

# Recent acquisitions (2012–16) at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

IN 2016, the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge celebrates the bicentenary of its foundation through the bequest in 1816 of Richard, 7th Viscount Fitzwilliam of Merrion. Two hundred years later, Lord Fitzwilliam's old-master paintings and prints and his fine library of books, illuminated manuscripts and musical scores continue to be augmented with important acquisitions. This survey of highlights from the past five years demonstrates the breadth and richness of the collections, and the generosity of donors, many of them alumni of the University of Cambridge, whose principal museum this is. Particular thanks are owed to the Chairman, Committee and staff of HM Government's Acceptance in Lieu Scheme, which has been a constant source of treasures, while the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund, the V. & A. Purchase Grant Fund, the Pilgrim Trust, the Henry Moore Foundation, the Aldama Foundation and many other grant-making bodies have been loyal supporters. The Museum's patrons, the Marlay Group, occasionally assist with important acquisitions, while the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum must be our greatest donors ever – founded in 1909, they devote their entire income to purchasing objects for the

Museum. Thanks are also due to the many people who support appeals and thoughtfully remember the Museum in their wills. The selection that follows is only a small fraction of what has been acquired over the past five years – another twelve pages could easily be filled with other, no less remarkable objects. I am grateful for the staunch support of the Syndicate of the Fitzwilliam Museum, and for the expertise of the Museum curators who often identify potential desiderata, and research, care for and display them once acquired. Of course, many gifts and bequests are the fruit of years of careful cultivation by former Directors of the Fitzwilliam Museum, notably Simon Swynfen Jervis and Duncan Robinson, and some were acquired by my immediate predecessor, Timothy Potts. I also take this opportunity to salute the achievement of David Scrase, former Keeper of Paintings Drawings and Prints, under whose watch perhaps our most ambitious fundraising appeal ever, for Nicolas Poussin's *Extreme Unction*, was successfully concluded in 2012.

TIM KNOX, FSA  
Director and Marlay Curator

I. *Extreme Unction*, by Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665). 1638–40. Oil on canvas, 95.5 by 121 cm. Accepted by HM Government in Lieu of Tax and allocated to the Fitzwilliam Museum in 2012, with additional funds raised via public appeal, Art Fund and Heritage Lottery Fund grants. (PD.11–2012).

*Extreme Unction* is one of a set of seven scenes representing the sacraments of the Catholic Church, painted in Rome c.1638–40 for Poussin's first patron, Cassiano dal Pozzo. The series was acquired in 1785 by the 4th Duke of Rutland through an intermediary in Rome and with the active encouragement of Sir Joshua Reynolds. The arrival of the paintings in England was regarded as a national coup. The Fitzwilliam Museum seized the opportunity to acquire this picture, the most solemn and affecting of the now incomplete set, after the painting depicting *Ordination* was sold to the Kimbell Museum in Fort Worth and successfully exported. Most of the value of *Extreme Unction* was offset against the tax owed on this sale, but the Fitzwilliam Museum successfully raised the balance of £3.9 million by public appeal, run with the help of the Art Fund and a major grant from the HLF.







II. *The kiss of Judas*, by an unknown English artist, possibly from Coventry. c.1470. Oil on oak boards, 173 by 74.3 cm. Bought with contributions from The Pilgrim Trust, Gatsby Educational Foundation, Sir Peter Ellwood, The Sir Michael Marshall and Lady Marshall Charity Fund, Nicholas and Diana Baring, Tim and Ruth Clarke, Charles and Jill Rawlinson, Paul and Louise Cooke Endowment, Sir Charles Chadwyck-Healey, The Finnis Scott Foundation, The Marlay Group, The Bernard Sunley Foundation, Mrs Anthea Franklin, Lady Juliet Taddell, The Kirby Laing Foundation and the Perceval Fund, 2012 (PD.2–2012).

This very rare example of pre-Reformation church decoration was discovered in the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Grafton Regis, Northamptonshire, where it owed its survival to being turned over and painted with *The Ten Commandments*. Once part of an enormous tympanum painted with scenes of Christ's Passion over the rood separating the chancel from the nave of a church, it was probably from another religious foundation in the area. The painting, on four planks of wood, was in a very unstable state, and could not be adequately conserved in the church. Therefore, the churchwardens of St Mary's sought and obtained an ecclesiastical faculty to sell the picture by private treaty to the Fitzwilliam Museum, where, after several years of treatment at the Hamilton Kerr Institute, it can now be enjoyed by the public.



