennis at Wayville. He later went to the studio of Arthur Milbank, where he received instruction in the handling of pastels and oils, and some of the black and white media.

At about this time, Archibald Collins resigned from the staff of the Government controlled School of Arts and Crafts in Adelaide and decided to establish a studio in the old Royal Exchange Building. Trenerry joined his classes, but did not remain there for very long. Collins, who was born in Worcestershire and had attended the Royal Academy School, was a skilled draughtsman but sometimes, impatient of a student's efforts, he would take hold of the pencil and complete or at least completely change the character of the drawing. This technique offended Trenerry, who moved on to the James Ashton School, which was flourishing, with about two hundred part-time students, in the old Widow's Fund Building in Grenfell Street, Adelaide. James Ashton was very pleased with Trenerry's work, an example of which he sent to the Royal Drawing Society in London. Ashton had retained his affiliation with the Society and often sent the work of his outstanding students to London for their examinations. Trenerry's picture, "Hay Stooks", won the Society's highest award—a gold star medal. At the suggestion of James Ashton, Horace Trenerry enrolled at the South Australian School of Arts and Crafts where he studied under Fred. Britton, a Slade-trained artist who was in charge of Drawing classes at the school.

The following year, 1921, Miss Edith Birks established the School of Fine Art at Tynte Street, North Adelaide, securing the services of Fred. Britton as Principal. Horace Trenerry transferred from the School of Arts and Crafts with Mr. Britton and continued to study at North Adelaide until 1924, even though he was often unable to pay his fees.

In May of 1922, Trenerry went to Sydney, bearing a letter of introduction to Will Ashton, from Mr. L. H. Howie, who was Principal of the South Australian School of Arts and Crafts. At this time, Will Ashton was the President of the Society of Artists in New South Wales and Mr. Howie asked that he help Trenerry, who, he wrote, "is coming to Sydney in pursuance of his studies." It is also said that he studied at the Julian Ashton School in Sydney, but this must have been for a period of only six to eight months.

And so we find that Trenerry had the opportunity to learn from a number of art teachers, each with something to offer him. But in fact, although his work was always of a very high standard, he was extremely difficult to teach. He was a precocious, restless young man.

He held his first "One Man" exhibition at the Royal South Australian Society of Arts Gallery, from the 5th to the 20th of June, 1924. It was opened by Mr. G. D. Cowan, who predicted a great future for the young artist. Of Trenerry, Mr. Cowan said, "He has youth, enthusiasm, ability, sincerity, and, was a devoted student of Nature, the greatest teacher."

This is interesting since almost thirty years later, Trenerry made the following statement to John Miles, a feature writer for "The News" in Adelaide. "To paint nature, you must be afield early and late. The frost soon melts and the sun moves up, and no place ever looks quite the same again. That is why there is endless freshness in landscape work. A patch of grass is suddenly a golden counter-pane when the soursobs are out. Where you painted the brown hillside a few weeks ago there is a mist of blue Salvation Jane." In his humble way Trenerry could be called the Monet of South Australian painting. He had worked hard for about a year to present his first show, which included sixty four pictures, ranging in price from one guinea to twenty-five guineas. "Hay Stooks" which had previously won him the gold medal award, was offered for sale at only four guineas. He claimed that the cost of framing alone, for this exhibition was approximately £60, which he said, was loaned him by Hans Heysen. The art critic for "The News" 14/6/24 had this to say about Trenerry's exhibition. "These fascinating pictures indicate a boldness of style which, combined with that rarest of gifts a fine colour sense, gives to his works an irresistible charm, while his deep love of nature and the power of selection impart that depth of feeling and character found only in the finest art."

During this period, Horace Trenerry established a studio, which he called Greengate, and worked in the area from Woodside to Charleston. He had come to live and work in the area of the Mount Lofty Ranges, which had been "Heysen Country" for many years. Eventually the two men made contact and the kindly Heysen gave him financial assistance, painting materials, technical advice and a measure of inspiration. Trenerry was a notoriously bad manager, and Sir Hans is only one of a great number of people who helped him during his career. Following a fall from one of the Heysen ponies, resulting in a leg injury and some bruised ribs, Trenerry was cared for by Lady Heysen at their home.

There is no doubt that at this time, Trenerry's painting shows a marked similarity to that of Heysen. Even the inevitable gum-tree of the area became a major feature of his art. His use of colour and his technique aped the older man. However, Heysen saw in Trenerry a sincere, imaginative artist who was destined for an important place in art. Sir Hans is still of this opinion today, when Trenerry's art



A Flowerpiece by Horace Trenerry. In possession of the National Gallery of S.A.

can be seen in retrospect. The association came to an end as the result of differences of opinion which were not necessarily connected with art. One of the many stories of this period refers to a trip which Trenerry made to the Flinders Ranges, in the area near Aroona Valley, approximately 320 miles north of Adelaide. This was one of Hans Heysen's favourite painting grounds and there is no doubt that Trenerry used Heysen's good name in order to seek permission to work on private property. However, he was not well equipped to stay in the harsh desolate area which requires a man to carry a plentiful supply of food and water. As a result of his inexperience, he ran short of provisions and these he obtained, without permission, from a boundary rider's sub-station.

During the 1930's Trenerry was closely associated with d'Auvergne Boxall. The two men had first met as students at James Ashton's School and later at the School of Arts and Crafts. Their work was frequently compared at this time, since they often submitted work for the same Society of Arts exhibitions. It is easy to say that a certain artist was affected by certain influences, but the pictures of "Coogee" by Roberts and Streeton, seen in the "Tate Gallery" collection of Australian Painting in 1963, show a similar subject, treated in a similar way. But who can be certain that Roberts influenced Streeton or, that the reverse is not the truth. In the same way then, we may observe similarities of subject matter and of technique in the early work of Trenerry and Boxall.

