

BOWMAN SCULPTURE

The New School



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The gallery specialises in European Romantic sculpture from the 19th century to the present day. We start with the masters of the romantic period, such as Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux, Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse, and Aimé-Jules Dalou through to the Impressionist, Modern and Cubist sculpture of Edgar Degas, Pablo Picasso, Henri Laurens, Jaques Lipichitz and Ossip Zadkine.

Bowman Sculpture also specialises in British sculpture from the New School to the present day, such as Lord Frederic Leighton, Hamo Thornycroft and Henry Moore, Elizabeth Frink and Barbra Hepworth. Additionally, the gallery deals in a selection of contemporary artists, such as Hanneke Beaumont, Maurice Blik, Helaine Blumenfeld and Emily Young.

Robert Bowman is an appointed sculpture expert for the UK Government committees for the Acceptance in Lieu Tax Scheme and The Export of Art and Objects of Cultural Reference. He was the head of the TEFAF vetting committee for 19th & 20th-century sculpture for over 15 years.

Robert Bowman opened Bowman Sculpture in 1993 after 15 years at Sotheby's, during which he was Director of European Works of Art. Bowman Sculpture is the world's leading gallery for sculpture by Auguste Rodin and has earned a worldwide reputation for consistently sourcing works of the highest quality.

The family owned and run gallery is located in Duke street, St James's, where it welcomes collectors, enthusiasts, academics, and newcomers to the world of sculpture.



Gilbert Bayes

British, 1872-1953

Gilbert Bayes was the son of the painter Walter Bayes (1869-1909) and a prominent member of the late British New Sculpture movement. He began his studies in 1896 at the City and Guilds Art School in London, and later went to the Royal Academy to study under Sir George Frampton until 1899. In his final year at the Academy, he won a gold medal and a travelling scholarship to Paris. After spending only one year in France, he still received an honourable mention at the Universal Exposition of 1900.

On his return to Britain, he joined the workshops of Sir George Frampton and Harry Bates, but quickly began to engage with sculpture as an independent artist, as well as being an exponent of the War Memorial movement of the 1920s. Two of his most famous works include the *Queen of Time* (1928) above the main entrance of Selfridges in London, and the *Athletics* (1934) sculpture at Lord's Cricket Ground. Outside of Britain he produced a memorial of *St. George* (1927) in Jerusalem, as well as the *Offerings of Peace and War* (1926) group outside the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney.

Gilbert Bayes' work earned him international fame as he continually exhibited around the world and annually at the Royal Academy from 1905-1952. He served as the President of the Royal British Society of Sculptors from 1939-1944.

For Bayes his interests in symbolism and chivalry were based on their innate expression of eternity and mysticism. He was particularly entranced by the legends of Medieval Britain and their place in modern society. Similar equestrian statuettes to *Sirens of the Ford* are works such as *Sigurd* (1909), *Knight Errant* (1900) and *The Underworld* (1913).

In October 2004, the Victoria and Albert Museum and Gilbert Bayes Charitable Trust collaborated to open the Gilbert Bayes Sculpture Gallery inside the premises of the V&A. It now possesses a wide range of sculpture from Bayes as well as other artists of the period.

The Sirens of the Ford

Signed Gilbert Bayes

Bronze, with brown patina

Height: 27" (68 cm)

Conceived and cast circa 1899

The Sirens of the Ford was modelled in 1899 and illustrated in the *Studio Magazine* of 1900. The sculpture is a typical English New School interpretation of the Greek mythology of the mermaid like creatures called the Sirens who, with their beautiful appearance and sensual singing, lured sailors into rock strewn waters to drown. The most famous of these myths is that of Ulysses who sailing past the island where the Sirens lived, had his men fill their ears with wax and tie him to the mast of his boat. In this way he could hear their beautiful song without being tempted to join them in the sea. The story was well represented by the Pre-Raphaelite John William Waterhouse, whose painting would have been well known to Bayes. In Bayes' version an English Knight is crossing a ford in a river and is tempted to join two beautiful Sirens in the swirling current.

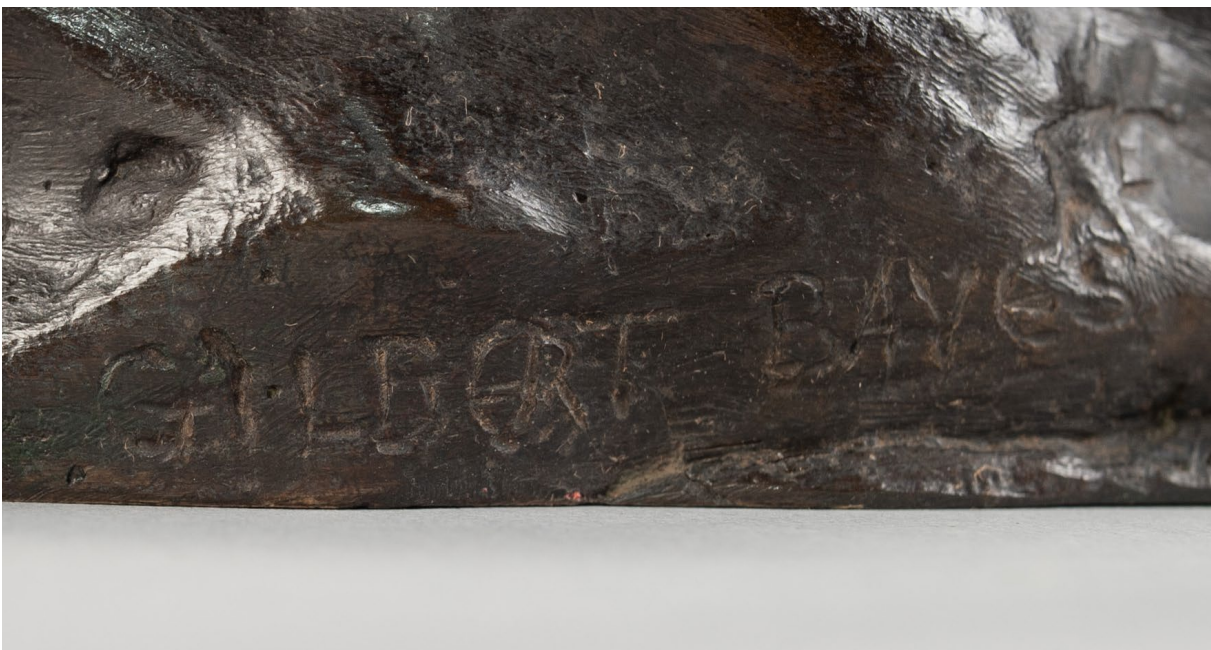
Literature

Jeremy Cooper, *Nineteenth-Century Romantic Bronzes: French, English and American Bronzes 1830-1915* (London, 1975), illustrated front cover

Katherine Faulkner, 'Gilbert Bayes and the Chivalric Statuette', in *Nineteenth -Century Contexts: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 36, Issue 4 (2014), pp. 307-321.

Melissa Hamnett, 'The Albert Dawson Collection: a Handley-Read Legacy' in *The Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 – Present*, 2016, No. 40, *The Charles & Lavinia Handley-Read Collection* (2016), pp. 96-113.

Louise Irvine and Paul Atterbury, *Gilbert Bayes, Sculptor 1872-1953*, Shepton Beauchamp, Richard Dennis, London: 1998, pp. 22





The Underworld

Signed and dated 'GILBERT BAYES 1913', on an ebonised pedestal

Bronze, gilt and dark brown patina

Height: 9 1/4" (23.5 cm)

Overall Height: 17" (43 cm)

Conceived and cast 1913.

The statuette *The Underworld* was produced by Bayes in 1913 and was inspired by Rudyard Kipling's ballad *The Last Rhyme of True Thomas* from 1894. The ballad recounts the tale of a 13th figure called Thomas Learmont, who according to legend was taken by the Queen of the Fairies into her realm to serve as her companion and confidant. From her he was gifted 'the tongue that can never lie' – hence the name True Thomas.

Inspired by the poem, Bayes created a sculptural group depicting a knight astride a rampant horse, being carried away to distant lands by a group of fairies. The knight is seen in full armour, and his horse is also cloaked in a caparison and rears its head as it flies through the skies.

The Fairy Queen is seen just below the horse's caparison, emerging as if from a cloud-like formation, guiding the horse on its way as she looks up towards Thomas. She is aided by six fairies, depicted here as children, who grip the edges of the horse's caparison, and help her guide the horse through the air. The Fairy Queen and her underlings represent the seven years that, according to the legend, Thomas spent in the Queen's service.

A coat of arms is presented five times on the sculpture, four times on the horse's caparison and once on the left shoulder of Thomas. The shields all depict the same coat of arms, a lion on a green background, which is reminiscent of the style of the 12th century and particularly the arms of Richard the Lionheart. This further emphasizes Bayes' fascination with medieval design and imagery.

Remnants of colour are still visible in areas on the shields. Bayes frequently used colour to enhance his sculpture, as seen with his Sigurd from 1909. He had worked in collaboration with the ceramic manufacturing company Royal Doulton throughout his career and this is where his experimentation with colour originated.

For Bayes his interests in symbolism and chivalry were based on their innate expression of eternity and mysticism. He was particularly entranced by the legends of Medieval Britain and their place in modern society. Similar equestrian statuettes to *The Underworld* are works such as Sigurd (1909), *Knight Errant* (1900) and *Sirens of the Ford* (1899).

Literature

Jeremy Cooper, *Nineteenth-Century Romantic Bronzes: French, English and American Bronzes 1830-1915* (London, 1975), pp. 93-94.

Katherine Faulkner, 'Gilbert Bayes and the Chivalric Statuette', in *Nineteenth-Century Contexts: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 36, Issue 4 (2014), pp. 307-321.

Melissa Hamnett, 'The Albert Dawson Collection: a Handley-Read Legacy' in *The Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 – Present*, 2016, No. 40, THE CHARLES & LAVINIA HANDLEY-READ COLLECTION (2016), pp. 96-113.

Louise Irvine, 'The Architectural Sculpture of Gilbert Bayes' in *The Journal of Decorative Arts Society 1890-1940*, 1980, No.4 (1980), pp.5-11.

Louise Irvine and Paul Atterbury, *Gilbert Bayes, Sculptor 1872-1953* (London: 1998), pp. 120,142.



The Bather

Signed Derwent Wood

Dated 1909

Bronze with dark brown patina

Height: 15 3/4" (40 cm)

Conceived and cast in 1909

The present model, conceived in 1909, featured prominently in the Pall Mall Magazine alongside busts by Alfred Drury and an image of Sir George Frampton's *Peter Pan*. It is one of a number of smaller pre-war works by the artist which show the influence of late 19th-century Romantic French sculpture.

During the 1890s Wood made a number of trips to Paris where he particularly admired the work of Auguste Rodin. Here, the sculptor expertly captures the movement in the bather's torso and her arms, giving the model a poise and charm that is less evident in his later memorial sculpture.







Alfred Drury

English, 1856-1944

Alfred Drury initially studied at the Oxford School of Art, later going on to study under Dalou at the South Kensington school. Dalou was in England during that period due to political events in France, and when the situation resolved itself he returned to Paris (1881). Drury went with him, being very impressed both by his tutor's work and that of the French School generally. However, four years later he decided to return to England, first to teach at the Wimbledon School of Art and after to work at Boehm's studio in London. He first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1885 and became an Associate in 1900.

Drury produced some fine portrait busts - for example *St Agnes, Age of Innocence* (exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1897) and *Griselda* - as well as full figures like *Spring, Evening and Circe*. He joined a group of artists including Gilbert, Thornycroft, Frampton, Leighton, Baxter, Mackennal and Ricketts whose work was called the New Sculpture. This school was self-confessedly influenced by the French style and was established during the last years of the nineteenth century, but unfortunately its activity was cut short by the onset of the First World War. In its rather brief history the New Sculpture dramatically managed to reform the course of sculpture in this country and establish the bronze as an exciting and significant art-form.

Works from the School were often commissioned as public statues and had a certain humanity and expression which arrested the imagination. Some examples of Drury's public works include *Science* on Vauxhall Bridge, London, *Peace and War* on the South-west side of the War Office, together with *Truth and Justice* on the North-west side, allegories of *Art and Design* on the Hammersmith Road, London, and *Morning and Evening* in the City Square, Leeds. A more unusual work is the bronze commemoration plaque (1897) at the Northern entrance to the Blackwall Tunnel, London.