III. *St Christopher meeting the Devil*, by the Master of St Christopher, c.1510–15. Oil on panel, 60.5 by 37 cm. Presented by the Trustees of the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust in memory of Karl von Motesiczky (1904–43), 2016. (PD.5–2016).

The painter Marie-Louise von Motesiczky was born in Vienna 1906 and fled the Nazis in 1938, settling in England, where she continued to paint – her works much influenced by Max Beckmann, under whom she had briefly studied. The Fitzwilliam Museum has several of her works, and she is now increasingly regarded as an important painter in the Expressionist tradition. Just before her death in 1996, Marie-Louise von Motesiczky established a charitable trust to care for her artistic legacy and support a variety of charitable causes. The Trust has presented to the Museum this rare Danube School panel depicting *St Christopher meeting the Devil*, once the right-hand wing of a triptych. The panel was restituted to the von Motesiczky family after the War and has long been on loan to Cambridge. It has been given in memory of Karl von Motesiczky, Marie-Louise's brother, who remained in Austria in 1938, and perished at Auschwitz in 1943.



IV. *The Triumph of Venus*, by Sir Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640). 1628. Oil and black chalk on panel, 34.5 by 48.5 cm. Accepted in Lieu of Inheritance Tax by HM Government and allocated to the Fitzwilliam Museum, 2012. (PD.7–2012).

This beautiful and highly finished grisaille oil sketch is a model prepared for a work of sculpture – a relief by the German sculptor Georg Petel (1601/02–1635).

Petel, a friend of Rubens, used this sketch for a salt cellar carved from a section of a tusk of elephant ivory. This magnificent object, which was executed, is Petel's masterpiece and is now in the Swedish Royal Collection in Stockholm.

The Rubens sketch for it belonged to Henry, 1st Duke of Portland, and passed down with his descendants at Welbeck Abbey in Nottinghamshire before it was offered in lieu of inheritance tax on the death of Lady Anne Cavendish in 2008.



V. *The Martyrdom of St Lawrence*, by Valerio Castello (1624–59). c.1650. Pen and brown ink and brown wash, heightened with white, 21 by 20.6 cm. Purchased with the assistance of the V. & A. Purchase Grant Fund and contributions given in honour of David Scrase, Keeper of Paintings, Drawings and Prints, on his retirement in 2014. (PD.260–2015).

Castello was active in Genoa, where, despite his short career, he produced many paintings and frescos for the churches and palaces in that city. His drawings are comparatively rare but distinctive – his draughtsmanship is characterised by nervous, calligraphic pen strokes, often combined with red chalk and coloured washes. The subject is the gruesome martyrdom of St Lawrence, who was grilled on a gridiron. The drawing joins the fine collection of Italian old-master drawings in Cambridge, many of them acquired by David Scrase, Keeper of the collection for thirty-seven years, in whose honour this sheet was acquired.

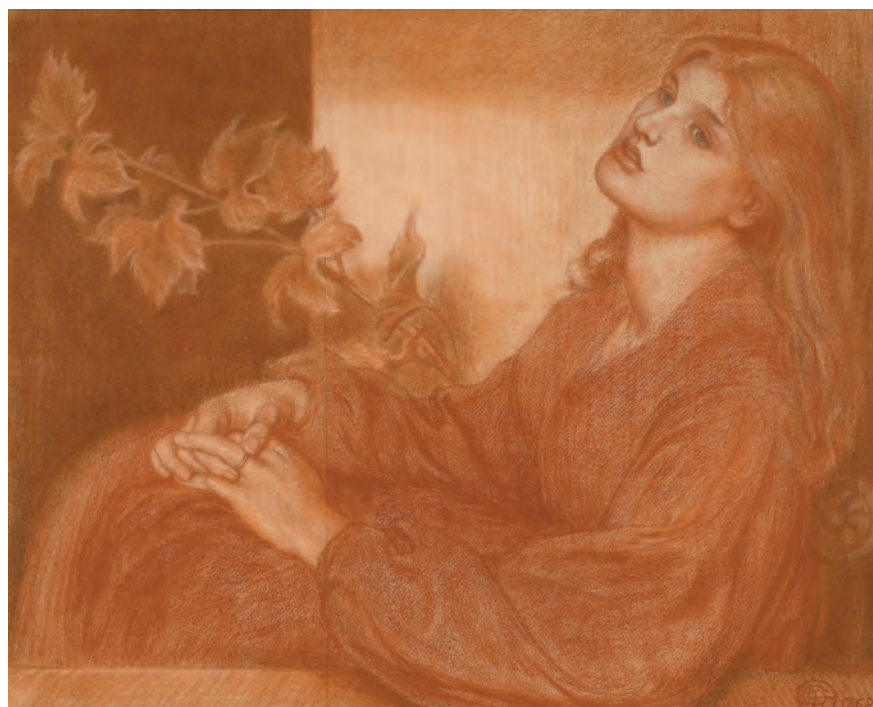






VI. *Portrait of Maria Isabel de Borbón, Queen of the Two Sicilies*, by Vicente López y Portaña (1772–1850). 1831. Oil on canvas, 110 by 78 cm. Purchased 2015, with grants from the Art Fund, the Aldama Foundation and the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum. (PD.254–2015).