In 1932, Horace Trenerry went on a five-month trek into the centre of the continent. The "red heart" fascinated him and he painted enthusiastically all the while. He preferred to complete a picture "on the spot" rather than work in a studio from notes and sketches. On his return to Adelaide, he moved his painting headquarters to Mount Lofty.

He worked and lived at "Wonnaminta", a property on the Summit Road, at Mount Lofty and here he began to develop his own style. It is true that he greatly admired the subtle tonal compositions of Whistler, and that, for a short time, Elioth Gruner also painted in the area near Mount Lofty, at times contacting Trenerry. Gruner produced some outstanding work in the Piccadilly Valley, not far from Trenerry's studio. Sir Hans Heysen has expressed the opinion that Gruner's influence upon Trenerry's painting was real and that as a result, "Trenerry's landscapes opened up, became lighter, and more accurately captured the character of the South Australian country-side." While at "Wonnaminta", Trenerry found himself the defendant in a police action. It was alleged that certain prime table birds, the property of neighbours, had met their fate in Trenerry's oven. Others, it was claimed, had been sold by Trenerry.

It is interesting that poultry should figure so prominently in his life and art. In several of his pictures fowls may be seen around a shack, or just scratching in the under-growth. "Willunga Landscape", in the National Gallery of South Australia, is a typical example. There are many other stories about Trenerry and his poultry; some of these are obviously more than half-truths. One describes a trip which he made "up north", when, with the idea of supplementing his diet with fresh eggs, he decided to take with him a dozen fowls. One can imagine the problem of keeping so many fowls in a confined area in a coop. They did not adjust themselves to their new environment and failed to supply the expected quota of eggs. As a result, each in turn paid the supreme penalty.

After the Wonnaminta incident, Horace Trenerry was obliged to leave, even though he was not found guilty. He moved to an old deserted cafe, in the Port Willunga area, and lived in a room at the top. Here he lived from about 1934, until a kindly Mrs. Dunstan helped him by renting a cottage for him, near the beach at Port Willunga. There seems no doubt that Trenerry's physical condition had deteriorated during his stay at the "Cafe" and Mrs. Dunstan saw to it that he was well fed and comfortable. She also gave him painting materials and some hand-woven cloth, which he used as curtains and coverings in his cottage. He had a gift for converting the most humble of objects into attractive items of furniture. Two kerosene cases and an old door made the frame for an attractive divan, for instance. His cottage was always clean and attractive.

He then rented a cottage for himself, on the Main Road, Aldinga, an area which he came to love. It is in the late Mount Lofty and the Port Willunga-Aldinga periods that we see him at his best. In fact, the landscape from Aldinga to Port Willunga was "Trenerry Country" to his contemporaries. And, in the early days, "Trenerry's Cafe" (pronounced caif), became a week-end rendezvous for young artists and art-lovers.

The rolling hills, holiday shacks and the winding roads of the area became integral parts in his work. He captured the very atmosphere of the country, which he painted in broad simplicity. Yet it was a calculated simplicity; he was a slow, thoughtful worker, whose output was not great. He preferred to wait for "just the right time of the day" to capture the character of a certain subject.

He was rarely satisfied with his work, often keeping a picture for months, adding a stroke here, a tone there, in an attempt to improve it. Although a capable draughtsman, it is evident that he placed more emphasis on the use of colour. He is surely one of the great painters in Australia, gifted with a very subtle sense of colour values. He had developed in this direction, as early as 1922-1924, as may be seen in "Dusk, Sydney Harbour", a small but brilliant painting by such a young artist. In it, one may see a promise of the pure Trenerry style which was brought to fruition in the next two decades. This is more interesting because later, at Greengate, he did at times produce work which accented the warm browns and somewhat broader technique. That his Aldinga-Willunga pictures show his mastery of subtle colour, indicates that he absorbed all of these suggested outside influences, but succeeded in fusing them into a highly personal style, which is uniquely his own. These early Port Willunga and Aldinga pictures are basically monochromatic. Although he observed the effects of light and studied the features of the landscape, his use of colour was aimed at achieving a strange harmony and not necessarily at recording colour in nature. As we shall see, Trenerry's dominant colour became much bluer during the 1940's, when he again worked in this area.

During the Second World War, Horace Hurtle Trenerry enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force on the 12th August, 1940, and so became Private Trenerry SX10138. However, he was discharged as medically unfit for further military service on the 25th October of the same year.

In January, 1941, the Royal Australian Air Force advertised in the press for Mess Stewards and "recruits to enlist for special training". Horace Trenerry sent in his application and an accompanying reference, signed by E. Napier Cutlack (nee Birks) stating that Trenerry "undertook to do the cooking and ordering for the

sketching camp (at Mr. Bellchamber's property) . . . and we have always been most satisfied with his efforts." In the letter, Mrs. Cutlack also referred to his enlistment in the A.I.F. and explains that he "was unable to continue his duties as a private soldier owing to an injury to his knee which prevented him from taking part in long marches."

And so Trenerry was accepted for enlistment in the R.A.A.F. on the 11th February, 1941, as A.C.I. Trenerry 28697, Mess Steward at No. 1 Recruiting Depot, Melbourne. He was later posted to No. 1 Armament Training Station, Cressy, but was discharged on 3rd September, 1941, "Medically unfit for further service."

It is unusual for a man to be discharged from one service, only to seek a post in another. We are not sure of his motives but can only suppose that he possessed a sincere desire to serve his country. Unfortunately, he found service life difficult. He disliked the order and discipline of it all and after his discharge from the Air Force returned to Aldinga to paint. He lived in a small house in Government Road, Aldinga, near the old hotel premises more recently converted into a comfortable home and studio by Ivor Hele.

