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FRIENDS

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of the Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome

NEWSLETTER



Artists in the Cemetery: two sculptors, four painters and the art dealer who loved Raphael

Dora Ohlfsen: Australian by birth, Italian at heart (from the inscription on her tomb)



Portrait of Dora Ohlfsen (1908)

A relief bust of the god Dionysius, one hand raised in a gesture of blessing, watches over one of the most distinctive graves in the Cemetery (Zone 1.15.28). This tomb houses the remains of two people: Australian sculptress Dora Ohlfsen and her lifelong companion, Russian-born Elena von Kügelgen. The two women were found gassed in their apartment at via San Nicola da Tolentino on the morning of the 7th February 1948. They had been living at that address, in an area traditionally associated with artists' studios, for nearly half a century.

They had moved to Italy in 1902 from St Petersburg, a city they both loved but which they accurately saw as being on the brink of revolution. Elena was from a well-connected family of Balten Germans, with one uncle a physician to the Tsar and another editor of the Petersburg German newspaper. Her family also boasted several prominent artists, two of them court painters. Dora had moved to Russia from Berlin after

completing piano studies at Theodor Kullak's *Neue Akademie der Tonkunst*. Travelling to Germany from Australia, Dora was reversing the journey that her father had made in 1849 in pursuit of his own dreams. Though Dora lived most of her life in Italy, she was proud of her Australian roots, of being from a country where women were en-

franchised long before those in Europe and where her pioneering high school (Sydney Girls' High School) trained some of the first women doctors, lawyers and professors for the newly federated nation. 'The air must account for it', she told journalists, 'the feeling of newness and vitality and power. Australians have this splendid heritage, the nervous energy that inspires them with the desire to get everything out of life. We are untrammelled by traditions.'

In Rome Dora re-trained as an artist, studying with a number of Prix de Rome artists based at the French Academy. She achieved early success as a sculptor, specializing in bronze medals and plaques. In 1907 *L'Italie* gave an account of a salon at Dora's studio. Those present included Donna Nicoleta Grazioli, the Countess Lutzow and Princess Maria Rospigliosi (formerly the American heiress Marie Reid Pankhurst). Many of Dora's patrons were from the Italian nobility, at a time when the patronage of living artists became fashionable through the activities of the art-minded Queen Margherita. Church commissions came from Cardinal O'Connell of Boston and Josef Alteneisel, Prince-Bishop of Brixen in the Tyrol.

In the following year, the *Rivista di Roma* included a feature article on Dora by Arturo Rusconi. This illustrated her medallion *The Awakening of Australian Art*, which was purchased by the French government and became her first work to enter a public collection.



Dionysius (c.1930), plaster cast



Anzac medal (1916)

Rusconi claimed that to Dora fell the honour of making the earliest portrait of the celebrated poet Gabriele d'Annunzio. Back home in Australia she became known for her poignant Anzac medal, undertaken at her own initiative as a fundraiser for wounded Australian

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Gabriele D'Annunzio (1909)
bronze medallion

and New Zealand soldiers and their families.

The inter-war years were particularly productive ones for Dora. She worked on a commission for the facade of the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney (later cancelled). She was among the crowds that lined the streets of Rome in 1922 to welcome Mussolini. It was a promising time for artists. Dora was commissioned to model a portrait of *Il Duce* for the entrance to

the Predil bauxite mine. She sketched him whilst he was working in his apartment at the Palazzo Chigi and remarked, as others did, that he was 'a great dynamic force. He is a creation of the times and he has great personal magnetism.' Her most important work, however, was a war memorial at Formia near Naples. This is her only surviving monumental work. When dedicated, Mussolini told her 'you may now be considered an Italian sculptress.'

This remark, intended as an honour, indicates the predicament that she found herself in during the 1930s. Although she considered herself an Australian artist living abroad, few commissions came her way from Australia. Australia's social progressivism was not matched by a cultural one and the country was slow to recognize the achievements of its own artists, particularly those who had settled abroad. When the news of her death reached home, her close friend Sir Robert Garran told the press 'It was her heart's desire to be commissioned for an important work of sculpture in Australia, and she visited Australia more than once, but did not receive in her own country the recognition she had won in Europe.'



Sacrifice (1924), bronze sculpture on Monument to the Fallen, Formia

Contributed by Steven Miller, *Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney*. His *Four lives: The awakening of Australian art* (Wakefield Press, 2014) has a chapter on Dora Ohlfson.

The 'Amazon of sculpture': a tomb by Félicie de Fauveau



Ary Scheffer, *Félicie de Fauveau*, 1829 (Louvre)

This past summer the Musée d'Orsay in Paris held the first retrospective of the work of Félicie de Fauveau (1801-1886) under the title "The Amazon of sculpture". After her death in Florence her name was forgotten and many of her works can no longer be traced. Her strong Catholic faith and her fascination with medieval and Renaissance art and heraldry resulted in some fine marble sculptures but also smaller objects such as holy water fonts, ceremonial daggers, picture frames and gold jewellery. In imitation of Benvenuto Cellini whose work she admired, she mastered numerous materials and techniques and produced some exquisite objects.