López is not well known outside Spain, but deserves to be – he is one of the most technically accomplished of all portrait painters, specialising in elaborate details of costume and jewellery, combined with a sympathetic but unflinching depiction of his sitters. This portrait, depicting the matronly Queen of the Two Sicilies awash with blue velvet and fine lace, wearing an impressive *parure* of diamonds and sapphires, is a superb example of López's skills. The treatment of the flounces of lace, the crumpled white kid gloves and the bejewelled orders is particularly admirable but despite this dazzling display, the portrait of the Queen is touchingly honest, her raddled, bloated face and podgy forearm are rendered with the same care as the lace and diamonds. There are three versions of this portrait; one in the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid, another in the Royal Palace in the same city and this example, probably one of the pair of portraits commissioned by her daughter, Maria Cristina, Queen of Spain. López often painted several versions of his major royal portraits, their quality and his signature attesting to his meticulous standards. Comparison shows that this version is slightly larger, and by far the best of the three.



VII. *La Pia de' Tolomei*, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–82). 1868. Red and black chalk on paper, 64 by 79 cm. Bequeathed by Sir Ivor and Lady Batchelor through the Art Fund, 2015 (PD.155–2015).

This magnificent red-chalk drawing is probably the jewel of the collection bequeathed by Sir Ivor and Lady Batchelor to Cambridge in 2015. Sir Ivor, a Professor of Psychiatry at Dundee University, and his wife accumulated a choice and highly eclectic array of watercolours, drawings, prints, bronzes, ceramics and glass, from which some 130 objects came to the Museum on Lady Batchelor's death. Rossetti's *Pia de' Tolomei* depicts an Italian noblewoman confined by her jealous husband to a fortress in the Maremma, a malarial district near Siena, where she succumbs to the fever. She was one of the souls that Dante encountered on his journey through Purgatory. It is a study for a painting in the Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas. The highlights of the Batchelor Bequest will be the subject of an exhibition at the Fitzwilliam in 2018.



VIII. *The death bed*, by James Pryde (1866–1941). 1913. Oil on canvas, 120 by 104 cm. Purchased 2014 with funds bequeathed by John Cornforth (1937–2004). (PD.73–2014).

This is one of the largest and most ambitious of James Pryde's twelve paintings collectively entitled *The Human Comedy*. Exhibited at the International Society in 1913, it has been described by one critic as 'the most poignant and emotionally concentrated' of the series, depicting a monumental state bed – supposedly inspired by the so-called bed of Mary, Queen of Scots, at Holyroodhouse – dwarfing the two just-visible figures of the corpse and a mourning woman. This picture was acquired directly from the artist by the American sculptor and socialite Gertrude Vanderbilt Witney, and remained until only recently in American collections. The Fitzwilliam Museum has an exceptionally good group of works by Sir William Nicholson, Pryde's brother-in-law and erstwhile collaborator, but this is our first work by this rare artist.