From this time, during the mid-40's, Trenerry began to show signs of an illness which was thought to be a nervous disorder. He roamed the area around Aldinga painting what was then quite unusual work. The paint was applied in thick, almost teased texture and "Gums in the Moonlight" was his favourite theme. As his step became more unsure and his temper the more short, many of the townspeople openly ridiculed him. He could not bear to have people come near him when he was "out painting". For Trenerry, who was a serious, sincere artist, this was a gloomy period.

He again neglected his health by ignoring nutritious food. A typical account of his purchases at the General Store might read:—

		s. d.
Cigarettes	10	1 10
Peppermint Creams	10	2 0
Cigarettes	10	1 10
Walnut Creams	10	2 0
Peppermint Creams	10	2 0
Etc., etc.		

Again someone came to his aid. The local butcher daily supplied Trenerry with choice meat, even though it is almost certain that he received nothing in return. But for this kindness, Trenerry's diet would have consisted solely of sweets, coffee, cigarettes and sherry. As his general condition deteriorated, Trenerry became worried about his eyesight and consulted an eye-specialist, Dr. David Crompton.

Dr. Crompton suspected that the condition was of a more serious nature and referred the case to a physician, Dr. Nichterlein, who recommended hospitalization at the services hospital at Mount Breckan, near Victor Harbor. Trenerry did not respond to treatment in the normal way and was discharged. But, as a result of Dr. Nichterlein's efforts, he was granted a small "disability pension" from the Air Force. He was later found to be suffering from Huntington's Chorea. In this later stage, he was becoming unsure of himself and frequently sought opinions and advice about his work.

He began to "hawk" his pictures. It had become terribly important for him to

Horace Trenergy with two of his pictures at an early exhibition in the Argonaut Gallery which was opened by Mrs. J. Lavington Bonython.



sell his work and some of his paintings were purchased for absurdly small sums. Although he continued to paint at Port Willunga and at Aldinga, at North Adelaide and at Walkerville, it is evident that his work was deteriorating as the dreaded complaint became more serious in nature. Although his affliction caused a lack of co-ordination, his mind was still alert. Occasionally, after rest and nourishing food, he could still produce a work of art. But now, it suggested a greater measure of inspiration, plus an unmistakable feeling of urgency. In 1949, he painted a Still Life flower-piece, which has a strange, almost luminous, blue background. The picture is broadly treated, composed decoratively and is an inspired piece of painting. This was an extremely difficult period. Although he was not a total abstainer, it is certain that at times he was erroneously accused of drunkenness, when in fact, the poor fellow was very ill. Eventually, he was admitted to the Home for Incurables at Fullarton, where he still attempted to paint when fit enough to do so.

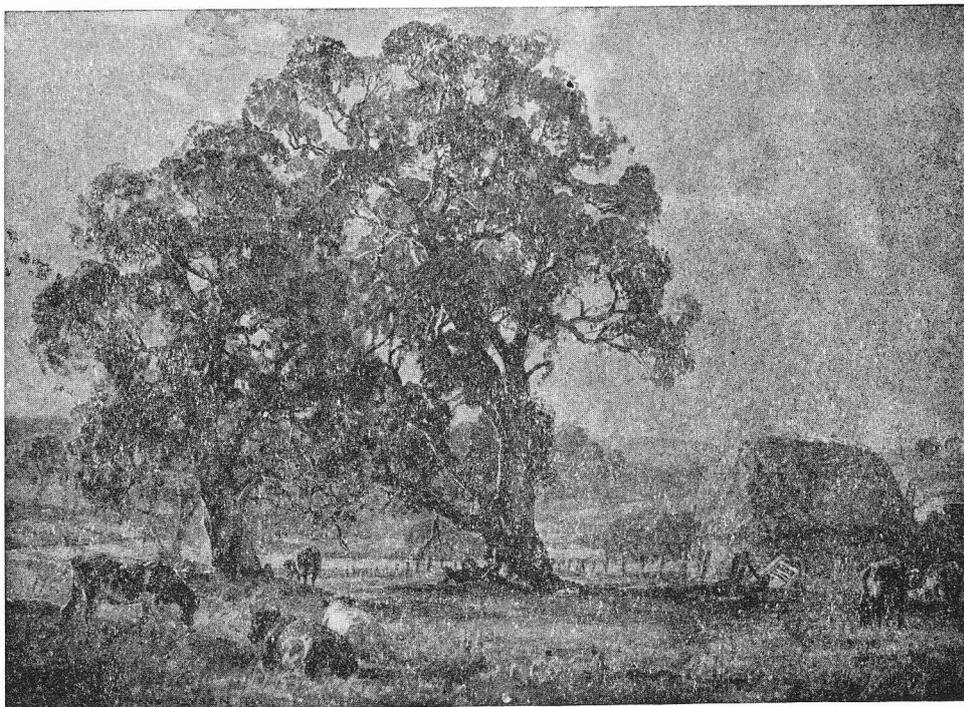
His many friends and admirers organized a Retrospective Exhibition of his work, which was arranged at the John Martin's Gallery, North Terrace, Adelaide. The exhibition included 113 works, in oils, etching and a variety of drawing media, and was opened by the Governor of South Australia at that time, Sir Robert George, on the 10th of September, 1953. The proceeds of the exhibition were for the Home for Incurables. Although most of the pictures were on loan from private collections, some of the exhibits were pictures found in his abandoned studio. It is interesting to note that the catalogue for this exhibition carried a print of a drawing of Trenerry done by Hans Heysen in 1934.

Unlike so many of his fellow artists, Trenerry did not leave Australia. He sought to identify himself with his environment, and this he achieved in a highly individual manner.