The Age of Innocence

With repeat signature A. DRURY. 98 and A. DRURY.'98.

Bronze with brown, red and green patina

Height: 14 11/16" (37.5 cm) on green marble base

Conceived in 1896, this example cast in 1898

The Age of Innocence is one of Drury's most popular works – it was considered by the art historian Benedict Read as one of the 'major icons' of the New Sculpture movement.

The model was conceived in plaster in 1896 and was first exhibited in marble at the Royal Academy in 1897. This version incorporated the girl's shoulders and a dress covering her upper arms and torso. The success of this model led Drury to produce a 'reduced' version in bronze for the collector's market, where the portrait of the young sitter was reduced to her face and neck, down to her collar bones.

The work was widely praised by connoisseurs and critics alike, with M. H. Spielmann, author of *British Sculpture and Sculptors of Today* (Studio Special Number, 1901), arguing that *The Age of Innocence* significantly '*heightened the public appreciation of Mr. Drury's talent*'. Drury was obviously delighted with the work and in a letter dated 1901 to Herbert Thompson, who had recently purchased the piece, wrote '*I am so glad that you like it so much. Among my smaller works it has certainly given me the most pleasure*'.

The model for the work was Gracie, the youngest of the Doncaster's daughters, who were family friends of the sculptor. All three children would later become the subjects of Drury's 'ideal sculpture', which aimed to convey the purity and charm of youth. Here, Drury depicts Gracie slightly tilting her head to the right, suggesting a state of peaceful daydreaming. The artist's depiction of the human form is of the highest order. The young girl's cheeks and delicate features are sensitively rendered, giving the bronze a soft, almost fleshy appearance.

Given the work's great popularity, it continued to be cast in a number of sizes and slight variations into the 1900s. This guaranteed the dissemination of the model, which can now be found in major public collections across the UK and abroad, such as the Laing Art Gallery (Newcastle), the Manchester City Art Gallery, the Harris Museum and Art Gallery (Preston) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York). An early plaster model of this sculpture dated 1897, is currently held in the Victoria & Albert Museum collection.



The Age of Innocence, Alfred Drury,
Marble, Victoria & Albert Museum



The Age of Innocence, Alfred Drury,
Plaster, Henry Moore Institute



Head of Gracie Doncaster (The Age of Innocence)

Signed A DRURY

Bronze with light brown and green patina

Height: 9 1/16" (23 cm)

Conceived and cast circa 1897

Literature

M.H. Spielmann, *British Sculpture and the Sculptors of Today*, (London, 1901), p.124.

Benedict Read & Peyton Skipwith, *Sculpture in Britain Between the Wars, 10 June to 1 August 1986*, (London, 1986), p.140.

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, Yale, New Haven and London, 1983, p 107-21, 167-74, 242, 260







Sir George Frampton

English, 1860-1926

Sir George James Frampton was born in London in 1860, the son of James Frampton – a wood and stone carver. At the age of 18, confident of the experience gained in his father's workshop, the artist moved to Paris to work on the building site of the Hôtel de Ville. He returned to London shortly after, studying at the Lambeth School of Art under W.S. Frith and then at the Royal Academy from 1881 to 1887.

Having exhibited at the RA for the first time in 1884, Frampton went on to win a gold medal and a travelling scholarship in 1887. Part of his travels took him to Paris, where he enrolled in the studio of one of the most successful sculptors in France, Antonin Mercié (1845-1916).

Mercié's work had been the inspiration for many of the English 'New' sculptors, and particularly for the early work of Alfred Gilbert. During Frampton's apprenticeship, Mercié was instrumental in introducing the artist to the French Romantic movement, as well as to the intricacies of Symbolism, which were to become a key feature of the artist's later work.

Upon his return to England, Frampton became the leader of the Arts and Crafts movement and was appointed joint head of the London Central School of Art, a post he held throughout the 1890s. His mastery of mixed media sculpture is best shown by his polychromed plaster of *Mysteriarch* of 1892, now part of the Walker Art Gallery collection, Liverpool. The sculpture is representative of Frampton's mature, Symbolist aesthetic: never before that time in Britain had a bust been so filled with evocative power and devoid of its traditional function as a portrait. Frampton's contribution to the movement was not limited to the United Kingdom, as the artist participated in the first show of the Symbolist group *La Libre Esthétique* in Brussels in 1894.

Frampton was knighted in 1908, marking the importance of his contribution to the development of English sculpture in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period.

Peter Pan

Signed with GF monogram and dated 1913 and inscribed with monogram PP

Raised on a stepped rectangular green veined marble plinth

Bronze, with a rich dark brown patina

Height: 18.9" (48 cm)

Overall height: 23" (59 cm)

Conceived 1911. This reduction edition dated 1913.

Frampton is best known for his statue of *Peter Pan* in Kensington Gardens. Commissioned by the character's creator Sir James Matthew Barrie (1860-1907). This was erected in 1912 at night, so that the public might think it appeared by magic.

The statue in Kensington Gardens depicts Peter Pan in a very natural and childlike pose, playing his pipes. He is standing on a large 'pedestal' which on close inspection is actually made up of fairies, personages, and woodland animals, in a very organic and magical way. It remains not only one of Frampton's most well-loved works, but also one of London's - it has been voted as the city's most popular statue. The wonderfully lifelike representation of Peter Pan is whole-heartedly in the style of the Romantic era (1880s). This is in contrast to the starker, more hard-edged and avant-garde movements in vogue when this piece was sculpted.

This particular version of Peter Pan was cast in 1913 and has the initials PP (standing for Peter Pan) and the artist's monogram GF inscribed on the base of the bronze. He has the delicate poise of a woodland sprite, and is happily playing his pipes, one arm outstretched, one foot forward, as though he is dancing to the sounds of his magical music.

Other casts of the sculpture occupy prominent public locations in Liverpool, Brussels, Camden (New Jersey), Toronto (Ontario), St John's (Newfoundland) and Perth (Western Australia).

Literature

Benedict Read, *Victorian Sculpture* (London: 1984), pp. 315-317.

Jeremy Cooper, *Nineteenth Century Romantic Bronzes* (London: 1975), illust. p. 85, pp. 82-85.

John Blackwood, *London's Immortals* (London: 1989), pp. 136-7, 104-5, 166-7.

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture* (London: 1983), p. 21.





The Red Shawl

Black and red lacquered Japanese Ash

Height: 54" (137 cm)

Conceived and carved 1925

Richard Garbe (1876–1957) was born in London and studied at the Central School of Arts and Crafts and the Royal Academy Schools. Garbe started out as an apprentice to his father, Gustave, a carver specialising in ivory and tortoiseshell. Influenced by Chinese carvings in jade and crystal, Japanese netsuke, and Gothic craftsmanship, he began to experiment with direct carving around 1903, in ivory and marble. Although he practiced, and eventually taught modelling, he considered himself primarily as a carver.

Garbe was a prolific sculptor whose work is marked by the variety of the materials including terracotta, clay and plaster. He first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1928 and was made an associate member in 1929. He was a fellow of the Royal Society of British Sculptors, and in 1936, he became a Royal Academician. Garbe's best known large-scale works are two groups of sculptures representing the medieval and modern periods located in the east pavilion of the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff. Garbe is also well known for his ideal works, including *The Egoist* (1906), *Man and the Ideal* (1907), *The Idealist* (1908) and *Undine* (1909).

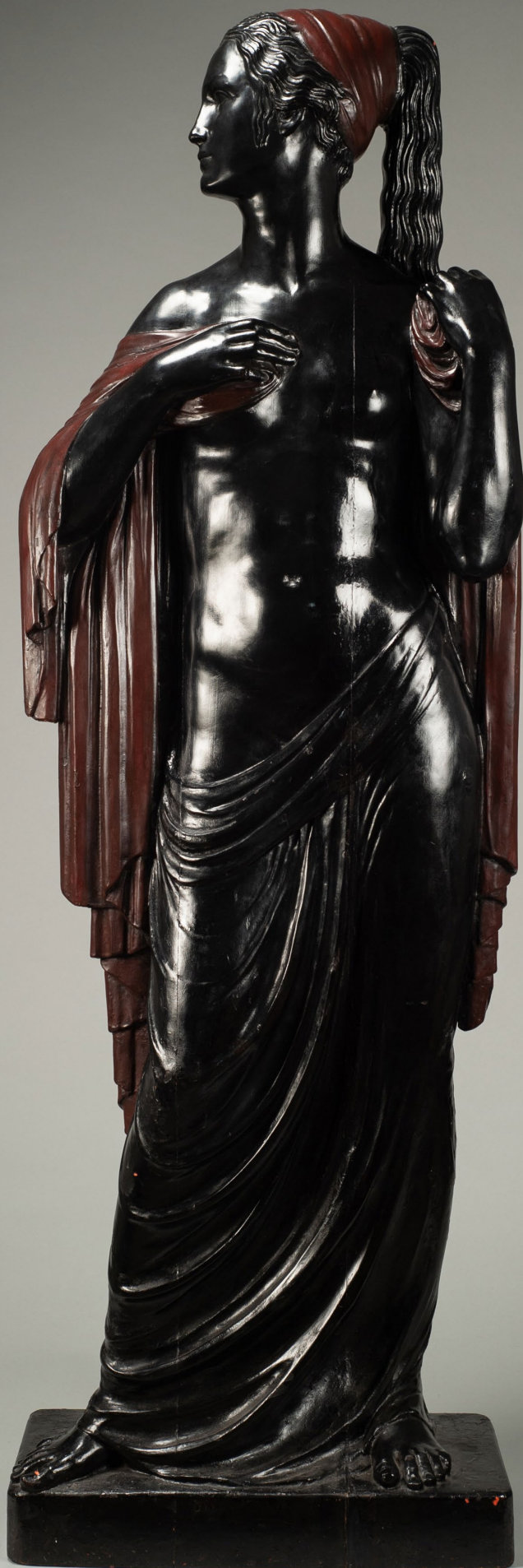
After teaching at the Central School between 1901-1929, Garbe's renown led to his appointment to Head of Sculpture at the Royal College of Art from 1929-1946. Nowadays, his work is featured in a number of museum collections including The Royal Academy, London; Tate, London; The Museum of New Zealand, Wellington; and The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney. An important collection of Garbe's ivory carvings can be seen at The Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

The Red Shawl, was first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1925 (no. 1336); It is made of Japanese ash which has then been lacquered and ebonised. It was later exhibited at The Fine Art Society, Sculpture in Britain Between the Wars, 1986, no. 38, and again at The Fine Art Society, Carving in Britain from 1910 to Now, 2012-2013, no. 7

Literature

The Fine Art Society, *Britain Between the Wars*, 1986, no. 38

The Fine Art Society, *Carving in Britain from 1910 to Now*, 2012-2013, no. 7





Sir Alfred Gilbert

British, 1854-1934

'I was born ambitious . . . I cannot remember one moment of my life from my earliest childhood, when some sort of aspiration did not inspire me.' - A. Gilbert, Confessions, 1907

Sir Alfred Gilbert was one of the most original and ambitious sculptors of the Victorian era and a key figure of the New Sculpture movement. Born in London in 1854, he was the eldest son of professional musicians, Charlotte Cole and Alfred Gilbert Sr. He was admitted into the Royal Academy Schools in 1873 and in 1875 moved to Paris to study at the École des Beaux-Arts under the tutelage of sculptor, Pierre-Jules Cavelier.

Gilbert's move abroad was fundamental in developing his artistic language. He travelled and worked in Italy, settling in Rome in 1878, where the Italian Renaissance had a lasting influence on his craft.

Gilbert's first publicly exhibited bronzes at the Royal Academy and Grosvenor Gallery were sent to London from Rome, causing great sensation among the British public. These included *Perseus Arming* (1882) and *Icarus* (1884), which cemented the young sculptor's reputation and contributed to the development of New Sculpture aesthetics.

Returning to London in 1885, at Frederic Leighton's request, Gilbert was commissioned to design the *Fawcett Memorial* for Westminster Abbey. This was to be the first of many Royal commissions, including the design of the *Queen Victoria Winchester Jubilee Memorial*, exhibited in 1887 and now installed in the Great Hall at Winchester Castle.

