

Florrie's Dream

A History of the Johannesburg Art Gallery

"When one lives in a town like Johannesburg one is surprised - and consoled - by finding there an islet where one can live the life of the spirit. In Johannesburg, this islet is provided by the Municipal Museum, which is called there 'The Art Gallery'."

Agnes Humbert, Ass. Dir. Museum of Modern Art, Paris (1950)

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Johannesburg Art Gallery Johannesburgse Kunsmuseum



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PREFACE:

This is a history of the Johannesburg Art Gallery as seen from a personal perspective. It does not set out to be a complete document of all acquisitions, or of all events that took place. The aim is to plot the development of the Art Gallery from a colonial art museum, in the mould of the 19th century to a venue which will provide for the artistic needs of a new South Africa at the end of the 20th century.

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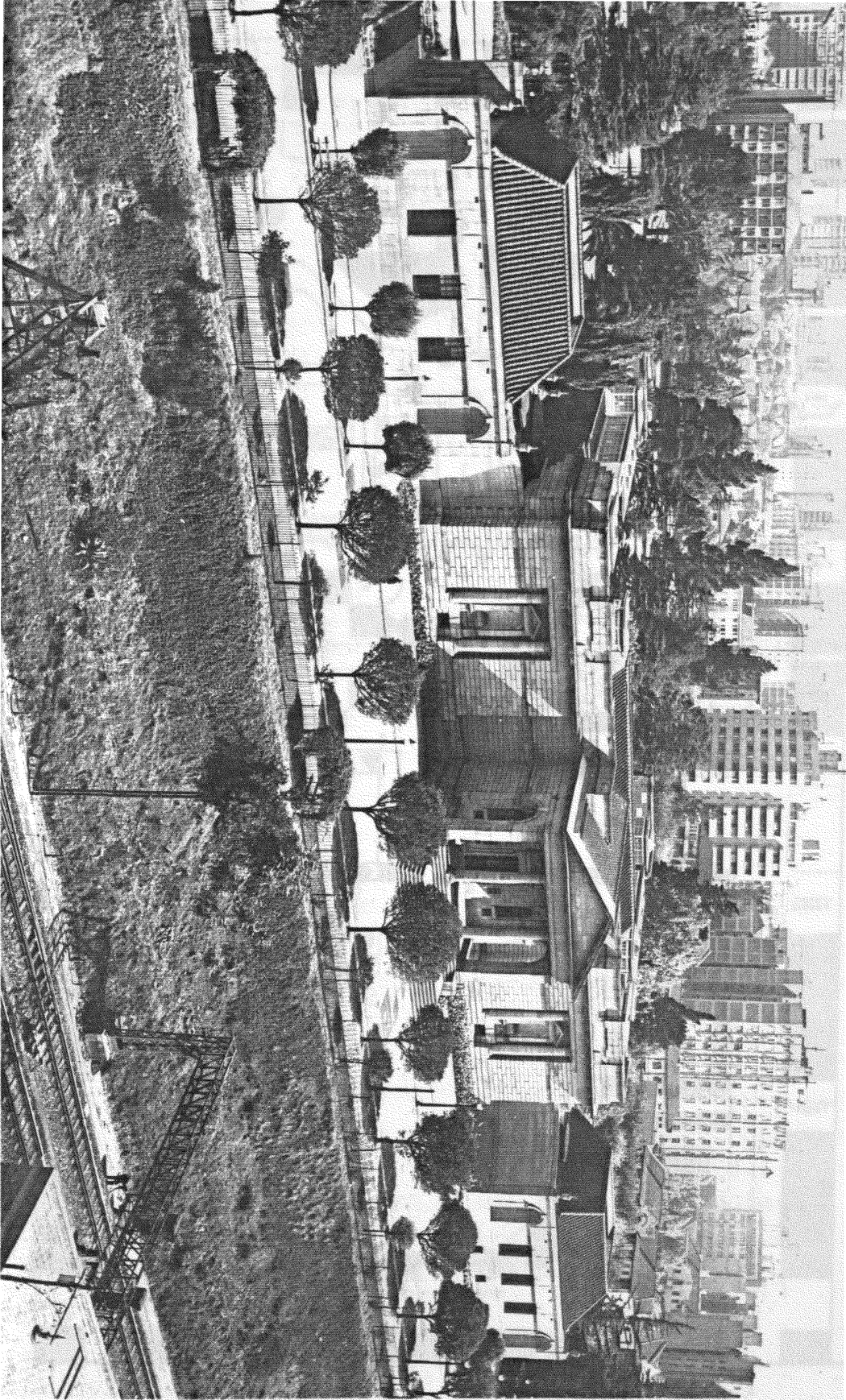
Without their assistance, this thesis would never have been possible.

ILLUSTRATIONS

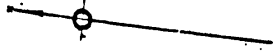
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ABBREVIATIONS

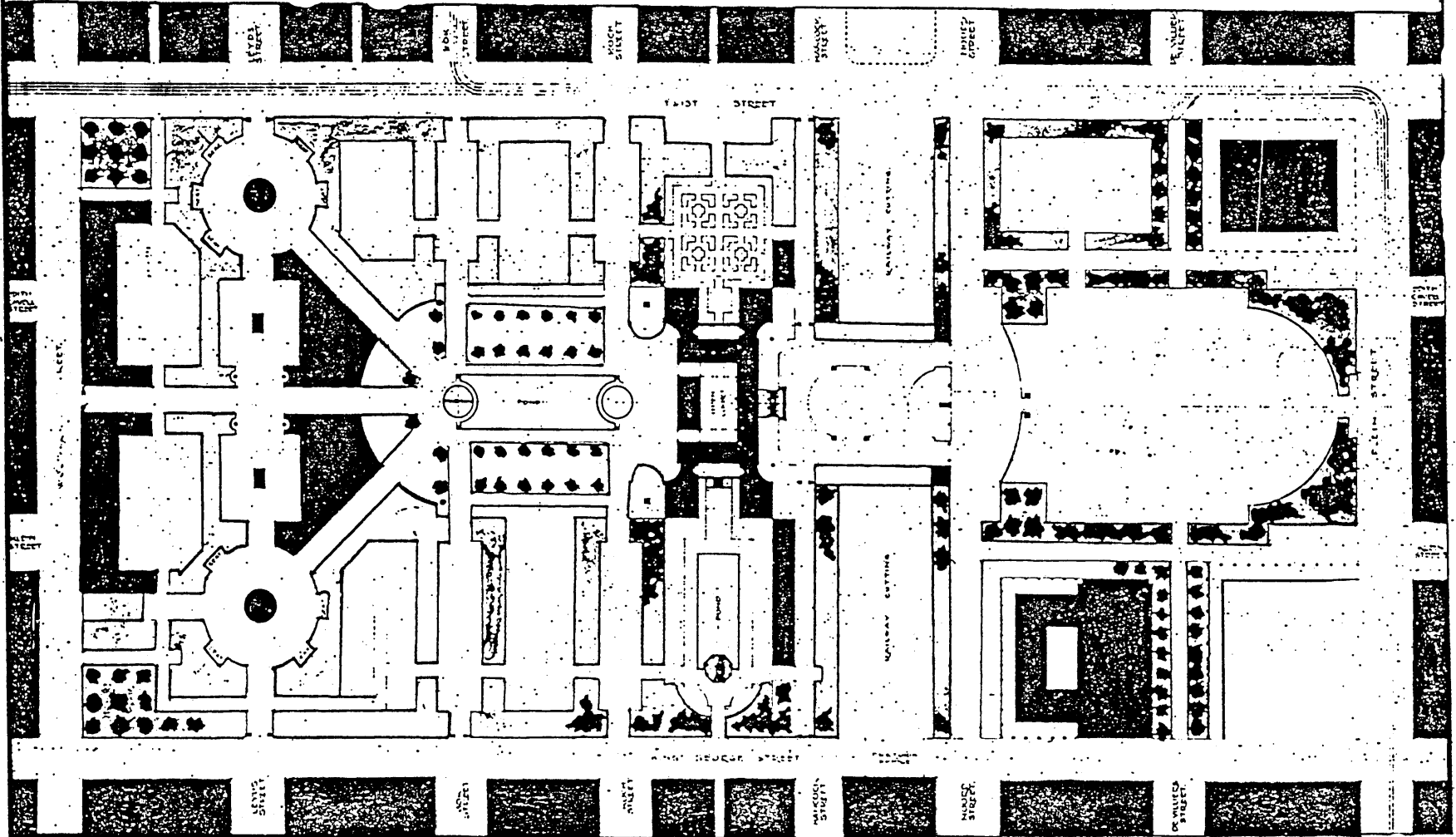
J.A.G.	- Johannesburg Art Gallery
Ref. Lib.	- Municipal Reference Library, Braamfontein, Johannesburg



PROPOSED LAYOUT OF JOUBERT PARK AND UNION GROUND
FROM SKETCH DESIGN PREPARED BY SIR EDWIN L. LUTYENS F.R.I.B.A.



SCALE 10 FEET TO AN INCH.



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1. INTRODUCTION

"To write a history of the Museum is to give account of the evolution of two concepts: that of the Museum and that of Time."¹

The "history" of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, in Afrikaans "Johannesburgse Kunsmuseum" starts way back when the concept "museum" from the Greek "museion", Latin "museum", was first applied to a collection of works of Art. The Italian Renaissance was responsible for that. Prior to that, the concept museum like the one in Alexandria, founded by Ptolemy Philadelphus (Ptolemy Soter) did not include works of art.

In the same way the word "gallery" is derived from the Italian "galleria" and was first used in the time of the Renaissance to mean "a succession of splendid rooms, like the galleria Palatina in the Pitti Palace" ² in which works of art were displayed. By the end of the 16th century the word "gallery" was firmly established in the English language to denote a venue for housing or exhibiting paintings and sculpture.

The concept "museum/gallery" is thus rooted in Time, i.e. in History and is a manifestation of man's desire to preserve and display, for whatever reason, that which gives him spiritual sustenance.

But as man is the product of the age in which he lives, what he conceives as beautiful or worth preserving will depend on the society in which he finds himself. His taste will reflect his social, economic and political environment and that is something which is never static. It will thus follow that what one generation deems worthy of preserving might not necessarily be valued by subsequent generations.

¹ Germain Bazil, The Museum Age, translated by Jane van Nuis Cahill, p 4.

² Ibid, p 7.

2. EARLY BEGINNINGS

Against the complex and overlaid fabric of layers upon layers of civilizations, steeped in centuries of different cultures, a young woman, born from German and English settler stock and nurtured by the Karroo, realized a dream. Her name was Dorothea Sarah Florence Ortlepp. She was born on June 14 1863 and destined to become Lady Florence Phillips, the founder of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, or as it was initially known, the "Municipal Gallery of Modern Art."

2.1. FLORENCE AND LIONEL PHILLIPS

A tremendous amount has been written about this exceptional woman who had such insight and drive. Her life has been very well documented by Thelma Gutsche in her book, *"No Ordinary Woman"*.

Early in her life, Florrie's father, a land surveyor to the Orange Free State Government, had taken his daughter with him into the veld and had awakened in her a love for the beauties of nature, a trait which was to develop as she grew into womanhood, especially after her marriage to Lionel Phillips.

Lionel Phillips was born in London, on August 24, 1855. He arrived in Kimberley at the age of 20. This young man who worked for J.B. Robinson, a diamond dealer, as a bookkeeper and diamond sorter, was as exceptional as the woman he married.

After the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand the young Phillipses moved north. Lionel became the manager of the London-based firm of Wernher Beit and Company and soon was elected President of the Chamber of Mines in 1892. In 1910, now a mine magnate, he was elected to Parliament and in 1912

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honoured for his services to the British Empire by being included in the New Year's Honours List.

But he was not only an astute businessman and politician, Thelma Gutsche says of him:

"In their twenty years of married life, Lionel had taught her to draw her strength and guidance from the finest expression of human creativeness and, while she stopped short of his abiding passion for music, she was a willing addict of other art forms. She had learnt to concede that her excellent discretion in matters of taste, her poise, her self-assurance, her missionary spirit - everything that removed her from the impetuous hoyden whom Lionel had first met - had been evoked by what amounted to a cultural education. She had lost none of her desire to impart it to her countrymen."³

But how did she realize her desire for imparting culture to her countrymen and in particular to the mining community of the Witwatersrand?

Florence Phillips was a regular commuter between South Africa and England. She, in fact, had a home, an estate called Tylney, in England and had been accepted into the society of the day. As a result of her friendship with a Mrs Grosvenor, a colleague of Burne-Jones and William Morris, she was introduced to the Arts and Crafts Movement. It was during one of the visits of Caroline Grosvenor in 1909 that Florence divulged her plan of trying to collect funds for the founding of an art gallery for her home town in South Africa.

³ Thelma Gutsche, No Ordinary Woman, The Life and Times of Florence Phillips, p 181.

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Mrs Grosvenor knew exactly whom to approach; her friend Hugh Lane, then 34 years old, the future director of the Dublin Municipal Gallery. He was a man, wrote Dr Anna Smith, "to whom the art world in general and South Africa in particular owe a great debt. No single individual contributed as much to the cultural development of South Africa."⁴

Florence Phillips told Hugh Lane that she wished to have European masters for the proposed gallery:

"Florrie admitted him expansively to what was on her mind - a collection of outstanding Old Masters whose possession would uplift and inspire her countrymen."⁵

Hugh Lane explained that the idea, although an excellent one, was impractical from a financial point of view as such works of art would be exorbitantly expensive if obtainable. Why not invest in modern art, i.e. contemporary art. With his intuitive gift for recognizing talent when he saw it, the suggestion was put into practice and Florence bought three paintings by Philip Wilson Steer, paying for them with the 21 carat blue diamond ring, a gift from Lionel, which she took from her finger. The first gift to the Johannesburg Art Gallery.

(Who would deny the fact that diamonds are a good investment!)

Florence Phillips then set out to commission Hugh Lane to make further purchases. For that, however, she needed funds. She was going to extract the money from the other gold magnates. In a letter to her husband she categorically stated that she wanted £10 000 from Otto Beit. He did give her that and Max Michaelis a

⁴ Thelma Gutsche, Sir Hugh Lane, Archives of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, 1986.

⁵ Thelma Gutsche, No Ordinary Woman, p 227.

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further £5 000. Money was collected from all the leading men in her husband's company. By the time she set sail for South Africa in November of that same year, she had been promised £20 000 of which Hugh Lane had already spent £6 000 on works of art.

What had been the thinking behind her idea of a gallery for Johannesburg?

The contrast between the cultural life in South Africa and that in Europe and Britain, was something which struck Florence anew every time she returned from Europe.

She wished to change this state of affairs by building "a gallery for loan exhibitions from overseas of pictures and statuary, and more important, of craftsmanship of every form so that the people could both enjoy beautiful things and learn to adapt them to their own materials and workmanship. To own a picture collection, to possess works of art, to be able to enjoy their own fine things, would be of incalculable value to the people of Johannesburg and South Africa." This is what she told her friend Mrs Grosvenor.⁶

We note here that not only was she interested in exposing her fellow countrymen to good art from overseas, she was inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement and wanted to encourage such a movement here.

But she went further: "Her collection of pictures and sculptures would include a section constituting a National Portrait Gallery. Many aims could be compounded within one institution and she strove toward that end with all her

⁶ Thelma Gutsche, No Ordinary Woman, p 226.

strength. Things of beauty would be not only an inspiration to her countrymen but a source of national pride."⁷

Why national pride?

As I mentioned earlier, man is historically and politically entrenched in the age into which he is born, whether he wishes it or not. At the beginning of this century the Transvaal was trying to recover from the onslaughts of the Boer War. Bitterness was rife. The Burgers of the Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek were smarting under the humiliation wrought upon them by the English who had exiled their President (Paul Kruger), and incorporated their autonomous republic against their will into the vast British Empire. This was coupled with economic depression.

The Phillipeses, upon their return from England, (Sir Lionel had spent 8 years in exile for his alleged participation in the Jameson Raid) were convinced that the bad economic state of the Transvaal was directly related to the "lack of national confidence and pride." Both husband and wife wished to eradicate this hatred between Boer and Brit. Lionel did this by founding the Agricultural Society and the annual Rand Easter Show, where both factions could work side by side. Florence was going to serve the community by the founding of an art gallery, incorporating the arts and crafts from Europe, thereby providing models for local artisans and artists alike. She also envisaged a school of design and an Art Library.

⁷ Thelma Gutsche, No Ordinary Woman, p 232.

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2.2 THE BUILDING

Having started a collection of works of art, attention now had to be given to housing them.

By June 1910 Lionel Phillips had persuaded the local Town Council to donate the present stand in Joubert Park. General Jan Christiaan Smuts, the then Administrator of the Transvaal, granted the profits accruing from the leasing of the Government-owned Market Building towards the building fund for an art gallery.

When Sir Hugh Lane arrived in South Africa with his 130 works of art for the gallery, he suggested enlisting the services of Sir Edwin Lutyens, the greatest architect the British Empire boasted at that time.

"In the twenties and thirties Lutyens was hailed as an architect as great as Wren, if not greater."⁸

Lutyens was initially reticent about designing the gallery as he felt he would be trespassing on the architectural territory of Sir Herbert Baker, a former colleague of his in England. Baker, however, welcomed the suggestion of Lutyens designing the gallery as he was at the time engrossed in designing the Union Buildings in Pretoria. For Florence Phillips only the best was good enough. His coming did, nonetheless, provoke the anger of the local architectural fraternity who felt spurned. To placate them it was decided to appoint a local architect to supervise the building designed by Lutyens. Robert Howden, President of the Architectural Association was appointed. It was he who was also responsible for carrying out the subsequent additions.

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Mary Lutyens, In a Glorious Tradition, Apollo 1982.

2.3 SIR EDWIN LUTYENS

Lutyens was an Arts and Crafts Movement man, who with the use of local materials and excellent workmanship, married various styles from different periods and made them his own. Where he borrowed from the past, it was to create something new, reflecting the age in which he lived; a manifestation of the best the British Empire had inspired. (This is especially evident in his creation of the city of New Delhi.)

His tenet was that the buildings he designed should have eternal values.

"Although a traditional classicist, he was a genius of superb originality."⁹

The drawing of the building was completed in 1911 and the corner stone laid by Councillor H.J. Hofmeyer on October 11 of the same year. The contract was, however, only signed in 1913. The "incomplete" building was completed in 1915. What had, in fact, been built of the original concept - only a front entrance and two wings. The 4 neo-Georgian pavillions, - "one to be a residence for an energetic educationist - curator, who would conduct a School of Art, a second to house the Art Library, the third for Loan Collections and the fourth to be furnished in the manner of an old Dutch house, so that people could see examples of their own culture" -¹⁰ the adjoining loggias, the sculptures and urns, the front on the north side overlooking a square pool, the newly designed park by Lutyens, these were all not there. Not even the proposed covering over the railway line had been executed. Ironically Lady Phillips "had been to see the municipal sub-committee dealing with it (the Art Gallery) to insist again

⁹ Mary Lutyens, In a Glorious Tradition, Apollo 1982.

¹⁰ Thelma Gutsche, No Ordinary Woman, p 340.

on bricks and plaster for economy so that all of Lutyen's great design could be built. They had promised her that despite the extra cost, the whole would be completed in stone."¹¹

Why was the building incomplete despite this promise?

