

AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY

QUARTERLY



ANTOINE BOURDELLE
Drame D'Interieur

AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY QUARTERLY

NUMBER TWELVE — 1960

EDITORIAL

This issue marks the recommencement of acquiring works of art overseas and several new acquisitions are reproduced.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

The library continues to grow and we have been fortunate in finding several out of print volumes. This year we have added 238 books.

VISITORS

In late November we had a visit from Mr John Hayes, Assistant Keeper in the London Museum. Having spent nearly a year in New York he gave a lecture on that city.

In February we look forward to a visit from Dr Ursula Hoff, Keeper of Prints and Drawings in the National Gallery of Victoria. She has already agreed to speak to the Associates on our print collection.

GALLERY ASSOCIATES

The usual Christmas party was held on 8 December and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

For 1960 the main aim will be to increase membership and a new brochure is being prepared for wide circulation. All members are asked to make a particular point of personal approaches to their friends. This is by far the most successful way of finding new members.

FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Although plans for 1960 are not quite complete, the following exhibitions have been arranged. New Zealand contemporary painting and sculpture — Australian contemporary painting — 60 Old Master Prints from the Monrad collection and European Painting 1880-1958 in New Zealand private and public collections.

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EMILE ANTOINE BOURDELLE (1861-1929),
French

DRAME D'INTERIEUR

Bronze 24 ins

Purchased by the Committee, 1959

The reaction of Antoine Bourdelle to the expressionism of Rodin inaugurated a sculptural style which, in its reassertion of the relationship of sculpture to architecture, is almost unique in the 19th and 20th centuries. As Bourdelle himself stated it, 'From the life in the human model the sculptor must pass on to the life in his work, and from that to its setting against an architectural background. That is the great law by which stone can achieve its august destiny in human gestures.'

It is in such works as DRAME D'INTERIEUR that this 'life in his work' has its greatest significance. These heads of Bourdelle are radiant with an inner life; light flicks and agitates the surface of forms which seem transparent; the tensions here are not those of, this volume opposed to that, but rather (as the name of the mask suggests) the tensions of the soul.

Bourdelle was much impressed by the poetry of Mallarmé and the symbolists, and his work has many equivalents, indeed he has been called the symbolist of sculpture.

This is the second work by the master acquired for the collection, the first MADONNA AND CHILD, being a later work is very different in feeling and style: DRAME D'INTERIEUR is possibly closer to the shadow of Rodin that spreads over much of Bourdelle's earlier work.

— H H K

KAREL APPEL (Born 1921), Dutch

TWO HEADS 1958

Gouache 24" x 19" ins

Presented by The Contemporary Art Society,
1959

Karel Appel was born in Amsterdam. He studied at the Amsterdam Royal Academy of Fine Arts and in 1948 was a co-founder of the international group C O B R A (linking painters in Holland, Belgium and Denmark). He settled in Paris in 1950, having his first one-man shows there and in New York in 1954. Appel has exhibited widely and is represented in most major collections in Europe and America.

TWO HEADS is the second painting of this genre to enter the collection; it represents, however, an aspect of abstract expressionism very different from that of Karl Kasten (Quarterly No. 10). Unlike Kasten, Appel has forced his paint to yield messages, to create primitive images, violent and cryptic, and paint and image conflict, one confining the other. Beast and Man struggle through the turbulent surface; the crusted iconography of the old world stands in contrast to the landscape of the new.

Having its source in Paul Klee, this later

Painting Classes

During the past year regular painting and drawing classes were added to the Art Gallery's programme of activities. This year these classes will be continued but with some changes being made. Two of the practical classes are being dropped and lectures intended to provide a coverage of many of the directions and aspects of art are to be included. On Monday evenings we will follow this year's plan of keeping the Gallery open until 8 pm and lectures on the permanent collection and on any temporary exhibitions will be given from 7 pm to 8 pm from 25 April to 8 August. On Tuesday evenings, commencing on 26 April, three courses of lectures on contemporary art will be given. These lectures will be illustrated with slides and films and while planned to give an increased understanding of modern painting in particular they will relate this to an



direction of abstract expressionism is distinctly European and the American version has at least the appearance of being a European import.
— H H K

appreciation of the painting of other periods and art in general and should be equally useful to both artists and to those who wish to further their understanding of art.

For those who paint or may wish to learn to paint classes are planned to develop their perception of the fundamentals of line, colour and composition.

A class will be held on Thursday evenings (for more advanced painters) and a life drawing class on Wednesday evenings. Every second Thursday, from 24 March, evenings of discussion and criticism will be held. These evenings will be available for practising painters only, either beginners or more advanced painters, and we hope will in some measure fill the often stated need for such a group.

- C.McC.



ARMAND GUILLAUMIN (1841-1927), French
SEASCAPE

Oil on canvas 21 i x 26 ins
Signed *Guillaumin*
Purchased 1959

Among such names as Cezanne, Manet, Renoir, Pissarro and Monet, Guillaumin must take a second place as an impressionist painter. He worked and exhibited with the impressionist masters but was not an innovator and as a follower of their discoveries must be regarded as a lesser artist, but at the same time given his rightful place as a thoughtful and honest painter.

