

No 16



CONDER

Charles Conder ranks high among the 'exquisites' of the eighteen-nineties in England, but prior to this he had already won acclaim in Australia as one of the creators of Australian 'Impressionism'. A couple of years after his arrival in Sydney in 1884, he abandoned the career as land surveyor imposed on him by his father; joining Julian Ashton, Daplin, Count Nerli, Victor Mann and others in painting expeditions into the country he soon made a mark with his art and with his poetic, playful and engaging personality. Forever bent on returning 'home' he painted subjects reminiscent of the English spring (Nos 4, 7, 24), chose some his titles from English poetry (No. 4), and made designs inspired by the work of Walter Crane and English Aestheticism (No. 14). His best early work, the nostalgic and witty *Departure of the S.S. Orient* (No. 8) was the first Australian picture of the 'modern' impressionist style to be bought by a State Gallery.

In 1888 Conder joined Roberts, Streeton, McCubbin in Melbourne and took part in the controversial 9 x 5 'Impressions' show (Nos 14, 4, 15, 16). After his return abroad in 1890 he settled in Paris where he formed a friendship with Toulouse Lautrec who in 1892 included Conder's likeness in his painting *Two Waltzers at the Moulin Rouge* (Prague) and made the oilsketch of him now in the Aberdeen Gallery. In Paris, in Dieppe and later in London Conder joined the English artists and writers of the 'fin de siècle', such as Will Rothenstein, Aubrey Beardsley, Oscar Wilde and Max Beerbohm, and contributed to *The Yellow Book* and *The Savoy* his arcadian wash designs on silk often made in the shape of fans (compare Nos 29, 30, 35, 40). "His work has the indefinable hothouse atmosphere of the decadence", wrote Holbrook Jackson in 1913. "If the *Fetes Galantes* of Wattéau became literature in Paul Verlaine, they were translated back into painting by Charles Conder, and both he and the poet added to them their own special sense of the world-weariness of modernity".

The works listed here, generously made available by the State Galleries and private owners, show examples of his Australian Impressionism as well as some of his later oils, silks, lithographs and drawings.

CHARLES CONDER

Cat. Nos.