Various reasons have been given. Suffice it to quote a few:

What had been built was "in the classical grand manner, but was too ambitious to be completed..."¹²

"This was partly because of local reaction to the onset of the First World War and partly because the municipality could not and would not allocate sufficient money to carry out the scheme."¹³

"An unfavourable Labour Government, armed confrontation between mine workers and mine management, the near-fatal shooting of Lionel, the outbreak of World War I and the death of Sir Hugh Lane aboard the Lusitania in May 1915."¹⁴

"Lutyens' first plan was for a building in brick (as mentioned above), to cost £20 000, but later the Town Council decided on a stone building to cost £104 000. Eventually the cost became £110 000 for the complete building."¹⁵

11 Thelma Gutsche, No Ordinary woman, p 320.

12 Wendland, Dictionary of South African Biography, volume 4, p 332.

13 Doreen Greig, The Mafeking Mail, Journal of Africana, vol.1, no.5., May 1978.

14 Maybeth Mc Teague, The Johannesburg Art Gallery

15 H.E. Winder F.R.S.A., A great Art Gallery - thanks to a dedicated woman - Sunday Times Supplement, Diamond Jubilee Review (5), 1966.

Why had there been deviated from the original brick concept? The Council had agreed to the spending of £20,000.¹⁶ Had the Council stuck to the initial proposal, Johannesburg could have had a completed building. Now not even half could be afforded.

"In spite of these disadvantages and its situation which, southwards overlooks the squalor of railway lines and wires and other urban debris, the gallery has attributes which makes it South Africa's finest example in the great tradition of controlled classicism by an architect who was not prepared to compromise with fashion and local architectural standards and sentiments."¹⁷

The disappointment of Florence Phillips was so great that she did not attend the "official" opening. In fact, the opening virtually passed unnoticed by the public of Johannesburg. What a blessing that it did not coincide with the launching of the collection.

2.4. FIRST ART COLLECTION

"Johannesburg is a place where people sit in 5 guinea chairs and gaze at 5 shilling pictures." This was the quote of a journalist writing in *The Sunday Times* of January 23, 1910.

By the end of this same year, Johannesburg was in possession of possibly the finest art collection in the country.

¹⁶ Thelma Gutsche, No Ordinary Woman, p 251.

¹⁷ Doreen Greig, *The Mafeking Mail*, Journal of Africana, vol.1, no.5, May 1978

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Sir Hugh Lane had arrived here in 1910 with 130 pictures and sculptures, including 5 paintings which he had personally donated. In May of the same year this collection had been exhibited at the Whitechapel Gallery in London and had gained the highest accolade from the critics of the day. It was rated a collection of the highest order and Hugh Lane congratulated for the impeccability of his taste.

The artworks consisted of:

54 Paintings by British artists, for obvious reasons. (Hugh Lane was British, South Africa had strong link with Britain, availability.)

6 Paintings by Dutch and Belgian artists

10 French paintings (Romantic and Barbizon)

8 French Impressionists

5 Italian paintings

6 Portraits of: Mrs Phillips by Giovanni Boldini

Mr Rudyard Kipling by Sir Phillip Burne-Jones

Rt. Hon. Viscount Milner by R.W.Chaplin

Mr Alfred Beit by Tennyson Cole

Mr G.F.Watts working on Physical Energy by Sir Phillip Burne-Jones

Otto Beit by William Orpen

It is interesting to note who besides the 3 donors were represented. That in itself reflects the bias and interests of the age.

15 Pieces of statuary

The acquisition of the bust of Miss Fairfax in marble by Auguste Rodin was a particular coup.

Another Rodin was also included in the collection: Rodin's Eve, in bronze.

In this respect, it is interesting to analyse the acquisitions and to observe that the only inclusion of any South African artist, were the sculptures by Anton van Wouw, a gift from Lady Phillips.

Colonization was at its peak. The "New Worlds" had been carved up by one or other colonial power. Class and caste ruled rigidly. Paris had but recently had its exhibition of art from North Africa, which was to revolutionise painting. Missionary zeal in its broadest sense was the order of the day. It is thus understandable that the art produced in the colonies was deemed inferior. Seen against this backdrop, Lady Phillips was a pioneer to donate the 5 van Wouw sculptures.

2.5 OFFICIAL POLICY

I have drawn attention to the thinking behind the establishment of an art gallery. These were mainly the ideas expressed by Lady Phillips in her dealings with various people, the most important being Sir Hugh Lane to whom the choice of the art works had been entrusted. He set out his policy in the Prefatory Notice of the first catalogue which was published when the collection was first exhibited at the Transvaal University College on 29 November 1910. (This same Prefatory Notice was to appear in every subsequent catalogue issued up till 1932.)

His ideas may be illustrated by quotes from this Notice:

"Johannesburg.....by the establishment of a gallery of Modern Art in the town, removes for ever the stigma that its citizens are concerned with naught else that the amassing of fortunes."

"The importance of a Modern Gallery is undoubted for, to the student actively engaged in Art, it is his contemporaries that teach him most.....The South African student enters on his studies with a mind free from preconception, and coming immediately upon the work of acknowledged masters the result cannot be other than beneficial." (The missionary zeal.)

Sir Hugh Lane also quotes Sir Joshua Reynolds in saying:

"The habit of contemplating and brooding over the ideas of great geniuses till you find yourself warmed by the contact, is the sure method of an artist-like mind." (The geniuses being the overseas masters.)

It was not only the British tradition which was recognized. It was necessary to "awaken in young South Africans the inherited tradition of the Dutch and French nations from which it has partly sprung." Thelma Gutsche seems to think that this seed had been planted in the mind of Hugh Lane by Jan Smuts, the then Minister of Mines, the Interior and Defence and who in his turn had been influenced by Dr Engelenburg, who rightly reminded Smuts that this section of the public also had a heritage and that their tradition should not be neglected.

"An extreme catholicity of taste has been displayed in the choice of pictures in this gallery."

Something which I find very significant is a quotation from Bernard Shaw which reads as follows:

"It is the duty of the rich to provide luxuries to the poor."

This statement underlines the intention expressed by Lady Phillips, as set out in the 1910 Draft Deed of Trust, that the Art Gallery and Museum was there:

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"for the behoof and public benefit of the inhabitants of the said town (Johannesburg) and the neighbourhood thereof."¹⁸

Finally Hugh Lane states:

"An important adjunct to this Gallery should be a collection of portraits of men and women who are making history in this country."¹⁹ (National pride rearing its head.)

To the initial collection of portraits the following were added in 1912:

The Rt.Hon. Cecil J. Rhodes by Sydney Marsh
Sir L.S. Jameson by John Tweed
Jan van Riebeeck by John Tweed

The historical bias is very clear. At this stage no inclusion of any Boer General.

1910 was an auspicious year. The Act of Union came into force. What better occasion to launch the founding of the Art Gallery. The Minutes of the General Purposes Committee of the Johannesburg Municipal Council of 21 March 1910, state:

"that the Council express the opinion that the Art Gallery should be for the purpose of commemorating the Union of South Africa and be a memorial to the peace established between the two white communities in South Africa."

As stated before, the collection was to be temporarily housed in the building of the Transvaal University College in Eloff Street (later the Witwatersrand College for Advanced Technical Education.)

¹⁸ Archives, J.A.G.: Draft Deed of Trust, 1910.

¹⁹ Archives, J.A.G.: Prefatory Notice to the first catalogue, 1910.

It was hoped that the Prince of Wales, who was supposed to open the first Union Parliament, would be available to open the Johannesburg Collection, as it was called at the time. However, the death of King Edward VII changed all that. Instead the Prince's uncle, the Duke of Connaught, deputised both in Cape Town and in Johannesburg.

The 1910 catalogue lists 101 entries. We, however, know that Lane arrived with 130 works of art. The 1912 catalogue lists 228 entries. The 1912 catalogue included the Pre-Raphaelite works from the bequest of Sir Sigismund Neumann. Henry Tonks, a medical doctor for 25 years, at the time a teacher at the Slade, had selected the works, assisted by Robert Ross.

In the introduction to this catalogue sir Herbert Baker writes:

"Feeling that no Gallery of modern British art would be complete unless so prominent a school as the Pre-Raphaelite was represented, Sir Sigismund Neumann, with admirable foresight, generosity and method, organised a collection, small but as representative as possible....The result is certainly a carefully chosen introduction to the essential nature of the movement."

This collection include works by three of the leaders of the movement; Homan Hunt, Millais, Rosetti.

2.6. ADMINISTRATION

In the Supplementary Report of the General Purposes Committee of the Johannesburg Municipal Council we find the following entry under Art Gallery:

"On the 3rd March, 1910, the Council had before it certain correspondence between the Mayor and Mr Lionel Phillips, in which were set forth the intimation of the proposed donation

of a collection of pictures and statuary to the town of Johannesburg and suggestions of the donors for the custody and conservation of the collection."

It is with the "custody and conservation of the collection" that we are concerned here.

A Draft Deed of Trust was submitted on 19 October, 1910, which states that:

"The said Municipal Council shall maintain and keep in a proper state of repair the said Art Gallery and the said pictures and other works of art, and hold and apply and keep the same in suitable and proper order for the general purposes of an Art Gallery and Museum of Industrial Art for the Town of Johannesburg for the promotion of the Arts and Sciences, and in particular that the inhabitants of the Town of Johannesburg and the neighbourhood thereof and other persons resorting thereto may have the benefit and enjoyment of the said pictures....."

and

"that the said Municipal Council shall do and perform no act, matter or thing with reference to the purchasing or acquisition of other works of art before and until the said Municipal Council shall have consulted with and received the advice and consent of a Committee, which shall be constituted as follows, that is to say, by the following seven persons,

the Mayor of Johannesburg,

one person to be nominated and appointed from time to time by

the Government of the Union of South Africa,

one person to be nominated from time to time by the said

Municipal Council,

Florence Phillips aforesaid,

plus three additional members.

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Should any of the above members not be able to continue serving on the committee, for whatever reason, the remaining members should "appoint any other person or persons to be a member or members in the stead or places of the member or members."

Further injunctions were:

That the gallery would not be closed on Sundays or on Public Holidays.

That no one "remove, exchange or dispose or varnish or repair the said pictures, statues and other works of art" or "add to the collection without first obtaining the consent of the said Art Gallery Committee"

"Nor shall the the said Municipal Council remove a Curator or Curators of the said Art Gallery without first obtaining the advice of the said Art Gallery Committee."

"Four members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by the said Art Gallery Committee."

At the end of 1910 the General Purposes Committee records the following recommendations by Sir Hugh Lane and Lady Phillips:

That Mr Alfred Edmund Gyngell be appointed temporarily as Curator at £5 per week.

That he be assisted by 2 caretakers.

Both these recommendations were accepted.

2.7. HONORARY DIRECTORS

Sir Hugh Lane, who had been the kingpin in the selection of the initial collection, was the first honorary Director, obviously London based. In 1911 he tendered his resignation. Henry Tonks, from the Slade, who together with Robert Ross had selected the Pre-Raphaelite collection, was Lady Phillips' choice to be the

next Honorary Director for the Johannesburg Art Gallery. However, she withdrew the proposal, presumably because Tonks had just been appointed Professor at the Slade. The successor to Sir Hugh Lane was to be Robert Ross, the well-known art critic and friend of Oscar Wilde.

Lady Phillips had appointed him without the consent of the Municipal Council. She only informed them at a later date of her appointment. The salary she offered him was £150 per annum.

Of Robert Ross, Maureen Borland his, biographer, states:

"His exact role in the affairs of the Gallery remained ill-defined, but he was constantly sought after by artists, dealers and private collectors who hoped to persuade him to buy their works for the Johannesburg Art Gallery, and his diplomacy as a dealer was often tested."²⁰

What we do know, is that after his resignation, which Lady Phillips was loathe to accept, he still assisted her with the gallery. By September 1916 he had arranged for the artworks which had been stored at the Tate to be packed and shipped to South Africa, in five different ships. This was a good precaution as Britain was at war.

The reason he gave for his resignation was:

"My name being associated with what seems likely to become a perpetually recurring scandal would eventually do the Gallery harm." ²¹

He was referring to his friendship with Oscar Wilde.

Ross was the literary executor of Oscar Wilde. A biography of Wilde written by Arthur Ransome and dedicated to Ross, started a

20 Maureen Borland, Wilde's Devoted Friend, a life of Robert Ross 1869-1918, p 168.

21 Ibid p 191.

ball rolling which caused Ross tremendous unhappiness. It seems that this led to the deterioration of his health, which had never been good. He died of a heart attack at the early age of 49, on 4 October 1918, just prior to setting sail for Melbourne where he had been appointed buyer for the National Gallery. His ashes were interred with those of Wilde, some time after his death.

The First World War had ended: a war that had an impact no war had had before. It was the end of an era, also for the Johannesburg Art Gallery. No longer would it be controlled by a Director from England. The suggestion to appoint another overseas Honorary Director which had been made by Lady Phillips had come to nought, as so much she had suggested, as far as the Gallery was concerned. When she returned to South Africa to stay, it was to make her home at the Cape. As mentioned before she did not even attend the opening of the Lutyens building in 1917.

3. THE YEARS BETWEEN (1915-1937)

Lady Phillips had wished to appoint a "Keeper" to run the Gallery. To this end, Alfred Gyngell was appointed in 1911.

3.1. THE FIRST CURATOR

Who was this man Alfred Gyngell?

He was an Englishman, born in 1866 in Wordsley, Worcestershire. He came to South Africa in 1893 at the age of 27. He had studied at the Royal Academy Schools, London, under Hubert Herkomer, as well as at the Bushy School of Art in Hertfordshire. From 1899 to 1902 he was a store-keeper and stationmaster at O'Kiep in Namaqualand. In 1910 he joined the staff of the Teachers' Training College in Johannesburg. A year later he took up the part-time position of curator, as mentioned, and held it concurrently with teaching at the Normal College, Johannesburg and part-time at Roedeau. From 1924 to 1946 he was a member of the Consultative Committee on Fine Art for the Johannesburg Public Library and wrote reviews for the Architectural Journal. Four of his lectures are extant and in the Archives of the J.A.G.. Mention is also made of his work at the first exhibition held by the S.A. Academy which opened on March 20, 1920.

Esmé Berman in her Art and Artists of South Africa says in this regard that he was highly esteemed as a charcoal portrait artist. He executed a portrait of Gen. Louis Botha and his wife, Annie as well as a portrait of the mayor of Johannesburg, at the time. (At the moment in the Africana Museum.)

21.

Gyngell is further described by Berman as belonging "to the era of Victorian pedantry; his drawings, in keeping with his personality, were academic."²²

He made a series of illustrations on the theme "The fool in the Forest" based on a line from Shakespeare's "As You Like It", in which he portrayed himself as the central figure with "whimsical self-mockery." Is this perhaps how he viewed himself in relationship to his environment, the gallery? There seems to me to be more than a touch of dramatic irony here.

The Johannesburg Art Gallery was now a fait accompli; how did its future look?

1914 saw the outbreak of the First World War. This country was not free from its ravages either. Sir Hugh Lane, who had been so instrumental in establishing the initial collection, had booked a passage to America on the fateful Lusitania and sank with her on 8 May 1915.

In South Africa a Labour Government was in power, with other priorities than art. In Johannesburg itself there was confrontation between the mine workers and the mine management. Lady Phillips was unhappy with the running of the Gallery. Alfred Gyngell had not measured up to her expectations. To prove this, she cited examples of his incompetence. According to the Minutes of Art Gallery Committee of 24 August 1915 he had:

²² E. Berman, Art and Artists of S.A., p 207.

22.

- (a) Altered a painting of Sir Lionel Phillips
- (b) Not varnished others according to the instructions of Sir Hugh Lane
- (c) Could not account for the money accruing from the sale of certain photographs
- (d) Had lost a painting by James Condor.

Lady Phillips was irate.

Florrie had suffered many setbacks as far as the Gallery was concerned, and being the woman she was, she was not going to take her disappointments lying down. Thelma Gutsche writes that at a meeting of the Art Gallery Committee on 12 May 1915 she "with brutal lack of tact or discretion, threatened to withdraw her gift to the City of her collection of handwork unless the appropriate wings were built for it, for the Michaelis Art Library (Max Michaelis had donated £1 000 for art reference books on condition the books be housed in the Art Gallery²³) and for the School of Art. She also asked in the presence of the gentle Gyngell for the appointment of a 'qualified and competent man to supervise the complete complex.²⁴ After all, she stated, he had only been temporarily employed by Sir Hugh Lane.

"Gyngell thought she was scheming to appoint Solomon in the place of Robert Ross as director and employ Roworth as curator; but Dr Engelenburg (the government representative on the Art Gallery Committee) to whom he turned, told him he was wrong. Factions developed in the artistic fraternity - those who supported the Lady Phillips - Solomon persuasion and those who sided with Gyngell and the Council. Gyngell easily vindicated himself and his tormentor made a last desperate attempt to gain public support."²⁵

23 Archives, Municipal Reference Library, Johannesburg: Minutes of General Purpose Committee of the Johannesburg Municipal Council, 1912

24 T. Gutsche, No Ordinary Woman, p 330.

25 T. Gutsche, No Ordinary Woman, p 333.

Small wonder that she refused to be present when the doors to the gallery were opened to the public in November of the same year. On the 4th of November 1915 she had left Johannesburg on her way to England, but not before she had written a bitter letter in which she "dealt with the council's failure to implement the grand concept which had inspired her and the donors."²⁶

When she returned to South Africa to stay, it was to make her home at the Cape. On 31 March 1917 the estate, Vergelegen, was transferred from the late Samuel Kerr to Dorothea Florence Alexandra Phillips (born Ortlepp), who in the words, once again of Thelma Gutsche, "restored to her country one of its great glories."²⁷

How was the Gallery viewed by the public of the time?

In an article published in The Star the anonymous author says:

"We are generally backward in this country for obvious reasons. Our population is small and our means limited, but there are compensations ~~...~~ Johannesburg has its fine gallery of modern art and Cape Town the Michaelis collection. The value of these things cannot be easily underrated. Both galleries are almost purely the result of limited private enterprise and private gifts... A careful study of the pictures and sculptures in the Johannesburg Art Gallery is bound in the end to exert a good influence... It is not entirely representative and from this point of view singularly out of date, in not containing copies of the latest Victorian masterpieces, but as a public collection of modern paintings it is almost unique."

26 T.Gutsche, No Ordinary Woman, p 333.

27 T.Gutsche, No Ordinary Woman, p 343.

In another article published by The Star of 14 January 1920 entitled "The Art Gallery", the unnamed author writes:

"The case of public collection is determined chiefly by the directors, by committees of trustees and sometimes by public opinions. A good deal depends on the director."

Johannesburg did not have a resident director until Anton Hendriks was appointed in 1937.

The Gallery "ticked over". At a meeting of the Art Gallery Committee, held 14 January 1920, it was pointed out by the mayor that the possibility of building more wings to the existing Gallery, would not be sanctioned by the Administrator.

At this same meeting a vote of thanks was proposed to Charles Aitken of the Tate Gallery for accepting the position of Honorary Director (Aitken thus was the third Honorary Director of the Gallery.) He, however, does not feature prominently at all.

At this same meeting it is noted that: "All pictures offered for purchase were refused on the invariable ground of lack of funds although in fact the Committee had hundreds of pounds in the Town Treasurer's keeping."²⁸ The reasons for this resistance are not clear: it may be related to the absence of a resident director, as well as an inactive committee.

28 Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the Art Gallery Committee, 1920.01.14.

Not much happened in the ensuing six years either. In March 1926, Mr Gyngell was due for retirement but had his term of office extended for two years. Once more Lady Phillips, without a positive result, made her plea for a better qualified man, who would be paid a decent salary. However, a letter, dated 12 March 1926, enclosed a Diploma of Honour awarded to the Art Gallery for its exhibits in the National Section of the South African Exhibit at the British Empire Exhibition. Special mention was made of the input of Mr Gyngell, with a special vote of thanks to him for contributing to the success of the South African exhibit. (Some recognition at last, in the face of so much adverse criticism by Florrie).