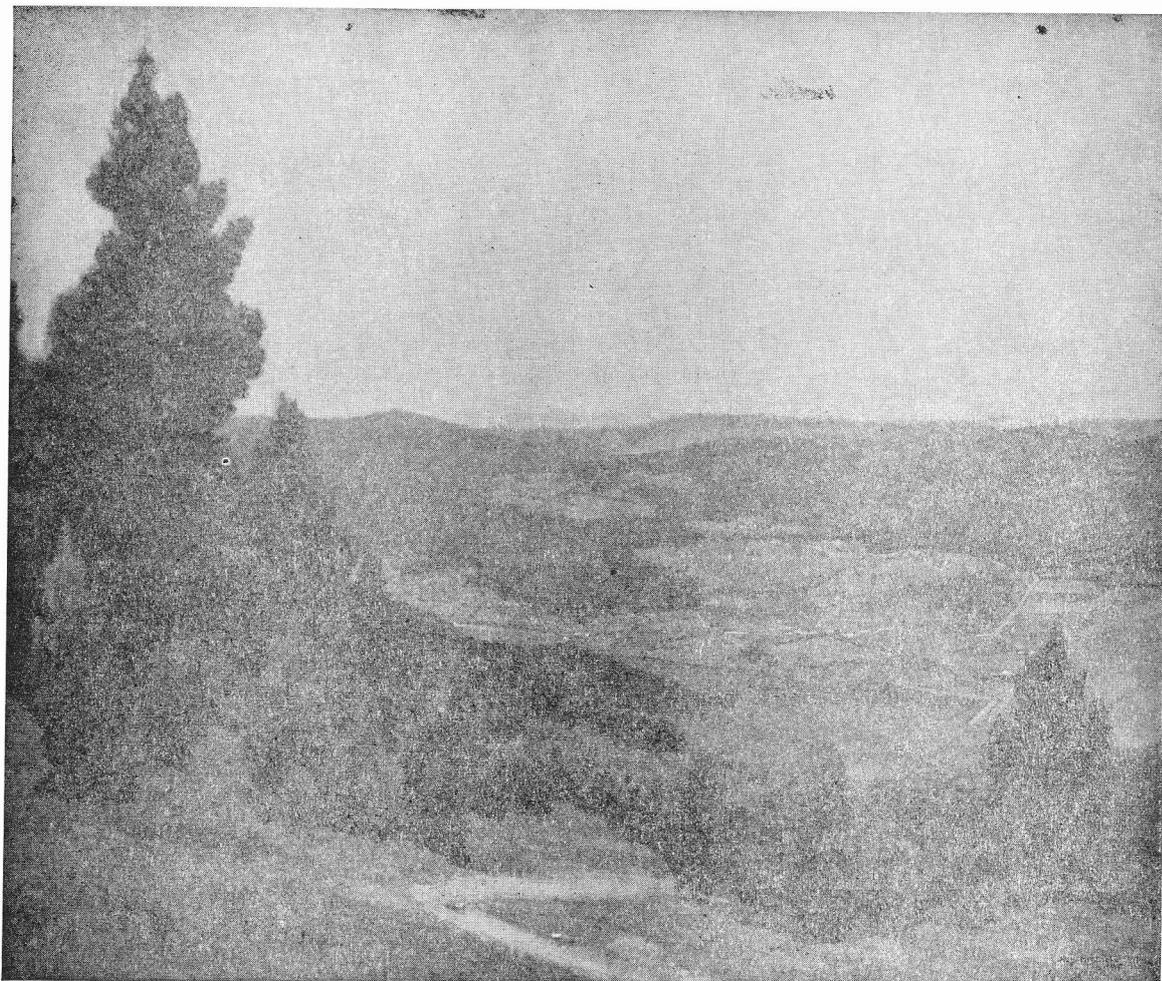
Trenerry the man, did little to attract friends. He is often accused of "biting the hand that fed him". He was often short of money and would ask openly for assistance, the most amazing example of which was a request for £50 from Hans Heysen, "to put a dance floor in his studio". Yet, if Trenerry sold some paintings, or obtained money from any source, his friends were invited to a party, and his parties still make stimulating topics for conversation. Of course, he would again be short of money immediately afterwards. He was also a gifted musician who welcomed an opportunity to play the piano. Chopin and Tschaiikowsky were his favourite composers and it is said that he played their works very sensitively indeed. It is credit to his peculiar genius that Trenerry the artist is still held in very high regard. He was represented in the Tate Gallery Exhibition of Australian Painting, arranged during 1962-63, where his three pictures aroused considerable interest. One English art critic drew attention to what he describes as a "serious omission" of any reference to Trenerry and his work, in Dr. Bernard Smith's recent book, "Australian Painting 1788-1960".

Horace Trenerry died after more than five years at the Home for Incurables. He was buried in the West Terrace Cemetery on the 13th January, 1958, in a family plot which is as yet unmarked, with no headstone to denote his identity.

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"A Pastoral, Woodside", by Sir Hans Heysen. Watercolour on white paper, signed and dated Hans Heysen, 1923. Heysen was one of Trenerry's major influences.



*"Piccadilly Valley" by Elioth Gruner, in possession of the National Gallery of S.A.
Trenerry worked a great deal in this area.*

THE ARTIST SPEAKS

"The Artist Speaks" guest for this issue of Kalori is Sydney born Mervyn Ashmore Smith. Smith trained in art and architecture in New South Wales before coming to Adelaide in 1941. In 1943 he married Adelaide artist Ruth Tuck. Smith is represented in the National Gallery of South Australia, the Art Gallery of Western Australia, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, the Commonwealth Collection in Canberra and the Bendigo Art Gallery. In 1955, 1957 and 1958 Smith watercolours were awarded the Perth Prize for Contemporary Art, and in 1961 he won the Bendigo Prize with a watercolour.