In 1886, he began work on the *Shaftesbury Memorial Fountain* for Piccadilly Circus in London, a year later gaining the title of Associate of the Royal Academy. The iconic monument features a giant model of Anteros (now commonly known as *Eros*). This was the first-ever statue cast in aluminium in England.

Gilbert contributed greatly to the development of casting techniques in the United Kingdom. The artist re-introduced the lost-wax process of casting into the country, which he had learnt during his time in Rome, and which became one of the distinguishing features of his sculptures. In addition, his taste for polychrome and mixed media work led him to experiment with alternative metal alloys to cast in bronze.

In 1892, Gilbert embarked in the most important of his Royal commissions – the *Memorial to the Duke of Clarence, Prince Albert Victor*, for St George's Chapel, Windsor. The sculptor's perfectionism, high studio costs and lack of business acumen led to increasing delays in the production of this and other commissions. Eventually Gilbert was forced into bankruptcy in 1901 and went on self-imposed exile to Bruges, halting his work on the *Windsor Memorial* and leaving a public relations disaster in his wake.

During his time in Belgium, Gilbert continued to produce and cast his most famous statuettes, which were sought after by both European and English collectors. His rift with the Royal family over the *Clarence Tomb* was finally resolved in 1926, and Gilbert was able to return to England to finish the work. In England, the artist also produced the *Queen Alexandra Memorial* (1932), on Marlborough Road, London – the last of his major public commissions. He was knighted in 1932 and died two years later, in 1934.

Comedy & Tragedy: 'Sic Vita', Large Version

Bronze with green, dark and light brown patina

Height: 31 1/3" (79.7 cm)

Conceived in 1890 and cast circa 1900

'Clarice: Shall it be comedy, then?

Abbé Dubois: Tragedy!

De La Ferté: Comedy!

Doctor Choquart: Gentlemen, let us benefit by this difference of opinion. Let us say comedy first, and tragedy afterwards.'

W.S.Gilbert, *Comedy and Tragedy*, first performed at the Lyceum Theatre (London) on 26th January 1884

The present piece was the first ever independent bronze figure Gilbert set out to create after producing *An Offering to Hymen* in 1886. The artist regarded it as 'the climax' of his 'cycle of stories'—the last chapter of his trilogy of self-portraits, which includes *Perseus Arming* (1881) and *Icarus* (1884).

The work is reflective of Gilbert's mind in the early 1890s. By this point, Gilbert was a well-known sculptor with Royal patronage and a seemingly impeccable career ahead of him. Yet, in his private life he was struggling; mounting debts, problems with his patrons and a sick wife had left the artist in a state of anxiety and depression. The artist was likely further inspired to produce this sculpture after he attended the play '*Comedy and Tragedy*' by William Gilbert, which was staged at the Lyceum Theatre in London in the 1880s and where his friend, the American actress Mary Anderson, played the lead role.

As is often the case with Gilbert's work, it is only through his words that one can fully grasp the symbolism of the piece. During an interview given in the 1903 Easter Art Annual, the artist remarked how the sculpture '*represents a boy carrying a comic mask. He is stung by a bee - the symbol of love. He turns, and his face becomes tragic. The symbol is in reality fact. I was stung [...] by my love for my art, a consciousness of its incompleteness. [...] I was living a kind of double life at that time, enjoying the society of Irving and Toole and other famous and pleasant members of the Garrick Club going to the theatre at night, and with Tragedy in my private life, living my Comedy publicly, if not enjoying it.*'

Combining such contrasting images in one work was not easy. To achieve this, Gilbert elaborated a complex but highly effective composition, which engages the viewer in the round. The result is a tour de force in modelling, displaying a mannerist twist that is reminiscent of Giambologna's (1529-1608) work—an early master of the multi-viewpoint sculpture. The success of the model led the artist to cast it in two different sizes, 76cm and 34cm.

The original plaster model for the 76cm version is currently part of the Victoria and Albert Museum collection. Bronzes from this and the smaller model are currently part of the Ashmolean Museum (Oxford), the Scottish National Gallery (Edinburgh), the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) and the National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC), among other collections around the world.

Literature

Benedict Read, *Victorian Sculpture* (London: 1984), pp. 315-317.

Jeremy Cooper, *Nineteenth Century Romantic Bronzes* (London: 1975), illust. p. 85, pp. 82-85.

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Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture* (London: 1983), p. 21.



Sir Alfred Gilbert

British, 1854-1934

Comedy & Tragedy: 'Sic Vita'

Bronze with rich, dark-brown patina

Height: 14 2/5" (34cm)

Conceived and cast circa 1890





Perseus Arming, Large Version

Bronze with rich brown patina

Height: 28¾" (73 cm)

Conceived 1881 and cast circa 1890.

Commissioned in bronze by Sir Henry Doulton and first shown at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1882, *Perseus Arming* is one of Sir Alfred Gilbert's most popular works. It was modelled in 1881 while Gilbert was living and studying in Rome and received an honourable mention in 1883 at the Salon in Paris.

It's evident that certain elements of *Perseus Arming* were influenced by Gilbert's visit to Florence in 1879, when he encountered the works of the great Renaissance sculptors, Benvenuto Cellini and Donatello. This had a marked impact on Gilbert, inspiring him to adopt the classical subjects as well as the contrapposto (counterpoise) twist associated with the Italian Renaissance.

However, even at the young age of 25, Gilbert was more interested in the adaptation of sculpture rather than replication. He remarked at the time that although he was amazed by Cellini's masterpiece, *Perseus with the Head of Medusa*, the work left him 'somewhat cold,' as it failed to touch his 'human sympathies.' 'At the time, my whole thoughts were of my artistic equipment for the future,' he wrote in 1903. 'I conceived the idea that Perseus before becoming a hero was a mere mortal, and that he had to look to his equipment.' (Joseph Hatton, 1903, p.10)

With this mindset, Gilbert inserted himself into the sculpture, using the subject as a means of self-portrait. The piece is considered an analogy for Gilbert's own burgeoning artistic career. We see Perseus looking over his shoulder to his winged sandals, checking his tools are fit for purpose. We can surmise that just as Perseus was a mere mortal before slaying Medusa, Gilbert believed that one day he too would master his tools and achieve greatness.

The Greek mythology of Perseus has been widely depicted among poets and artists for centuries. Perseus was a demigod, the illegitimate offspring of the god, Zeus, who seduced Perseus' mortal mother, Danae. The mythology of Perseus is comprised of numerous heroic and thrilling tales, including the slaying of Medusa. Medusa's gaze could petrify her victims, but Perseus' polished shield protected him from petrification, enabling him to slay the Gorgon monster.

One of the many sons of the amorous Zeus, he also saved the beautiful Andromeda from a sea monster and won her hand in marriage. Gilbert modelled this Apollo-like youth influenced by Renaissance sculptors centuries before his time.

Gilbert created this work in three sizes. Each version was a separate sculpture, not a mechanical reduction, which was common during this period. Gilbert adjusted the proportions of the limbs and torso to suit each model and also made some subtle changes to the details. For instance, on the large version, the head of the handle of the sword is more elaborate than the middle-size version.

It is important to remember that the New School Sculptors made works in very small numbers and often for a specific client, so each work would be overseen in its creation by the sculptor. Gilbert was notorious for his embellishments and adjustments even in his smaller works. This present cast of *Perseus Arming* is a large version measuring 28¾" (73 cm).

Literature

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. pl. 175.

Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Art: *The Handley-Read Collection*. London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1972. No. F44.



Perseus Arming

Signed A. Gilbert

Bronze with a rich dark brown patina with lighter brown highlights

Height: 14 1/2" (37 cm)

Conceived in 1881 and cast within the artist's lifetime





Victory

Unsigned, on an agate orb and ebonised socle

Bronze, dark brown patina

Height: 5 1/4" (13.5 cm)

Overall Height: 9 7/8" (25 cm)

Conceived circa 1887

In 1887 Gilbert sculpted the *Queen Victoria Jubilee Memorial*, which is now in the Great Hall at Winchester Castle. He exhibited the full-sized plaster at the Royal Academy a year later. The present work is a reduction of the figure of *Victory*, which stands on the royal orb, held by Queen Victoria, in the monument.

Unfortunately for Gilbert, the original model of *Victory* was broken off and stolen from the monument when it was first unveiled at Winchester Town Hall. The damage was perceived as a protest not against the Queen or Gilbert, but rather against William Ingham Whitaker, who had funded the monument and was unpopular with the public at the time. Fortunately, the figure was recovered and restored by Gilbert and the monument was eventually moved from the Town Hall to the Great Hall at Winchester castle, where it remains to this day.

The figure of *Victory* is influenced by the iconography of the Ancient Greek Goddess Nike, particularly Winged Victory of Samothrace, which was rediscovered in the mid-19th century and is now part of the collection of the Louvre in Paris.

The reduction of *Victory* was cast in several sizes, the present being the smallest and most popular. Gilbert gave examples of the model to a number of friends, including John Singer Sargent, Seymour Lucas, Henry Irving and Mark Senior.

Other casts of Gilbert's *Victory* are part of the collections of the Royal Academy of Art, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Ashmolean Museum as well as the Wolverhampton Art Gallery and the Leeds City Art Gallery.

Literature

Benedict Read, *Victorian Sculpture* (Yale University Press: 1982), p.341.

Richard Dormant, *Alfred Gilbert* (London: 1985), p.180-183, plate 39.

Richard Dormant, *Alfred Gilbert: Sculptor and Goldsmith* (London: 1986), 129, nr. 34.

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture* (Yale University Press: 1983), pp. 196, 207, 210.

The Fine Art Society, *Gibson to Gilbert – British Sculpture 1840-1914*, ex. cat (London: 1992), p. 53-55. Plate 26.

The Royal Academy of Arts, *Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Art: the Handley Read Collection* (London: 1972), p. 108.



An Offering to Hymen

Bronze with dark brown and silver patina, on a wood base

Height of bronze: 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (29 cm)

Height of base: 3 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (8 cm)

Conceived 1884 and cast circa 1890

Conceived in 1884, while Gilbert was still in Rome, this small statuette depicts a naked young woman offering two gifts to Hymen, the god of marriage and the attendant to Venus. The work was highly acclaimed by public and critics alike during its first ever exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1886. Gilbert first met the pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones at this venue: this chance meeting developed into a lasting friendship between the two artists.

In the present, rare version of the model, the young girl holds a miniature winged figure of Anteros (the Greek god of requited love) in her left hand and a sprig of hawthorn in her right one. In another variation of the model the hawthorn is replaced with either a goblet or a rose. The beautifully preserved silvered patination of the figure of Anteros on this piece, adds to the rarity of the model.

The figure stands on a richly decorated pedestal, which is heavily adorned with repeated, miniature grotesques. As the art historian Susan Beattie pointed out, these decorations '*suggest the hieroglyphics on a pagan altar*' and thus echo '*the symbolism of the statuette*'.

In another reading of the work, the model can be placed alongside Gilbert's *Perseus Arming* (1881) and *Icarus* (1884), completing a triad of works concerned with the transformation from youth to maturity. In Gilbert's *Perseus*, the hero glances towards his winged sandals, questioning whether they will be fit for the daunting task of fighting the monstrous Medusa. Likewise, in the present model, Gilbert depicts the uneasiness of the young woman as she proceeds to the altar and the ceremony that awaits her, displaying the figure's nervous, almost trance-like demeanour, through her stiff posture and focused expression.

Other versions of this model can be found in the collections of the City of Manchester Art Gallery, Victoria and Albert Museum (London), National Museum of Wales (Cardiff) and the Ashmolean Museum (Oxford).

Literature

Isabel McAllister, *Alfred Gilbert*, London, 1929, pp. 144-145, illus. p. 48

R. Dormant, *Alfred Gilbert: Sculptor and Goldsmith*, exh. cat. Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1986, pp. 51, 114, no. 19

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, London, 1985, chapter 6, illus. plate p. 143



Group of the Lovers

Plaster wax and plasticine

Height: 6 1/8" (15.5 cm)

Conceived and modelled circa 1892

The *Group of the Lovers* (circa 1890) is a unique, hand-modelled plaster of which no other versions or bronze casts are known to exist. The artist gifted the piece to Albert Toft, another great contributor to the New Sculpture movement and personal friend of Gilbert's.