The Art Gallery Committee apparently also felt that action was needed. The Minutes of the Art Gallery Committee, 30 April of the same year, 1926, records:

"that the General Purposes committee be asked to consider granting £105 annually to purchase works from the Architectural Exhibition (i.e. the South African art submitted to the S.A. Academy's annual exhibition) which, in the opinion of the Art Gallery are worthy of hanging in the Art Gallery."²⁹

In fact, as early as 1924, Denis Lefebve had recommended that the best work of art exhibited at the Academy, should be considered suitable for purchasing for the Art Gallery Collection.

At this time the Gallery also acquired various pieces of art: the bronze bust of a Bushman by Van Wouw, out of the Neumann Funds, more antique furniture also from the same funds.³⁰

These few "glimmerings" did not amount to very much, but it did indicate some movement in the right direction. Hope was now pinned on the next curator.

²⁹ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the Art Gallery Committee, 1946.04.30, p.27.

³⁰ Ibid, p 27, notes by Thelma Gutsche

4.1 THE SECOND CURATOR

Upon the retirement of Alfred Gyngeell in 1928 a Mr A. Winter Moore was appointed. At the time of his appointment he was head of the Department of Art and Architecture at the Witwatersrand Technical Institute. His appointment was of very short duration as he was appointed lecturer at Rhodes University College from 5 February 1929.

4.2. THE THIRD CURATOR

The third curator was a man by the name of Dr A.A.Eisenhofer. He was in office for the next 8 years, from 1929 till the appointment of Anton Hendriks in 1937.

Information about Dr Eisenhofer is scarce. The Minutes of the Art Gallery Committee of 11 April 1929, states the following:

" Eisenhofer presented himself as a Master of Art from the Science and Arts Department of the South Kensington Museum, also a doctor of Philosophy, the first Art Master of the Transvaal Education Department in 1904, transferred to the Johannesburg University College where he remained until 1913, served in South West Africa during the war. He was born in England though his grand-parents were German."³¹

The step-daughter of Dr Eisenhofer, a Mrs Hesse, filled in some more details:

³¹ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the Art Gallery Committee, 1929.04.01. p.31.

He had initially studied medicine. Whether he qualified she was not sure. He did however, subsequently procure a master's degree in fine arts. He had been headmaster at the Pietersburg High School. While there, he married her mother, a Mrs Jane Martha Price, a widow with three daughters. In 1914 he joined up on the side of the British. What he had done after he was demobbed and prior to his appointment as curator she could not remember. He, together with his wife, had composed music for the visit of the Prince of Wales, who had been very taken by it and had signed the manuscript. He restored paintings and made many copies of the artworks in the gallery. Mrs Hesse says she has a collection of these copies in her home. He died approximately a month after his retirement at the age of either 78 or 79.

What happened during his 8 years of office?

The Council Minutes of 22.10.1929 state that as an experiment it had been decided to open the gallery at night on Sundays, Wednesdays and Public Holidays. Whether this experiment was successful and how long it lasted, could not be ascertained.

Attention was also being given to the Art Gallery building as we see from the Minutes of the Council meeting of January 25, 1930, which records that the sum of £200 pounds had been voted to procure preliminary sketches from Sir Edwin Lutyens, showing the proposed extensions to the Art Gallery, "with particular reference to method of lighting."

In September of 1930 Mr C. Turner presented a watercolour by J.Kerr Lawson and a Mr J.H. Forgery presented a picture by J.Tennant: "Conway Ruins, North Wales."

In 1931 the art collection of the gallery was revalued by the firm Messrs P. and D. Conaghi (London). Mr Brangwyn also donated 50 of his etchings to the gallery in memory of his friend, Father Peter Ryan, plus a portrait of Father Ryan by Kerr Lawson.

A bronze plaque of Lady Philips, designed by G.E.Pearse, was unveiled by the Mayor on 23 March 1931. This plaque can be seen to the left of the south entrance of the Gallery.³²

1931 seemed to have been a good year. The council minutes of 24.2.1931 notes that the sum of £2,000 had been budgeted for the acquisition of new works. A new buying committee had also been appointed, consisting of the following:

Mr Charles Aitken (Curator of the Tate Gallery, Hon. Director of the Johannesburg Art Gallery.)

Prof. Tonks (Principal of the Slade)

Mr Daniels (Curator of the National Gallery, London)

The next date to note is 1934, the year in which the gallery acquired the Howard Pim Bequest.

Howard Pim, for many years a collector of graphic art, donated more than 500 prints to the gallery. This was a major

³² Archives, J.A.G.: Article on Hugh Lane, 1986

acquisition for the art gallery as these prints included works by artists such as Rembrandt, Dürer, Canaletto, Goya, Corot, Turner, Whistler, Villon, Matisse, Dufy, Steinlein, Roussel, Daubigny and many others. This bequest had certain conditions attached, as stated in the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 26.6.1934:

- (a) Within 2 years of death of the donor "suitable provision be made for the permanent exhibition of the Prints and under the title THE HOWARD PIM BEQUEST."
- (b) Arrangement for the display should be subject to the approval of the Trustees in consultation with the Art Gallery Committee.
- (c) Not all the prints need be exhibited together at one time, but those on exhibition should be housed in cases similar to those in use at the time at the British Museum.

With the acquisition of this bequest, extra gallery space was badly needed. At the Meeting of the Council of 26.3.1935, it was decided "that the basement of the Art Gallery should be made available for exhibition purposes...."

At the 603rd Meeting of the Council on 25.6.1936, an extra £100 was voted "to provide additional wooden battens to the walls and to cover them with hessian, and coloured to approval."

At the next Meeting of the Council, held 28.7.1936, it was decided "that two pavilions be erected at the South East and South West corner to the Art Gallery (according to the Lutyens plans procured in 1930) at a cost of £16,000 each" and that one of these be called the PRINT ROOM.

The first Council Meeting of 1937 confirmed that Sir Edwin Lutyens would undertake the extensions to the gallery and that Mr Howden would act as his local representative.

1937 was to be a very propitious year: not only was the gallery to be enlarged physically, but upon the retirement of Dr Eisenhofer, Anton Hendriks was appointed as Curator. He was to add a dimension to the gallery which changed it from a provincial gallery, into an art gallery which could hold its own internationally.

4. THE NEW ERA

The following entry appeared in the Minutes of the 613th Meeting of the Council, held on 27.4.1937:

"In accordance with the decision of the Council, applications have been invited in South Africa and overseas for the position of Curator of the Art Gallery at a salary of £50 per month.

Forty applications have been received, twenty four being from South Africa and sixteen from overseas.

4.1. THE FOURTH CURATOR

The Art Gallery Committee recommended that Mr P.A. Hendriks, of Pretoria, be appointed to the position, as being the most suitable applicant.

The following particulars are included in the minutes:

"Born in Rotterdam - naturalised British subject. Four years at State Training college for Teachers at Haarlem, Holland. Holds various certificates, including one for drawing. Studied for four years at Academy for Fine Arts, Rotterdam, where he obtained the highest teaching degree for fine arts existing in Holland. Worked and studied in Germany and Paris for three years. Lecturer in the history of art and drawing and painting at a young ladies' institute at the Hague. Principal for three years of the Art school at Pretoria Technical college. Four Years part-time lecturer at Pretoria University. Executed several mural paintings in Johannesburg Post Office, Voortrekker Gedenksaal, and Onderstepoort Laboratories. Considerable experience in lecturing.

Weekly public lectures in Art School, Pretoria. Good knowledge of value of pictures and works of art. Visited nearly all art galleries in Europe and has made extensive study of technique and history of paintings of all times. Practical knowledge of care and preservation of pictures."

It is indeed interesting to note the conditions of his appointment:

"That the appointment carry no staff or other privileges, except three weeks' non accumulative leave per annum, and be subject to a special agreement on a monthly basis.

That the person to be appointed be not required to become a member of the Johannesburg Municipal Pensions and Provident Funds and that he be permitted to do private work."

"Anton Hendriks eventually came to the Johannesburg Municipal Gallery where, as director, his wisdom and foresight have built up one of the best art galleries in the Southern hemisphere.....

His arrival was probably one of the most important milestones in the story of South African art."³³

The second world-war broke out in September 1939, affecting the lives of all South Africans in some or other way. The Gallery was not directly affected.

In January 1939 eight pictures were selected by Hendriks from the Engelenburg estate, including works by Wenning, Pierneef and Oerder. This was the beginnings of the South African Collection which he was to build up during his term of office.

³³ H.E. Winder, F.R.S.A., Vice-Pres.of S.A.Ass.of Arts (S.Tvl.), How art has flowered, Sunday Times Jubilee Review, 1966.06.26.

In March he had a set of 58 postcards made; reproductions of works in the Gallery. These were sold for three shillings a set.³⁴

Later that same year he organized for the loan of the Collection of French Masters from Mr Cassirer and had the front room of the Gallery renovated.³⁵

The minutes of the Cultural Committee of 25 April 1939 also makes mention of the proposed visit of Hendriks that year to visit galleries in the U.S.A., Canada, England and Europe, "for obtaining scientific data concerning the illumination of the galleries, which will serve as a useful guide for the lighting of the Art Gallery in Johannesburg."³⁶

5.2. STAFF

Anton Hendriks had been a one-man show as far as the administration of the Gallery was concerned. The Minutes of the Council of 18 December 1945 reads as follows:

"Provision was made in the Staff Grading scheme adopted 29 May 1945 for position of shorthand - typist to be appointed."

Then in 1949 we read that "The Art and Culture Committee recommend the creation of an additional position of Senior Assistant." The recommendation was that this post be created as from 1 July 1949.³⁷ This post was filled by Mrs E.K.Lorrimer.

³⁴ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the Cultural Committee of the City Council, 1939.03.28.

³⁵ Ibid, 1939.04.28

³⁶ Ibid, 1939.04.25.

³⁷ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the Council, 1949.05.23

5.3. THE COLLECTION

An article in The Star, 6 November 1941 provides an overview of the Gallery's collection at the time:

"Few modern municipal collections of works of art can compare in quality with the Johannesburg Gallery in Joubert Park."

The author proceeds to list the highlights:

The 2 marble busts of women: Miss Fairfax, Mrs McEvoy

The "Black and White" Room with its 30 Rembrandt etchings,

15 Dürer plates, 2 masterpieces of Charles Meryon

The best Whistler etchings, as well as good examples of Schongauer, Lucas van Leyden, van Dyck, Zorn, Besnard and Legros.

British Oil Paintings: Wilsons Steer's, Corfe Castle,

The Lime Kiln, At a Chelsea Window; the 2 famous Sargents (not portraits); Will Rotherstein's Carrying of the Law; Walter Russel's Littlehampton Harbour; Clausen's The Breakfast Table; Charles Condor's Golfers.

The comment on Orpen's The Fairy Ring is delightful:

"It is so well drawn, the fantasy so delightful, the grass so very grass-green, and yet it is doubtfully a work of art."³⁸

The French Wing: 2 Renoirs, 3 Cezannes, a van Gogh, Daumier, Derain, Utrillo, Sisley, 2 Boudins, Corot, Ingres, Courbet, Gericault, Delacroix, Ribot."

Lord Harlech ends off by saying:

"The Johannesburg Gallery is worth going a long way to see."

³⁸ The Rt.Hon. Lord Harlech, P.C., G.M.C.G., F.S.A., the Municipal Art Gallery, Johannesburg, The Star, 1941.11.06.

Records of happenings during the first few years of the 1940's are scarce and the reason can be Anton Hendriks' involvement with the war. He was Chairman of the Advisory Committee on War Art and as such visited the war fronts. His detailed report on this visit is in the Archives of the Military War Museum, dated 30 September 1945.

The dogs of war had ceased their hostilities in May 1946. People could start picking up the pieces.

The City Council also reorganised itself. It set up an Art and Culture Committee which could henceforth deal with all the cultural matters pertaining to Johannesburg. This committee gave its approval for Anton Hendriks to embark on his first post-war buying trip.

Upon his return we find the following entry in the Minutes of the City Council dated 26 November 1946:

"The Art and Culture Committee reports that, when used in connection with art galleries, the designation of 'Curator' indicates a person whose duties are of a technical and limited nature and who looks after collections of works of art and is responsible for the care and upkeep of the exhibits.

Nowhere is a person in general charge of an art gallery of importance called the 'Curator' of such an institution, but is designated 'Director' and is assisted by curators in technical charge of special departments." ³⁹

Anton Hendriks thus started 1947 with the designation "Director."

39 Archives Ref.Lib.: Council Minutes, 1946.11.16.

4.4. COLLECTION POLICY

The following is a report tabled by Anton Hendriks at the Meeting of the City Council, 30 July 1946, under the heading:

BUILDING UP OF ART GALLERY COLLECTIONS.

The Johannesburg Art Gallery has, up to the present, provided its visitors with the opportunity of seeing works of art, which normally could not be seen outside an art gallery, but the majority of people visit the Art Gallery because it is considered to be one of the sights they should see perhaps once. A modern art gallery, however, has an active function to perform as an educational institution in the life of a city. In order to convert the Johannesburg Art Gallery from a static show place to an institution which will fulfil this function as part of the city life, the existing collection...must be built up and completed according to a general plan, and new exhibits must be shown from time to time.

The Johannesburg Art Gallery is a gallery of modern European painting and sculpture i.e. painting and sculpture of the last 150 years approximately.

The existing collections, though very representative in some respects, show serious gaps which have to be filled..” In his opinion, the only way that difficulty could be overcome was by the “ ..receipt of a generous annual grant for the purchase of works of art, instead of small sums which had been allocated in earlier years.

"Sir Hugh Lane, in his introduction to the first catalogue for the Johannesburg Art Gallery wrote in 1910:

'I hope it will not be long before the Gallery acquires works by Courbet, Corot, Daubigny, Manet, Renoir, Degas, Israels, Matthew Maris, Whistler and representative works of the best of the pre-Raphaelite school, to name but a few that still must be gathered.'

Since then, in 1912, the Sir Sigismund Neumann collection came to the Gallery, which was representative of the pre-Raphaelites, and two generous donors gave a Courbet and a Corot. However, Manet, Renoir, Degas, Cezanne, and many others were not acquired and now the time for purchasing their works at reasonable prices is past and Johannesburg has lost the opportunity, not for lack of proper advice given in time. This, however, should not discourage us and there will still be opportunities.

In considering what has to be done now, it is useful to divide the collection into

- (a) English School
- (b) French School
- (c) Dutch School (Netherlands and Belgium)
- (d) Rest of Europe
- (e) South African painting

(a) ENGLISH SCHOOL:

The existing collection is representative of Victorian academic and pre-Raphaelite painting. It is pretty representative of English art of period 1900-1910. The collection should be completed at the earliest possible date by the purchase of representative work of modern English

painters like Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell, the Spencers, John Nash, etc., which still could be bought before the war at reasonable prices. That is the only gap to be filled immediately in the English collection.

To make the collection truly representative of English painting of the 19th century, it would be desirable to have works by Constable, Turner, Gainsborough, and the early 19th century portrait painters as well as the landscape school of the same period. However, at present it is hardly possible to purchase works by these artists, suitable to be hung in the Gallery, and therefore, in this case, we shall have to await the opportunities, which may or may not arise in the future.

(b) FRENCH SCHOOL:

French painting of the 19th century is the most significant of the modern school.

Of painting up to 1910 the collection is not completely representative - gaps have to be filled as was already indicated by Sir Hugh Lane. The Gallery should possess works by Manet, Degas, Cezanne, Renoir- a collection of modern works must contain examples of this school.

Of younger French artists it is, or at least it was, before the war, possible to purchase, comparatively cheaply, representative works. The gallery should procure works by Signac, Marquet, Bonnard, Vuillard, Braque, and contemporaries, and Oudit, Ceria and others of this group who are the most important artists in the French school of the present time, as well as sculpture by Maillol, Despiau, Bourdelle and others.

Of the earlier period we should possess examples of the work of Delacroix, Ingres, David, etc., etc. This wish is hardly likely to be realised for obvious reasons, but paintings of the Barbizon school, which is not yet represented, can still be obtained.

(c) DUTCH SCHOOL:

In a public institution in this country Dutch painting should be represented.

Although we have a few paintings of the Hague School, these are not very spectacular or impressive, and it should be possible to complete this collection with some works by Bosboom, Matthew Maris and contemporaries.

Some of the later artists of European importance: Breitner, Verster, Isaac Israels, Toorop and Konignenburg should be represented.

(d) REST OF EUROPE:

Our collection contains some Italian paintings, Mancini, Emma Ciardi. If special opportunities should arise, the Gallery should try to obtain representative works of those European artists whose importance is more than local and national. To give a few examples: the Swiss painter, Karl Hofer, the Norwegian Edvard Munch, the Austrian Faistauer, the Italian Carena.

(e) PRINT COLLECTION:- It is inadvisable at this stage to purchase prints except when very special opportunities might arise. The collection should be completed now with facsimile reproductions, to be used in conjunction with originals for educational exhibitions.

- (f) COLLECTION OF ORIENTAL ART:- A collection of oriental art, as now on loan, but not displayed, should be part of the permanent collections. It need not be big, but should be well chosen.

European art of the last hundred years cannot be understood if the influence of Chinese and Japanese art is not recognised.

- (g) SOUTH AFRICAN PAINTING:- It has been the policy of the Art Gallery Committee, for the last few years, to build up a collection, showing the best and most significant aspects of South African painting and a small but fairly representative collection is being formed. The educational value of such a collection displayed next to the best European painting cannot be overestimated, and incidentally is of greatest interest for visitors from outside the country.

To sum up, the first thing to do now is to obtain painting (and sculpture) of French and English artists after 1910, and a few well chosen examples of Dutch painting of the period 1860-1920.

We are of opinion that a regular buying policy to build up the Gallery's collections should be adopted and that the gaps be filled in a methodical manner rather than in the haphazard way which lack of funds had forced the Art Gallery Committee to adopt in the past. It is suggested that the Curator should be sent overseas as soon as circumstances permit and thereafter at intervals of every three or four years, for the purpose of purchasing works of art, if possible, in collaboration, where necessary, with overseas museum directors, in order to build up the Gallery's

collections in accordance with the recommendations of the Selection Committee."

This policy was adopted by the Council. They also committed themselves to sending Anton Hendriks as soon as was possible.

This buying trip took place in 1948. It was a most successful trip. Anton Hendriks came back with works of art by: Roualt, Vuillard, Vollon, Gauguin, Picasso, Matisse, Daubigny, Signac, Toulouse-Lautrec, Augustus John, etc. (See Glossary for complete list of purchases made.) A catalogue of these new acquisitions was also published, with a foreword by G.L. Matthews, Chairman of the Art and Culture Committee.

Matthews writes:

"The pictures referred to in this catalogue represent a further stage in the policy of the City Council of Johannesburg in building up the Art Gallery into a planned and balanced entity.

During the war years, when it was impossible to make purchases overseas, advantage was taken of the opportunity to acquire pictures by South African artists.

The present exhibition covers a large field and fills in several notable gaps which previously existed in the collection."

4.5. THE BUILDING

Two new pavilions, built according to the Lutyens' design, under the supervision of Howden, were completed in 1940.

The Gallery now had 13,300 square feet of exhibition space. That would be pushed up to 24,000 square feet after the air conditioning of the basement had been completed. Anton Hendriks had personally gone to Vergelegen, on his way to Europe in 1938, to tell Florrie Phillips that her dream was coming true. She died the year they were completed. This must have afforded her considerable satisfaction that many of her ideals for the gallery were coming to fruition, under the able management of Hendriks.