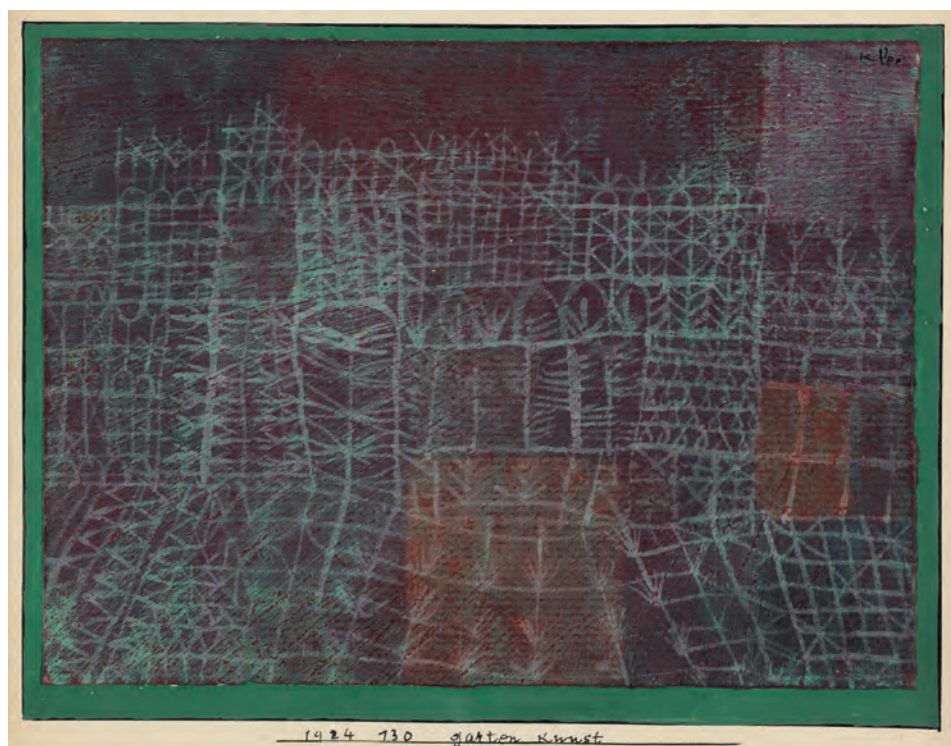


IX. *Making columns for the Tower of Babel*, by Sir Stanley Spencer (1891–1959). 1933. Oil on canvas, 54 by 49 cm. Accepted in Lieu of Inheritance Tax by HM Government and allocated to the Fitzwilliam Museum, 2013, with additional contributions from the Art Fund (with a contribution from the Wolfson Foundation), the V. & A. Purchase Grant Fund, the Fairhaven Fund and the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum. (PD.15–2013). © The estate of Sir Stanley Spencer/Bridgeman Images, London.

Painted in 1933 from studies for an aborted commission to decorate one wall of the entrance hall of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's University Library in Cambridge with a large mural called *The Tower of Babel*. As well as being an allegory of the diffusion of language, Spencer planned *The Tower of Babel* to be composed of different styles of architecture, showing its gradual decay, with 'only army huts and bungalows' at its uppermost level. The commission was never realised and this picture was acquired by his friend and supporter the engraver Gwen Raverat who lived and worked in Cambridge. Her collection of works by Sir Stanley Spencer – this picture, an oil study for *John Donne arriving in Heaven*, two studies for the Sandham Memorial Chapel murals and a large squared-up drawing of the entire composition of the University Library mural – greatly enhance the very fine and representative group of works by Spencer already in the Fitzwilliam Museum.







X. *Gartenkunst*, by Paul Klee (1879–1940). 1924. Gouache on paper, 14.5 by 19.2 cm. Presented by Mrs Gigi Crompton, 2016. (PD.1–2016).

Given to the donor, Mrs Gigi Crompton, in 1946 as a wedding present by Sir Roland Penrose, this small gouache by Klee is believed to have once been in the collection of the Surrealist poet Paul Eluard. It is one of a group of works executed by Klee in the 1920s with a delicate web-like design, suggesting plants and possibly filigree trellis or ironwork, painted on a dark ground. The Fitzwilliam Museum has only one other work by Klee, a drawing in coloured inks entitled *Luftgeister* of 1930, which was presented to the collection in 1978.



XI. (left) *Evidence of doubt*, by Jane Dixon (b.1963). 2011–13. Set of sixteen photograms, 27.98 by 22.9 cm. And (right), untitled drawing for print 2 in the series *Evidence of Doubt* by Jane Dixon. Graphite on True-Grain polyester drafting film, 2013. Given by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, with a contribution from the Chadwyck-Healey Charitable Trust, 2013 (P.318–2013). © Jane Dixon.

Jane Dixon's *Evidence of doubt* suggest photographic records of real organic forms, but prove to be imaginary and drawn by the artist's hand. It is inspired by nineteenth-century photographs – or photogenic drawings – which were created by laying specimens of plants and algae on light sensitive, chemically prepared paper in order to produce a direct, life-size image in negative. A famous example is Anne Atkins's *Photographs of British Algae* (1843–53). Dixon, however, has made a series of drawings on transparent film, which she then laid on photographic paper and exposed to light to create negative images of mysterious life forms. Two extra drawings, made specially for the Fitzwilliam's set, were acquired with the photograms, and in 2015, Jane Dixon gave the remaining fourteen drawings to the Museum in memory of her mother, Evelyn Dixon.