MERVYN SMITH

I have before me a long questionnaire in regard to an artist's thoughts and activities. The first six or seven questions relate to the "school of painting or school of thought" to which he subscribes.

What restrictive and perilous nonsense to be bound by such a chastity belt of collective security.

As an artist I like to be free—free to preserve my intellectual integrity, free to observe and record, free to suggest, to protest and to prophesy—in paint. And, above all, to create—imagination, creation—to see for the first time something that did not exist before—that is an exciting reward.

So you see, it is what I think that matters in my paintings—whether it subscribes to this or that "school of painting or thought" is exquisitely unimportant to me.

This is not to suggest that I ignore it in painting of other artists of today, I too, am in this physical world of movements, problems and restrictions but to be bound in any way by a school or type of painting is to start on the slow process involving decline in every field of personal activity, towards Orwell's 1984.

So my thoughts are very much against any but occasional indulgence in group painting, or participation in the one art project in which all take an equal hand.

Recently there has been a tendency to this group activity and painting instruction of the very young as an offset to social problems, but to me this will do nothing more than confine them to a state of perpetual childhood in a welfare state system. Picasso, Miro and other artists were simply allotted areas and precincts for their art in the UNESCO Building in Paris "and were given no other instructions." Think of the mess and bloodshed if they had been put to work on the same work space. The world would have lost some of its finest artists.

This does not mean, of course, that I live here in Adelaide in a world of my own painting, free of thanks for association with other artists and their work. Painters such as Wladyslaw and Ludwik Dutkiewicz, Francis Roy Thompson, Douglas

Roberts and others, sculptors like Paul Beadle and Voitre Marek and, of course, Ruth Tuck, who has provided art companionship and wifely comforts since 1943. I should like to mention some few of the world's great of whom I have some special thanks for influence and help—Vincent Van Gogh, El Greco, Raoul Dufy, Marc Chagall, Oskar Kokoschka, Picasso, and the American watercolourists, John Marin and Dong Kingman.

I like to work with good materials. It becomes, I think, a part of the conception of a painting with me. The makers of those excellent Winsor and Newton colours and brushes, the makers of Whatmans paper and of Fabriano, all of these by their excellent work help to create for me, not only a good material but also an aura in harmony.

I seldom make sketches in small. I consider scale is part of the conception. So I work with good materials at full size from the beginning. And for landscape—I like to do my first sketch and painting on site like Van Gogh.

The Warragamba dam which is under construction does something to me. The Newcastle dockyard with the steelworks nearby spouting smoke and violence over the landscape at the rate of 500 tons of deposited material per square mile per annum—this does something to me. So, too, in South Australia, the big crane at the Whyalla Shipyard. Or I go to the Flinders Ranges, to Brachina Gorge, or to stretch a point, to Broken Hill. And the sunflowers in the garden.

So you see, it is the personal contact that counts—this living with your subject until you know it or her, and it becomes a part of you.

It is not easy to paint mental gymnastics in a studio all the time. I have a body and at least six senses, and I like to use all of me in my paintings. I like to look hard with both eyes, to feel, to hear the sound of earth, everything.

The studio work comes later— much later—if at all.



Easter, by Mervyn Smith, was bought by the National Gallery of South Australia in 1958.

Alii Alia

- Australian paintings for Shelley's Cottage. Shelley's Cottage, Englefield Green, Surrey, England, the former home of the poet, now houses, besides its owners the Freemans, a growing collection of Australian paintings. Six years ago it acquired a Drysdale and this year both a Dobell and a Cant. The latter "Landscape with Butterfly" is fellow to "Two Birds" in the Melbourne Gallery. Both are 36 inches by 48 inches and were painted in 1959.
- Entries for the fifth "Helena Rubinstein Portrait Prize, Perth, 1964" close on Tuesday, June 2. Organised by the directors of Boan's Ltd., Perth, and Helena Rubinstein, the competition, which is open to artists resident in Australia for twelve months, will be judged by Mr. Elwyn Lynn, president of the Contemporary Art Society of N.S.W. and critic for the Sydney "Sunday Mirror". A prize of 300 guineas will be awarded to the winning portrait in any medium. Selected entries will be hung in the Claude Hotchin Art Gallery, Boan's Ltd., Perth, from June 9 to June 19. Entry forms are available from Boan's Ltd., Perth, and Helena Rubinstein Pty. Ltd. in all states.
- Prizes totalling £600 will be awarded in the ninth Robin Hood Art Competition this year—£200 for the best painting in oils, £100 for the best painting in water-colour or gouache, and painting supplies to the value of £100 in the Pan Am Award open to all categories. There are special sections for psychiatric patients and emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded children. Entries for the last sections are expected from Great Britain, the Continent, Canada and the U.S.A. S.A. entries should be submitted at the National Gallery of S.A. on August 13, and entry forms must reach the Robin Hood Committee Art Competition, Eric Road, Artarmon, N.S.W. by September 2.
Judging will be done by the Deputy Director of the National Gallery of Victoria (Mr. Gordon Thompson), the Director of the Queen Victoria Gallery, Launceston (Mr. W. F. Ellis), and the president of the Contemporary Art Society of N.S.W. (Mr. Elwyn Lynn). Winning and selected entries will be exhibited in the David Jones Ltd. Art Gallery, Adelaide, from October 19 to 30. Entry forms are available at the National Gallery of S.A. and David Jones Ltd. Art Gallery.
- Kalori has again been produced in the new format, which has elicited much self-congratulation from members and an apparently wide public appreciation. The improved Kalori, which owes so much to the few and distinguished non-paid contributors, was designed with the hope of development into a magazine significant in the Australian art world. How can this happen when there is no support from office holders and 99 per cent. of the members. Kalori is the journal for all members who in return should surely assume some responsibility and not leave it entirely to the Editress to furnish all articles, drawings and news items. In fact, the position is an untenable one. If the Society wants a worthy journal something must be done about it. Otherwise I am afraid this issue is my last bow.