By 1948 it was realised that the existing space at the Gallery was still hopelessly inadequate. It was therefore decided to embark on a post-war development programme which would include alterations to the Gallery. In a report written by Hendriks to the Town Clerk on 5 November 1948, he asks "That this matter be referred to the Technical Sub-Committee regarding the advisability of extending the art gallery building in view of the proposed expropriation by the Railway Administration (of portion of the road in front of the Gallery)...or whether the art gallery should not be re-erected elsewhere on a more suitable site."⁴⁰

Should the Technical Sub-Committee decide against erecting a new building elsewhere, Anton Hendriks proposed the following changes:

⁴⁰ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Post - War Development Programme:
Ref.No.200/5, 1948.11.05.

43.

1. "Immediately a large room for handling and packing of temporary exhibitions should be constructed." This room should have access to the street. "Without this accomodation it will be impossible in the almost immediate future to handle further temporary exhibitions as the basement which is now being used for this purpose will be included in the exhibition space as soon as air conditioning is installed."
2. "An office for the Director, work-room, laboratory, print storeroom, should be constructed within the shortest possible time, which would free the west wing of the gallery for the original purpose for which it was built, i.e. exhibition rooms."
3. A caretaker's flat should be built, containing within its structure packing and storerooms.
4. Lastly he requested a lecture cum exhibition room.

He concludes by saying that they should follow the original scheme suggested by Lutyens. The only part of the "Lutyens' plan which could stand over would be the "hall of statuary in the central part of the building."⁴¹

5.6 EDUCATION

In the Report of the Art and Culture Committee, 26 April 1949, we read that the S.A. Ass. of Art had requested the Gallery in 1947 to give lectures on art to children and adults and "that the Committee should endeavour to persuade the Transvaal Education Department to use the Art Gallery to promote education for school children."⁴²

⁴¹ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Post- War Development Programme:
Ref. No. 200/5 1948.11.05.

⁴² Archives, Ref. Lib.: Report of the Art and Culture Committee
of the University of Pretoria Council, 1949.04.29.

44.

As there was no lecture facilities at the Art Gallery, it was decided that lectures on art be held at the Public Library. "It is considered that only occasional lectures should be given in the Art Gallery until such time as a properly equipped lecture room can be erected."⁴³

In the same report it was recommended:

(a) "that the Town Clerk be authorised to make representations to the Provincial Administrator for the appointment of a guide-lecturer at the Art Gallery.

ADOPTED

(a) That the director of the Art Gallery be authorised to arrange for occasional lectures in the Art Gallery under the auspices of the South African Association of Art or similar cultural bodies.

(b) That Kodachrome miniature slides of old and new masters be acquired, together with a slide projector for this purpose."

This then was the beginnings of an Educational Policy for the Gallery.

4.7 GIFTS

The Report of the Art and Culture Committee, as reflected in the minutes of the Council of 29 July 1947, states that Mr Eduard A. Houthakker was prepared to donate his collection of 17th century

⁴³ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Report of Art and Culture Committee, 1949.04.26.

Dutch paintings which had been on permanent loan to the Gallery under certain conditions, these being:

- (a) That they be displayed together as a group , known as the E.A. Houthakker Collection
- (b) That they be kept in one room
- (c) That at all times they be adequately insured
- (d) That at no time they be de-accessioned
- (e) That a notarial Deed of Donation be entered into with Mr Houthakker.

The Council approved this recommendation and entered into this agreement with Mr Houthakker. These paintings were an invaluable acquisition. In 1950 he was to donate 2 more paintings:

Thos. de Keyser. Portrait of a Lady
Jacob Bakker. Portrait of a Youth ⁴⁴

Another gift was a painting by Roualt: Crucifixion donated by Dr Jack Chaskalson in 1949.⁴⁵

Nine etchings were also donated by a Mr V.Grindley Ferris to be included in the Print Collection.⁴⁶

44 Archives, Ref. Lib.:Minutes of the Council, 1950.11.21. p 1032.

45 Ibid.1949.10.18.

46 Ibid, 1949.10.18.

4.8. LOANS

In May 1948 permission was asked for certain S.A. paintings of outstanding quality to be sent on loan to the Tate Gallery, London, to be exhibited as part of a large exhibition of S.A. Art. This permission was granted. ⁴⁷

Later that same year Mr J.W.R. Dreesman of Amsterdam, Holland offered his collection, known as the Amsterdam Collection to Johannesburg. The pictures were to be exhibited at the Art Gallery. The other artifacts were to be lent to the Africana Museum, i.e. glass, silver, antique clocks, porcelain of the 17 and 18th centuries. This collection was however, only to be sent out in January 1949.

4.9. EXHIBITIONS

Quite a number of big exhibitions were mounted during the first ten years of Hendriks' office. The first was an exhibition of French Masters, on loan from Mr Cassirer.

The Minutes of the Council Meeting 25 Feb. 1947 state that all the South African Art had now been assembled in one room and that it would be a good idea to have a formal opening by the mayor,
"To publicise the collection and to awaken interest in South African Art generally."

⁴⁷ Archives, Ref. Lib.:Minutes of the Council, 1948.05.25.

Then in 1949, Anton Hendriks organised the loan of old French Tapestries from Mobilier National in France. This was a real coup. "The exhibition attracted 30 000 visitors a week."⁴⁸

To end off the year on a festive note, a Christmas Exhibition was mounted, consisting of mainly 16th century art. This included articles such as wall-hangings, kists from different places, paintings, carved figures of the Madonna and Child, etc.

This exhibition was to usher in the new decade as well, as it extended till the Middle of March 1950.

⁴⁸ Sunday times Supplement, 60 years, 1906-1966. 1966.07.10

5. THE YEARS OF MATURITY 1950-1959

The fifties were very good years for the Art Gallery. The Director was a strong man who knew what he wanted and had the financial wherewithal to execute his plans. He also seemed blessed with a Council and Art and Culture Committee who were willing to support the arts, not just nominally but also financially. In fact, as early as 30 July 1946, the Council had agreed in principle to sending the Director of the Art Gallery overseas at intervals of three or four years "in order to build up the Art Gallery Collection in accordance with recommendations of the Art Gallery Selection Committee."⁴⁹ Hendriks went to Europe 3 times during the fifties. (Approximately four months were allowed for such buying visits.)

5.1. COLLECTION POLICY

The Collection policy was reviewed in 1951. The Report of the Art and Culture Committee formulated it as follows:

"The Art Gallery was essentially a gallery of modern European art, although it contained an important collection of European graphic art of earlier times (Howard Pim Collection.)

It goes on to state what an invaluable asset the Houthakker Collection was to the Gallery.

"In view of this, the Art Gallery Committee considers that in the further building up of the Gallery's collections, the general policy with regard to contemporary and 19th Century art should be continued, and suitable works of European art of the period before 1800 should be added to the examples now shown in

⁴⁹ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the Council Meeting, 1951.08.18

the Gallery. Whilst recognising that the Houthakker Collection, which is particularly representative of Dutch 17th Century portrait painting, should be completed by representative examples of Dutch still life, landscape and genre painting, it is considered that the emphasis should not just not be placed on the Netherlands school. Representative examples of English, Flemish, French and Italian paintings of the period before 1800 should be added to the collections when opportunities arise. Such examples should, however, be in harmony with the existing collections.

When the Art Gallery contains a collection of European art before 1800 it will fulfil its function as an institution for the education of students and for the edification of the general public more effectively than has been possible up to now."⁵⁰

Anton Hendriks arrived in Europe at the beginning of October 1951 and stayed till March of the following year. This proved to be a most successful excursion. Not only were good purchases made but he also managed to arrange for the exhibition of Dutch 17th century art to be sent out for the van Riebeeck celebrations in Cape Town later that same year. (1952) He also negotiated with V.E. van Gogh, the owner of most of the paintings of van Gogh which were shown on international exhibitions, to have a possible exhibition in South Africa. (This never came about because of the introduction of Apartheid. One of the earliest casualties of the cultural boycott).

⁵⁰ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Report of the Art and Culture Committee as minuted at the Council Meeting, 1951.08.28.

5.2. THE COLLECTION

The collection was being built up according to the collection policy at quite a rate, both on the home front and on the international front. More money had been made available. The acquisitions during his 1951/1952 visit to Europe were significant. Hendriks, upon his return, reported back the following to the Council concerning his purchases.

"Every object was decided upon

- (1) because it was suitable for inclusion in our collection and filled a gap
- (2) because it was of first class quality and state of preservation
- (3) because it was representative of or even outstanding among the work of the artist concerned."⁵¹

The works purchased on this trip were exhibited at the Gallery and a very comprehensive catalogue accompanied it.

In the introduction to this 1952 catalogue Hendriks refers to the updated collection policy. He also finds it necessary to justify the inclusion of the few avant garde items.

"A few paintings by important representatives of the abstract, non-figurative school have been included. In this way also a painting by Fernand Leger was purchased a few years ago. For many this form of painting will be somewhat difficult to understand or even to accept at all.

⁵¹ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the Council Meeting, 1952.07.22.

If we begin with things we like and seem to understand, we may find that a wider and more impartial understanding will follow."⁵²

The works bought were mainly representative of the French and Dutch Schools:

FRENCH:

Impressionists; Degas, Renoir, Neo-Impressionists; Signac, Expressionists; Marcel Gromaire, Jean Metzinger- the third Cubist.

DUTCH:

17th Century; Esias Bourse, Pieter Claesz

Post-Impressionist; Marius Bauer

(A complete list can be found in the Glossary.)

In 1953 the Gallery had a real windfall. Mr and Mrs Cassirer offered Anton Hendriks 15 lithographs by Toulouse-Lautrec and 8 pieces of Chinese ceramics from the Ming Period at what was really only a nominal price, out of gratitude for the Gallery having exhibited, looked after and insured a large number of their works of art.⁵³

In 1954 Anton Hendriks again went overseas for 4 months with the princely sum of £19 500 pounds to spend. This, in 1991 terms would be more than R1,5 million! (He was reported to have spent £50 000 on artworks for the Gallery since the war. Rand Daily Mail, 1958.10.29.) Just as well he spent the money when he did because in his report back to the Council on 6 December 1955 he states:

⁵² P.A. Hendriks, Introduction to the 1952 Catalogue of the J.A.G.

⁵³ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the council Meeting, 1953.10.27.

"It is to be expected that in the future many countries will lay down even more stringent export regulations, designed to prevent the loss of works of art considered to be of national importance. The prices of works of art have gone up considerably. There are, however, still possibilities, and the list of purchases may be proof of this."⁵⁴

(A complete list of purchases made in South Africa and overseas can be found in the Glossary.)

In 1958 Hendriks undertook another visit to Europe, this time with £20 000 in his pocket to spend on works of art.

6.3. GIFTS AND LOANS

The Gallery also had a lucky run as far as gifts were concerned. As mentioned above Mr Houthakker donated two paintings to add to 17th century Dutch Collections in 1950.

1954 saw the addition of another Edward Roworth to the collection, Old Cape House, bequeathed by the late Mr Richard Goldman.

The firm Sagot le Garre et Cie., of Paris in 1955 also donated the following works to the Gallery:

⁵⁴ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Report back to Public Amenities Committee as minuted at the Ordinary Meeting of the Council, 1955.12.066, p 1032.

A Collection of lithographs by S.Humbert. Quatre Saisons de Paris

A Lithograph by Minaux. Eglise de Village⁵⁵

6.4. EXHIBITIONS

Apart from the regular viewing of new acquisition of the gallery, there were a few outstanding visiting exhibitions from various places.

The first was an exhibition of contemporary French Art in November 1950, sponsored by the French and South African Governments. Names like Braque, Buffet, Chagall, Derain, Dufy, Leger, Manessier, Matisse and Picasso featured. Here to accompany the artworks was Agnes Humbert, Assistant to the Director of the Museum of Modern Art, Paris. Madame Humbert did not only write the introduction to the catalogue accompanying the exhibition, but wrote an article to the Paris journal, Arts, in which she had the following to say:

"When one stays in a town like Johannesburg one is surprised - and consoled - by finding there an islet where one can live the life of the spirit. In Johannesburg this islet is provided by the Municipal Museum, which is called there "The Art Gallery."

She goes on to say, as far as French Art is concerned:

"Today he (Hendriks) conducts his visitors from our Romantics to the Fauves, from George Roualt to Maurice aUtrillo and finishes the tour in front of a Fernand Leger. In sculpture one goes from Rodin to Marcel Gimond."

⁵⁵ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of Council Meeting, 1955.12.06, p 1032.

"Not content with having made of his museum a shrine for plastic art, M. Anton Hendriks transforms the entrance hall, several times a week, in the evenings, into a hall for lectures or concerts. More than four hundred people attend."⁵⁶

It is interesting to note what reaction this exhibition had on certain members of the public. The following letter was written to the Editor of the Rand Daily Mail on ? Nov. 1950:

"Sir, - After viewing the French pictures now exhibited in our Art Gallery, I am astonished that our authorities have allowed them to be shown. It is impossible to regard them as works of art.

"They are really a crude collection of hideous daubs, and I venture to say that the average child of twelve could easily produce better pictures without the slightest training or knowledge of paints."

Another viewer of this exhibition wrote to the Editor of The Star that he too felt that "Some of the examples of modern art which have recently been exhibited in the Union have reduced me to a cold and inarticulate condition." The caption to his letter is, "Modern art is a series of 'dehumanised nightmares.'"

The next was an exhibition of "Three Centuries of South African Art" which had been organized by the Government of the Union of South Africa for the Central African Rhodes Centenary Exhibition in Bulawayo in 1953.

This was followed by an exhibition of German Graphic Art XV-XVI Centuries.

⁵⁶ A.Humbert, The Municipal Museum of Johannesburg, Arts, 1955.05.05. (English translation) the J.A.G.)

In April 1953 there was the Contemporary Belgian painting exhibition arranged by the Ministry of Public Education of Belgium. This was followed by the Edvard Munch exhibition. This exhibition of woodcuts, etchings and lithographs by the great Norwegian artist was sent here by Mr Johan Langaard, Director of the Oslo Kummunes Kunstsamlinger.

Then came German Graphic Art (1900-1955), followed by the First Quadrennial Exhibition of South African Art, 1956.

A very interesting exhibition of Rembrandt Etchings on loan from the Prentekabinet of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, was held at the National Gallery, Cape Town, to mark the 350th birth of this great painter in 1956. These works were to be viewed together with the Rembrandt etchings of the J.A.G. and both Hendriks and J.Q. van Regteren Altena (Prentekabinet) wrote the introduciton to the catalogue. After Cape Town, this exhibition was scheduled for viewing in Johannesburg in February and March 1957.

There were three subsequent exhibitions later the same year: an exhibition of graphic art, comprising etchings, woodcuts and lithographs which the Gallery had acquired in recent years, including more than 20 Daumier prints, 9 Picassos and 11 Villons.

This exhibition was of a chronological nature, showing the development of modern graphic art since the midle of the 19th century.⁵⁷

An editorial in Die Vadeland, Thursday 29 August 1957 states:

"Watter museums, behalwe die rykstes in Europa en Amerika, kan vandag nog skilderye met beroemde name soos Eugene Delacroix, Raoul Dufy, Eduard Manet, Camille Pissarro en Peirre Renoir aanskaf?"

57 Rand Daily Mail, 1957.09.06. French Impressionist Art
H.E. Winder.

The second exhibition in 1957, comprised works by South-West African (Namibian) artists.

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly the Henry Moore exhibition which had been on view in Cape Town for the Van Riebeeck Festival in 1952. It had subsequently toured the Commonwealth countries and was on its way back to Britain from New Zealand. The British Council conceded to the request to have the exhibition break its journey and brought to Johannesburg. This exhibition, consisting of 25 pieces of sculpture, 23 drawings, and 2 panels, drew a crowd of 21 528 people.

The Gallery had been emptied for this exhibition to ensure that the large works could be viewed in as near perfect conditions. The Art Critic of The Star writes very appropriately:

More impressive still would it be to see such figures in the silence of a Karoo landscape, for the work of Henry Moore seems to belong to the elements and to the beginning of time and the end."⁵⁸

In July 1958 Mr Frans Pernegger, of the Austrian Legation opened an exhibition of Austrian art with names like Oskar Kokoschka, Klimt, Egon Schiele etc.

At the end of 1958 Hendriks exhibited the new acquisitions he had bought in Europe earlier the same year.

1959 saw an Exhibition of Graphic Art. It comprised the best prints (etchings, engravings, woodcuts and lithographs) from the Gallery and gave a survey of graphic art from the Renaissance to the end of the fifties.

⁵⁸ The Star, 57.01.9. Effect of Henry Moore sculpture is deeply impressive. By the Art Critic. ✓

To end off the decade there was a grand exhibition of Tapestries from Mobilier National and the Gobelin Museum in Paris. This exhibition ran from 7 December till 17 January 1960.

5.5. ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Mrs Lorimer, who had filled the post of Senior Assistant, resigned on 24 May 1956.

Up till then the Gallery had been run by Anton Hendriks, assisted by Mrs Lorrimer and a secretary.

It was during this period that Hendriks was able to introduce some form of catalogueing. Mrs Lorrimer was set the task of setting the records in order. The Red Ledger was introduced, the first documentation of the collection since its founding in the days of Hugh Lane. The task was a monstrous one: the Aegean Sables were nothing in comparison with what she had to do. The first accession cards were also filled in by her. (This was introduced in 1952.) With her resignation it was decided to change the structure of the curatorial staff.

The Minutes of the the Council Meeting of 31 July 1956 (645) recommended:

- (a) That the position of Senior Assistant be abolished and that in its stead the position of Secretarial Assistant be created. The qualifications required being a Matriculation certificate and appropriate experience.
- (b) That the position of Professional Assistant be created. The requirements being a B.A. degree in Fine Arts or similar qualifications.

That anyone applied for the job is a wonder for the description runs as follows:

"Professional Assistant.

The technical work of dealing with the contents of the Gallery, the handling and arranging of paintings, sculpture, and specially the graphic collection, textiles, ceramics and furniture exhibits, and their maintenance, the mounting of drawings and Prints, their labelling, lecturing to visiting schools and clubs has increased to such an extent in recent years that it can no longer be considered a part-time occupation for an untrained assistant."⁵⁹

It goes on to say:

"In the near future all paintings have to be taken out of their frames and dealt with suitably for surface deterioration due to railway smoke, the publishing of the general catalogue, for which there is an insistent urgent demand, should not be longer delayed and the print collection should be further professionally labelled and described."

The description of the task seems as unwieldy as the sentence structure!

At this point it is perhaps appropriate to note that the Art and Culture Committee of the Council had become the Health and Public Amenities Committee in 1955. Was the Art Gallery henceforth to be an Amenity?

⁵⁹ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the City Council.
1956.07.31. (645)

5.6. FIRST PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANT

Who was this first professional assistant, Nel Erasmus?

Petronella Margaretha Erasmus had been born in Bethal in 1928. In 1950 she gained the degree B.A. Fine Arts from the University of the Witwatersrand. At the end of 1951 she was awarded a National Teachers' Certificate from the Witwatersrand Technical College. In 1952 she studied privately under Gina Berndtson, while teaching at the Johannesburg High School for Girls. The following 3 years she spent at the Sorbonne, Paris, under Soureau, at the Academie Ranson, under Selim, Gustave Singier and Fiorine. She also enrolled as a Edudiante Libre at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Upon her return to South Africa she joined the staff of the Gallery.

6. THE AGE OF AQUARIUS 1960-1970

The Sixties brought with it a type of cultural revolution.

As far as the art scene was concerned, the emphasis had shifted from Paris to New York. This had happened as a result of the emigration of top artists from their homes in Europe just before, during and directly after the 2nd World War. What they found there was very different to what they had left behind. America was a polyglot of people, from varying cultural backgrounds, forming a new nation. The American Dream was still alive. It was the decade of the young with their unbridled optimism. This post-war generation had not suffered the hardships of their parents; they had only experienced the welfare of technological advancement which had thrused into their laps by their elders to compensate for the deprivations they had suffered. Rebelling against this materialism, the young were going to reform the world. They were the Flower Children, the anti-Vietnam Campaigners, the protagonists for Human Rights. They had an idol in John F. Kennedy, who by his assassination became a symbol of "What could have been."