XII. The Lansdowne Relief. Roman, 120–138 AD. Dark grey limestone (*bigio morato*), 56 by 181.5 by 23 cm. Purchased, 2012, with grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Greg Fund, Mr Denis Severis and the Marlay Group. (GR.1–2012).

In 1769, the antiquary and dealer Gavin Hamilton secured permission to begin excavations on the site of Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli, some 300 km. east of Rome. Here, in a stagnant bog called the Pantanello, he unearthed a great many fragmentary sculptures and decorative reliefs, which he then sold to English Grand Tourists. This strange relief in an unusual dark grey limestone was one of his discoveries. Possibly part of the decoration of a luxurious room or courtyard, it is carved with a series of niches which may have once held statuettes or lamps, with scenes from Greek mythology with a marine theme in the spandrels. It was purchased by William Petty, 1st Marquess of Lansdowne, who incorporated it into a massive Egyptian Revival chimneypiece in the Sculpture Gallery of Lansdowne House in Berkeley Square, London. Removed from the house when it was demolished in 1931, it has been carefully examined and conserved by the Museum and is an interesting, if enigmatic, example of early Imperial period architectural sculpture with eighteenth-century additions.



XIII. Portrait busts of the Emperors Commodus (180–92 AD) and Septimius Severus (193–211 AD). Roman, 193–211 AD. Marble, each 81.2 by 68.5 cm. Accepted in Lieu of Inheritance Tax by HM Government and allocated to the Fitzwilliam Museum, subject to their remaining *in situ* at Houghton Hall, Norfolk, 2016. (GR.1 & 2–2016). Images, courtesy Houghton Hall, Norfolk.

The two over life-sized busts form part of an assembled set of twelve that decorate the Stone Hall at Houghton Hall in Norfolk. This pair was given to Sir Robert Walpole by Lieutenant-General Charles Churchill, who had acquired them from the celebrated collection of Cardinal Alessandro Albani in Rome in July 1731. Of exceptional quality, with characteristic drill work and finely carved details, these ancient busts of Emperors contributed to Houghton Hall's powerful visual statement of Walpole's authority and social standing – where, thanks to the *in situ* arrangement, they will remain.





XIV. *The Virgin of Sorrows*, by Pedro de Mena (1628–88). c.1670–75. Polychrome wood, with glass eyes and tears, hair eyelashes, 33.6 by 31 by 19.8 cm. Purchased 2014, with the Museum's acquisition funds, grants from The Art Fund, the Henry Moore Foundation, the J. Paul Getty Foundation, the Gatsby Foundation, the David Laing Foundation Trust and the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum and with private donations. (M.7–2014).

Pedro de Mena's highly expressive sculptures of the Virgin of Sorrows were extremely popular and much in demand in his lifetime. The leading sculptor in Spain in the second half of the seventeenth century, Mena was notable for both carving and painting his work. This recently discovered sculpture is an exceptional example of Mena's *Mater Dolorosa* type, and dates to about 1670–75. Many were conceived as companion pieces to sculptures of *Christ as the Man of Sorrows* (*Ecce Homo*); this example is smaller than life-size and is likely to have been made for private devotion. The Virgin's face peers out from beneath her blue headdress, which casts a shadow and frames her face. Her lips are slightly parted to reveal her teeth, while her eyes are emphasised by eyelashes of real human hair. Three glass tears course down her cheeks and her neck. Mena's technique for inserting the glass eyes was to carve the face separately and hollow it out like a mask. Before being fitted inside the veil, two small glass 'cups', painted from the inside, were inserted into the eye cavities. The care and attention that Mena has given to the back of the sculpture suggests that it was almost certainly meant to be viewed in the round.



XV. *St Francesco of Paola*, by Giovanni Antonio Colicci (fl.1692–1740). 1725. Polychrome terracotta, with glass on panel, in its original painted shadow box and carved wood frame, 53.6 by 45 by 12 cm. Purchased 2016, with grants from the Aldama Foundation, the Henry Moore Foundation, the V. & A. Purchase Grant Fund and The Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum. (M.2–2016).

This arresting terracotta sculpture, *The Vision of St Francesco of Paola*, is signed by Giovanni Antonio Colicci, a rare and little-known sculptor of Roman origin who worked in Naples and environs and flourished in the first half of the eighteenth century. St Francesco of Paola, a hermit famed for his sanctity and ability to perform miracles, was canonised in 1519 and is particularly venerated in southern Italy. The work was probably created for private devotional use, possibly for the private oratory of some wealthy noble or ecclesiastical patron with a special devotion to the saint. One can imagine it in a damask-hung private chapel off a bedchamber, surrounded by filigree reliquaries and other devotional ornaments encrusted with red coral from Trapani – in stark contrast to the poverty of its hermit subject. Its discovery in a private collection in Spain suggests it may have been commissioned by a member of the Spanish ruling class, possibly one of the Viceroy's, and taken back from Italy to Spain on his return.