The *Group of the Lovers* is strongly reminiscent of numerous sketches produced by Gilbert as studies for potential gifts, designs for cutlery, pendants and jewelry in silver or gold. In particular, a series of six silver spoons produced between 1893 and 1903 show a similar composition, with a male and female figure embracing at the bottom of the handle. These have been interpreted as Adam and Eve, although little information about the work can be found in the artist's diary and archives.

At the same time, the piece could equally represent the study for a seal and it might have been conceived as a potential crowning element of the so-called De Vesci Seal, now part of the Metropolitan Museum of Art collection in New York City. The seal was commissioned from the artist on 1 January 1891 by John Robert William Versey, 4th Viscount de Vesci. As was typical with Gilbert's commissions, the artist took over five years to complete the work, which was delivered only in 1886. Ten years later, the Viscount presented the Seal to his wife (née Lady Evelyn Charteris) as a present for their silver wedding anniversary. Indeed, the figure in armour surmounting the elaborate seal holds two shields marked respectively with the arms of Vesey and Charteris, suggesting the union between the two families.

The *Group of the Lovers* could have been devised by Gilbert as the crowning element of such a seal, with the two figures representing the union between the Viscount and his wife, only to be replaced by the figure in armour—more in keeping with the heraldic nature of the commission.

We are grateful for Richard Dormont for his assistance in cataloguing this work.



Bust of George Frederick Watts

Signed A.Gilbert A.R.A. Sc.

Dated 1890

Bronze with green, dark and light brown patina

Height: 6 1/4" (16 cm)

Conceived 1888 and cast 1890

George Frederic Watts was a highly successful Victorian painter, first garnering fame with his drawing of Caractacus, which won the first prize in the competition to design murals for the new Houses of Parliament in 1843. In the following decades, Watts was first associated with the Aesthetic Movement and was greatly influenced by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. He later developed his own pictorial style, drifting away from the movement but continuing to be considered a master of the painted medium. Watts also produced some accomplished sculpture, the most important of which is *Physical Energy* (conceived 1882-1902) and currently occupies prominent public locations in England, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

In 1888, Watts' wife, Mary, wrote a letter to Gilbert asking him to model a portrait of her husband. Gilbert was clearly delighted to undertake the commission as he greatly admired Watts, who at the time was an established member of the Royal Academy and an illustrious part of the 'Holland Park Circle' together with Frederic Leighton.

According to Mary Watts, on his first visit to her husband's studio at Little Holland House, Gilbert had said that he could not tell her '*how great an endeavour*' he would make in executing the work. Such attitude is directly reflected in the number of sittings Gilbert required to produce the portrait. Instead of the usual five posing sessions the artist usually required, the resulting likeness was produced after 18 sittings during the summer of 1888.

In the portrait, Gilbert does not attempt to flatter his sitter. Rather, he produces a dignified depiction of his aged looks, resulting in a wise and contemplative countenance, which is framed by Watts' infamous skull cap and beard.

Gilbert refused payment for the model and gave the first cast of the work to Watts. This was executed in the winter of 1889 and later joined Tate Britain's collection as a gift of Mary Watts in 1904. The original plaster is in the collection of the Royal Academy, while the present model is a reduction of the original bust, produced by Gilbert for the collector's market.

In return for Gilbert's generosity Watts painted a portrait of the sculptor. The portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1896 and was listed as being in the collection of Mrs. Gilbert. The present location of the painting is unknown.

Literature

Richard Dormont, *Alfred Gilbert* (London: 1985), pp. 121-122, 220, plate 50, p.93.

Richard Dormont, *Alfred Gilbert: Sculptor and Goldsmith* (London: 1986), pp.119-120, plate 25.

Jeremy Cooper, *Nineteenth-Century Romantic Bronzes: French, British and American Bronzes 1830-1915* (London: 1975), pp. 73-74, plate 69.



Elizabeth Dyce Duckworth

Bronze with rich brown patina

Height: 19.6" (50 cm)

Cast circa 1900

Elizabeth 'Elsie' Dyce Duckworth was the daughter of the celebrated physician Sir Dyce Duckworth, who attended Queen Victoria and Edward VII. Tragically, Elsie died when just a teenager on 20th March 1884. From photographs or a painted portrait Sir Dyce commissioned Gilbert to produce this delicately evocative likeness, which he modelled in plaster, then cast in bronze and finally carved in marble.



marble version sold at Sotheby's London, lot 110, June 2010

Alongside studies at the Royal Academy Gilbert worked in the studio of Sir Joseph Edgar Boehm, favourite sculptor of the royal family. Boehm's studio was constantly working on his many portrait commissions in which, as Dormont writes, '*Boehm sought to distinguish in marble the texture of flesh, hair, pearls or fabric*' and this technique clearly influenced the young Gilbert. By 1875 Gilbert had learnt everything he could from Boehm and he left for Paris, where he developed his gifts for modelling. It was in Italy that Dormont asserts Gilbert discovered the medium of bronze. His mastery of modelling and casting would go on to become one of the most distinguishing features of his career.

Gilbert produced this portrait in bronze, with a reduced truncation of the marble version and with the addition of portrait pendants of the girl's mother and father hung on the ribbon around her neck. Only the present cast is known, sold at Sotheby's on 29th March 1983. It is not known why the portrait was worked in both media, but Sir Dyce was delighted with the marble when he visited Gilbert's studio on 8th January 1891 and asked the sculptor to exhibit it at the Royal Academy, which he did in June of that year.

Literature

R. Dormont, Alfred Gilbert: *Sculptor and Goldsmith*, London, 1986, no. 27, pp. 12



Hope

Bronze, rich dark brown patina

Height: 19" (49 cm)

Conceived 1890 and cast circa 1920

In 1892 Gilbert was commissioned to design the *Memorial for Lord Arthur Russell* (1825–1892) a member of the Liberal Party. Together with the *Clarence Tomb*, this was one of Gilbert's most important commissions, taking over eight years for the sculptor to complete.

The Memorial was eventually installed in 1900 at the Bedford family chapel at St Michael's Church, Chenies, in Buckinghamshire. It took the form of a candle stick over 9.5 m tall, which featured four bronze figures mounted on an elaborate knop placed halfway up the structure.

The four figures Gilbert devised were those of Faith, Hope, Charity and Courage. In this context, the first three represent the traditional Christian theological virtues, while Courage a cardinal one. The allegory of faith, hope and charity are important symbols of the early modern period and in this instance act both as representations of martyred Christian Saints named 'Faith', 'Hope' and 'Charity' (love), denoting the three Christian virtues found in 1 Corinthians 13:13 but which also act as sculptural representations of the character of Lord Russell himself.

Faith, Hope, Charity were conceived specifically for the monument while the figure of Courage was originally intended for the Tomb to the Duke of Clarence and was never cast for the collectors' market. The other models were produced during the 1920s and sold through the Fine Art Society, which by this point, had the sole rights to reproduce Gilbert's work.

The present model is that of the personification of *Hope*.

Literature

R. Dormont, *Alfred Gilbert: Sculptor and Goldsmith*, London, 1986, no. 92, pp. 82

Richard Dormont, *Victorian High Renaissance*. London: Lund Humphries, 1978, cat. 103.





Frederic Lord Leighton

English, 1830-1896

‘There can be no doubt, whatever the rapid advance made in the art of sculpture during the last thirty years was, to a considerable extent, due to the sympathy and the interest which Leighton gave to it’ – Hamo Thornycroft (Barrington, 1906, p.6)

Frederic Lord Leighton was one of the most prolific and influential artists in Victorian Britain. Born in Scarborough, he studied and worked in Europe, primarily Italy and Paris, before settling in London in 1859. He quickly rose as one of Britain’s brightest stars and became an associate member of the Royal Academy in 1864. He was elected president of the RA in 1878 and maintained the position for almost twenty years until his death in 1896.

Although Leighton is primarily known for his paintings, he was also a fundamental figure in the development of late-Victorian sculpture. The exhibition of his first ever model, *An Athlete Struggling with a Python* in 1877 was heralded as signalling a rebirth of the sculptural form, prompting a movement known as New Sculpture. This piece was then followed by two other works, *The Sluggard* (1885) and *Needless Alarms* (1886). These works cemented Leighton’s influence and position in the medium of bronze sculpture.

Leighton’s contribution to the renaissance of sculpture in Britain is not only confined to his artistic merits. Thanks to his influential position as president of the Royal Academy, he was also able to mentor the development of sculpture as a patron. Leighton contributed to the study of the discipline by supporting Hamo Thornycroft’s election to the Royal Academy in 1881, and instituting changes to the Academy’s exhibition rooms that facilitated the display of sculpture. He was also responsible for the progress of Alfred Gilbert’s career in Britain and ultimately convinced the sculptor to move back to London from Rome.

After being honoured with a knighthood in 1878, Leighton was the first artist to be given a peerage, becoming Lord of Stretton in 1896, the year of his death. In 1900, he posthumously represented Britain with his paintings at the Great Exhibition in Paris. His residence in Holland Park now houses the Leighton House Museum in London.

The Sluggard

Signed Fred Leighton and inscribed The Sluggard

Stamped Founded by J. W. Singer & Sons Frome Somerset and Published by Arthur Leslie Collie 39B Old Bond Street London May 1st 1890

Bronze with dark and light brown patina

Height: 20 3/5" (52.3 cm)

Conceived 1886 and cast before 1906

The Sluggard is one of the most famous sculptural works of Leighton as well as of 19th century Britain. It depicts a male nude in a momentary stance of languish repose, his arms raised above his head as he stretches out his limbs. Similar to his paintings, his sculptures relied heavily on the contoured lines and exact detailing of his drawing skills and imbues the work with elegant grace and form. The result is a work that harks back to the classical traditions of ancient and renaissance sculpture; however, its subject matter and style of portrayal was entirely new.

The inspiration for *The Sluggard* came from Leighton's life-drawing model Gaetano Valona stretching during a break between poses. The work was originally called *Athlete Awakening from Sleeping* and was first executed in 1882. It is argued that the work was conceived as a sequel to *An Athlete Struggling with a Python*, however the work is more removed from the Neoclassical style as it intricately plays with the ideal and the real. Although seemingly in a state of relaxation, the defined muscles of the male figure are flexed and showcased as an ideal form.

The original cast was received with great critical acclaim at the Royal Academy in 1886. Subsequently in 1889, it was exhibited in Paris and earned Leighton a medal of honour. This bronze is a sketch for the finished work and one of an edition cast by Singer and Sons of Frome, Somerset. This version was produced for the collector's market, as a reduced version of the finished work was never cast.

Singer and Sons set up their new foundry, capable of casting using the lost wax and sand-casting processes, in 1888. The rights to market the model were bought by Arthur Leslie Collie in 1890. Working from his joint premises with Agnew's in Old Bond Street, Collie sold numerous works of Leighton and other British sculptors in collaboration with the Singer and Sons Foundry. A bronze cast of *The Sluggard*, which bore his name and that of the foundry, was exhibited at the Arts and Crafts exhibition of 1890. By 1901 Collie was no longer associated with Agnew's and by 1906 he was no longer listed in the art directory. Therefore, casts made under Collie's name can be accurately dated to this period.

The Sluggard became one of the most popular sculptures of the Victorian Era and many notable museums possess a cast in their collections. These include the Tate Britain, the Royal Academy, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Leighton House Museum, the Ashmolean and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. A cast of *The Sluggard* was also included in the design of Lord Leighton's tomb in St. Paul's in 1902.

Literature

Jeremy Cooper, *Nineteenth-Century Romantic Bronzes: French, English and American Bronzes 1830-1915* (London: 1975), p. 65, illustr. p. 125.

Mrs Russell Barrington, *The Life, Letters and Works of Frederic Leighton*, Vol.1 (London: 1906), p.6.

Michael Forrest, *Art Bronzes* (Pittsburgh: 1988), illustr. p. 198.

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture* (London: 1983), pp. 30, 149, 190-191.





Sir Edgar Bertram Mackennal

English, 1830-1896

Born in Melbourne in 1863, Sir Edgar Bertram Mackennal played a pivotal role in the development of the English New School of sculpture. He initially trained under his father, John Mackennal, a prominent Melbourne sculptor of Scottish descent. Mackennal first studied at the Melbourne National Gallery, then moved to London in 1882, where he studied at the British Museum before gaining a place at the Royal Academy. Disillusioned by the RA's teaching methods, he decided to abandon his studies and set up a studio for himself. Only 19 at the time, Mackennal obtained his varied tuition by visiting the studios of several leading sculptors in Paris.