Even Anton Hendriks had said in the fifties:

"If art is to live, we (the public) need understanding of our own time, such as we get through the artists.

The young people like it and that is to-day's recommendation. in the past the young were not considered to have the experience, wisdom or taste; to-day the best recommendation from countries, such as America, was that the young like it."⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Rand Daily Mail, 1951.4.13. Hendriks give Talk on French art Exhibition.

In this climate, with its conscious effort to democratize society, to have equal opportunities for men and women, to make art accessible to everyone, various new art forms developed. The dividing line between Art and the Everyday existence, incorporating the trivial and the industrial world, was being erased.

Art had to have a ready appeal, on the one hand (Pop Art). On the other hand, it demanded that the viewer should apply his own interpretation to what he saw. (Concept Art).

This "New Age" was also being experienced by the custodians of our art treasures. There was to be a new, wonderful gallery built in Parktown; one that would be a cultural centre in the true sense of the word. Anton Hendriks was due to retire and the reins to be given into the able hands of a young woman. A woman in an executive position!

6.1. DIRECTOR

Anton Hendriks was due to retire in 1962, but despite advertising here and overseas it was impossible to find someone suitable. He thus conceded to remain on till 16 July 1964.

It was undoubtedly difficult to find someone to measure up to a man who had made an impact on the art museum world here and abroad. The Star (1962.01.12.), in the sub-leader states:

"If the Joubert Park Art Gallery is known throughout the world and if the works displayed in it have greatly increased in monetary value during the last few years it is mainly due to the taste and eclecticism of its present director and to his shrewdness in the course of many purchasing missions abroad.

When the time came to review the situation, the City Fathers thought his Professional Assistant could prove a worthy candidate.

In the Town Clerk's report to the Council, May 26 1964, he recommended that Nel Erasmus be appointed Senior Professional Officer, a new post, and that Anton Hendriks be asked to assist in a consultative capacity for 2 more years.

The report furthermore states that:

"Miss Erasmus, before coming to the Gallery, had considerable training and experience both in South Africa and overseas preparing her for the work in an art museum. In her 7 years at the Art Gallery she has become proficient in professional art museum work in all its various aspects. Miss Erasmus knows the art world of South Africa, the museums and the dealers, the art critics, the interested public and the artists themselves, and also knows the contacts that the present director has made with institutions and the trade overseas."⁶¹

This post was later upgraded to Acting Director, then to Curator, in 1966, and finally to Director in 1972.

6.2. NEW ART GALLERY

Anton Hendriks had long been unhappy about the Art Gallery. It was hopelessly inadequate as far as exhibition space was concerned, the artworks were being polluted by its proximity to the railway lines that passed just in front, the lighting was poor. Furthermore the vibrations of the trains passing were felt throughout the building. The Gallery also did not fulfil the functions of a modern art gallery.

⁶¹ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Report of the Town Clerk as minuted at the Ordinary Meeting of the Council, 1964.05.26. (1109).

"We need something warmer - the building should be subservient to the collection. The architect of the present gallery thought of the building first and the pictures afterwards. The lighting for the oils should be natural. Oils live through changes of light. Under perpetually artificial light they are paralysed. The display should have more intimate relations with the public. There should be lecture and exhibition rooms, places for practical work and for meetings of art societies, but not in the gallery itself."⁶²

When interviewed on June 4, 1962, Hendriks emphasized the urgency of providing a new building:

"Our activities in this building are being hampered by a lack of space. We do not have adequate workrooms, laboratories or library and we need more room to put up our special collections which are now being stored.

The press clamoured:

"We need a bigger and more modern building. This one is attractive but not suitable from a museological point of view.

To enlarge and renovate this building would be possible, but probably more costly than building a new one. The lighting is very bad and it would be much more realistic to have a new gallery which would be adequate for the next 100 years or so."⁶³

The Council accepted their responsibility to do something about the situation. A new gallery was on the cards. Its "history" reads as follows:

⁶² Rand Daily Mail, 1964.05.16. Strong Views on New Art Gallery. Article by Leah Bach. (Quoted portion by Anton Hendriks.)

⁶³ The Star, 1962.06.04. New director for Rand art gallery not yet found. By Staff Reporter.

February, 1959: The Council agrees to build a new gallery incorporated in the new Civic Centre.

November, 1960: The Council decides to place the new gallery at the Zoo, near the war memorial.

September, 1963: A viewsite on the Parktown ridge is thought to be more appropriate as the view would be so magnificent.

April, 1964: The viewsite had been bought and the completion date set for the end of 1969.

January, 1966: Change of plan: the Pieter Roos Park ground would be more suitable. 64

This sight was bought by the Council and it was recommended by the Management Committee that as soon as the four stands had been acquired, portions of Girton and Wellington Roads would be closed and the properties consolidated.

6.3. THE COLLECTION

Anton Hendriks went to Europe on another excursion in 1959 but it was only in 1960 that the Public Amenities Committee reported the following on the purchases made:

"A number of important paintings and sculptures, and a collection of graphic works of art were purchased in England, Holland, Belgium and France.

As expected, it was not possible to continue building up the modern part of the Art Gallery collection because the prices, especially of the Impressionist and the Post-Impressionist School, have in recent years increased so much that for a single outstanding example of this kind the funds available would not have been sufficient. Nevertheless a few outstanding modern paintings and a small number of modern sculptures were purchased. A number of the most important purchases belong to earlier periods, mainly 19th century Dutch and 18th century French and English Schools.

64 The Star, 1966.01.20. Gallery site may have to be changed.

65.

These earlier paintings fill important gaps in the Gallery collections, and show the development of European painting over the last three centuries. Prices for this type of painting are bound to increase considerably."

"Whereas modern works of art of first-class quality have become expensive and difficult to find, paintings of the earlier periods are not so very rare. More often than not, however, the older paintings are not suitable as museum exhibits because of their poor state of preservation. Earlier paintings in excellent state of preservation are not very abundant and this is strongly reflected in the prices paid for them.

"The Gallery's print collection will be enriched by a collection of graphic works of art purchased from various sources. A number of these were added to the collection to show certain phases in the development of the graphic arts over the last four centuries and cover the period in between the Howard Pim collection and the extensive collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist etchings and lithographs purchased in recent years, which now have become so much more difficult to obtain."⁶⁵

Anton Hendriks went to Europe again in 1963. He had R28,000 to spend and he spent it well. He bought more than 100 works, mostly graphics, lithographs, etchings and aquatints. Artists whose works were included were, Rousseau, Picasso, Goya, Dufy and Toulouse - Lautrec. He also acquired a number of Japanese Prints. Their inclusion in the collection was particularly valuable as they had had such an influence on the Impressionists and especially on the posters done by Toulouse-Lautrec, Stienlein and Bonnard. His "coup"

⁶⁵ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Report of the Public Amenities Committee to the Council, 1960.03.29.

this time, however, was the seven-foot bronze statue "Sappho" by Antoine Bourdelle and 3 outstanding pieces of 11 and 12th century Indian sculpture. ⁶⁶

Later the same year Anton Hendriks was to say the following about the coloured lithographs by Toulouse-Lautrec in the Gallery's collection:

"They are world famous and everybody desires them and we could not, in fact, have a better collection." ⁶⁷

The attitude of the Council, however, had changed in the sixties: Professor Nikolaus Pevsner, one of the most prominent historians in Britain at the time had the following to say in 1961:

"If a gallery is to count, it should have at the very least R40 000 to spend every year.

The Council's annual grant of R10 000 to Johannesburg was very poor." ⁶⁸

Prof. Pevsner, a former Professor of Fine Arts at the Slade and at Cambridge quoted the Melbourne Gallery in Australia and the Sao Paulo Gallery in Brazil who through private enterprise were building up the most wonderful collections. These Governments encouraged the arts by allowing tax deductions where works of art were bequeathed to galleries. Why is it that we, who had had such a head-start were falling behind?

(The list of works acquired by Hendriks in the sixties can be found in Appendix 2.)

⁶⁶ Rand Daily Mail, 1963.05.14. R28,000 spent on works of art for city.

⁶⁷ The Star, 1963.06.24. Stoep Talk. Johannesburg has rare and wonderful Lautrechs.

⁶⁸ Rand Daily Mail, 1961.8.23. Little spent on art. Professor hits at mean public and Council.

6.4. GIFTS AND LOANS

A very wide-awake Town Clerk heard about the sum of £2,000 which had been earmarked in the will of a certain Mrs Minna London for some deserving cause in South Africa. He immediately wrote to the Trustees of the estate of the said Mrs London and suggested the money be given to the Johannesburg Art Gallery. He pointed out that an amenity such as the Art Gallery did not only benefit the community it served at that time but also future generations. He was successful. At the discretion of the Director another artwork could be acquired, inscribed "Mrs Minna London Bequest."

Some other artworks trickled in during the course of the decade:
1962 Interior Maria Blanchard by Maud Sumner offered by Mrs E. Kandinsky⁶⁹

1965 Gift of 17 Etchings by Councillor and Mrs Keith Fleming
(See glossary for complete list of works.)

1967 A Sea Pool (watercolour) by E.L M. King
offered by Mrs Ruth Everard⁷⁰

1968 21 Ink Drawings by Florence Zerffi
donated by the Central Acceptance Bank of Industry, Jbg.
Painting by Milich donated by his wife.

Landscape by Hughes Stanton, gift of Viney estate.

1969 Portrait of the Artist by Maud Sumner
bequeathed by late Henry Lidchi in his will.

Bust of William Plomer by Frances Baruch. donor anonymous.

69 Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the Council,
1962.12.04. (2648).

70 Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the Council, 1967. (I) p 1144.

6.5. CATALOGUE

In 1968 a list of exhibits in the collection was published. In the foreword, the Curator, as was Nel Erasmus' title at the time, stated that:

"This inventory with its guide plan is no substitute for a catalogue."

She goes on to say that:

"This list is intended to assist the visitor's memory and be a basic reference to, not only the exhibited works, but also to those that are in the collections but which cannot be exhibited for various reasons."

The European paintings were revalued by Sotheby and Company, London in 1969. As the result of astute buying, the Gallery had accrued a very fine collection.

7.6. EXHIBITIONS

During the sixties there were a number of important exhibitions that were very important. In total there were about thirty: quite a haul for a decade.

Let it suffice to highlight a few:

The Christmas Exhibition of 1961 comprised about 50 graphic works of 16 and 17th century masters; 17 Rembrandt works, mainly from the Howard Pim collection, works by Ferdinand Bol, Jan Lievens, Hendrik Goudt. The German graphics were represented by Dürer, Goltzius and Beham. An editorial in *Dagbreek en Sondagnuus* of 24 December had the following to say about this exhibition:

"Wanneer 'n mens afskeid van hierdie tentoonstelling neem - en dis nie maklik nie - is jy byna oorstelp van bewondering vir die toegewydheid van die kunstenaars, hul integriteit en eindelose geduld." ⁷¹

In September 1962 the exhibition of Architectural drawings for the new Civic Centre was opened at the Art Gallery. The drawings for the new Art Gallery were sadly lacking!

As always there were those who found the current exhibitions unacceptable. About the exhibition of contemporary French Art, on loan from France in June, 1963, Die Vaderland had a scathing editorial. The caption read:

"Dis net te vreeslik waarmee mense alles skilder."

In May 1964 the Gallery launched an exhibition of lithographs by Daumier. This was followed by the excellent exhibition of Belgian Contemporary Art which included a cross-section of different styles: realism, surrealism, non-figurative art. "Solitude", by Paul Delvaux, was perhaps the most important work exhibited.

Another Graphics Exhibition was to follow in October 1964. It comprised 60 works from the Howard Pim Bequest. It was a very welcome Christmas treat that the public were able to view some of the Pim collection again. It ran till January.

The third Quadrennial Exhibition also took place in 1964, as well as the exhibition of the Transvaal Academy. This exhibition ran concurrently with the Print Exhibition.

⁷¹ Dagbreek en Sondagnuus, 1961.12.24. Uitstalling van Grafiese Kuns deur Laurens van Zwaan.

1965 saw 2 exhibitions of graphic art: one in the middle of the year and one in October. The latter featured the works of late 19th, early 20th century French artists. Especially interesting was the inclusion of the complete series which Toulouse-Lautrec made for a a publication called "Elle". Only 100 signed and numbered copies were made. The Gallery owns a complete signed set of these. (11 in all.)

Johannesburg was 80 years old in 1966. For this birthday celebration much was planned.

The new year started off with a very important exhibition of the work of the Flemish artist, Constant Permeke. He is called by Matthys Bokhorst, in his introduction to the catalogue, "one of Belgium's greatest 20th century artists, one of the lonely peaks in the landscape of European Expressionism." ⁷²

It is interesting to note what Mr J.F.Oberholzer, M.P.C., chairman of the Works and Traffic committee had to say about Permeke's "Standing Nude" which the Gallery, in fact was buying:

"If I have to take home that work and say I paid R29 for it, it would be grounds for a divorce." ⁷³

In May of this same year it was decided that the Gallery could not, under present conditions accomodate temporary exhibitions. That meant that the South Transvaal Academy which had been guests at the Gallery could no longer be accomodated. Only exhibitions of unique international importance would be accepted. This was the result of lack of space and shortage of staff; space being the prime factor.

⁷² Matthys Bokhorst, Foreword to the catalogue Constant Permeke.

⁷³ Rand Daily Mail, 1966.04.28. Jo'burg gallery attacked:
"Nothing to stir."

Also in May the Gallery exhibited the Japanese Prints Anton Hendriks had bought on his last trip to Europe. These included the 18th century woodcuts, the golden age of woodcuts in Japan. They were arranged in sequence to enable the viewer to follow the line of development of the art.

September saw two major exhibitions (accompanied by two beautiful catalogues); the exhibition of French Graphic Art: Delacroix to Picasso, compiled by Matthys Bokhorst from the Gallery's own collection, and an exhibition of the work of Adolph Jentsch. The Jentsch exhibition was accompanied by a little book written by Otto Schröder in German, and Anton Hendriks in Afrikaans and English. There were 44 watercolours and 5 oils on view. Another accolade; the Gallery was the first in South Africa to have bought artworks by Jentsch.

The Gallery also acquired, after protracted negotiations, a birthday gift in the form of two portraits, one of Lady Phillips, and the other of Edie, her daughter, painted by Mancini. It was lucky for the Gallery that Thelma Gutsche, in her research, stumbled upon them in the basement of the National Gallery in Cape Town.

The Christmas exhibition this year was, once again, graphic in nature, showing works of French artists of the mid 19th to early 20th centuries.

The Capetonians, also benefited from the Gallery's collection that Christmas. The National Gallery exhibited graphic works of the late 19th, early 20th French masters, such as Bonnard, Renoir, Vuillard and Picasso.

It had been the policy of the Gallery to have 4 or 5 graphic exhibitions each year so that the public could become acquainted with these treasures.

The next exhibition of note was the one of 20th century etchings. It was the first time that such a large selection of European modern graphics, of the period 1930 onwards, were exhibited together in the Gallery. ⁷⁴

The highlight of that year was without any doubt the exhibition of work by Le Corbusier, which took place in June. Le Corbusier was a very eclectic man and this is evident from the artworks on show. These include tapestries, lithographs, aquatints, engravings, a maquette of "the Open Hand". The exhibition was accompanied by lectures and films about Corbusier.

The last Academy exhibition was held that October. It was closely followed by 2 exciting exhibitions. The first one was an exhibition of french tapestries, and the second one showed 70 artworks by Fritz Krampe, an animal painter.

The Ruth Prowse Memorial exhibition also visited the Gallery that year.

⁷⁴ Die Beeld, 1967.04.09.

The last year of the decade was a very full one. Apart from the 5-yearly exhibition of the S.A. Association of Arts, there was a Contemporary British exhibition, and the Hugo Naude and the Maggie Laubser retrospective exhibitions. To end off the year there was a tercentenary exhibition to commemorate the death of Rembrandt on the 4th October.

6.7 SUMMARY

The sixties were not always plain sailing for Nel Erasmus. She had to cope under difficult circumstances: her staff was small and her exhibition and storage space still smaller. It was a constant juggling feat to perform. A new exhibition caused a major upheaval. To crown it all there was often criticism that the South African art visible on the walls was not representative enough. What people neglected to consider was that the exhibition space was limited. Furthermore, that the Johannesburg Art Gallery was not an art museum which set out to collect South African art per se. Anton Hendriks did not want to duplicate what the Pretoria Art gallery had set out to do. He did collect South African artworks but his criteria was always excellence. In fact, in 1966 there were 62 South African works on display, against 59 British, 34 Dutch and 19 modern European.

At the end of the sixties Nel Erasmus was to visit the most prominent galleries in America, Britain and Europe on a fact-finding architectural mission: operation new art gallery had been launched. She was accompanied by Mr. A Buchanan-Smith, the chief architect of the City Council. She also had the opportunity to attend the second symposium on Museum Architecture arranged by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in Mexico City.

Upon her return she compiled two very comprehensive reports. Excitement was in the air: Johannesburg would soon have a new art gallery.

7. THE SEVENTIES

1970-1977

The seventies started off optimistically. Plans were being drawn up for the Gallery of all galleries. Eventually after a long debate the City Fathers conceded that a woman can become the Director of an Art Gallery, in title as well as function. There definitely seemed to be movement. To crown it all, the Gallery was to have its Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

7.1 THE FRIENDS

Thelma Gutsche, the doyenne of the arts and the biographer of Florence Phillips approached Nel Erasmus for permission to found an association of "Friends", of the Gallery, a concept that had been mentioned several times since the inception of the Gallery, but had not had the driving force to implement it. She was fortunate in having very able people to assist her in getting the "Friends of the Johannesburg Art Gallery" off the ground.

As early as 1919 the subject of "Friends" had been raised. Money had been left over from the Neumann Bequest, after the artworks had been bought. "It had been decided to devote this sum, left out of that given by the late Sir Sigismund Neumann, Bart., to form the nucleus of an Endowment Fund, to be modelled on the lines of "Les Amis du Louvre" to which small sums will be subscribed by friends and well-wishers of Art, in South Africa. This fund will be used for the purchase of Works of Art by South African Artists, for the Gallery, the selection to lie with a small Committee to be appointed for that purpose, in South Africa. It is hoped by this means to stimulate artistic efforts in all directions."

The idea of forming a society of Friends was again raised during the time of Anton Hendriks, but he was not enamoured as he said the Gallery had neither the facilities nor the staff to cope. ⁷⁵

Nel, herself, states that she was initially not that enamoured of the idea as she had been warned by the American galleries that "Friends" did not always turn out to be friends. However, it did not take her long to be convinced that these were going to be "Friends" with a difference: they would give maximum support with minimum interference. It would be difficult to overestimate the contribution of "The Friends" to the Gallery.

Initially they were not called "The Friends", as they grew out of the Jubilee Fund Committee which was presided over by Esme Berman, in the Chair, Thelma Gutsche, Vice, and Mr Alf Widman, representing the Council. It was a very strong committee, being blessed by people like Mrs Hettie Finger, who suggested that a fitting tribute would be an exhibition of works by living Johannesburg artists of the time. She, also found the sponsors for an exquisite prestige catalogue to this exhibition.

"The Friends" were instrumental in procuring, or helping to procure, several artworks which the Gallery with its limited budget from the Council, would not have been able to buy. But they did much more: they put the Gallery on the map. As a result of their involvement, especially on the social front, the public were being drawn into the Gallery. Brochures were printed and sent out to members of the public, inviting them to become members. These brochures were made available in public places like libraries.