XVI. Frame, by an unidentified craftsman. England, c.1692–97. Carved and gilded limewood, mirror, 182 by 129.5 by 13.5 cm. Purchased, 2016, with the help of the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, and grants from the V. & A. Purchase Grant Fund, the Finnis Scott Trust and an ongoing public appeal.

This magnificent mirror frame bears the arms of Admiral Edward Russell, later 1st Earl of Orford (1653–1727). The marine equivalent of the 1st Duke of Marlborough, Russell is chiefly remembered today for his victory at the naval battles of Barfleur and La Hogue in 1692. These confrontations irreparably damaged the French Atlantic fleet and confounded the invasion of Britain that was threatened by Louis XIV and the deposed English King, James II. With its figures depicting Hercules and Mercury, flying figure of Fame blowing two trumpets, tritons, shells and other marine symbols, the frame celebrates Russell's remarkable naval career. It was probably made for the Admiral's country seat, Chippenham Park, outside Cambridge, where Celia Fiennes encountered 'the finest carved wood in fruitages, herbages, gems, beasts, fowls etc., very thin and fine', when she visited in 1698.



XVII. A pair of ebony-veneered cabinets of architectural form, mounted with *pietre dure* panels and gilt-metal mounts, made in Rome. c.1625. Each cabinet is on a later stand, English, c.1800, veneered with mahogany and with gilded caryatid supports and ornaments. Size on stand 222 by 92 by 43.5 cm. Purchased, 2016, with grants from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund, the John Armitage Charitable Trust, the Drawing Matter Trust, a bequest from Dr Peter Walker and several private benefactors. (M.12 & A– 2016).

The cabinets are important examples of seventeenth-century Roman parade furniture, ornamented with elaborate geometrical intarsia of coloured marbles and semi-precious stones. Henry Howard, 4th Earl of Carlisle (1694–1758), one of the leading collectors of Italian art of his day, probably bought them on his second Grand Tour to Italy in 1738–39. The grandiose stands, with their supporting caryatids and Apollo masks emerging from sunbursts, were added to the cabinets by the 5th Earl of Carlisle, almost certainly to the design of Charles Heathcote Tatham (1772–1842) in about 1800. Alvar González-Palacios has suggested that the cabinets were made for a member of the powerful Borghese family (the family of Pope Paul V), on the evidence of the eagles – a Borghese family crest – that support the cabinets. However, the crowned eagle is the principal crest of the Este family, Dukes of Modena and Ferrara, and further research may elucidate who was really the original patron.



XVIII. Cabinet, by Elias Boscher (active 1629–65). c.1660. Cabinet veneered with ebony, kingwood, amaranth and stained walnut, with silver-gilt mounts and Florentine *pietre-dure* plaques. 85 by 84 cm. Purchased 2014, with a grant from the Monument Trust, and funds bequeathed by Monica Beck, the Abbott Fund and the Gow Purchases Fund. (M.9–2014).

In late 2014, the Fitzwilliam Museum acquired at auction this table cabinet in the form of a miniature tiered temple, a superb example of the luxurious cabinets produced by workshops in Augsburg in Southern Germany in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Veneered with ebony and exotic woods, and embellished with silver-gilt mounts and specimens of rare coloured stones, the cabinet is also inset with twenty-five *pietra dura* plaques depicting birds and flowers, produced in the Grand Ducal *Galleria dei lavori*, or hardstone workshops, in Florence. It contains numerous and ingenious drawers and secret compartments. However, what makes this cabinet special is that it is among the very few pieces of seventeenth-century furniture that is signed by its maker. This was Elias Boscher, a master cabinetmaker of Augsburg who flourished between 1629 and 1674, and was probably the disciple or associate of Melchior Baumgartner, creator of a series of elaborate cabinets for the Wittelsbach court at Munich. The cabinet is very closely related to an ivory veneered example, now in the collection of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Indeed, they may have once been a pair. The cabinet was in an Irish collection, that of the Coote family of Ballyfin, Co. Laois, since at least the early nineteenth century.







XIX. The Rumbold Desk, by an unknown craftsman from Vizagapatam, Southern India. c.1750–60. Rosewood inlaid with ivory, silver handles, 76 by 113 by 62 cm. Accepted in Lieu of Inheritance Tax by HM Government and allocated to the Fitzwilliam Museum, 2016. (M.3–2016).