- STOCKYARD NEAR JAMBEROO H*.1 1 board, 8½ in x 10½ in signed and dated 1886
Collection: Dixon Galleries,
Public Library of New South Wales
- THAT FATAL COLOUR H.26 2 board, 14 in x 8 in unsigned, undated; painted about
1887-8 Collection: Mrs. Frank Chartres
- QUIET BEACH H.27 3 panel, 6½ in x 12 in signed, undated; painted 1887-8
Collection: Queensland Art Gallery
- HERRICK'S BLOSSOMS H.28 4 panel, 5 in x 9 1/8 in signed I.I., undated; painted
1887-8 Collection: Mrs. W. G. Buckle
- RAINY DAY, RANDWICK H.5 5 panel, 10½ in x 13 in signed, dated 1888
Collection: Mrs. K. L. Taylor
- COOGEE H.6 6 board, 10½ in x 15½ in signed, dated 1888
Collection: J. O. Manton Esq.
- SPRINGTIME H.15 7 canvas, 17½ in x 23½ in signed, dated 1888
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- DEPARTURE OF THE STEAMSHIP ORIENT H.10 8 canvas, 17½ in x 19½ in signed, dated 1888
Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales
- COVE ON THE HAWKESBURY H.21 9 panel, 14 in x 8½ in signed, undated; painted about 1888
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- FEEDING THE CHICKENS H.11 10 panel, 11½ in x 15½ in signed, undated; painted 1888
Collection: National Gallery of South Australia
- SUNSET, SYDNEY HARBOUR H.22 11 board, 9 in x 6 in signed, undated; painted about 1888
Collection: Douglas Watson Esq.
- FISHERMAN'S BRIDGE, DOUBLE BAY 12 board, 15 in x 10 in signed, dated 1888
Collection: Imperial Chemical Industries of Australia
and New Zealand
- A PASTORAL H.29 13 canvas, 8½ in x 14 in unsigned, undated; painted about 1888
Collection: Esther and Betty Paterson
- CATALOGUE COVER DESIGN 14 Exhibition of 9 x 5 *Impressions*, August 1889; a discussion
of this design, and its symbolism is in Bernard Smith,
Australian Painting, Melbourne, 1962, pp. 96 seq.
- SKETCH PORTRAIT H.31 15 board, 5½ in x 3½ in signed, undated; painted 1889
Collection: Rodney Timmins Esq.
- HOW WE LOST POOR FLOSSIE H.33 16 panel, 9¾ in x 3¾ in signed, undated; painted 1889
Collection: National Gallery of South Australia
- MISS RAYNOR 17 board, 6½ in x 6½ in unsigned, undated; painted 1889
Collection: Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Lynch.
- RICKETTS POINT, NEAR SANDRINGHAM H.41 18 panel, 12 in x 30½ in signed, dated 1890
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- INTERIOR WITH ARTHUR STREETON AND TOM ROBERTS 19 board, 5 in x 9 in unsigned, undated, 1888-90
Collection: Mr. & Mrs. Rudy Komon
- SPRING STREET, MELBOURNE H.44 20 canvas, 13½ in x 11½ in unsigned, undated; painted 1889-90
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- THE WRECK 21 canvas, 13 in x 7½ in signed, undated
Collection: K. Lothringer Esq.
- YARDING SHEEP H.37 22 canvas, 13½ in x 21½ in signed, dated 1890
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- LANDSCAPE WITH RIVER AND BOAT H.38 23 board, 15½ in x 7½ in signed, dated 1890
Collection: Mrs. H. F. Maudsley
- ORCHARD SCENE H.39 24 board, 8 in x 16 in signed, undated; painted 1890
Collection: Estate of the late Mrs. L. F. Miller
- MORNINGTON BEACH H.49 25 watercolour, 4 7/8 in x 9 in signed, undated; painted 1890
Collection: Professor K. Fitzpatrick
- STREET SCENE, COLOMBO 26 panel, 9½ in x 6 in unsigned; painted 1890
Collection: Mr. & Mrs. Oswald Burt
In a letter to Roberts Conder wrote, 20 Aug. 1890:
"I should like to work very much in Ceylon which charmed
me very much—the little I saw of it. It would suit you to
paint in I feel sure and I wanted you muchly at the time to
enjoy the fun with me and have a sympathetic gloat in that
city of Arabian Nights, Colombo. I did a sketch in Colombo
of a street scene and it hangs by me in the studio. . ."
- FRUIT TREES IN BLOSSOM, ALGIERS 27 canvas, 25½ in x 31½ in signed, dated 92
Collection: Queensland Art Gallery
- ILLUSTRATIONS FROM BALZAC'S COMÉDIE HUMAINE 28 silk, 15 in x 11 in unsigned, undated; painted about 1895
Collection: Sir James McGregor
- THE BLUE BIRD 29 watercolour on silk, 13½ in x 17½ in signed, dated 1895
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- PEARL 30 watercolour on silk, 9 in x 11½ in signed, dated 1899
Collection: National Gallery of South Australia
- AN APPLE ORCHARD IN BRITTANY 31 canvas, 23¾ in x 19¾ in signed, dated 1902
Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales
- COLUMBINE 32 chalk drawing, 9¾ in x 14 in signed, undated
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- SEASCAPE 33 canvas, signed, dated; inscribed *To his friend
Yorke Rowell 14 . 1 . 1904*. Collection: The Western Australian
Art Gallery