Mackennal's first major commission came in 1887, when he won a competition to sculpt the relief panels on the façade of Parliament House in his native Australia. He spent the next two years completing the project before returning to Europe and exhibiting *La Tête d'une Sainte* and *Le Baiser d'une Mère* at the Paris Salon of 1892.

Mackennal's reputation as a sculptor spread around the world after his exhibition of *Circe* at the Royal Academy. He completed two commissions in Australia in 1901 before returning to London, where he designed the *Coronation Medal for King George V*, among other prestigious works.

As the Art Gallery of New South Wales's important 2007 exhibition showed, Bertram Mackennal is arguably the most successful Australian artist of the early twentieth century: the first Australian to be elected to membership of the Royal Academy, the first to have work purchased by the Tate Gallery and the first to be knighted.

Circe

Signed B.Mackennal and inscribed with foundry mark

Hohwiller Fondateur Paris (Rodolphe Hohwiller, 1901-1930)

Inscribed on base KIPKH (Circe)

Bronze, with rich dark brown patina

Height: 22 5/16" (56.5 cm)

Conceived 1893, this reduced version cast circa 1910

It was in Paris in 1893 that Mackennal executed the model of *Circe* – derived from Homeric myth – the goddess, sorceress and temptress who was famous for her beauty and known for transforming her enemies or those who offended her into animals.

Circe first garnered interest in 1893, when the piece received an honourable mention at the Salon. The critic for the *Revue des Deux Mondes* remarked that *'the tense, restrained, but triumphant beauty of the sorceress bears itself with a firm and elegant alertness, which is free from every trace of vulgarity'*. (Joep Slade, 1895. p. 390)

The following year, *Circe* appeared at the Royal Academy and caused a sensation. The Hanging Committee of the Royal Academy considered the scenes of Odysseus's men being enslaved, which decorate the base of the sculpture, too graphic.

'[The Committee] recognised the brilliance of the sculpture, but its frank sexuality went well beyond anything they had previously accepted. Furthermore, the intricate swirling plinth of the statue depicted Circe's bestialised victims in a manner that was far too forthright for the Academy.' (James, 2013. p. 69)

Fortunately, The Committee and Mackennal negotiated a compromise, which allowed the sculpture to remain in place of honour but required the base to be covered from public view with a swathing red baize.

This unprecedented exhibition heightened the public's curiosity and led to considerable comment by the press, who reported that Mackennal's sculpture *'drew wondering and admiring eyes'*. Mackennal imbued *Circe* with a confronting sexuality, mesmerising beauty and an undeniable sense of power. It was perhaps, *'the irresistible supremacy of her nudity'* and her expression *'of scorn for her victims'* that attracted the most attention. (Joep Slade, 1895. p. 390)

The success of Mackennal's allegorical figures in the 1890s was the result of his masterful ability to synthesise the major artistic tendencies both in England and France, revealing the distinctive influence on his work by masters, such as Auguste Rodin and Alfred Gilbert. Mackennal was also greatly inspired by Florentine Renaissance traditions and the eroticised body, which was prominent in French sculpture at the time.

Graeme Sturgeon notes that *Circe* is *'a careful composite of all the influences to which [Mackennal] had been subject since arriving in England in 1882. In his treatment of Circe as a proud and self-sufficient individual, French influence can be detected, although the pose of the figure itself owed something to Alfred Gilbert.'* (Sturgeon, 1978. p. 63) Sturgeon also states that the intertwined figures around the base of the sculpture "could only have been conceived by someone who had inspected Rodin's models for *The Gates of Hell*".

In Homer's eternal work, *Odyssey*, legendary Greek hero Odysseus and his crew encounter Circe on her island of Aeaea. Circe drugs Odysseus' men before turning them into pigs. Before rescuing them, Odysseus is given a powerful herb by Hermes. This herb protects him from Circe's drug, enabling him to overpower Circe and force her to return his men to their human forms. Odysseus later becomes Circe's lover and remains with her and his crew on Aeaea for one year.

Described as *'haughty, imperious and sexually charged'*, *Circe* is an iconic example of Mackennal's expertise at blending the expressive surfaces and sexualised subjects of Rodin with the style and ideals of English New School. (Gray, 2004. p. 194) This piece is also the reason why many consider Mackennal the *'Australian who changed the British concept of what was sexually acceptable in sculpture'*. (James, 2013. p. 69)



Salome

Signed B.MACKENNAL LONDON

Inscribed SALOME

Bronze with dark, brown patina

Height: 11 1/2" (29 cm)

Conceived and cast circa 1896

The present piece depicts the biblical figure named Salome, a dancer at the court of King Herod of Judea. According to the New Testament, Salome was dancing for King Herod at a feast and her charms seduced the powerful king. He promised to fulfil any wish of her choosing, to which she responded that she desired the head of St. John the Baptist. The shocked king reluctantly carried out the request and St. John's fate was sealed. The story of Salome's wish became a popular image in Western iconography, where she is usually depicted with the head of John the Baptist on a silver platter. Often portrayed as a seducer, the imagery was used as a symbol of the power of female persuasion.

Mackennal delivers a unique twist to the imagery of *Salome*, by not engaging with the traditional iconography but rather offering a new depiction of the dancer. She is presented in the nude, wearing an exotic headpiece, as she holds a large sword behind her back. In a contrapposto pose, her right foot gently lifts from the ground as the shoulders twist and her back elegantly arches as if to rest on the sword's edge.

The object of the sword is an obvious reference to the beheading of St. John but also a suggestion of the traditional form of sword dancing prevalent in Middle Eastern culture. Not only does Mackennal present us with a dancer engaged in a traditional form of her craft but also a foreshadowing of Salome's famous wish and the consequences of her seductive powers. The result is a sculpture that breathes new life into a traditional iconography through imaginative modelling and sophisticated imagery.

The story of Salome was brought to the fore in the early 1890s by Oscar Wilde's play *Salome*, a good example of the late Victorian era's fascination with the femmes fatales and their powers of persuasion. The original model of *Salome* was first presented by Mackennal in the 1896 Royal Academy exhibition. The work was very well received and garnered critical acclaim for its sensual modelling.

The model of *Salome* was only cast in the present size. Other examples of this work can be found in a number of public collections, such as that of the University of Melbourne and the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney.

Literature

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture* (London: 1983), pp. 246-247, 260n.61.





Edward Onslow Ford

English, 1852-1901

Edward Onslow Ford was born in London in 1852. He first studied painting in Antwerp at the Koninklijke Academie voor Schone Kunsten before taking up sculpture, encouraged to join the classes of Professor Michael Wagnmüller at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Munich.

He returned to London with his wife, Anne Gwendoline von Kreuzer, whom he met and married in Germany, in 1874. Ten years later, the sculptor took a studio opposite Alfred Gilbert in Fulham. The two became firm friends, experimenting with the lost-wax method of casting. Ford later became well-known for casting his smaller bronzes with this technique. Along with Gilbert, Ford was also a pioneer of mixed-media sculpture.

Onslow Ford fell under the influence of Alfred Gilbert, and became one of the central figures of the New Sculpture Movement. His work includes, as well as the portraits, a variety of ideal works including many allegorical nudes.

These very different strands in Onslow Ford's work show the variety of skills and work. His portrait sculpture - a prodigious number of portrait busts in marble and bronze, and a few full statues - tend to be highly finished, with complex folded or enveloping drapery, in a way that seems to capture a moment. This rather realist work contrasts with the softness and ideal forms of his allegorical nudes. These latter works clearly show the influence of Gilbert, confirming his passion for symbolism.

Onslow Ford's *The Singer* (1889) was one of only two sculptural works among Henry Tate's original gift to the nation. Also in the Tate Gallery is *Folly* (1886), which was bought through the Chantrey Bequest and also exists in versions in the Ashmolean Museum and at Port Sunlight. Other work at Port Sunlight includes the marble *Snowdrift*. *Peace of 1887* is in the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool.

Linus

Signed E Onslow Ford

Bronze with light brown and green patina

Height: 30 1/2" (77.5 cm)

Conceived 1884 and this example cast circa 1890

The present sculpture (alternatively titled Linos) is based on the son of Apollo, and the God of Melody and Rhythm. There is a single full-size version in the Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight, Liverpool. This large-scale cast (191 cm) was originally shown at the Royal academy in 1884.

Although the sculptor had made his debut in 1875, it was this work which signalled the beginning of his career as one of the foremost artists of the New Sculpture movement. Indeed 1884 represented an important year for sculpture in Britain, in particular for full-sized, bronze statues of youthful male nudes - represented at the Royal Academy that year by Ford's *Linus*, Alfred Gilbert's *Icarus*, Hamo Thornycroft's *Mower*, and Auguste Rodin's *The Age of Bronze*.

As with many other models by Gilbert, Thornycroft and Onslow Ford, different scaled versions were produced for the wider market. In correlation with this custom, a 38 cm version was made, with a fig leaf to cover Linus's modesty.

The current model is the rare, 77.5 cm version.





Folly

Signed E. Onslow Ford, dated 1893 and Copyright

Bronze with rich dark and light brown patina

Height: 19.5" (49.4 cm)

Conceived in 1886 and cast in 1893

Ford produced a series of allegorical female nudes during the 1880s, which cemented his place at the forefront of the New Sculpture movement. The earliest of these nudes, *Folly* (1886), was purchased by the Tate Gallery, London, and made '*the fortunes of its creator*' (Dixon, *Magazine of Art*, 1892, p.328). Another large, 88cm version of the model is currently in the National Gallery of Scotland (Edinburgh).

In 1886, *Folly* was exhibited at the Royal Academy together with Leighton's *Needless Alarms*; Gilbert's *An Offering to Hymen* was also on display at the nearby Grosvenor Gallery. The three models typified an interest by the 'New' sculptors in the depiction of beauty and adolescence, which influenced the later generation of British artists.

According to the art historian Benedict Read, the model is '*sometimes claimed as the first work cast by the revived lost-wax method*' in England (Victorian Sculpture, p.321). While this statement cannot be verified, it is certainly indicative of the ground-breaking nature of Ford's use of such a technique at the time.

Modelling the work, Ford pressed strands of animal hair into the wax model to effectively imitate the texture of hair so as to achieve a hyper-realistic effect. The sculpture's excessive life-likeness was brought up as a criticism to the artist's work. Famously, such criticism was also levelled at the French master Auguste Rodin (1840–1917) in 1877, during the first ever public exhibition of his *Age of Bronze*.

Devoid of any contextual narrative, *Folly* is a compelling expression of an abstract idea in a realistic sculptural style. Although the work functions as an allegory, this is strictly evocative, and neither moralising nor instructive. In this light, the piece derives much inspiration from and fits perfectly within the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic, popular at the time in England.

As well as the present model, Ford also produced a truncated version of *Folly*; removing the figure's arms, head and lower legs. While the work echoes the fragmented models of antiquity, its sensuous form and softly modelled contours radically differentiate it from the stiff neo-classical models often produced by British sculptors in the mid-19th century.

Literature

- M. Hepworth Dixon, *Onslow Ford ARA*, *The Magazine of Art*, 1892, p.238, repr. p.329;
 Edmund Gosse, *The New Sculpture, 1879–1894*, *The Art Journal*, 1894, p.282, repr. p.306;
 E.T. Cook, *A Popular Handbook to the Tate Gallery*, London 1898, p.279;
 M.H. Spielmann, *British Sculpture and Sculptors of To-day*, London, 1901, p.55;
 Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, New Haven & London, 1983, pp.153–55, pl.144.



Peace

Signed E. Onslow Ford London 1890

Bronze, rich dark brown patination

Height: 17.7" (45 cm)

Conceived 1889 and cast circa 1890

Part of his series of ideal nudes, Onslow Ford's full-size plaster of *Peace* was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1887, where it was considered by the critic Edmund Gosse to be '*the most delightful contribution to the exhibition*'. Three years later a life-size bronze was also shown; this work is now part of the Walker Art Gallery collection, Liverpool.