The Fitzwilliam Museum boasts a significant collection of furniture, which is displayed alongside our superb holdings of paintings, sculpture and decorative art, continuing a tradition begun by a former Director, Sir Sidney Cockerell, in the 1920s.

This Anglo-Indian desk, of rosewood inlaid with finely engraved ivory, with silver handles, was made in Vizagapatam, near Madras, in Southern India in around 1750–60. It has been on loan to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge since 2012 and is one of the finest of a very small group of similar desks made for British patrons in India at Vizagapatam, a centre for the manufacture of such luxurious ivory-inlaid furniture. It is known to have belonged to Sir Thomas Rumbold, 1st baronet (1736–91), a British administrator in India, who amassed a great fortune in the service of the East India Company and served as Governor of Madras from 1777 to 1780.



XX. The Gussage All Saints Hoard, Roman, late 4th–early 5th century AD). Earthenware pot and 33 silver Roman coins, 13 by 8.7 by 4.7 cm. Presented by Richard Beleson, 2013. (CM.233–266–2013).

The Gussage All Saints coin hoard was found on 21st March 2010 on ploughed land in the parish of Gussage All Saints, Dorset, still in the globular earthenware flagon in which they were hidden. In total, 662 coins were discovered in the flagon, all late Roman silver coins of the denominations known as *miliarenses* (of which there were nine) and *siliquae* (of which there were 653). The earliest coins present were those of the emperor Constantius II, minted in 355–61 AD. The latest coins were those of the emperors Arcadius and Honorius, minted in Milan between 395 and 402 AD. The composition of the group is fairly typical for hoards of this date, and it is likely that the coins circulated together before deposition in the early fifth century. This was from the period when the Western Roman Empire, beset by the collapse of the Rhine frontier and invasions in Gaul and Italy, relinquished its authority over Roman Britain, which became increasingly vulnerable to Germanic and Irish raids. The British Museum purchased one coin from the hoard, the rest were returned to the finder and sold on the open market in London. The Fitzwilliam Museum failed to secure any lots from the hoard at auction, but one of the successful bidders generously presented a selection of the hoard and its original container to the Museum.



XXI. Merovingian gold *tremissis*, struck in Paris by the moneyer Eligius c.584–639. Gold, 1.14 by 1.25 cm. Given by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, with contributions from Buttrey and Grierson Funds. (CM.60–2016).

The coin is 'signed' by the moneyer Eligius, who is almost certainly the same Eligius who was active during the reigns of the Frankish kings Clothaire II and Dagobert. King Dagobert commissioned Eligius to execute the magnificent goldsmith's work for the shrines of St Denis and St Martin of Tours. In 641 Eligius was appointed Bishop of Noyon, where he remained until his death on 1st December 660. He was subsequently beatified, and is the patron saint of goldsmiths, of the province of Flanders and of the cities of Noyon and Limoges. Thus this rare gold coin has the additional distinction of having been struck by a saint.





XXII. A selection of pots from the Shakeshaft Bequest of Studio Pottery (from left to right): Long necked porcelain bottle, with wide rim, by Lucie Rie (1902–95). Before 1975. Matt white with spiral in brown and green 25.5 by 15 cm. (C.353–2016); Flattened spade form vase, with small mouth, on a cylindrical base, by Hans Coper (1920–81). Before 1979. Matt white and brown manganese slips 18.5 by 19.3 by 6.3 cm. (C.166–2016); Footed stoneware vase, by Lucie Rie. Before 1990. Pitted glaze with variegated cream grey, light blue and tan shades, 31.7 by 15.3 by 6.7 cm. (C.543–2016); Oval stoneware stem cup, with indentations, by Hans Coper. Before 1971. Matt white and manganese brown slips, 16.3 by 12 by 5.7 cm. (C.165–2016); Lobed tube form on a cylindrical base, by Hans Coper. Before 1972. White and manganese brown slips, 27.5 by 6.5 by 5.2 cm. (C.168–2016). Bequeathed by Dr John Shakeshaft 2016. © The estates of Lucie Rie and Hans Coper/Crafts Study Centre, University for the Creative Arts.