Editress



"Sir Kerr Grant", by Mervyn Smith, which was on display in the Conservatorium of Music during the 1964 Festival of Arts.

- Scholarship to U.S. John Bailey will leave for the U.S. on a Harkness Scholarship in August. His one man exhibition in London opened on May 25th.
- Daws Show in July. Lawrence Daws will return to Adelaide with a show for the Bonython Art Gallery, North Adelaide, in July. Daws, who has been away for three years, with only a brief trip home, will bring his English wife with him.
- July 3 is receiving day in the Maude Vizard Wholohan Art Competitions. Entries should be taken to the Royal S.A. Society of Arts Gallery after 10 a.m. The Show will be opened on July 14 and close July 24.

GOOLWA SUMMER SCHOOL

If not quite so enthusiastically received by some in Adelaide the Goolwa Summer School, which opened on January 4 with a practical painting school, the second of its kind in Australia, was highly praised in a recent edition of the Melbourne Council of Adult Education's quarterly "Adult Education".

"The W.E.A. in South Australia has made a very important forward move in taking over and adapting "Graham's Castle", at Goolwa near the mouth of the Murray about 60 miles from Adelaide. The original building, set on a piece of high ground, overlooking the dramatic coast between Goolwa and Victor Harbor, appears to have been built in the fifties of the last century. It is built of the local limestone, a sanguine, handsomely proportioned old house. The W.E.A. bought it together with some four acres of land for £1,500 which was phenomenally cheap, even given that the building required extensive renovation and refit. It is a very valuable asset, and together with its interesting outhouses and sheds, can be developed into a magnificent centre.

"Two years of very hard work and intelligent planning have gone into the renovation and remodelling of the house to make it usable as a residential centre. The essential character of the house itself has been preserved, and the dignified, generous proportions of the rooms and the large entrance hall are unimpaired. On the seaward side, at the back of the original house, commanding a magnificent view, the W.E.A. has built an additional two-floor wing, comprising a very large lounge, with bedrooms, toilets and bathrooms on the ground floor.

It was impossible to preserve the actual character of the whole in making the new section—the cement block construction does clash unhappily with the lovely quality of the old limestone blocks of the house, but the architect or designer has gone to great pains to reduce damage as far as possible and the general line has been preserved. What is interesting and encouraging is to see the devoted care which has been lavished upon the furnishing and the fittings. The interior decoration is in excellent taste—wherever possible the period flavour has been retained and emphasized, yet functional modernity has never been avoided. The bedrooms, dining quarters, lounge rooms are a joy. This is a house to be lived in; it is what any adult education college should be, an example of applied intelligence and taste.

Accommodation is limited. Maximum is forty, including staff and tutors—there is virtually no privacy to be had, since all bedrooms are on the dormitory pattern. It will, no doubt, take quite some time before the W.E.A. is able to provide everything really necessary for a college of this kind, but they have made a fine beginning and deserve hearty congratulations."

WHAT'S WRONG WITH SOUTH AUSTRALIA?

by Ruth Tuck

I'm sure most of the Festival of Arts visitors from overseas went away with the impression that there are no painters of importance in South Australia. Whose fault was this? Maybe we're all to blame. For so long we've been looked upon as the Cinderella State where art is concerned that we are beginning to believe it ourselves. This is the State where amateur art flourishes and is encouraged. Surely nowhere else in the world has the therapeutic value of painting been so exploited. But let not any of you think that you can step beyond this shop window front of screens on North Terrace and enter the professional world. Only artists from Sydney and Melbourne (and perhaps Brisbane) where there is a solid background of schools and traditions dare enter this holy ground! If any would tread this path he must leave South Australia behind for good and forget he began there.

Well—let's change all this—let's be proud of our painters and talk about them and advertise them abroad.

This train of thought was started in my mind three weeks ago by a paragraph in "The Advertiser" concerning an exhibition in London which included the work of several Australian theatre designers. Three were mentioned—Nolan, Kenneth Rowell and Ian Spurling. Nolan was enlarged upon (The Display, of course) and Rowell's work for the ballet, but the name Ian Spurling remained just that, without embellishment. And this is the main Adelaide daily. Now this made me mad. For if we're proud of Helpmann and Keith Michell, we should be equally proud of Ian Spurling. So I started a private questionnaire to see how many local people knew about Ian Spurling. Out of dozens, probably a hundred people in the art world here, only two had heard of him. One, a teacher at the School of Art had vague memories of him as a student, and the other, Mrs. Davidson, knew all about him. (Bless her, she's a real ambassador abroad for our own artists. But alas, there are not many like her).

The truth is that Ian Spurling left Adelaide about eight years ago after doing part-time lessons at the S.A. School of Art, while working as a window dresser at John Martins.

He had enough faith in himself to take himself to London and study at the Leade Academy, and last year at the age of 22 he was commissioned to do ballet sets for the Edinburgh Festival and has recently been commissioned to do a relief in metal for the new Shakespeare Exhibition at Stratford-on-Avon.

All of this started when Dorritt Black saw some paintings of Ian's when he was a small boy, exhibited in the Port Lincoln Show. She impressed upon some of the local people the fact that here was a marvellous talent, and so it was with the faith

of a small band of country people behind him, Ian was sent on his way. Now—at least let's be proud to claim him as a South Australian.