Peace is here depicted as a youthful female figure, following its traditional iconography, holding the palm branch of victory in her right hand and a dove in her left, standing on a piece of armour—the symbol of subdued war. Ford's innovation does not relate to the subject's iconographic attributes, but rather to its composition. *Peace* is represented as a lively young girl and captured mid-movement, devoid of the stiffness that would have characterised ancient or neoclassical depictions of the same subject.

Peace was one of Ford's first ever works to be cast in bronze in a reduced scale for Arthur L. Collie. Collie's business had opened in 1889, sharing his premises with the renowned fine art dealer Thomas Agnews at 39 Old Bond Street. His endeavour was fundamental for the spreading of New Sculpture aesthetics to a wide British public in the form of affordable, high-quality reductions of popular artists' works.

On 31 May 1890, an article by an anonymous contributor appeared on the London Saturday Review, addressing the novelty of Arthur Collie's endeavour. In the article, the author states how '*Mr Onslow Ford's elegant and spirited work specially lends itself to reproduction in miniature. No specimen in Mr Collie's gallery is more delightful than the Peace, a little nude female figure in a caressing and conciliating attitude, waving a palm branch*'. Five years later, Gosse's article in Magazine of Art, entitled '*Sculpture in the House*', *Peace* was illustrated in domestic settings alongside statuettes by Frederic Leighton and Hamo Thornycroft, demonstrating the success of Collie's undertaking and the widespread popularity enjoyed by the 'New' sculptors.

Literature

W. Armstrong, *E. Onslow Ford*, Portfolio, 1890, p. 70

E. Gosse, *Sculpture in the House*, Magazine of Art, 1895, p.369

M.H. Spielmann, *British Sculptures and Sculptors of To-Day*, London, 1901, p.54-5.

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, New Haven and London, 1938, p.153, pl. 145 (another cast) and p. 188.

Joanna Barnes Fine Arts ed, Exhibition catalogue, *Leighton and his sculptural legacy: British sculpture 1875-1930*, London, 1996, pp.54-5, no.24.



Dancing

Signed Onslow Ford

Bronze with rich brown patina

Height: 13.7" (34.8 cm)

Conceived and cast circa 1890

Dancing was conceived as a pair to *Music* (1890) and featured the young woman wearing an ornate helmet with two wings. When it was illustrated in the 1890 edition of *Magazine of Art*, the author suggests that the headdress was inspired by Alfred Gilbert's *Enchanted Chair*; this life-size model was later exhibited at the Fine Art Society in 1902. Another life-size cast of the work, without the headdress, is in the collection of the Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool. The present model is a reduction of the Lady Lever version, with the position of the left hand differing slightly.

As is typical in Ford's work, the dainty idealised figure is left free from classical connotations or mythological themes. Here, the graceful swooping of the dancer's arms and her delicate posture merely serve to illustrate the movement and joys of dance.

Literature

Beattie, Susan. *The New Sculpture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. pl. 175.

Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Art: The Handley-Read Collection. London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1972. No. F44E. Goose, Sculpture in the House, *Magazine of Art*, (1895) p.369

Joanna Barnes Fine Arts ed., *Exhibition catalogue, Leighton and his sculptural legacy: British sculpture 1875-1930*, (London, 1996) pp.54-5, pl no.24.

M.H. Spielmann, *British Sculptures and Sculptors of To-Day*, (London, 1901) p.54-5.

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, (New Haven and London, 1938) p.153 and 188. pl no. 145 (another cast illustrated)

W. Armstrong, *E. Onslow Ford, Portfolio*, (1890) p. 70





The Shore and the Deep

Reverse with paper label from The Art Exhibition Bureau,

23 Albemarle Street, London W1

Swedish green marble

Height: 15.5" (39 cm)

Width: 12.5" (31.5 cm)

With thanks to Kirsty Jackson, grand-daughter of the sculptor for information about this work.

Charles d'Orville Pilkington Jackson was born in Cornwall in 1887. He moved to Scotland early in his life, first studying design at the Royal Institute and then enrolling at the Edinburgh Art College in 1907. His early talent earned him a travelling scholarship to Italy in 1910. A year later, Jackson was back at work in his Edinburgh studio, submitting his first ever sculpture, *Loretto Boy*, to the Royal Academy.

Jackson enlisted in the Ayrshire Field Artillery during WW1, travelling to Palestine and Egypt. Upon his return to Britain, he started sculpting again, focusing on the creation of war memorials throughout the 1920's; Jackson's works of this kind include the *Alloa War Memorial* and the sculptural decorations for the *Scottish National War Memorial* at Edinburgh Castle. In the same years, the artist also produced a number of portraits, the most exemplary of which is the *Sir Edward Sharpey-Schafer medal*, executed in 1922 and now in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery, London.

In 1942, he became president of the Scottish Society of Arts, a position he held until 1945. His best-known work is an equestrian statue of *Robert Bruce, King of Scots* on the battlefield of Bannockburn.





Perseus Holding the Head of Medusa

Signed F. W. Pomeroy SC and Dated 1898

Bronze with a rich brown and green patina

Height: 19" (49.5 cm)

Cast 1898

The present model is perhaps Pomeroy's most distinguished and certainly his most celebrated work. It was first exhibited as a life-size plaster in 1898 at the Royal Academy and was described as early as 1901 by the renowned art historian and theorist M.H. Spielmann as 'a very important statue'.



Perseus, one of the earliest heroes of Greek mythology, is depicted clutching the severed head of the Gorgon monster Medusa as well as the diamond edged sword given to him at the fountain of the nymphs. He wears winged sandals, lent by the god Hermes, which enabled him to fly beyond the ends of the earth to find Medusa and her sisters.

The composition, with a few amendments, is based on the most famous work of the Renaissance sculptor Benvenuto Cellini, whose own Perseus with the Head of Medusa, was designed for the Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence and unveiled in 1554.

Pomeroy was born in London and studied at the Lambeth School of Art under Dalou and Frith. In 1880 he was admitted to the R.A. Schools, where he won a gold medal and a travelling scholarship in 1885. He went on to Paris and studied under Antonin Mercié whose *David with the Head of Goliath* of 1872 (now in the collection of the Musée d'Orsay) clearly also influenced this study of Perseus as no doubt did Alfred Gilbert's *Perseus Arming* of 1882. All the small bronze casts of this model differ very slightly. Some of these bronzes bear the date of the original plaster 1898 like the present example. Others, are inscribed 1901 (or 1902) and were cast specifically for an exhibition at the Fine Art Society Exhibition in 1901, where they were sold for 30 Guineas.

Benvenuto Cellini, *Perseus with the Head of Medusa*, 1545-1554,
Bronze, 550cm, Piazza della Signoria, Florence



The Spinner

Signed and dated Reid Dick ARA/1924

Plaster with wash

Height: 44" (112 cm)

Conceived and modelled in 1924

Sir William Reid Dick's sculptural production was much indebted to the work of New Sculpture artists, but also steeped in Rodin's end-of-the-century lessons, representing a unique form of artistic expression in England during the first half of the 20th century.

The long and distinguished list of his public monuments includes the *Kitchener Memorial Chapel* in St Paul's Cathedral, the *Lion on the Menim Gates at Ypres*, the equestrian group entitled '*Controlled Energy*' at Unilever House (London), the *Eagle on top of the Royal Airforce Memorial* at Embankment, and the statue of *Franklin D. Roosevelt* in Grosvenor Square.

The Spinner was commissioned as a sculptural feature of Vigo House, on Regent Street, in Central London. The present piece is the plaster model for the stone figure which was placed on its façade in 1925 and can be still seen in situ today.

The building was designed by the Scottish architect John James Burnet for the Glasgow-based clothing company R.W. Forsyth. It is therefore unsurprising that the choice of the artist for the composition fell on Reid Dick, who, much like architect and retailer, had Glaswegian roots but resided in London.

The final location of the sculpture fundamentally influenced its iconography. *The Spinner* sits cross-legged, holding a spindle in her left hand and threads in her right one; the figure's clothing – seemingly a long-sleeved peplos – and sandals reference the attire of ancient Greek women, bringing to mind the mythological figure of Clotho, one of the three Fates, who was responsible for spinning the thread of human life. Placed on the façade of Vigo House, *The Spinner* functioned as a visual exemplification of the building and its commissioner.

In 1926, a bronze reduction of the model was cast and exhibited at the Royal Academy, cementing his growing reputation in Britain; the sculptor was elected Royal Academician in 1928. He was appointed President of the Royal Society of British Sculptors in 1935, holding the post for three years and received his knighthood in the same year. King George VI appointed him King's Sculptor between 1938 and 1952. Last in a long list of honours, he was appointed Queen's Sculptor in Ordinary for Scotland from 1952 until his death in 1961.



Augustus John, 1937

Signed BARNEY SEALE and dated 1937

Entitled Augustus John

Bronze with dark brown and green patina, on marble base with inset bronze

Height: 8.3" (21 cm)

Barney Seale (1896-1957) was born in London and was the son of Gilbert Seale and grandson of John Wesley Seale, both architectural sculptors. He trained and worked in the family firm, G. Seale and Son Ltd. and was also a student of William Silver Frith and Henry Massey. Although his training was broadly architectural, he is famed for his striking portrait heads including the virtuoso violinist and composer *Nicolò Paganini*. Seale exhibited from 1936 at the Royal Scottish Academy and from 1937-1941 at the Royal Academy. From 1938, he was made Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, the Royal Society of British Sculptors, and the Royal Society of British Artists.

The subject of the present bust is Welsh painter and draughtsman *Augustus John* (1878-1961), who studied at the Slade School of Art in London (1894-99) with his sister Gwen John. Following a diving accident while on holiday and suffering a serious head injury in 1897, his outlook on life changed. The long recovery period seemed to have stimulated his adventurous spirit and accelerated his artistic growth. He embarked on a Bohemian lifestyle – he drank heavily, lived in a caravan, and camped with gypsies. As his painting technique became more brave and daring, his friend, writer and painter, Wyndham Lewis, remarked that John had become a *'great man of action into whose hands the fairies had placed a paintbrush instead of a sword'*.

Considered to be the most talented artist of his generation, by 1914 on the outbreak of the First World War, John was the best-known artist in Britain. By the 1920s, John was Britain's leading portrait painter. Among his sitters were notable contemporaries Thomas Hardy, George Bernard Shaw, W.B. Yeats, and T.E. Lawrence.

In the present bust, we see the portraitist becoming the sitter. According to scholar Stanley Casson, John highly approved of Seale's sculpture of him and thus added his own signature to the original model. In the present version, his signature is visible on a bronze plaque set in the marble base.

Literature

Casson S, *Sculpture of Today*, The studio Ltd, London, 1939, p.51



Firedog Finials

Bronze with dark and light brown patina

Height: 14" (37cm)

Conceived and cast circa 1850-1857

Although the critic Edmund Gosse did not coin the term 'New Sculpture' until 1894, Stevens' work provided an early challenge to the somewhat stale state of academic English sculpture already in the mid-19th century. The artist not only assimilated influences from Renaissance Italy, but also managed to translate such influences into a host of architectural and industrial designs which would inform the next generation of sculptors, architects and designers. Indeed, even Leighton's seminal *Athlete Struggling with a Python* owes much to Stevens' own *Truth and Falsehood* with its twisting depiction of combat between man and beast.

Stevens joined his father's decorating workshop at the age of ten, assisting him with house painting and joinery. In 1833, he was sponsored by the Rector Samuel Bet to travel to Italy and pursue an education in the fine arts. It was whilst studying in Rome and Florence that the young artist developed a strong inclination for the Italian Renaissance, particularly the work of Michelangelo.

In 1842, Stevens returned to England. He failed to secure the contract for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament, and thus he turned to teaching, spending two years as a tutor at the New School of Design in London.

In 1850, he took the position of chief artist at Henry E. Hoole & Co., manufacturers of ornamental stove grates and fenders. It was whilst in this position that Stevens designed the present firedogs, which were cast by the same firm in 1852. The models clearly show the influence of Michelangelo and, as the art-historian Susan Beattie asserts, these homely firedogs are '*transformed into heroic figures that echo, in their freedom of power, the ignudi of the Sistine Chapel ceiling.*'

Upon his return to London in 1852, Stevens was commissioned to design railings for the British Museum, topped with 25 ornate casts of lions. Following this he was given little large-scale work until 1856, when he started working on the *Wellington Monument* in St Paul's Cathedral, London.