⁷⁵ The Star, 1961.08.17. Editorial, "This is how it should look."

It is unfortunate that this dissertation does not allow for the space to do justice to their input.

7.2. DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

In 1971 the Gallery was 60 years old. This called for very special celebrations. The first was the opening of the Sculpture Garden, by the Mayor, Mr Alf Widman, on May 26, 1971. What he said at that opening has validity for us in the nineties. Let it suffice to quote a few examples.

When speaking of the real function of an Art Gallery he says:

"It must serve as a link between the past and the future. And above all it must have growth."

Expanding on this, he goes on in Afrikaans:

"Ons beywer ons vir die groei van hierdie museum, ten einde van die beste kunswerke uit die hedendaagse wêreldkultuur-sentra aan die publiek van Johannesburg en Suid-Afrika toeganklik te maak. Langs hierdie weg sal die wedersydse bevrugting wat nodig is vir enige kultuur-groei kan plaasvind.

So 'n bevrugting, tussen ons eie skeppingswerk en die van ander lande, kan net lei tot die bestendiging van die identiteit van Suid-Afrika se eie skeppingskrag. Dit sal Suid-Afrika verder identifiseer met strominge in die wêreldkultuur en terselfdertyd die volk se eie individuele kunsuitdrukking en sensitiwiteit verskerp en bevestig."

"But it is implicit in all growth that we must re-shape our thinking; re-constitute our endeavours to match the needs of the present day self-fulfillment. Whether it be the professional Artist or the potential, promising Artist seeking a stimulus to creative expression: whether it be Mr and Mrs Johannesburg or whether it be the younger citizen seeking enjoyment of its Art Museum: the Art Museum now needs a re-statement of its purpose. Let us update - or better still re-interpret the 1910 purpose."

Various evenings, slide shows and talks were also arranged, apart from the regular chamber concerts. The highlight of the celebrations were, without doubt, the opening of the Bonnard exhibition: a joint venture of the gallery staff and the Friends. The opening took the form of a soiree, with 600 guests circulating. A very large marquee had been erected. Refreshments were served to French music. It was a Gala evening to be remembered.

7.3. EDUCATION

7.3.1. Guides

In 1975, owing to the increase in Curatorial Staff to three, Nel Erasmus was able to embark on a training scheme for volunteer guides, mainly to conduct school children and young people through the Gallery. She had been introduced to the idea by seeing the work done by the "dosents" in the American art galleries. What finer tribute could the guides have had than the following which appeared in the Rand Daily Mail on Thursday, October 2 1975.:

"The parties of children arrive, looking as though they have been press-ganged into the whole thing. By the time they leave they are begging to come again."

This service was extended to include the adult public. This took the form of lunch-hour lectures which were offered for 6 weeks starting in February 1976. Each week another aspect of the Gallery's collection was to be covered.⁷⁶

Miss Erasmus started the training of the guides herself but later, owing to pressure of work, handed this over to Mrs Pat Senior.

7.3.2. Educational Leaflets

Miss Erasmus made educational leaflets available to the public and students. These were researched and prepared by the curatorial staff. They served as "guides" to permanent, as well as temporary exhibitions. The Minutes of the Council state that between 2,000 and 25,000 leaflets were being taken by visitors per month. The Gallery was certainly buzzing.⁷⁷

7.4. RESTORATION

The Minutes of the Council Meeting of 25 July 1978 records the visit of the British painting restoration expert, Prof. S. Rees Jones to the Gallery and the Director's intention to visit the Birmingham Restoration Centre as SAMA had recommended the establishment of such a service both in the Cape and in the Transvaal.

⁷⁶ Die Beeld, George Boshoff, Museum-gidse, 1976.01.31.

⁷⁷ Archives, Ref. Lib.: Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council, 1977.05.25.

7.5. THE COLLECTION

The collection was being built up at a steady pace, as funds were available. Two acquisitions, however, caused more than a stir. The first one was the buying of Picasso's Tete D'Harlequin, and the second was the acquisition of Helen Frankenthaler's abstract painting, Since Then. Many editorials were devoted to these two works of art: the public expressed themselves vociferously. The correspondence in the press was prolific. Thelma Gutsche, on behalf of The Friends, who put up most of the money, took the criticism in her stride, pointing out that "When the Johannesburg Art Gallery was founded they (the public) thought the impressionists far worse than we think the Picasso." 78

Die Transvaler in its criticism of the public taste said:

"Die Bybelse verwarring om die twee werke, Tete d'Harlequin en Kennis van die Aand (Andre Brink), het nog duideliker as ooit bewys dat ons op kunsgebied nog nie ons kinderskoene ontgroeï het nie." 79

When one considers that the budget for the Gallery was cut back to R10,000 for 1977 and that one of its Council members had said:

"Dit was 'in landsbelang' want beeldende kuns is 'n bykomstige weelde artikel", it is clear that the Gallery was not being supported by the City Fathers.

78 Rand Daily Mail, 1974.02.19. P. Barry, The woman behind that Picasso.

79 Die Transvaler, 1974.04.07. Nico van Rensburg, Kuns beeld die onsigbare uit.

80.

It is ironic that at the same time the Civic Centre's new wing cost more than R7,5 million (the chandelier in the Council Chamber alone costing R30,000) and every new programme for the music fountains at Wemmerpan R10,000!

Luckily there were those crying in the wilderness who pointed out:

"Dis juis in tye van materiële en geestelike onsekerheid soos nou dat die mens hom instinktief wend tot die kunste.

Die museum wat in 1915 geopen is, is inderdaad begin omdat die Johannesburgers na 'n stryd van oorlog en wanhoop die innerlike honger gevoel het vir die sigbare simbole van die dinge wat grondliggend aan die mens se bestaan, onveranderlik en seker is."⁸⁰

The good that came from both these new works was that the Gallery was visited by people who would never had set their feet there, purely out of inquisitiveness to see what the "scandal" was about.

7.6. EXHIBITIONS

Many exhibitions were to be viewed in the Gallery in the seventies.

The decade started off with exhibitions of British Water-colours and Drawings lent by a "recent British settler". This was followed by an exhibition of the work of Jean Welz, compiled by Matthys Bokhorst in Cape Town.

⁸⁰ p.Pieterse, Die beurs of die siel? Beeld. 1976.07.17.

81.

The artworks that were sent to the Sao Paulo Biennale were also on view here in 1971: Nel Erasmus had been the Commissioner for the Biennale. The artists represented were: Judith Mason, John Muafangejo, Herman van Nazareth, Cecil Skotnes and Stanley Pinker.

Also in 1971 the Johannesburg public was treated to the works of Oskar Kokoschka. This exhibition was a joint effort of Marlborough Graphics, London, the Fine Arts Department of the University of Stellenbosch and the South African National Gallery, Cape Town.

For the first time in its history the Gallery in 1972 mounted an exhibition of contemporary tapestries designed solely by South African artists: 32 pieces were exhibited, with names like Bettie Cilliers-Barnard, Cecily Sash, Cecil Skotnes, Eduardo Villa, Christo Coetzee.

The entries for the Venice Biennale, 1972, were also shown here under the title RSA Exhibition. This time names like Neels Coetzee, Ernst de Jong, Ezram Legge, Leonard Matsoso, Andrew Verster appear.

The Christmas Exhibition was also all South African, showing new acquisitions which had never before been shown together: names like Lionel Abrams, Walter Battiss, Karen Jarosynski, Louis Maqhubela, Hugo Naude, Florence Zerffi and many others.

An exhibition of Henry Moore's etchings and sculptures of the "Elephant Skull" series had a long visit here in 1973; from February through to May. The "Pointed Torso" and accompanying "Architectural

82.

Projection" were both included in this series. Many a visitor has found it difficult to see the connection of these two works with the elephant skulls given to Moore by Julian and Juliette Huxley. In this connection Moore had the following to say:

"For me a work of art must have a vitality of its own. I do not mean a reflection of the vitality of life, of movement, physical action, dancing figures and so on, but that a work can have in it a pent-up energy, an intense life of its own, independent of the object it may represent." ⁸¹

Later that year there was an exhibition of the work of Pieter Wenning, as well an exhibition of contemporary French art, sponsored by the Association Francaise D'Action Artistique.

The Christmas Exhibition of 1973 was one of Gothic Sculpture and Religious Prints from the Gallery's own Print Cabinet and illustrated four centuries of printmaking, both in relief and intaglio; Rembrandt and Dürer dominating the exhibition.

Then in 1974 there was another Japanese Print exhibition, ten years after the previous one. An exhibition of Goya etchings, sponsored by the Spanish Government, followed in September of the same year. Mary Johnson wrote in the Rand Daily Mail of 20 September:

"On the list of things to do this month the absolute must is a visit to the Johannesburg Art Gallery to see the exhibition of etchings by Goya." At a time when it was already difficult to see art from abroad, this was real treat.

⁸¹ Natalie Knight, A look into the mind of a genius, The Star, 1973.02.28

Another treat was the exhibition of Three centuries of French Painting (Francois I - Napoleon I). In her foreword to the catalogue, Nel Erasmus thanked the Wildenstein Foundation for their generosity in making this exhibition possible. She also paid tribute to The Friends. She wrote:

"The Bonnard collection motivated the formation of The Friends of the Johannesburg Art Gallery. I am convinced that this exhibition will confirm the positive appreciation and incentive generated by the previous one and will perceptibly encourage the aims of The Friends of the Johannesburg Art Gallery." ⁸²

December brought a tribute to Moses Kottler, who was celebrating his 82nd birthday. Sixty examples of his work graced the Gallery during the festive season.

In 1975 the Association d'Action Artistique organised another exhibition of contemporary French Tapestries. Later that year there was also another graphic Exhibition, from the Gallery's own Print Cabinet; Dürer to Dine.

To mark the centenary of Sir Hugh Lane's birth, paintings and photographs devoted to him were exhibited.

The Christmas exhibition of 1975 was devoted to the French sculptor, Emile Bourdelle, a pupil and friend of Rodin. The artworks on show consisted of 39 pieces of sculpture and 15 sketches. The collection was presented and sponsored by the Rembrandt Van Rijn Foundation.

82 Nel Erasmus, Foreword to the catalogue. Three centuries of French Painting, Francois I - Napoleon I

Modern South African art had never had a permanent exhibition venue. In January 1976 this was achieved as the result of clearing out a small storage room and making it habitable for 38 contemporary works of art. As the space was so confined the intention was to change the exhibition from time to time. Initially the following artists were represented:

Lionel Abrams, Armando Baldinelli, Walter Battiss, Noel Bisseker, Wim Blom, Norman Catherine, Christo Coetzee, Patrick O'Connor, Karin Jaroszynska, Claude van Lingen, Judith Mason, Louis Maqhubela, Douglas Portway, Hans Potgieter and Geoffrey Armstrong. ⁸³

1976 was the 90th birthday of Johannesburg. The Friends had been trying to raise a large sum of money to buy a piece of modern sculpture for the sculpture court. As there was a shortfall, the Management Committee decided to add the money paid out after the theft of the Henry Moore, Woman seated on a bench, provided it was spent on a statue of similar merit.⁸⁴ The piece of modern sculpture that replaced it was Table Piece by Anthony Caro.

The last large artwork acquired during Nel Erasmus' term of office was titled Empress Love 5 by the American abstract painter, Jules Olitski. The generosity of the Friends had made this possible.

It is interesting that this avant garde work elicited more admiration than criticism from the uninformed public.

Nel Erasmus had come to end of her term of office. She had served the Gallery for 20 years and felt she wished to devote all her time to her own art.

⁸³ S.A. Jewish Times, 1976.02.27, South African Room at the Art Gallery

⁸⁴ David Breier, City's birthday gift, The Star, 1976.08.27.

She had taken over from a very forceful academician which must have been difficult, especially as she was a woman in a man's world. However, with her eclectic taste and ingenuity she put her own stamp on the Gallery. She upgraded the educational programmes of the Gallery, introduced the system of volunteer guides, she had made a film about the gallery directed by Raymond Hancock, called Johannesburg Art Gallery, which for its excellence was awarded a Silver Screen Award in its category at the 7th annual United States Industrial Film Festival in 1974.

During her time cards with reproductions of works of art were on sale, so too airmail notelets with reproductions of artworks. She continued with the chamber concerts introduced by Hendriks. There were film evenings and lectures. To end off 1976 and celebrate the 90th birthday of Johannesburg, the Gallery offered a very special Christmas Festival.

Here are some of the activities:

1. A Treasure Trail for children which took them to every part of the gallery to find the answers to six questions. A prize for the first correct answer - an artbook.
2. Films during the lunch-hours. These had a Christmas flavour. Ballet, Cathedrals, Theatre featured.
3. A Programme of Medieval Music including Christmas carols, performed in medieval dress with instruments like lutes, recorders, flutes and a crumhorn. There was one evening concert and a few daytime concerts. The latter was held in the Sculpture Garden.

86.

4. An exhibition of graphics; Rembrandt to the present. These came from the Gallery's own Print Cabinet, which included more than 2,500 graphic works at that time.

5. An exhibition of the newly acquired Helen Frankenthaler painting together with graphic work by the European abstract painters, Hartun and Soulages.

6. A guided tour of the Gallery. ⁸⁵

A worthy tribute to Nel who had expanded the Gallery's activities and imbued all functions with a sophistication and grace which would have won the highest approval of its founder, Florrie Phillips.

Although many positive things happened during the last few years before Nel's retirement there was a strong down-side. The long-awaited new building for which so many had campaigned, was shelved. This despite pointing out, as recently as 1975, that the position of the Gallery was not museologically suitable owing to the the vibrations of passing trains, and the high incidence of crime in the area.

The Minutes of the Council Meeting of June 26, 1976 read as follows:

"Because of a shortage of funds it has not been possible to proceed with this project."

An unbelievable indictment when one remembers what had been spent on the new Civic Centre!

85 Artlook, Nov/Dec 1976. p 20.

8. IN A SENIOR POSITION

1977-1983

When Nel Erasmus retired in October 1977, her assistant, another young woman, stepped into her shoes. Her name was Patricia Senior.

Pat was born in Simonstown, of a Welsh father and a South African mother. After the war, her father who had been stationed at Simonstown returned to Wales, taking with him his wife and baby daughter. She thus grew up as a Welsh lass. She joined the staff of Nel Erasmus in 1971, after working at Kenwood House in London.

Although her qualifications were not what was needed, her qualities were recognised by the Council and she was appointed assistant Director when the post of Director fell vacant.

Like Nel she had had the advantage of working under a director for 6 years prior to leading the team at the Gallery. With youth and vitality on her side, as well as charm, she made the Gallery into an active, "swinging" venue. She "earned for the gallery the most unusual accolade to be applied to a museum: lively." ⁸⁶

Like all directors she put her stamp on the Gallery, within the parameters of the existing collection policy.

8.1. EDUCATION

Perhaps because she had a child of her own she, was interested in making the Gallery a fun place for the young. Special events were

⁸⁶ Flavia Pascoe, Exhibit: Pat Senior, Fair Lady, 1982.04.07, pp 192 - 194.

planned for children; so much so that the child attendance figure quadrupled as a result of her input.

Examples: picture-hunts, - like a treasure hunt - in which the objects are "hidden" in the works of art. Her comment was:

"They're (the hidden treasures) not always immediately obvious and the children really look at the pictures in a way a hundred lectures wouldn't make them do." ⁸⁷

Theatre workshops. Here the children were expected to act out what they had seen in the artworks. In fact, a troupe of dancers, inspired by the artworks in the Gallery did improvised dancing, all through the building and into the sculpture Garden.

Special tours and workshops were introduced for Matriculants taking art, as well as for art students of tertiary institutions. This became possible because now there were 21 volunteer guides to assist. One notes the shift from the formal to the informal approach, the Gallery moving with the times.

8.2. COLLECTION

Nel Erasmus had been a protagonist for "modern" art; after all the Gallery was called a Museum of Modern Art at its inception. Pat Senior built on that concept. During her time she started a collection of South African Ceramics: art and craft were moving closer. More modern international art was bought, predominantly American, the Dan Flavin sculpture with its red and blue neon lights, the Mobile by Alexander Calder, the minimal sculpture by Judd.

⁸⁷ Flavia Pascoe, Exhibit: Pat Senior, Fair Lady, 1982.04.07. pp 102 - 104.

8.3. EXHIBITIONS

There were many and varied exhibitions during Pat's time. The first was a small exhibition of 23 American Artists sponsored by the United States Information Services. In his foreword to the slim catalogue, accompanying the exhibition, Douglas James Johnson, the American painter-critic explains the modern tendency in American art:

"There is a willingness to reject traditional preconceived definitions of art - 'the creation of ideal beauty', or 'the imitation of nature'. There is an acceptance of materials, images and objects without artistic content or tradition: trash, plastic, packages, domestic and industrial objects, photographs, etc. This openness has had a liberating effect, opening areas of experience undreamt of as recently as twenty years ago."

In 1978 there was an exhibition of Designer Bookbinders from Britain, as well as an exhibition of the works of Daubigny, Corot and the Cliche-Verre. This exhibition commemorated the centenary of the death of Daubigny.

In October and November the Johannesburg public were able to see an exhibition of German Expressionist Prints. All the galleries had pooled their prints for this exhibition, the host gallery being the National Gallery. In November the Katrine Harries exhibition from Cape Town visited Johannesburg.

An exhibition with a difference in 1979 was Cutlery through the Ages. This small, but informative exhibition had exhibits like a combination knife and fork, designed for use by a one-armed person, (early 17th century), a knife and fork reputedly owned by Bonnie Prince Charlie and the first set of stainless steel knives, made by Brearly in 1913. The catalogue for this exhibition was the first in a series of excellent catalogues prepared by Jillian Carman, who had been appointed as Professional Officer towards the end of 1977; an invaluable "acquisition".

The Art of the Space Age was a collection loaned by the Peter Stuyvesant foundation to the Johannesburg Art gallery, 1978/79. This was followed by The Animal in Art, presented by the Rembrandt van Rijn foundation in aid of the S.A. Nature Foundation. The very informative introduction to the catalogue was written by Kenneth Clark, and comes from his beautiful book, Animals and Men.

Hommage a Jean Lurcat presented by the Peter Stuyvesant Foundation was a beautiful exhibition, accompanied by an equally beautiful catalogue. It was Lurcat who revitalised the art of weaving, which had become the step-child of the crafts. Lurcat conceived more than 1,000 cartoons for translation into tapestries. This exhibition was on show here from April to June 1980.

There was also a contemporary German Print exhibition compiled by the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations in Stuttgart; 33 constructive realists being represented in this exhibition. This was followed by

the Ansel Adams collection of photographs of the American West, organised by The Friends of Photography for the United States Information Agency.

An outstanding exhibition and one which drew crowds in vast numbers was the collection of glass sponsored by Cinzano. The catalogue describes the history of the glass from the earliest times. The earliest exhibit dated from 6th century B.C.

The Christmas exhibition at the Gallery was a collection of paintings and drawings collected by The Friends of the Johannesburg Art Gallery.

1981 was a special year as far as exhibitions were concerned. The year started with an exhibition called "Virtues and Vanities" and was devoted to the way 19th century women were depicted by French artists of the time. This exhibition ran till March.

8.4. GIFTS

March also heralded the acquisition of 26 works of art donated by Mrs Stella Loewenstein and Mrs Bernadine Mentz. Another very important acquisition in March was the Still Life, "Pommes" by Louis Valtat which was received from the estate of the Mr E.J.A. Loerincz. Valtat was a Fauve and this painting filled an important gap in the collection.