He was born in Paris, took a job in the Compagnie d'Orleans, painted landscapes on Sundays and in the evenings attended the Academic Suisse where he met Cezanne and

Pissarro. In 1863 he exhibited at the Salon des Refuses where 'One has to be doubly strong to keep erect beneath the tempest of fools, who rain down here by the millions and scoff at everything outrageously' — (Zacharie Astruc). For a time Guillaumin tried to live by his art but by 1868 was obliged to take a post in the Administration des Fonts et Chaussées. He continued painting views of Paris and the neighbourhood in his spare moments and exhibited with the Impressionists six times, 1874-86. In 1891 a lottery prize of 100,000 francs enabled him to give up his job and paint full time; also to travel in search of subjects to Provence, Auvergne, Brittany and Haute-Loire, and in 1904 to Holland.

- C.McC.



HENRI MARTIN (1860-1943), French
OUVRIER AVEC UN PIQUET
Oil on canvas (1920) 23i x 30 ins
Purchased 1959

In 1879 Martin became a pupil of Jean Paul Laurens in Paris and from the following year he exhibited regularly at the Paris Salon. From the age of twenty-three, when he won an important prize, he began to achieve public recognition. Up to this time he had been a 'classical' painter in the French academic tradition but in 1885 he went to Italy on a travelling scholarship and his experience there resulted in a decisive change of style and influenced the development of his technique.

Later he received many important commissions, including the decoration of the Hotel de Ville in Paris, for which he received the Legion of Honour. The Avenue Henri Martin

in Paris was named after him and he was considered one of France's greatest living painters of the period.

For many years he exhibited at the Galerie Georges Petit in the group known as 'La Societe Nouvelle' which included among others Claude Monet, Albert Bernard and Jacques Emile Blanche.

Henri Martin is something of a rediscovery as an easel painter in the impressionist tradition, his many commissions for the decoration of buildings seeming to have associated him mainly with a style of decorative art that has now lost its attraction. The easel paintings, however, show an aspect of his work which links him with the pointillist style of impressionism and with Camille Pissarro rather than with official decoration.

- C.McC.



KARL SCHMIDT ROTTLUFF

TWO HEADS II

Woodcut 1911

Signed in pencil *Schmidt Rottluff*

Presented by the executors of the late Dr Rosa Schapire, 1956

Rouault's work comes from a group of his MISERERE ET GUERRE series in the Gallery, while the Schmidt Rottluff is one of eight. As a matter of interest, Dr Rosa Schapire was the artist's lifelong friend and compiled the definitive edition of his graphic work.

Schmidt Rottluff was a member of the well-known *Die Brücke* group whose initial influence was Edvard Munch (1863-1944). Munch also was responsible for the rebirth of interest in the woodcut, introducing several innovations. It is to the point, therefore, that Schmidt Rottluff spent the summer of 1911 in Norway and it is in this year that he commenced his considerable output of woodcuts. Although the work of Munch and the French *Fauve* artists were considerable stimuli, it was also the direct observation of the African sculpture which gave Schmidt-Rottluff his basic vocabulary of forms. The mask is an important form in most primitive arts having both a religio-magical identity in itself and also more important, in the European context —

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GEORGES ROUAULT (1879-1958), French

QUI NE SE GRIME PAS?

Who does not wear a mask?

Miserere No. 8

Etching and aquatint c. 1927

Purchased 1957

the hiding of the identity and emotions of the wearer.

Rouault's work is post-war and is too well-known to need lengthy description. This particular plate, however, employs the clown image which appears first in its melancholic character in the works of Watteau and later in Daumier — in Toulouse Lautrec — in Picasso, and also in many of Rouault's pre-war paintings. The greasepaint mask of the clown has now, since Rouault's interpretations, assumed a wholly tragic definition.

Thus there were two distinct sources for the mask image in the first quarter of this century, and the European tendency has been to see the mask as a grimacing facade to the tragic-heroic structure of human emotions and fears of man.



KEITH VAUGHAN (Born 1912), English
LANDSCAPE WITH DISTANT HILLS
Oil on canvas 174 x 23i ins
Signed and dated *Vaughan S3*
Purchased by the Committee, 1955

The several main lines of development which English landscape painting has followed since the end of the war might be seen as a following up of leads given by a few representative painters active in the period between the two wars. Possibly the chief influences (to simplify a good deal) within which a young post-war painter could choose to work were the anglicising of impressionism by Sickert, and the style and method of Paul Nash, with its echoes and evocations of cubism. A further strain that has been continuous in English landscape art, and that has affinities with a wider, indeed timeless, vein in art, is what might be called the Virgilian school of land-

scape: this reached its richest flowering in England during the period of William Blake and Samuel Palmer. For all his twentieth century borrowings, Nash's painting still has a strong admixture of this perhaps all too literary tradition. Another important influence, more recent, which must be kept in mind, is that of the abstract and neo-surrealist trends on the Continent.

Keith Vaughan's LANDSCAPE WITH DISTANT HILLS, acquired by the gallery in 1955, at first glance seems to have its roots in Nash's synthesis of surrealism and cubism with the landscape of the Golden Age — but a basically different element is present. Has it something to do with the rediscovery of the 'emblem' by Continental painters — the motif, not analogous in its actual form, but extending by evocation a painting from the descriptive to the symbolic.

— R D F

exhibition calendar

CONTEMPORARY
NEW ZEALAND
PAINTING
and
SCULPTURE

70 paintings 12 sculptures

24 MARCH-24 APRIL 1960

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