The forty-foot structure features a sarcophagus that supports the recumbent figure of the Duke of Wellington. A marble canopy overlooks the effigy, decorated in the style of the late Renaissance period. Stevens' most famous works, the composite bronze sculptures of *Valor and Cowardice* and *Truth and Falsehood*, which echo the present firedogs, flank it on either side.





Sir William Hamo Thornycroft

English, 1850-1925

Sir William Hamo Thornycroft was one of the leading figures of the New Sculpture movement, and a great inspiration to many artists of his day. He was born in London in 1850, the son of sculptors Thomas and Mary Thornycroft. Encouraged by the family's engagement with the arts, he entered the Royal Academy at the age of 19, while working in his father's workshop.

In 1871, at his aunt's death, the artist was left with a £50 legacy. With the money, he travelled to France and Italy with his sisters. Their tour lasted over seven weeks; they visited Paris, Venice, Florence and Rome, where the ruins of the Classical past were mingled with the work of the great sculptors of the Italian Renaissance.

After his return to England in 1872, Thornycroft's work was exhibited at the RA for the first time; he was only 22 years old. This date signals the beginning of the artist's long-standing relationship with the Academy. In 1875 he won the RA's biennial Gold Medal for the best work of sculpture on a given theme, *A Warrior Carrying a Wounded Youth from the Field of Battle*. The following year, the artist joined together with his family the so-called 'Holland Park Circle', purchasing a plot of land close to G.F. Watts' and Leighton's houses. The group was responsible for the definition of late-Victorian aesthetics and culture.

Thornycroft was made an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1881, taking up a teaching post that was created appositely for him, and ultimately influencing the development of British academic sculpture for over 30 years, ceasing to teach only in 1914. He was knighted in 1917 and won the RBS Gold Medal in 1923, two years prior to his death. A joint memorial exhibition of his and Francis Derwent Wood's work was held at the Royal Academy in 1927.

Thornycroft's success can be waged directly against the large number of public commissions he received throughout his life. These include the memorials to *Gladstone* (1882, The Strand), to *General Charles Gordon* (1887, originally erected in Trafalgar Square) and to *Oliver Cromwell* (1899, House of Commons, Westminster). A lover of the Classics, Thornycroft's art represents an invaluable contribution to the development of art and culture in 19th-century Britain.

The Mower

Signed Hamo Thornycroft ARA SC 1884

Numbered 11 four times on the base

Bronze with dark and light brown patina

Height: 23 1/4" (59 cm)

Conceived in 1884 and cast within the artist's lifetime.

*'A mower, who, as the tiny swell
Of our boat passing heaved the river grass,
Stood with suspended scythe to see us pass'*

Matthew Arnold, *Thyrsis*, lines 127–129

The Mower is one of Thornycroft's most celebrated sculptures. The artist conceived the work around 1882, as he was boating down the river Thames, catching sight of a young farmer resting along its banks. Thornycroft sketched the figure quickly, writing in a letter to his fiancé Agatha Cox:

'He will keep his hat on and carry his shirt on his right arm along with the scythe. A brace will pan over his left shoulder, which will take off the nude look and connect the hat with the breeches somewhat. This gives the hang of the shirt. It is a great help in solidifying the composition and supporting the scythe.'

Thornycroft used his favourite model, the Italian Orazio Cervi, to pose for the piece. Upon its completion in 1884, *The Mower* was displayed at the Royal Academy accompanied in the catalogue with lines from Matthew Arnlod's poem *Thyrsis*, quoted above.

The Mower is a pioneering sculpture in light of its subject matter as it is arguably the first ever free-standing statue of a labourer in worker's clothes in the history of European sculpture. Its idealised composition is far removed from the realist and dignified depictions of labourers produced in France and Belgium by Aimé-Jules Dalou and Constantin Meunier towards the end of the century. With its contrapposto pose, *The Mower* is instead an image of sheer youthful beauty, steeped in the arcadian, classical tradition.

Thornycroft produced several wax studies for the work, the earliest of which dates to 1882 and is currently held in the collection of the Tate Gallery (London). The original lifesize version of the bronze is currently part of the Walker Art Gallery collection in Liverpool. The sculpture's success led the artist to produce a 60cm reduction of the model for the collector's market. Smaller casts, such as the present one, are currently part of the Tate collection and the National Museum of Wales (Cardiff), among others.

When the present cast was produced, Thornycroft was already an Associate Member of the Royal Academy, and his abbreviated title, ARA, is inscribed immediately after the name at the base of the piece.

Literature

Elfrida Manning, *Marble and Bronze: The Art and Life of Hamo Thornycroft*. London: Trefoil, 1982, illustrated p. 90



John Bright

Signed Hamo Thornycroft and dated 1891

Entitled John Bright

Inscribed Published by Arthur Leslie Collie 39b Old Bond Street London Sep R 10th 1891

Bronze with a rich mid and dark brown patina

Height: 13" (34cm)

Conceived in 1891 and cast circa 1892

The original commission for the full-size version of the bronze of *John Bright* by Thornycroft, was raised on a granite plinth and initially situated outside the Town Hall in Rochdale when it was unveiled in 1891 although it was subsequently moved to Broadfield Park in the town in 1933. Due to the popularity of the statute, the firm of Collie was then commissioned to produce a limited edition reduction of the statue.

A watercolour and pencil caricature of Sir William Hamo Thornycroft by Leslie Ward as 'Spy' and originally published in *Vanity Fair* 20 February 1892, is now in the permanent collection of the National Portrait Gallery (NPG 3933). This work depicts the sculptor working on a small figure of a man and it has been suggested that this figure may be the maquette for the Collie reduction of the full-size figure which Thornycroft unveiled in October 1891. This maquette was itself exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1892.

John Bright (16 November 1811 – 27 March 1889) was a Quaker and Nonconformist, British Radical and Liberal Statesman who is best known for his connections with Richard Cobden and the Anti-Corn Law League. A great orator, parliamentary reformer and critic of British foreign policy, he sat in the House of Commons from 1843 till his death in 1889.



Sir Leslie Ward, *Hamo Thornycroft, 1891-1892*,
Watercolour, 33.7cm x 2.5cm,
The National Portrait Gallery, London

Born in Rochdale, Bright first met Cobden in 1836/7 when the later was alderman of the newly formed Manchester Corporation. Hearing Bright speak, Cobden urged him to speak against the Corn Laws which lead to the founding of the Anti-Corn Law League in 1839. Bright joined Cobden in standing for parliament as a Free Trade Candidate in 1843 and was subsequently returned in 1847 and 1852. Although Bright lost his seat in 1857 due to his opposition to the Crimea War, he was elected as MP of Birmingham in 1858, a position which he held for the next thirty years. During this period he campaigned for parliamentary reform culminating in the Reform Act of 1867. However, Bright was finally forced to leave the Liberal party in 1886 due to his views on Home Rule in Ireland, although he continued to be active in politics and continued with his other academic posts.

In late 1888, Bright become seriously ill resulting in countless letters and telegrams wishing him a speedy recovery including one from Queen Victoria. However, his health continued to deteriorate until he passed away in 1889. Amongst the great and good of late Victorian high society and the political world paying tribute, the Conservative Prime Minister Lord Salisbury summed Bright up in the House of Lords as '*the greatest master of English oratory that this generation has produced*'. Bright was buried in the graveyard of the meeting house of the Religious Society of Friends in his home town of Rochdale.

Literature

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. 188, 190.



Teucer

Signed HAMO THORNYCROFT and dated 1881

Inscribed with the number 88

Bronze with a rich dark brown patina and lighter brown highlights

Height: 31" (79 cm)

Conceived in 1881 and cast in 1888

The life-size plaster for *Teucer* was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1881. The bronze was exhibited a year later and subsequently purchased for the Tate by the Trustees of the Chancery Bequest. In light of the sculpture's success, Thornycroft cast the work in three further sizes: 79cm, 55cm and 33cm.

In 1880 Thornycroft had the idea for a number of small sculptures 'illustrative of English Games', beginning with his model of an athlete *Putting the Stone*. The series was never completed, but in the present work we see the sculptor combining sporting imagery with the classical mythology of ancient Greece.

According to Homer's epic poem *The Iliad*, which recounts the final year of the Trojan War, Teucer was a formidable Greek archer who entered Troy in the Trojan Horse. Once inside Troy, Teucer tried in vain to kill the Trojan prince Hector, who was protected by the god Apollo.

The following passage was printed in the Royal Academy Catalogue which accompanied the exhibition of the work:

'Since, rallying from our wall we forced the foe, Still aimed at Hector have I bent my bow; Eight arrows from this hand have fled, And eight bold heroes by their points lie dead: But sure some God denies me to destroy this fury of the field, this dog of Troy.'

Thornycroft depicts the archer having just released his last arrow, captured in a moment of intense concentration as he watches it fly towards its target. The tension of the figure's arm and tautness of the bow is clearly evocative of Leighton's earlier *Athlete Struggling with a Python*. Yet, Thornycroft's use of the right-angled form is revolutionary and does not disrupt the model's perfect balance.

Literature

Elfrida Manning, Marble and Bronze: *The Art and Life of Hamo Thornycroft*. London: Trefoil, 1982, illustrated p. 15



The Iron Age

Signed and date Hamo Thornycroft 1907

Inscribed and numbered HT 1892, Signed in ink underneath, Hamo Thornycroft SC

Titled THE IRON AGE

Bronze with a rich brown patina

Height: 13.5" (35.1 cm)

Conceived 1892 and cast 1907

The idea of 'realism' was a recurring one that preoccupied Thornycroft and many of the other New School Sculptors and which is reflected in his work. The New Sculptors tried to find ways to bring the sculptural body to life making it appear life-like without wishing to make it a '*display of flesh*.' This tension is apparent in much of Thornycroft's sculpture especially the figure of the *Mower*, and *The Iron Age*. In 1885 Thornycroft gave a lecture at the Royal Academy where he commented that the '*considerable and sustained advance of sculpture*' was due, in part, to '*the closer study of nature*.'

The Iron Age, *The Navy*, or *Pay Day* was modelled by Hamo Thornycroft in 1892, inspired by the success of his *Mower* and his commission for a life size version for the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool, he worked on a second worker figure, a pickaxe resting on his shoulder, looking at the meagre coins he has received for his days labour.

Literature

D. Getsy, *The Problem of Realism in Hamo Thornycroft's 1885 Royal Academy Lecture*, *The Walpole Society* 69 (2007): pp. 211–25.

E. Manning, *Marble and Bronze, The Art and Life of Hamo Thornycroft*, London 1982, p.122, illustrated page 162





A Warrior Carrying a Wounded Youth from the Field of Battle

Inscribed EXECUTED IN BRONZE BY J. A. HATFIELD. FOR THE ART-UNION
OF LONDON. 1878. FROM THE ORIGINAL BY HAMO. THORNYCROFT

Bronze with brown and light brown patina

Height: 27 1/2" (70 cm)

Conceived in 1875 and cast in 1878

A Warrior Carrying a Wounded Youth from the Field of Battle was conceived by the artist in 1875 to compete for the Royal Academy's biennial Gold Medal for the Best Work of Sculpture on a given theme. Thornycroft took part to the contest with Alfred Gilbert, eventually winning the prize. In 1894 the art critic Edmund Gosse defined such a competition as the 'prologue' to the English New Sculpture movement.

While the Royal Academicians set the theme for the piece, its treatment was left completely to the imagination of the young artists involved in the competition. Thornycroft's composition was extremely indebted to his travels to France and Italy, and particularly to the sculptural norms of the Florentine Renaissance and to the ruins of Classical antiquity.

The iconography of the present piece is likely linked to the bas-relief of Trajan's Column (Rome), which narrates the victory of the Roman emperor against the king Decebalus in the 1st Century AD.

In one of the Column's vignettes, two soldiers are depicted carrying a wounded youth from the field of battle. The age difference between the figures is developed through the presence or lack of beard on their faces, much like in Thornycroft's piece. In the present model, however, the artist exaggerates the contrast further, modelling with painstaking attention the muscular soldier and the soft folds in the youth's body, thus enhancing the heroism of the scene.

Although four years passed between Thornycroft's visit to Rome and the conception of the present piece, the artist could make full use of the ingenious plaster cast of the column produced by Monsieur Oudry in 1864, which was on display at the London's South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria & Albert Museum) since 1873.