8.5. NEW ACQUISITIONS

But the most significant happening in March was surely the arrival of the modern works which had been bought by the Gallery with the subsidy

of R38,000 it had received from the Council. They were:

The Andy Warhol, Triptych of Joseph Beuys
Herbert Bayer, Spiral Free Curve, (Lithograph)
Jean Dubuffet, Fruits Memorables III, (Silkscreen)
Dan Flavin, (Sulpture)
Howard Hodgkin, (Lithograph)
John Hoyland, (Etching an Aquatint)
Bob Law, (Oil and mixed media)
Sol Lewitt, Grid, Circles, Arcs from 4 sides and 4 Corners
(Silkscreen)
Davis Brown, Animal Number 2, (Sculpture in wood and steel)
Norman Catherine, Anonymous 1980
Philippa Hobbs, Grey II (1980 mixed media)
Karel Nel, Saw E. Destroyer/Creator (mixed media)_
Malcolm Payne, Early rising Plasmas (Pastels and Paper)
Ronald Rosenberg, Carcass 1977
Ann Sassoon, The Brothers (Oil on Canvas)
Andre van Zijl, Lovers come in Paris

Most certainly the most prestigious exhibition to visit this country in the 80's was the Oro Del Peru collection of pre-Columbian art made possible through the initiative of Mr H. Storch-Nielsen, Consul General of Peru at that time. This was a wonderful Easter present to the people of Johannesburg. The Gallery hours were extended till 8 pm and the daughter of the Consul General, Linda Storch-Nielsen, guided the tours at the Gallery. The Rand Daily had the following report on the exhibition:

"The collection of pre-columbian South American gold on exhibition at the Johannesburg Gallery is one of the richest privately owned treasures in the world.

It is insured for 700 million dollars and is ranked with the Tutankhamen exhibition of the Cairo Museum and the collection of 1000 Picasso works displayed in New York's Museum of Modern Art last year." (1980)

The collection comprised jewelery, masks, ritual utensils, breastplates, crowns, needles.

While the government of Peru very jealously guarded its art treasures, most of the antique gold in this collection was privately owned by Mr Miguel Mujica Gallo.

In June the exhibition of Architectural Models were on show in Johannesburg. This exhibition was put together by the Pretoria Art Museum to acquaint the public with the architecture produced by South Africa's leading architects of the time. Dr Werth in his foreword to the catalogue justified this exhibition by stating:

"The fine arts and architecture are inseparably connected: monumental sculpture, the mural, graphic work are all ideal additions to both exterior and interior architectural beauty."

At the same time the Pierneef and Van Wouw collection, sponsored by the Rembrandt van Rijn Foundation, visited the Gallery. This exhibition was also put together by Dr Werth of the Pretoria Art Museum.

The second half of the year seemed as packed with exhibitions and functions as the first half. Thys Nel was the guest artist in June. June also saw a series of films made available by the British Council.

July was the the month devoted to the Bushmen: Harald Pager exhibited the series of photographs he had taken over a period of 2 years while doing research in the Ndema Gorge in Natal.

In July the Gallery acquired 102 artworks from the will of the late Harold Gallagher. These were mainly South African: Battiss, Boonzaaier, Broadley, Sydney Carter, W.H.Coetzer, Erich Mayer, Hugo Naude, Alfred Palmer, Pierneef, Maude Sumner, W. Timlin, J. Volschenk.

A function with a difference was the 10th celebration of the forming of the Friends of the Gallery. This was celebrated in July with what they called "Dramatic Diversion." Nomsa Nene and her husband, Peter Se-Puma were the guest artists. At this function Pat Senior formally announced that it had been decided to extend the existing Gallery and also that the Gallery was going to have its own restorer in the person of Andrew Durham, who had trained at the famous Courtauld Institute. Andrew's appointment never materialised. He wished to immigrate to South Africa but the authorities botched up his application.

In August the Gallery had another Japanese Print exhibition. The Gallery now owned 179 woodcut prints, the Ukiyo-e Prints; meaning "Pictures of the floating world." The period covered was known as Hishikawa Moronobu and stretched from 1694- 1858. The three famous names which featured were: Utamaro, Hokusai, Hiroshige.

Two films accompanied the exhibition; one on Japanese architecture and the other explaining the Japanese open-air tea ceremony, Asucha, which evolved in the 15th century under the influence of Zen Buddhism. To complement it there was demonstrations of the Japanese Tea Ceremony given by Mrs Kaorin Sakuma.

September saw the introduction of guided lectures for schools to coincide with the art syllabi, starting from standard six. Two tapes, covering the highlights of the Gallery's international collection were also made available to the public. The centenary of the birth of Picasso was celebrated with graphic works of his dating 1905-1966 and there was a Willem Boshoff "Happening". The Star of the 24th called Boshoff's work "the most intriguing of any guest artist" to exhibit at the Gallery.

All this just seemed an aperitif for the end of the year festivities: an exhibition of works by Richard Hamilton called Interiors 1964-1979. Also included in this exhibition were works by pop artists like Jim Dine, Jasper John and Allen Jones, Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol, Tom Wesselman.

December and January was devoted to art from colder climes; Rothman of Pall Mall Canada Limited presented an exhibition of Inuit Art, a selection of Canadian Eskimo art from the collection of the National Museum of Man, Ottawa. The introduction to the accompanying catalogue introduced the art in the following way:

"The contemporaray art of the Inuit has only a short history to which we can attach a definite date. In the summer of 1948 the, then young, artist, James Houston, went north for a few days of sketching and 'discovered' that some of the people - the word inuit means THE people - had produced a few small carvings out of soapstone which were as charming as they were powerful."

For the children, the Christmas holidays had a special treat in store. They were shown how to make small gifts and Christmas decorations. These activities were concluded with the decorating of a Christmas tree and a party for the children of Johannesburg and Soweto.

The Inuit exhibition extended into the new year. In February the guest artist was Johann Moolman. 135

In March the Gallery made the papers in a big way: The Beatles had come to town. Harry Hammond had with his photographic lense captured the pop stars from the forties to the sixties. He used to follow them around on location. This exhibition was, as it were, a slice of pop history, featuring people like, the Beatles, Judy Garland, the Everley Brothers, Billy Fury, Buddy Holly, Vera Lynn, Johnny Ray, Bill Hayley, Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra and many others. The "show" was opened by Eve Boswell, the Beatles featured on the invitation, and pop music reverberated through the Lutyens Gallery.

The next exciting event was quick to follow: Equus, the image of the horse, which opened on March 31. Close on 100 artists portrayed the horse through the ages from a personal perspective; the earliest exhibit dates from China's Huan dynasty, (206 B.C. to 210 A.D). The catalogue was sponsored by the Premier Group. Mr Reinhold Cassirer played a major part in the organization of this exhibition, so too the Friends, for whom this was a fund raising occasion. Many people had an input. Mrs Par Senior, in her foreword to the catalogue gives credit to all those who assisted, saying:

"Without support from the private sector it is quite possible there would be no Johannesburg Art Gallery."

No more true word could have been spoken: the only pity is they did it in such fits and starts.

At more or less the same time the Gallery bought three works by modern international artists: Two Dutch; Ger van Elk, Zig Zag River II and Jan Dibbets, Perspective Correction II and one Greek-born American; Lucas Samaras, Reconstruction 43.

The guest artist for June was Guiseeppe Cattaneo, then senior lecturer in graphic art at Wits.

In July Henry Moore featured with his 2 "elephant skull" bronze sculptures and 28 black and white etchings. Running concurrently was a display of Italian, French, German and English fans of the 18th and 19th century from the Gallery's own collection.

At the same time the newspapers started featuring photographs of models of the extension to the Gallery by the Architectural firm, Meyer Pienaar and Partners. What a pity they were not employed to design a new Gallery on the ground bought for that purpose, in an area user-friendly to both the works of art and the public. The August issue of the Northern Advertiser published the following report:

"The sight in Parktown which was to house the new Johannesburg Art Gallery, is to be rezoned to Business 4, and offered for sale to the public."

The City of Gold in its ignorance paying its tithes to mammon. Why was there no research into the museological soundness of this decision?

Even laymen in the press pointed out from time to time the unsuitability of an ART gallery in such close proximity with, not only the pollution of a down town city center, but the reverberation of the very foundations as a result of the trains passing right in front of the south entrance.

The safety of the visitors to the Gallery was also at risk. The Star Tonight of 10 November 1982 warns:

"Art lovers! Don't get mugged please." It elaborates:

"Last year's low attendance might not be through lack of public interest in our beautiful art gallery in Joubbert Park. Could it not be because the city area is being shunned because of the hazard of being mugged?"

To end this letter the writer, who signs himself as "A friend of the Gallery" concludes:

"One wonders about the generous R5 million to be spent on the Gallery face-lift."

This ignorance on the part of the powers that were, however, seemed to be mirrored in other spheres too. Towards the end of the year the papers were filled with headlines like the following:

"Monstrosities in gallery - Oberholzer,"-Citizen, 1 September 1982

"Obie doesn't fancy 'junk' in his gallery."-Rand Daily Mail, 1 September 1982

"Art is not Obie's palette."- The Star, 1 September 1982.

Obie nie alleen onkundig."- Die Vaderland, 2 September 1982.

These headlines referred to the criticism made by the Chairman of the Management Committee in charge of an art gallery; and the artwork which caused this furore, the untitled sculpture by Michael Goldberg, often referred to as "the bathtub". Once again the positive of such a polemic was an upswing in the attendance figures of people who came to see what the fuss was all about.

Hans Potgieter was the first visiting artist in the second half of the year. This exhibition was complemented with a visiting photographic exhibition called South Africa: Photo Statement.

A Book of Days, a diary of sorts, was the next project of the Friends. This small book with reproductions of some of the treasures of the Gallery was made possible through the generosity of Dr Marino Chiavelli and launched in July.

Judith Pringle, the new art restorer took up her post in October. The Gallery was very lucky to procure her services. She has a honours degree in History of Art from the University of East Anglia and a post graduate diploma in conservation from Newcastle. Altogether she trained for 5 years, now holding a certificate of conservation from the Museum Association of Great Britain.

The year ended with an exhibition of the works of Roy Carruthers, and an exhibition of the works of Willem Strydom.

For Christmas the Friends offered a most attractive T-shirt, sporting an artist's palette, to swell its funds.

The children, too were catered for: as in the previous year there were workshops where they were taught to make small gifts and Christmas decorations, and subsequently decorate the Christmas tree. An added bonus was the film, "The Pied Piper of Hamelin."

The highlight for the adults was the viewing of Letter from India, by Samuel Barber; perhaps the most significant of the followers of William Blake. This work which had been in the collection of the Gallery for 25 years and had been in bad state of repair, had been newly restored by the British Museum. At the same time there was the exhibition called John Piper and the English Neo-Romanticism; 72 works covering a period of 1600 years. This exhibition had been compiled by Peter Cannon-Brooks of the National Museum in Wales. The connection between these works and the Samuel Barber is evident.

The end of January saw the arrival of the Cape Triennial, 69 works by contemporary artists, Karel Nel being the award winner with his work, Bodhisattva.

8.6. PREMATURE DEATH

The Rand Daily Mail of January 21 announced that the director of the Gallery would be going overseas early in the new year to visit galleries in New York, London, Paris and Düsseldorf. This visit never materialised. On 19 March she was tragically killed when run over by a bus, while crossing the street.

Many were the tributes to this young woman, who took over the running of the Art Gallery at the age of 34, on October 1977.

One of the accolades came from Nel Erasmus, under whose guidance she had worked, for at least five years, before taking up the office of director. She had the following to say:

"Ek het Pat leer ken as 'n sensitiewe, ondersoekende gees. Dit was vir my 'n vreugde om saam met haar te werk, want ons kon en het saam gewerk en geleer.....en toe die Vriende van die Museum gestig is in 1971 en veral met die kulminerende groot Bonnard-aand, was sy die mees getroue medewerker, die mees inspirerende personeellid denkbaar. Spangees het sy verstaan en haar woord was haar eer." ⁸⁸

The Rand Daily Mail of 23 March published the following tribute to her:

"Pat Senior has been credited for returning life and vigour to the Art Gallery.

She began an annual seminar for matriculants with history of art as a subject. She introduced chamber music performances, poetry readings and even had a play staged - "The Lark and the Crow", written and performed by Christopher Consani and directed by Norman Coombes - based on the life of van Gogh.

She introduced a new post of restorer/conservator." (Judith Pringle).

In fact, two new posts were created on 1982: that of restorer and that of technical officer, to help with the hanging of exhibitions. All six her curatorial staff members were young and dynamic, making for a good team.

⁸⁸ Die Beeld, 1983.03.23. Pat Senior was 'n vreugde deur Nel Erasmus.

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Pat Senior also started the Gallery's first photographic collection as well as a collection of contemporary ceramic art.

She worked hard on updating the gallery's print collection. Her "coup" in this genre was the acquisition of a print by the 19th century British poet, William Blake."

The Fair Lady of April 7, 1982 perhaps summed her up best: "a lady in love with life. You can hear it in her voice. You can see it in her springy walk and in the way she dresses: sophisticated and cosmopolitan, tailored and subtly sexy. She had the liveliness of youth."

One somehow feels that the way in which she died mirrored the way in which she lived.

8.7. HIATUS

With Mrs Rochelle Keene, the assistant director, catapulted into the driving seat, the Gallery had to go on. It must have been quite a daunting task to find oneself peremptorily taking over the running of such a prestigious institution without any warning at all.

The intended visit to the northern hemisphere to acquire new works of art was put on hold till a new director could be appointed, but for the rest, exhibitions had to run to plan.

The planned exhibition of prints, illustrating various artists' attitudes toward landscape, went on view on March 29. These were prints from the Gallery's own collection.

This was followed by Ndebele Images which opened with a cocktail party on April 16. Over 50 examples of Ndebele beadwork were exhibited. These pieces had been collected by Natalie Knight and Suzanne Priebatch.

May heralded the Afrox 1983 Sculpture Exhibition, which consisted of 9 works by Ian Redelinghuys.

9. A NEW LOOK

This time the Council put on their sprinting shoes and managed to appoint a new curator in record time. With the extensions on the drawing board, they realised they could not waste time.

9.1. DIRECTOR

As early as May 10 Die Beeld announced to the public that new curator of the Art Gallery was going to be a young man by the name of Christopher Till, at the time director of the National Gallery in Harare. He had been appointed curator of the Sydney Art Gallery in Australia, but had turned that position down when this one presented itself. A Rhodes graduate, with a mother living in Johannesburg, he was returning home. He was due to take up his position 1 June.

Who was this very young man, not even 32 at the time of assuming office? His name was Christopher Martin Till; he was born in Johannesburg in November 1951, matriculated at Hilton college in Natal, subsequently went to Rhodes University where he gained the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1975, and a year later his Masters degree. The following year he was appointed Curator of the National Gallery of Rhodesia, and a year later, Assistant Director of that same gallery, now called the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. This post, as mentioned before he held till his appointment at the Johannesburg Art Gallery. When he took up the post here he was married and had 3 small children.

Although he took up his position here to the strains of the dulcet harp: the Harp Society held a concert in the Art Gallery on Sunday 9 June, he was soon plunged into the fracas, so typical of the City Fathers whenever an out-of-the-ordinary artwork was acquired. This time it the Study of a Portrait of a Man by Francis Bacon, which cost the Gallery R53,000.

9.2. NEW BUILDING

The dream Pat Senior had of extending the Lutyens gallery, was still on the drawing board and in model form. This dream, scheduled to be a reality for the centenary celebrations of Johannesburg, was the first major undertaking for Christopher Till: quite a daunting prospect it must have been. Johannesburg at the time did not realise exactly how symbolic this marriage of the old, a symbol of colonial rule, designed by the architect who had been responsible for the symbol of the British Raj, the city of New Dehli, with the new, the modern, designed by a truly South African firm. It foreshadowed a new order which was to be progressive, like the new addition, without ditching the best the past had to offer.

The Gallery extensions, as mentioned before were in the hands of the firm Meyer, Pienaar and Partners. This was a particularly good choice, as Mr Meyer is not only a most competent architect but also sensitive to that which has gone before: tradition. To quote from the Architects Statement put out by Mr W.O. Meyer:

Lutyens adopted the classical style tongue in cheek, calling it "the high game of Palladio." It is precisely the creative games of paradox and invention that Lutyens plays with time-honoured elements that render his contribution of interest today. Though Lutyens usually excelled in the integration of building and setting, the incomplete nature of the original gallery meant that this potential had not been realised. The building was indeed placed and orientated as intended ut it was to have been fronted by a wide promenade bridge on the city side, crossing over an originally narrower railway cutting, and linking it to the city park presently cut off by a bus terminal along the length of the railway cutting. On the side facing Joubert Park the relationship of the formerly incomplete building to its park setting was almost hostile in the sense that the one gave nothing to the other - there was no dialogue, connection of comfortable contact with the consequence that both the gallery and park suffered. If the extension is to contribute anything beyond providing additional gallery space, then it is to redress this breach by fusing building and park into a more sympathetic whole, thereby enhancing both.

The new extension exactly recalls the footprint of the original Lutyens plan but then extends into the park beyond it with much increased gallery space on an underground level. The result of this above ground will be to form a 'threshold' to the park in the form of an elevated 'footstool' base to the Lutyens building providing for informal entry from the park by means of ramp, forecourt, porch, vestibules and foyer hall. This threshold can also be read as a fictive fortification protecting the edifice and allowing for a progressive arrival sequence from the park.

The existing heads of the Lutyen's building will be accented as centrepieces of display. The originally intended Lutyen's face to the park is pulled forward to become a freestanding fragment. The copper roof barrels will form a soft cascade into the park recalling traditional architecture."

In keeping with the 'swinging' nature of the Gallery in the 80's "a variety of new public orientated facilities will appear in the extension including a 'happening' space for film shows, temporary exhibitions and talks, sculpture courts, library, children's art workshop and coffee shop with terrace.

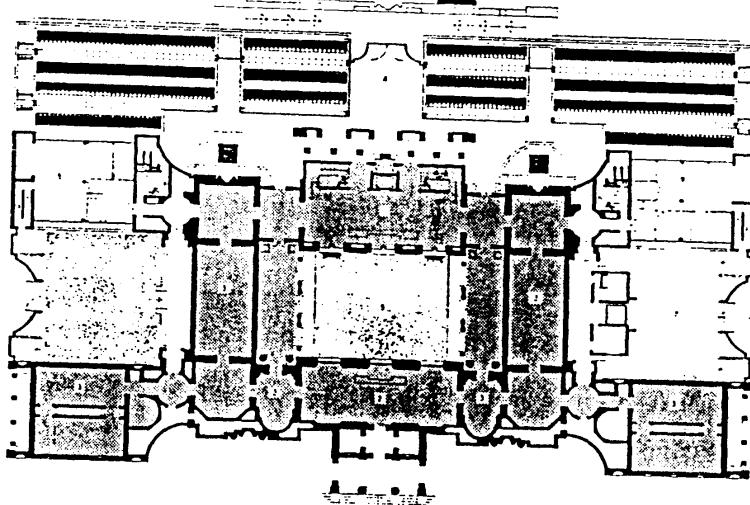
The most conspicuous element in the extension to the Lutyen's building is the use of facebrick handled in a way complimentary to the original sandstone."

Mr Meyer ends off his report by saying:

"The intension of the new is to relate to the old as much as an accompanist would to a soloist - both are artists in their own right but are here bridging an age difference in the harmony of one overall purpose."