Now I'm sure Ian is not the only one with talent and prowess fit to be recognised abroad. All of us could name at least five South Australians whose work should be proudly hung in the current exhibition for the Tate Gallery or in the present exhibition "Australian Painting Today". There is no need for me to name these people—you all know them. But how often are they mentioned in Interstate art journals, or by our local TV critics (or let's put it in the singular number and be more specific) or by the bureaucratic heads of our State art departments? It seems to me that these people are ashamed to be associated with their own local artists. So with the rather vague art standards abroad nowadays, one cannot blame Laurie Thomas for overlooking South Australian painters when our own art patrons and experts ignore them first.

While I'm on the subject of Australian pictures for Europe, I must just say a word or two about the rubbish in this present exhibition. By rubbish I mean rubbish in a very materialistic sense—aesthetically this work is not rubbish—but physically it is. If you don't believe me go along and look at No. 74. Already three great lumps of black P.V.A. paint have fallen off leaving the shiny brown masonite exposed in middle of an impressive black and white abstract. No. 76 next to it has yellowing newspaper collage already peeling off. No doubt these pictures are valued at hundreds if not thousands of pounds, it amazes me that picture collectors consider them sound investments.

As for the "pop-art" number, I admit it has a rich tapestry effect, but what a stupid transient fashion. I admit this use of rubbishy material is not confined to Australians. Last year in an Italian exhibition at one of our private galleries I was intrigued by a very photographic rendering of the brown panelling on the walls of a room painted as an interior with the view of a white walled village through the window. When I went for a close look I found that the wonderfully painted woodwork was a collage of self-adhesive plastic which in the damp warmish weather was already peeling round the edges. And this for 300 plus guineas.

So art patrons all, think again before spending those hundreds of pounds on impermanent rubbish from other states (in other words put not your faith in P.V.A. and newspaper), and look to the local talent and Winsor and Newton paints put humbly before you in local exhibitions.

THE MILDURA SCULPTURE COMPETITION, 1964

by Max Lyall

The second triennial exhibition of Australian Sculpture was held recently at Mildura. Full credit for this major step in the stimulation of sculpture in this country must go to the director of the Mildura Art Gallery, Ernst Van Hattum.

Although Australia is part of Asia, the story of Australian sculpture to date is one of dominant European influence; it is quite an amazing fact that there is little influence of Asian art in our sculpture. The results of European influence and the work of migrants have, in fact, formed a solid core for the development of Australian sculpture. Its philosophy, so far, has been affected purely by the changes occurring overseas, which have been largely the only sustenance it has ever had, till now. Basically this situation stems from two sources. First, a survey of the history of Australian sculpture reveals that at no time has there been any sustained patronage. Secondly, there are no scholarships, grants, fellowships or the like for the young sculptor.

For these reasons, sculpture, unlike painting, has not developed an Australian style or flavour. Whether or not this will happen, or is desirable, can only be decided by events in future years. One thing is certain however, sculpture in this country is no longer static, its energy is increasing. There is greater public awareness of the sculptor's art because of events at Mildura and the increased use of sculpture in architecture.

But despite these encouraging things, sculpture and sculptors are still in an unenviable position. Many cannot practise as sculptors as they have to work at other employment to support themselves. The expense of materials and processes, such as bronze casting, also tends to deter the sculptor in the production of sculpture especially for speculative purposes like exhibitions and competitions.

Being mindful of the problems the sculptor has to face, let us review the Mildura exhibition. The £400 prize for monumental sculpture was won again by Melbourne sculptor Norma Redpath (she won the award in 1961) with her entry entitled "Dawn Sentinel". Cast in bronze in Italy, this work is vertically poised reaching upward, challenging and has the presence of a neolithic monolith, a timeless quality. It stood out from the other entries quite noticeably, having such a craftsman-like finish contrasting textured and polished surfaces.

Lithuanian-born sculptor Vincas Jomantis was awarded a £500 purchase prize for his bronze "Guardian". Similar in theme to the "Sentinel" this sculpture with its large perforated head structure seems to be in conflict with the lower body form. Nevertheless it has an arresting presence not unlike primitive images.

Sydney sculptor Robert Klippel was awarded £100 prize for small indoor works

with two "steel junk" sculptures. Welded scrap moving parts of small machinery such as typewriters and the like are welded together to form, in these two instances, rather flat structures. Heavily reliant on the creative chance and the original shapes of individual junk pieces, Klippel has conjured up figurative images which are not without a vitality and life of their own.

At this point I would like to mention the efforts of South Australian sculptors which, incidentally, were given prominent places in the reviews of interstate critics. Any doubts about the potential abilities of local sculptors are dispelled when viewing the works of the newer names.

Talented Geoffrey Sharples forcefully jolts the viewer with his crucifix-like "figure" in wrought and brazed copper. Dynamically vertical, it dominates its position on the gallery lawns; however, one can see influences at work which will have to be resolved in future. Margaret Sinclair and Sandy Taylor both exhibit unique works. The former's "Territory Man" has a totem-like quality found in the grave posts of the north, while Taylor shows an "insect" of considerable vitality and promise.

Sweeping rod constructed planes in space characterize Owen Broughton's sculpture. His small "welded form number 6" has an uncompromising simplified movement expressing at the same time a startling feeling of tension in its upward movement; while his "rod form", a dominantly spiral form seemed to me, related to water forms of a fountain.

Cold cast copper is the medium Alex Leckie uses in his "Sculpture 64" figure which has vigorous but arrested movement. Its massive form is tense but with a movement which seems to come from within.

Aina Jaugietis is exhibiting reliefs which show an inventiveness and pioneers new materials in her search for new modes of expression.

John Dowie, well known for his portrait heads entered one of Jacqueline Hick which is quite competent in its portrayal of character.

Of the remaining outstanding sculpture the following are to be noted.

Ian Bow's strongly figurative works have a feeling for humanity and its emotions.

Ruth Adam's metal sculptures have a unique life of their own.