The present bronze was cast for the Art Union of London, which was established in 1837 and had over 20,000 members in 1876. By subscribing to the Union, its members had the chance to win a prize at a yearly draw. After seeing Thornycroft's model, the Council of the Union '*thought the statuette so good [...] that they have entered into a negotiation with the author for its purchase*' (from the Annual Report Council, 1876, referenced in Beattie, p.183). Having purchased the rights, the Union proceeded to cast a limited number of reductions of the model.

The casting was done by John Ayres Hatfield (1815–1881) at his foundry in 1878—three years after Thornycroft's victory at the Royal Academy. The foundry, which was founded in 1834 and was granted a Royal Warrant by Queen Victoria in 1882, represented a staple of Victorian craftsmanship in London. Their restoration workshop is still active today.

A one-off cast of this model is currently part of the Leighton House Museum collection in Holland Park. This bronze was donated to the museum by the sculptor's widow, Agatha Thornycroft, in 1930, five years after the artist's death. By gifting the work, Agatha honoured the mutual esteem between Leighton and Thornycroft, which lasted throughout their careers and is attested to in a series of handwritten letters which form part of the Museum archives.

Literature

Elfrida Manning, Marble and Bronze: *The Art and Life of Hamo Thornycroft*. London: Trefoil, 1982, illustrated p. 56





Albert Toft

English, 1862-1949

Albert Toft was one of the most productive artists forming the second generation of the New Sculpture movement. His network of friendships and collaborations captures the close-knit relationships that shaped the development of the period, being a close friend of Alfred Gilbert, Frederic Leighton and the painter John William Waterhouse, among others. As a sculptor, he contributed to the development of the discipline in England by mingling the style of his teacher Édouard Lantéri with the more symbolist leanings of Gilbert.

Toft was born near Birmingham in 1862, where his father worked as a modeller for the electroplating firm Elkington & Co. During his teenage years, he was apprenticed at the world-renowned pottery manufacturers Wedgwood, while also taking evening classes at the Hanley and Newcastle-under-Lyme art schools.

In 1880 he received a scholarship to study at the National Art Training School in London, where he was awarded silver medals for his second-, and third-year submissions. It was here that Toft would learn from the renowned sculptor Lantéri, whose influence, along with that of Dalou, can be seen in Toft's best-known 'ideal works', such as *Fate-Led* (1892) and *The Spirit of Contemplation* (1901).

Toft exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1885 with numerous successes. Some of his most notable works are *The Sere and Yellow Leaf* (1892), *Spring* (1897), *The Spirit of Contemplation* (1901) and *The Metal Pourer* (1913). In 1915 his sculpture *The Bather* was purchased using the Royal Academy's Chantrey Fund and is currently part of the Tate Collection.

Toft was elected as a member of the Art Workers Guild in 1891. He became a Fellow of the Royal Society of British Sculptors in 1938.

Writing about the artist in 1901, Marion Spielmann described how '*there is a vein of real poetry in Mr Toft's ideal work, an idea which is expressed in the marble or bronze – or more often in the clay – with distinct individuality*' (*British Sculpture and the Sculptors of Today*, p.124).

The Metal Pourer

Signed Albert Toft and dated 1913

Bronze on a marble base

Height: 14 1/2" (36.5 cm)

Literature

M.H. Spielmann, *British Sculpture and the Sculptors of Today*, (London, 1901), p.124.

Benedict Read & Peyton Skipwith, *Sculpture in Britain Between the Wars, 10 June to 1 August 1986*, (London, 1986), p.140.





Reclining Female Nude

Signed Albert Toft and dated 21.1.07

Bronze with brown patina

Height: 7 7/8" (20 cm)

Conceived and cast circa 1907

In Toft's *Reclining Figure*, a beautifully modelled woman lies atop a rock with her head covered by a turban, leaving her eyes partially uncovered. Another cloth drapes the figure's legs, hiding her modesty and folding behind her back, covering the rock upon which she is lying. Because of the figure's stance, her torso curves slightly upwards, occupying the central part of the composition.

Through the arrangement, Toft sets up a tantalising interplay between nudity and concealment, demonstrating his technical mastery in his depiction of the human form as well as drapery. The work's diffused eroticism is highlighted by the figure's features, which appear as if in a blissful dream.

Writing about the artist in 1901, Marion Spielmann described how '*there is a vein of real poetry in Mr Toft's ideal work, an idea which is expressed in the marble or bronze – or more often in the clay – with distinct individuality*' (British Sculpture and the Sculptors of Today, p.124).

Spielmann – the greatest contemporary commentator of the New Sculpture movement after Edmund Gosse – captures perfectly Toft's sculptural prerogatives, which are summarised in the present *Reclining Figure*. Just like his *Spirit of Contemplation* (1901), Toft focuses on the figure's modelling and on the suggestiveness and languidness of her pose, leaving out any superfluous element; it is through such suggestiveness that the sculpture's poetic charge becomes evident.

Interestingly, the artist both signed and dated this cast. While New Sculpture bronzes are often inscribed with the year of conception, the presence of such a specific date (21st January 1907) is rather unusual, suggesting that the model was likely commissioned or cast to commemorate a special event, making this bronze a particularly rare object.

Literature

M.H. Spielmann, *British Sculpture and the Sculptors of Today*, (London, 1901), p.124.

Benedict Read & Peyton Skipwith, *Sculpture in Britain Between the Wars, 10 June to 1 August 1986*, (London, 1986), p.140.



Hagar

Signed Albert Toft SC

Bronze with a rich green and brown patina

Height: 9.8" (25cm)

Conceived and cast circa 1906

Hagar was first exhibited in 1904 as a plaster at the Laing Art Gallery, *Special Inaugural Exhibition of Pictures by British and Foreign Artists*.

According to the Bible, Hagar was the Egyptian slave of Sarai, Abram's wife (whose names later became Sarah and Abraham). Sarai had been barren for a long time and sought a way to fulfil God's promise that Abram would be father of many nations, especially since they had grown old, so she offered Hagar to Abram to be his concubine.

Hagar became pregnant, and tension arose between the two women. In the Bible it is seen that Sarai was despised in the eyes of Hagar as she had conceived whilst Sarai had not. Abraham gave Sarai the liberty to treat Hagar as she pleased, perceiving Hagar as her servant. Sarai eventually dealt harshly with Hagar and so she fled.

Hagar fled into the desert. At a spring en route, an angel appeared to Hagar, who instructed her to return to Sarai and submit to her mistress, so that she may bear a child who '*shall be a wild ass of a man: his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the face of all his brethren*' (Genesis 16:9 - 12) and she was told to call her son Ishmael. She then returned to Abram and Sarai, giving birth to a son, whom she named as the angel had instructed.

Literature

M.H.Spielmann, *British Sculpture and Sculptors of To-Day*, London, 1901, pp. 118-125 (marble version).

'Hagar', *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951*, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, online database 2011 [http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/object.php?id=msib5_12384]





Truth

Signed Albert Toft S and dated Copyright Oct 4th 1906

Bronze with a rich brown patina on a marble base

Height: 13.7" (35 cm)

Conceived and cast circa 1906

This rare work by Toft shows him working under the influence of the Art Nouveau movement with a long flowing organic lines and strong symbolism. The figure is Veritas, the goddess of Truth and the daughter of Saturn. She is holding an open book, a symbol of learning and knowledge. In the same way we describe a character as being an open book, the open book in this sculpture represents the record of our lives.

Literature

Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.

Benedict Read, *Victorian Sculpture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.

Arthur Reddie, *Albert Toft: Sculptor*. 66 *The Studio* (15 October 1915): 18-28. Internet Archive digitized from a copy in the University of Toronto Library, Web. 15 May 2015.

M.H. Spielmann, *British Sculpture and Sculptors of Today*. London: Cassell, 1901. Internet Archive. Web. 22 December 2011.





The Thorn

Signed with monogram AGW

Bronze with rich brown patina

Height: 21 3/16" (53.6 cm)

Conceived and cast circa 1896

'The Thorn, full of grace and charm, with as much elegance in the pose as in the action, is probably the most completely successful of Mr. Walker's ideal statuettes' - H.M. Spielmann, *British Sculpture and the Sculptors of Today*, 1901, p.100

The present bronze shows a youthful female figure bending over with her right arm and fingers outstretched to reach the heel of her right foot, which is raised on a rock beneath her. Her gestures are elegant, and her mouth is slightly curved, displaying a sense of calm surprise or poised agitation.

Walker derived a great deal of inspiration from ancient Greek statuary for the definition and modelling of the present subject. In fact, the *Boy with Thorn* is one of the most famous Hellenistic bronze sculptures to have survived in multiple copies and variations to the present day. Walker here reinterprets the subject substituting the male figure with a female one and changing the sitting composition of the Classical sculpture to a standing one.

Walker's model was hailed by the critics as one of the sculptor's greatest accomplishments. This view was shared by many of Walker's own colleagues, as can be seen in Bertram Mackennal's sculpture of *Diana Wounded* (c. 1907), currently part of the Tate Britain collection.

Walker first produced a large, 148cm tall version of *The Thorn* around 1896, exhibiting it for the first time at the Royal Academy in 1903. The piece was purchased in 1910 by Carl Jacobsen, son of Jacob Jacobsen and one of the heirs of the Carlsberg brewing empire. Jacobsen had a great interest in ancient Greek and Roman statuary and contributed to the founding of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek – one of the most important Danish art museums, based in Copenhagen. *The Thorn* was donated to the museum in 1910 and is still part of the collection to this day.

By the time of *The Thorn*'s conception, the 'cult' of the statuette for the home was widespread among the British public, who would seek after popular models exhibited at the Royal Academy and praised by critics. The present bronze is a reduction of the larger model in bronze, produced by the artist for the burgeoning collector's market.

Literature

M.H. Spielmann, *British Sculpture and the Sculptors of Today*, 1901, p.100 - *"The Thorn, full of grace and charm, with as much elegance in the pose as in the action, is probably the most completely successful of Mr. Walker's ideal statuettes"*



Physical Energy

Inscribed Physical Energy

Signed G.F.Watts and T.H.Wren 1914.

Bronze with brown patina

Height: 18" (47 cm)

Conceived 1883-1902 and cast circa 1914

It is estimated that no more than 10 casts were produced

The original concept for the present work dates to 1876-1883, when the artist was producing his monumental bronze *Hugh Lupus* for the Marquis of Westminster, now at Eaton Hall, Cheshire. As the patron left little leeway to the artist, Watts was unable to express his full potential. *Physical Energy* gave him that opportunity.

The first ever monumental piece was modelled in the grounds of Watts' New Little Holland House. It was cast in bronze in 1902 and transported to Cape Town, South Africa, where it was installed as the focal point of the Cecil Rhodes Memorial. The sculpture was to represent the energy of Rhodes, who singlehandedly shaped the development of South Africa in the late 19th century, setting up two successful companies, De Beers and Niger Oil, among other business ventures, and taking active part in the political life of the country.

Once the bronze was delivered and installed, Watts continued working on its composition. The second monumental version of the sculpture, which employed a heavily textured surface, was erected in bronze at Kensington Gardens, London, by Lord Holland, where it can be still seen today. The 'hammered finish' of the sculpture was certainly created in response to the changing tastes of the time, being influenced by a more stylised, modernist technique.

Watts died before the piece was finished and it was brought to completion by his assistant, Thomas Wren, who eventually erected it in 1909. Another posthumous monumental bronze was produced in 1959 and erected on the grounds of the National Archives of Zimbabwe. In 2017, the Watts Gallery Trust agreed to cast a new bronze cast of *Physical Energy* to mark the bicentenary of the artist's death. The piece was first installed in the courtyard of the Royal Academy and is now permanently at the Watts' Museum.

Watts' assistant, Thomas Wren was responsible for creating a series of smaller bronze maquettes based on the full-size gesso housed at the artist's house and museum, Limnerslease. This was likely commissioned by either Mary Watts or the Watts Gallery Trustees so that they might be commercialised to support the gallery's finances. The production started in 1914 and Wren recalled that the production of 50 bronzes was agreed with the art foundry Parlanti, based in London. However, at the outbreak of the war, the foundry was moved over to the production of armaments and the venture came to an abrupt end. It is therefore impossible to know how many of these bronzes were actually produced, but they are certainly rarely seen.



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