10. CONCLUSION

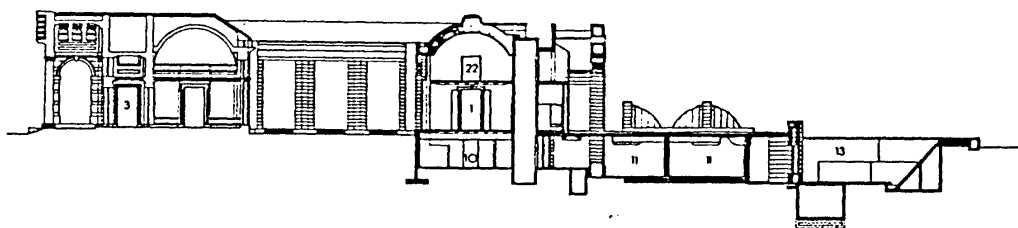
These prophetic words written in October 1986 will carry this Gallery not only into the 21st century but will hopefully fuse the old South Africa and the new into a monumental statement, a living symbol of what can be achieved when and where the best of two worlds meet.



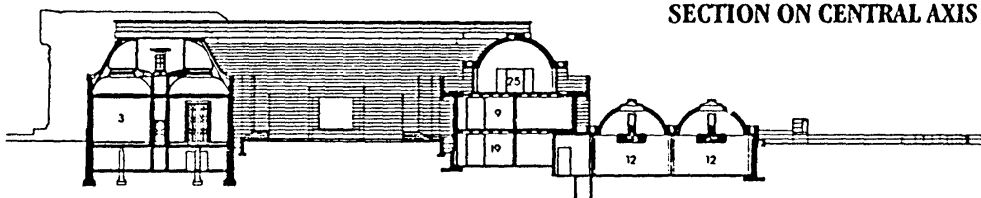
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Key

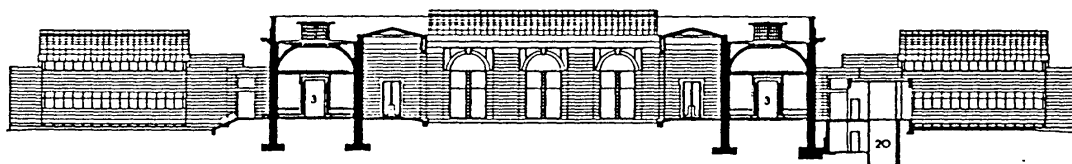
- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Main foyer new extension. | 13. Courtyard. |
| 2. Existing foyer. | 14. Pool courtyard. |
| 3. Existing gallery space. | 15. Storage and maintenance. |
| 4. New entrance court. | 16. Print exhibition. |
| 5. Main central court with ambulatory. | 17. Print storage. |
| 6. Sculpture court. | 18. Library. |
| 7. Service court. | 19. Workshop. |
| 8. General office space. | 20. Service lift. |
| 9. Restoration area. | 21. Air-conditioning plant room. |
| 10. Lower foyer. | 22. Coffee bar. |
| 11. Theatre area. | 23. Terrace. |
| 12. Flexible gallery space. | 24. Director's office and boardroom. |
| | 25. Children's art workshop. |



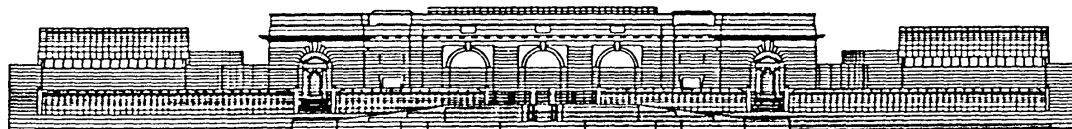
SECTION ON CENTRAL AXIS



SECTION SHOWING EXISTING GALLERY AND FLEXIBLE GALLERY SPACE.



SECTIONAL ELEVATION OF MAIN CENTRAL COURT WITH AMBULATORY.



NORTH ELEVATION.

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 Israels, J. Idyll (oil)
 Leger, F. Composition with 2 birds (oil)
 Kolwits, K. Mother and Child (etching)
 Lepere, A. Paris (woodcut)
 Daubigny, Ch. Landscape with Cows (etching)
 Carriere, E. Meditation (lithograph)
 Gauguin, P. Mahana ne Varua (woodcut)
 de Toulouse - Lautrec, H. La Loge au Mescaron Dore (lithograph)
 Picasso, P. Trois Figures (etching)
 Matisse, H. Femme et Fleurs (lithograph)
 John, A. The Tinkers (lithograph)
 John, A. The tinkers (lithographic stone)

1950's

Local Purchases:

Battiss, W. The Eternal Palace
Boucher, Drawing
Chinese Ceramics
Du Plessis, E. Villa Beatrix, Sea Point
Evans, M. Still - life with Fruit
Gear, W. Grid
James, R. Fighting Bulls
Jentsch, A. Earthcrust
Night
Mc Caw, E. Artist at Work
Markson, R. Limehouse
Oerder, F. Die Opsitkers
Pierneef, J. Drawings 1954, 1958
Watercolours 1954, 1958
Preller, A. Hieratic Women
Sheppard, R. Lino Cuts and Oil Painting
Wenning, P. Red Hibiscus

Overseas Purchases:

SCULPTURES

Maillol, A. Baigneuse aux Bras Leve
Buste de Femme
Renoir, P.A. Buste de Femme

PAINTINGS

Marquet, a. La Barque a Naples
Signac, P. Bateaux a Lomalo
Degas, E. Danseuses
Metzinger, J. Paysage
Singir, G. Nuit a Dieppe
Pignon, E. Les Oliviers
Manessier, A. Hiver e Montagne
Gromaire, M. La Fenetre Carre
Bonvin, F. Nature Mort uax Intruments de Musique
Guillaumin. L'Estacade au Pont de Sully a Paris
Bauer, M. Market at Marrakeche
Marquet. Nu Couche (drawing)
Paysage (drawing)
Claesz, P. Still - life with Crab
Bourses, E. The Frugal Meal

GRAPHIC WORKS

- Bonnard, P. Les Boulevard
Bottini. Adresse Sagot
La Soupeuse
Le Bar
Boussingault. Les Champs Elysees
Chagall, M. Illustration pour Fables I
Illustration pour Fables II
Degas, E. Au Louvre, Musee de Antiques
Derain, M. Tete de Femme
Tete de Femme de Profil
Dufresne. Le Chasseurs de Lions
Dufy, E. La Batteuse
de Segonzac, D. Bois de Chaville
La Grille a Versailles
Ensor, J. Triomphe Romain
Forain, A. La Table de Jeu
Plaidoire
Gromaire, M. Nu Couche
La Solitaire
Jongkind, P. Sortie du Port de Honfleur
Demolition de la Rue des Francs Bourgeois
Luce. La mer a Camaret
Maillol, A. Femme nu de Dos
Femme nu debout de Face
Picasso, P. Deux Pauves
Deux Nus Assis
Portrait de Vollard

The following list of purchases were presented to the Public Amenities Committee, 1960.02.25.

OIL PAINTINGS AND WATER COLOURS

Eeckhout, G. van den The Queen of Sheba
Seghers, D. Flowers in a Vase
Vliet, H. van der Interior of a Church
Breenberch, B. Christ and the Samaritan Woman
Sorgh, H. A Gentleman in his Study
Lambert, J. Christ and the Woman of Samaria
Coopse, P. River Scene
Momper, J. de The flight into Egypt
Coques, G. Portrait of Youth
Franchois, L. The Assumption of the Virgin
L Nain, M. Peasant and a Donkey in a Landscape
Aved, J.A. Le Jeune Eleve
Wilson, R. Italian Landscape
Holman - Hunt, W. Sunset in the Val D'Arno
Sutherland, G. Pembrokeshire Mountains
Permeke, C. Nude Study
Autumn
Soulages, P. Composition
Herman, J. A Welsh Miner

SCULPTURES

Daumier, H. Ratapoil
Despiou, C. Buste d'une Americaine
Moore, H. A Woman seated on a Bench
Mascherine, M. A Bull

GRAPHIC WORKS

Aubert, M. L'indiscret
Ploos and Amstel, C. 16 Engravings after 17th
century Dutch Drawings
Anonymous Hl. Christoffel (after Albrecht Durer)
Anonymous Les Armoires (after Albrecht Durer)
Bary, H. Michiel de Ruyter
Berghem, N. Three Landscapes
Blotelingh, A. August Stellingwerf
Kortenaer
Bolswert. The Resurrection (after Rubens)
So d'oude songen so piepen de Jonge
Both, J. 4 Landscapes
Cars, L. Le Menage
Deliff, W.J. Henrietta Maria, Queen of England

- Dietrich, C.W.E. The flight into Egypt
 Demarteau, G. 8 Engravings after 17th and 18th
 Century Drawings
 Derschau 4 reprints 15th century Woodblocks
 Duflos, C.A. Le Bain (after Pater)
Le Pecheur (after Boucher)
 Van Dyk, A. Christ crowned with Thorns
 Van Everdingen A. 9 Landscapes
 Faithorne, W. Margaret Cary (after van Dyk)
The Earl of Holland (after van dyk)
 Fusher, E. Lady Elizabeth Keppel (after Reynolds)
 Goltzius, H. The Holy Family
The Adoration of the Shepherds
 Goudt, H. Jupiter and Mercury
The Flight into Egypt
Tobias with the Angel dragging the Fish
 Van der Hecke, J. 3 Animal Studies
 Holsteyn, P. Portret van Jan Huydecooper
 (avant le lettre)
Portret van Jan Huydecooper
 I.H.V.E. La Saint - Face (after Albrecht Durer)
 Van Laer, P. 6 Animal Studies
 De Larmessi N. Le Jeu de Cache Cache (after Lancret)
La Femme avare - galant escroc
 Lievens, J. The Virgin presenting a Pear to the child
 Lorrain, C. Le Naufrage
 Massard, J.B. Le Lever (after Boudin)
 Mauperché, H. 3 Landscapes
 Mayreau, J. La Musette (after Watteau)
 Miele, J. The Bagpiper
 Le Prince, J.B. Le Boeuf
Le Port
 Pontius, P. Phillip IV (after Rubens)
Elisabeth van Bourbon
 Roos, J.H. Sheep Resting
 Ruisdael, J. Landscape with Peasants and a Dog
 Stoop, D. A Cavalier Galloping
 Van Swaneveldt, H. Landscape with Man riding a donkey
 Tardieu, N.H. Plaisir Pastoral (after Watteau)
 Tardieu, J.N. Marie, Queen of France (after Nattier)
 Tempesta, A. Set of 12 Landscapes with Signs of the Zodiac
 Treyler, J. Die Haan
 Van Uden, L. Landscape with Horses and Cattle (after Rubens)
 Van de Velde, A. 3 Animal Studies
 Vermeulen, C.M. Maria Luissa de Tassis (after van Dyk)
 Visscher, C. Le Gros Chat
The Gipsy Woman
 De Visscher, J. Abraham van der Hulst
 De Vlieger, S. Dog at a Kennel
 Van Vlier, J.G. Lot and his Daughters

- Vostermans, L. De Satyr bij de Boer (after Jordaens)
Waterloo, A. 9 Landscapes
Watson, J. Girtl with a dog (after Cotes)
Watts, R. 8 Engravings after 17th century Dutch
and Italian Drawings
Wille, J.G. Jean de Boullogne (after Rigaud)
Wyk, T. The Watermill
Zanetti, C. 28 Chiaroscuro Prints
Daumier, H. 20 Lithographs (sur blanc)
6 Lithographs (epreuves d'essai)
7 Lithographs (from Charivari)
Van Dongen, K. 7 Print - Series: Femmes
6 + 1 trial print
Hartung, H. 2 Lithographs and 1 Etching
Manet, E. L'Enfant à l'épée
Les Gitanes
Music, Z. 3 Abstract Compositions
Dunoyer de Segonzac, A. Serie (12) Paysages du Morin
Singier, G. 2 Abstract Compositions
Soulages, P. 6 Abstract Compositions
Wiegiers, J. Collection (22) of his graphic works
29 Japanese Woodcuts: 27 - 18th century hand-coloured
and colour printed woodcuts
2 - Otsu-e

1960's

- Ayres, G. Crevellis Room. 1969.
 Bauer, M. Etchings. 1966.
 Chinese Ceramics. 1961.
 Coetzer, W.H. Winter Transvaal. 1968.
 Cohen, H. First Folio D. 1969.
 Daumier, H. L'homme à large perruquer. 1965.
 Denny, R. Suite No. 5. 1969
 Domsaits, P. Karoo Landscape. 1866.
 Flower Piece. 1967.
 Location. 1967.
 Esmond-White, E. Etchings etc. 1968.
 Everard, D. Farmyard. 1967.
 Gravett, W.H. Aquatint and Etchings. 1968.
 Haden, R.E. Portrait of Bertha Everard. 1967.
 Mountains, Barbeton. 1967.
 The Fig Trees. 2967.
 Harries, K. Drawings, Etchings and Lithographs. 1968.
 Harrison, A. Etchings. 1969.
 Hasegawa, S. Etchings. 1969.
 Hendriks, A. Painting. 1969.
 Kibel, W. Portrait of a Child 1963.
 King, E.L.M. Blooming Wild Cherries. 1967.
 The Breaker. 1967.
 Koch, P. Vacuum Hot Table. 1965.
 Koningh, P. de. Isaac meeting his Bride. 1963.
 Krige, F. Drawings. 1968.
 Mancini, A. Portrait of Lady Nicholson. 1966.
 Moore, H. Bronze Sculpture. 1969.
 Morisot, B. Two Girls with Goat in Landscape. 1963.
 Oerder, F. Still Life. 1966.
 Permeke, C. Standing Nude. 1965.
 Pierneef, J.H. Meintjieskop, Pretoria, 1917. 1963.
 Senéque, C. Mountain Scene. 1965.
 Stern, I. Mother and Child, 1942. 1969.
 Persian Pottery. 1965.
 Sumner, M. Chez Maurice Denis. 1968.
 Eathorpe Weir. 1968.
 Zeekoeivlei. 1968.
 Van der Merwe, M. Etchings. 1968.
 Van Esche, M. Drawings and Lithographs. 1968.
 Welz, J. Anemones. 1969.
 Eileen. 1967.
 Meisie. 1969.
 Portrait of a Banker. 1967.
 Rococo. 1967.
 Zerffi, F. Woodland Hut. 1966.
 The Cornfield. 1966.

1970's

- Abrams, L. Pastels. 1972
- Armstrong, G. Germination. 1977
Monotype I 1975
Monotype II 1975
 Sandstone sculpture. 1975
 Standing figure. 1975
- Atkinson, K. Five graphic works, 1978.
- Baldinelli, A. Non lo Diro mai a Nesuno. 1974
- Battiss, W. Oil on board. 1972
Seriograph. 1972
Three figures. 1975
- Benjamin, A. Gazebo. 1978. Jan 23
- Bisseker, N. From my window I. 1973
From my window II. 1973
From my window III. 1973
- Blom, W. Figure. 1970
Interior with figures 74. 1975
Violated figure. 1970
- Borbereki, Z. Mobile. 1971
- Boys, G. Endless configuration. 1977
- Brews, L. Landscape variation in red. 1978
- Catherine, N. Liquidizer. 1973
Sacred pumpkin. 1973
- Gattaneo, G. Colour lithograph. 1973
Closing of votes. 1979
- Coetzee, C. Oil on canvas. 1973
- Coleman, T. Iris. 1977
 Painting. 1977
- Dali, S. Etching. 1972
- Davis, J. Cold turkey. 1975
- Dine, J. Bolt cutiers (second state). 1975
Five paint brushes (sixth state). 1975
Four German Brushes. 1975
Self portrait in a ski hat (second state). 1975
Self portrait in a ski hat (third state). 1975
 Wall chart 11. 1975
- Eglinton, S. Untitled. 1978
- Eight wooden Gothic sculptures. 1970
- Erasmus, N. Whirlpools in human matrix. 1978.
- Ernst, M. Oisseau Vert. 1978.
- Francis, S. Towards disappearance. 1978
- Frankenhaller, H. Oil painting. 1976
Since then. 1976
 Graphic works. 1978
- Hamilton, R. I'm dreaming of a black Christmas. 1975
- Higgs, C. Water colour and gouache. 1972
- Hockney, D. Contrejour in the french style. 1975
My mother with a parrot. 1975
Tree. 1975

- Jarosynska, K. Drawing. 1972
Oil on canvas. 1972
Take off. 1975
- Jennison, R. Secret garden - relief. 1975
Thanks for the memory. 1975
Wedlock. 1975
- John, A. Dorelia standing. 1974; 1975
- Jorn, A. Entreé de secours 87/100. 1973
- Kottler, M. Bronze bust of Field-Marshal J. C. Smuts. 1977
Bronze bust of H.C. Hull. 1977
Bronze bust of Professor Radcliffe-Brown. 1970
Bronze bust of R. R. Drydone. 1978
Portrait of a girl. 1974
Seated girl 1974
- Laubser, M. Portret van Kalie. 1970
- Legae, E. Chicken series. 1978
- Leibrandt, E. Etchings. 1970
- Le Parc, J. Collage. 1971
- Levy, R. Diptych: Night space. 1978
- Lindblom, S. Sculpture I. 1977
- Maqhubela, L. Mixed media. 1972
- Marcuson, T. Untitled ceramic. 1978
- Mason, J. Rocking horse. 1974; 1975
- Matsoso, L. Drawing. 1972
Silkscreen. 1972
- Meerkotter, D. Circular objects. 1975
Etchings. 1970
Komposisie met ovaal vorm. 1975
Mechanical inventions. 1975
- Michelow, B. Focus II. 1978
- Millington, T. Piano no. 3. 1975
Tablemat I. 1978
Tablemat II. 1978
- Moore, H. Etchings. 1972
Plate of etchings. 1972
- Munoz, L. Oil on wood. 1972
- O'Connor, P. Oil. 1972
- Organ, B. Monarch of the Glen after Landseer. 1978
Overseas. 1978
- Pasmore, V. Projected linear relief in two movements. 1978
- Portway, D. Oil on paper. 1972
- Potgieter, H. Four colours. 1974; 1975
Prints. 1976
- Rauschenberg, R. Poster for peace. 1975
- Ray, M. Les Pêches. 1975
- Reck, A.C. Bird sanctuary. 1978
- Rosenquist, J. Cold light. 1975
Hey! Let's go for a ride. 1975
Light that won't fall. 1975
Rainbow. 1975

- Sash, C. Etching. 1972
Oil on canvas. 1972
Silkscreen. 1972
- Shilakoe, C. Etching. 1972
- Skotnes, C. Carved wooden panel. 1972
The white Monday disaster. 1975
Woodcuts. 1971
- Smail, Jo. Here 1977. 1978
- Smith, R. Proscenium II. 1975
Proscenium III 1975
- Starkey, A. Portrait of a house. 1974
- Stella, F. Eskimo curlew. 1978
- Strydom, W. Bennox. 1977
- Tapnies, A. Barriere Marron. 1978
Matière - 59/75. 1974; 1975
- Tobey, M. Chinese memories. 1975
- Van Heerden, J. Untitled. 1975
- Van Lingen, C. Colour serigraph. 1973
Flow II 1974; 1975
Series P2, 1974. 1974; 1975
Spread. 1978
- Vasarely, V. Vega fel-rouge/vert. 1975
- Vels, E. The garment of praise. 1978
I will give you the keys. 1978
- Venter, P.S. Teabaq 1977. 1978
- Villa, E. Sculpture 1974. 1974
- Vorster, Anna. Oil on canvas. 1972
- Webber, P. Sea sculpture. 1978
- Wenning, Pieter. Drawing. 1971
- Whippman, M. Green landscape. 1974
Oil on paper. 1972
- Wilding, L. Two kinetic sculptures. 1978
- Wunderlich, P Giacomo Joyce II. 1978
Olympia. 1978
- Yvaral. Structure ambigue E. 1975
Structure ambigue G. 1975
- Zobel, F. Oil on canvas. 1972

From 1977 all new acquisitions are listed in the annual reports of the Gallery.

