

MODERN EUROPEAN PAINTING

from the **National Gallery of Victoria**
Melbourne Auckland City Art Gallery
Auckland Festival May / Canterbury
Society of Arts June 1967

The National Gallery of Victoria is the senior public gallery in Australia (it was opened in 1861) and also, by virtue of a fine tradition of private benefaction, the best endowed. In terms of the funds available to many American institutions, those at the disposal of the Melbourne Trustees are comparatively modest but it has meant that during this century, the National Gallery of Victoria has been able to enter the international field in friendly competition with the Americans and the Europeans.

The policy of successive boards of trustees has been to create in Melbourne a collection of works representative of a wide area of the world's art and as a natural concomitant of this, attempts have been made, often against considerable difficulties, to represent truthfully the situation in contemporary European art.

It should be said that the twenty-six paintings from our collection shown in this exhibition are not by any means the sum total of those possessed by the National Gallery in this field. Difficulties of fragility and other commitments prevented us from sending to New Zealand several works which we would have liked to include. In addition, it will be noticed that there is a strong representation of English paintings but this represents fairly the balance of the contemporary collections, as Melbourne has had a tradition of representing British painting in some strength from the 17th century onwards. However, pictures which are now on view do, I believe, show important and existing aspects of the contemporary situation, and as they do in Melbourne, they should give both laymen and artists in New Zealand a view of what has been done over the last few years. As always with such work, no-one should expect to enjoy every work but each work represents a serious and authentic painter striving to speak both a personal language and a language appropriate to his time.

On behalf of my trustees, I can express their pleasure at being able to collaborate in this way with our colleagues in New Zealand and their added pleasure that when they occupy the new building for the National Gallery of Victoria in 1968, they will be able to show the magnificent collection of works by Henry Fuseli which the City of Auckland Art Gallery has promised on loan as a generous return gesture.

Personally, as an ex-director of the Auckland City Art Gallery, it has been of the greatest satisfaction to know that pictures which I have been in part responsible for acquiring for my present institution will be seen in surroundings with which I am happily familiar and by many people whom I remember warmly and with gratitude.

Eric Westbrook *Director, National Gallery of Victoria*

When the Auckland City Art Gallery opened its doors for the first time on 17 February 1888, an enthusiastic Aucklander drew a comparison between the size of the collections in Auckland and Melbourne. Auckland owned 35 pictures as against Melbourne's 143 but the writer hastened to point out that: "The Auckland Collections have not entailed the expenditure of one farthing of public moneys", then he notes the thousands of pounds of government grants required to start the Melbourne Collection.

No doubt the writer meant to highlight the generosity of the early patrons of Auckland and the Art Gallery — Sir George Grey and James Tannock Mackelvie — because he goes on to say that this is so: "mainly through the enlightened munificence of two great public benefactors".

But perhaps he is subconsciously expressing an attitude still most unfortunately prevalent in our society, which continues to say that works of art are "non-essentials" in so far as the expenditure of public moneys is concerned.

However, in 1904, Melbourne found its famous benefactor in Alfred Felton whose name is now so magnificently associated with a collection which has justly become world renowned. All the works in this exhibition were acquired by means of the Felton Bequest and they represent only one facet of the great accessions made by the Bequest.

Trade links between Melbourne and Auckland have been long established but even so, this exhibition is the first direct exchange of selected works between the two public galleries. We are indebted to the Trustees, Director and Staff of the National Gallery of Victoria, to the Staff of Qantas Airways who have brought the exhibition to New Zealand as an event associated with the Auckland Festival, and to NAC for transporting the exhibition to Christchurch where it will show at the Canterbury Society of Arts Gallery, before returning to Melbourne.

G. C. Docking *Director, Auckland City Art Gallery*

Catalogue sizes are given in inches, height before width. All paintings have been added to the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria by the Felton Bequest, since 1949.

Michael Andrews b1928 English

1 GIRL ON A BALCONY

oil on hardboard 54x48

Karel Appel b1921 Dutch

2 MOONBIRD 1956

synthetic medium on canvas 38½x51

Balthasar Balthus b1910 Polish-French

3 NUDE WITH CAT

oil on canvas 25¾x31½

Bram Bogart b1921 Dutch-French

4 DANCING CRYING 1959

mixed media on canvas 57x40½

Martin Bradley b1931 English

5 SOUL OF THE FOREST 1961

oil on canvas 48½x57

Bernard Buffet b1928 French

6 THE OWL 1950

oil on canvas 39½x23¾

John Craxton b1922 English

7 LANDSCAPE 1962

oil on canvas 39x81

William Crozier b1933 Scottish

8 SMALL MAN IN A LANDSCAPE 1961

oil on canvas 36x36

Max Ernst b1891 German-American

9 FOREST AND SUN

oil on hardboard 8½x10½

10 WAR OF TWO ROSES 1955

oil on hardboard 11x14

Claude Garanjou b1926 French

11 MARINE COMPOSITION

oil on canvas 38x51

Joseph Lacasse b1894 Belgian

12 BLUE PAINTING 1960

oil on canvas 36x54

Pierre Lesieur b1922 French

13 COMPOSITION

oil on canvas 44x44

Evert Lundquist b 1904 Swedish

14 THE EASEL 1956
oil on canvas 39½x35½

Albert Marquet 1875-1947 French

15 THE PORT OF ALGIERS — AFTER THE STORM
oil on canvas 19¼x24

Emile Marze French

16 BLUE BAY
oil on canvas 39½x39½

Andre Masson b 1896 French

17 MOONRISE OVER TREES IN BLOOM
oil on canvas 24x28½

Friedrich Meckseper b 1936 German

18 SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN 1962
oil on hardboard 26x39

Jean Metzinger b 1883 French

19 NAUTICAL STILL LIFE
oil on canvas 22x29½

Jean Paul Riopelle b 1923 Canadian

20 THUNDERBIRD
oil on canvas 35x46

Antonio Saura b 1930 Spanish

21 PAINTING 1956
oil on canvas 51x38

Francis Newton Souza b 1924 English

22 STANDING NUDE
oil on hardboard 48x36

Ian Stephenson b 1934 English

23 OCTOCHROMATIC
oil on canvas 47½x40

Antonio Tapies b 1923 Spanish

24 BLACK WITH CURVES 1959
mixed media on canvas 25½x39¼ -

Piere Wemaere b 1913 French

25 ANGRY MASK 1958
oil on hessian 39½x32

Karl Weschke b 1925 German

26 KENIDJACK 1960
oil on hardboard 48½x60