- BLUE WATERS, ALGECIRAS 34 canvas, 26 in x 36 in signed, dated 1905
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- THE BUDDHA FAN 35 watercolour on silk, 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ (radius) x 19 $\frac{1}{8}$ in (overall width)
signed, dated 1905
Collection: Queensland Art Gallery
- BEACH AT NEWQUAY 36 canvas, 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ in x 20 in unsigned, undated;
perhaps 1906. Collection: Ralph Smith Esq.
- SEA AND CLIFF 37 canvas, 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ in x 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ in unsigned, undated, probably
painted at Newquay 1906
Collection: Mr. & Mrs. R. A. Gilling
- THE FOUNTAIN 38 canvas, 28 $\frac{1}{4}$ in x 36 $\frac{1}{4}$ in signed, undated
Collection: Queensland Art Gallery
- THE CARNIVAL 39 board, 8 in x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ in, painted in the South of France signed;
undated. Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- FAN DESIGN 40 watercolour on silk, 15 in (radius) x 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ in (total width)
unsigned, undated. Collection: Dr. & Mrs. W. R. Griffiths.
- 6 Lithographs from *The Balzac Set*
The publisher Leonard Smithers had commissioned Conder in 1895 to do six drawings to be engraved on wood for Dowson's translation of Balzac's *La Fille aux Yeux d'Or*, published in 1896. In 1899, at the instigation of Will Rothenstein, Conder drew the lithographs published as *The Balzac Set*, by the Carfax Gallery. Six of these are on exhibition here. They are "not so much illustrations to episodes of *The Human Comedy* as equivalent expressions in line and tone of various phases of the Balzacian spirit" (John Rothenstein).
- LA FILLE AUX YEUX d'OR. D. 2† 41 lithograph, 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ in x 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ in signed, published 1899
Collection: National Gallery of South Australia
- CORALIE D. 3 42 lithograph, 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ in x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in trial proof signed, dated 1899
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- BEATRIX AND CALYSTE D. 4 43 lithograph 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ in x 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ in signed, dated 1889
Collection: National Gallery of South Australia
- ESTHER (No. 1) D. 5 44 lithograph, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in x 12 $\frac{5}{8}$ in signed, dated 1899
Collection: Queensland Art Gallery
- CHEZ CAMILLE MAUPIN D. 6 45 lithograph, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in x 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ in, trial proof signed, dated 1899
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- L'ALCADE DANS L'EMBARRAS D. 7 46 lithograph, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in x 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in signed, dated 1899
Collection: Dixson Gallery,
Public Library of New South Wales
- 5 lithographs from *The Carnival Set*
This set, drawn in 1904, was published in 1906 by Messrs Ernest Brown and Phillips. There is no coherent motive running through the whole set and the general title which is of recent invention, is not applicable to all the subjects. No. 14 and 15 are illustrations to Henri Murger's *La Vie de Bohème*, a book which is said to have been Conder's favourite already during his stay in Sydney.
- SCHAUNARD'S STUDIO D. 14 47 lithograph, No. 16, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in x 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ in
signed, undated, exh. 1904
Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales
- LA MI-CARÊME D. 15 48 lithograph, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in x 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ in unsigned, undated, exh. 1904
Collection: National Gallery of Victoria
- A DREAM OF ARABY D. 19 49 lithograph, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in x 12 in signed, undated publ. 1906
Collection: Dixson Gallery,
Public Library of New South Wales
- THE SEA WALL D. 20 50 lithograph, 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ in x 12 in signed, undated, exh. 1904
Collection: Queensland Art Gallery
- A PASTORAL FANTASY D. 21 51 lithograph, 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ in x 12 in unsigned, undated publ. 1906
Collection: Queensland Art Gallery
- GOSSIP D. 26 52 lithograph, 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ in x 14 $\frac{5}{8}$ in unsigned, exh. 1905
Collection: National Gallery of South Australia
- ESTHER (No. 2) D. 30 53 lithograph, 15 in x 10 in signed, undated: exhibited 1906
Collection: National Gallery of Western Australia
- THE SALUTE D. 33 54 lithograph, 10 in x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ in unsigned, undated,
Printed winter 1912/13
Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales
- Orpen, Sir William (1878-1931).
PORTRAIT OF CHARLES CONDER 55 drawing, sheet size, 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ in x 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ in signed, dated 1900
Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales.

*H Ursula Hoff, *Charles Conder, His Australian Years*, The National Gallery Society of Victoria, Melbourne, 1960

†D Campbell Dodgson, *Catalogue of Conder's Lithographs* in: Sir John Rothenstein, *The Life and Death of Charles Conder*, London, 1938, pp. 243-256.

CHARLES CONDER 1868-1909