A distinguished astronomer and Emeritus Fellow of St Catharine's College, Cambridge, Dr John Shakeshaft had a passion for studio pottery. Inspired by Henry Rothschild and his influential shop, Primavera, on King's Parade, Cambridge, Dr Shakeshaft embarked upon forming a choice and representative collection of British and foreign studio pottery, which came to his small house in north Cambridge. Shortly before his death in 2015, concerned about the future of his collection, Dr Shakeshaft approached the Fitzwilliam Museum. Guided by Shakeshaft's friend, the well-known potter Phil Rogers, the Museum selected some seven hundred pieces of studio pottery from the collection as well as Dr Shakeshaft's notes on his acquisitions and a library of books on the subject. The collection is the perfect complement to Professor J.W.L. Glaisher's vast, 3,000 piece strong collection of British and Continental pottery and earthenware, which was bequeathed to the Museum in 1928.



XXIII. *Tanami Mapping III – Talus Slope* by Pippin Drysdale (b.1943). 2014. Porcelain, 23 by 20 cm. Presented, 2016, by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum with a bequest from Dr Ronald Gray. © Pippin Drysdale. Image courtesy of Adrian Sassoon, London.

For the past twenty years the Fitzwilliam Museum has benefited from annual gifts of examples of British craftsmanship – furniture, ceramics, glass and jewellery – from Sir Nicholas and Lady Goodison through the Art Fund. Now numbering over one hundred pieces, we have recently celebrated this sustained generosity with a publication, *Contemporary British Crafts: The Goodison Gift to the Fitzwilliam Museum* by Amanda Game (Philip Wilson Publishing, 2016). But the Goodisons acquire works only by British artists or those working in Britain. A bequest by Dr Ronald Gray enabled the Museum to secure this example of the work of Pippin Drysdale, who lives and works in Fremantle, Western Australia, thus allowing us to give an international context to this very popular collection.

XXIV. *Prosperity (White)*, by Caroline Cheng (b.1963). 2012. Porcelain butterflies on burlap, 140 by 140 by 10 cm. Presented, 2013 by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum, with a bequest from Mrs Joan Anne Simms. (C.1–2013). © Caroline Cheng.

Born in Cambridge in 1963 and educated in America, Caroline Cheng has pursued a distinguished career as a ceramic artist in the Far East, teaching and managing the Pottery Workshop in Hong Kong and establishing similar workshops in Shanghai and Jingdezhen. Cheng's best-known works are a series of robes sewn with hundreds of porcelain butterflies, all different and handmade in the ancient kilns of Jingdezhen. The title of the work is a play on words, for the Chinese words for 'Clothing' and 'Prosperity' are pronounced the same way. Her work is represented in many museum collections in Asia and Europe, and this striking robe was purchased from the Fitzwilliam Museum exhibition on contemporary ceramics produced at Jingdezhen, *China's White Gold*, in 2012.





XXV. Letters, from Samuel Palmer (1792–1882) to the Revd John Preston Wright and his family, dated 1866–81. Pen, various sizes. Presented, 2015, by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum. (MS 3-2015–MS 49-2015).

The Fitzwilliam Museum holds an important collection of artists' papers, including the archives of Sir Edward Burne-Jones and John Linnell. This series of forty-seven signed autograph letters from Samuel Palmer (1792–1882) to his close friend the Revd John Preston Wright and his family dates from 1866 until 1881 and discusses art, poetry and music. Sixteen of the letters are unpublished. The group complements the Museum's holdings of some 160 Palmer letters and notebooks, many of which form part of the Linnell Archive.



XXVI. The Creation of the Epicycles, miniature from a manuscript of Guillaume de Deguileville, *Le Pèlerinage de l'âme*. France, Metz, c.1435–1450. Tempera on vellum, 12.3 by 11 cm. Purchased, 2014, with a grant from the Headley Trust and funds bequeathed by Arthur Graham Reynolds. (MS 1-2015).

The miniature shows the epicycles created by the movement of the seven spheres in whose melody the human soul delights. It illustrates verses from the *Pilgrimage of the Human Soul*, a celebrated allegorical poem by the Cistercian monk Guillaume de Deguileville (1295–after 1358). The manuscript to which this miniature belonged was illuminated by the Master of the Gospels of St Goery, an artist active in Metz in the mid-fifteenth century. The volume was cut up in the late twentieth century. Some forty-five fragments with miniatures and text are known to survive. In 2003, the Museum purchased one of them in memory of Michael Camille, while in 2005, four miniatures from the same manuscript were donated by Sandra Hindman in his memory. The Museum purchased two more in 2005, and twenty-nine further cuttings containing thirty-five miniatures were presented by a private collector. The newly discovered fragment brings the total to forty-three miniatures, thus leaving no more than five images in private hands. This places the Fitzwilliam Museum in a strong position ultimately to recover the full set of illuminations and presents the possibility for a digital reconstruction of the entire manuscript.

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