Herbert Flugelman has an iron torso of tremendous vigour and Alan Ingham displays a thrusting spear form.

Bob Parr surprised me with "Alpha Omega" made in bronze and copper, it has the quality of surface seen in rotted wood. This is rather different from his entry in the Wholohan prize last year, which was light in content.

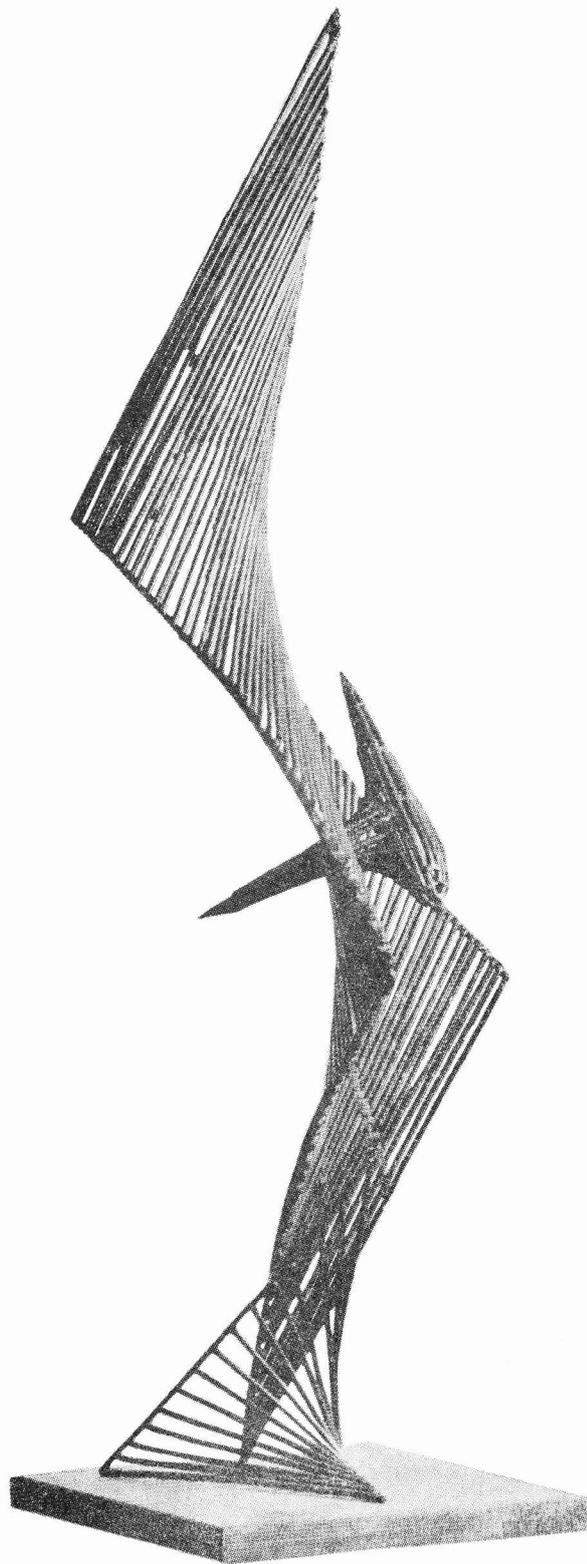
Linton Parr shows his usual vital style in welded steel.

The hard, almost brittle surfaces and forms exhibited in "Horus" are decisive organic statements.

Another outstanding personality is Stephen Walker. The bronze figure he shows is full of movement expressed by the thin wind-blown drapery-like forms.

When one views these works it can be seen that there are the stirrings of an Australian character in many, but internationalism seems to dominate at the moment. It little matters whether either nationalism or internationalism has the greater influence on Australian sculpture, what really matters is that sculpture is being revived, and with continued support, will flourish in a most rewarding fashion.

*Owen Broughton's welded
Form No. 6, on show at
the Mildura Sculpture
Competition.*



An Echo of the Festival

Union of the Arts

by Mary P. Harris

The agonised war poems of Wilfred Owen inspired Britten's War Requiem. It does not appear that any dark night of the soul shrouded Sidney Nolan's African camera studies. Yet Africa is passing through her birth throes. Boyd pursues the sex-racial conflict in designs of emphatic boldness, as previously Nolan pursued Leda and the Swan motif in a kind of sex perversion. Leonardo da Vinci in this strangely beautiful myth of Leda and the Swan interpreted the one-ness of all created life. Today the myth is traduced to fit our decadent civilization.

It is good to leave the heterogeneous mass of exhibitions and find oneself quietly in the Conservatorium of Music. For here one can appreciate in homogeneous surroundings the union of the arts —music and painting. The exhibition of the work of Mervyn Smith, thus displayed, is the most perfect chord struck in our Festival of Arts.

"I feel for the common chord again,
Sliding by semitones, till I sink to the minor"
Browning.

Boyd and Nolan deal aggressively and waywardly with the life force. In Mervyn Smith we are aware, as Dylan Thomas was aware of "the force that through the green fuse drives the flower".

This life force quivers in the artist's sunflower series; drives urgently and overwhelmingly in dockyard scenes; in every stone in every building from cathedral to suburban flats we feel the erection of that building; or are gathered into the timeless formation of "Flinders Ranges". Here is art, the power of design, the mystery of colour. For all is insight into that immortal scheme of things when we cannot stir a flower without troubling a star.

We are prone to follow the praise or assessment of our artists abroad. But, in this strange continent, we observe them like the poor who are always with us. Has Australia before produced an artist of the power, unique conception and sensitivity of Mervyn Smith? Where Boyd and Nolan fabulously try to unite ideas and technique, we find in Mervyn Smith an artist where vision and venture are one, as the Conservatorium of Music contributes to the Festival this union of the arts.