Her career was unorthodox. Her family connections to the restored Bourbon court of Charles X led to commissions that helped launch her early career in Paris. But in 1830 when Charles X was forced to abdicate, de Fauveau paid for her opposition to the new order by being imprisoned for three months and then, in 1833, went into exile in Florence. She made a striking figure on arrival there: as Ary



Photo: N. Stanley-Price

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Scheffer's portrait shows, she had adopted an androgynous appearance, with cropped hair and male clothing. One visitor reported that she had vowed to keep her hair short until the Bourbon monarchy was restored in France (it never was).

The tomb of Maria Bollvillez (Zona V.7.18) was the first of de Fauveau's commissions from the Russian aristocracy. In November 1845 the sculptor had retreated, as she often did when unwell and exhausted, to San Gimignano whose medieval atmosphere and art appealed strongly to her, as did its quiet isolation in those years before foreign tourists 'discovered' it. But her solitude was shattered by the arrival en masse of the Bollvillez family. Only a few days later they received news of the death of the 17-year-old Maria in Rome. The family promptly commissioned her tomb from de Fauveau.

On the headstone, an angel with bird-like body and half-spread wings ascends against a bright blue sky with gold stars made in mosaic. The right hand clutches a formidable billhook and the left a flower. Below is a chalice holding a lily, flanked by two inscriptions "ei raptio lilio" and "Coelum ad volat". Large teardrops fall on either side towards the framed epitaph at the base. No-one has mentioned the weathered inscriptions on the sides of the headstone, but one of them is the artist's signature. The distinctive pointed headstone is visible in Corrodi's watercolour (see *Newsletter* 20) of the grave of Natalia Shakhovskaya, and in Chapman's painting of Sophia Howard's grave (see this issue).

De Fauveau, the fervent monarchist, had found such favour with the Russian royal family that Tsar Nicholas himself visited her studio in 1845 and Prince Anatole Demidoff commissioned work for his extravagant villa at Pratolino outside Florence. Among other funerary monuments that she designed are two that are recently restored and easily visited in churches in Florence: her mother's in Santa Maria del Carmine and the memorial to Louise Favreau in the cloister of Santa Croce.

We know that Félicie de Fauveau spent three months in Rome in 1863 to support the Papacy against the Risorgimento. Perhaps then



she visited the Cemetery to see *in situ* her monument to the young Maria Bollvillez.

Nicholas Stanley-Price

On her life, see: Silvia Mascalchi, Félicie de Fauveau. Una scultrice romantica da Parigi a Firenze, Olschki, Florence 2012.



A fin-de-siècle fantasy: the memorial to Friedrich Geselschap

In the shade of a bay tree, between prominent monuments to August von Goethe and the Welsh sculptor John Gibson, lies the grave of German history-painter Friedrich Geselschap (Zone 1.13.20). Born in the Rhineland on 5th May 1835, Geselschap began his artistic apprenticeship studying the old masters in Dresden and Düsseldorf, and continued his training in Rome in 1866. Although based in Berlin from 1871, he and his artistic circle fled the harsh northern winters for sketching and relaxation in Rome and the southern Italian coastal resorts. Remembered for large historical and religious paintings in the armoury of Berlin's Hall of Fame and in the city's original Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, Geselschap was celebrated as a painter who had 'lived his life in the belief that Art ... might also guide the nation towards higher culture', and who in death 'ascended into the ideal world, ... the real home of his spirit'.

Geselschap's memorial is a low ledger with short inscription and symbolic design framed by a decorative border, with at the head a medallion portrait of the artist supported between sorrowing cherubs. This summary does not do justice to its startling effect. The viewer's eye is drawn from the realistic depiction of an ageing man with thinning hair yet luxuriant beard, down to a grotesque design at the slab's foot: a large jawless skull biting on a globular rose, as a snake penetrates the neck cavity and emerges through an eye socket. From this medieval symbol of death's grinning triumph over love and beauty pour lizards, toads and smaller snakes squirming along the bottom and up the sides, contained only by the border. By contrast, in lighter relief growing up from the skull's crown are stalks of ripe wheat where a dragonfly and butterfly flit. The wheat



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forms a central arrow pointing to the artist's name, and dividing the two-line inscription: 'UEBER DEN TOD HINAUS ALS HEROLD DES SCHOENEN / EWIG ZU LEBEN IST DEINER TAGE GOLDENE FRUCHT / 1835 / 1898' ('Triumphing over death, a herald of the beautiful, / To live forever is the golden fruit of your days').

The motto partially explains the memorial's iconography: art created during the painter's life survives to give him immortal fame. Symbols of death are confined to the lower half and margins, while symbols of ideal beauty and art – the cherubs and the artist's framed portrait decorated with foliage – dominate the upper half. Geselschap's immortality may be given a more orthodox Christian interpretation. On the medallion's reverse grows a vine bearing clusters of grapes; wheat and grapes represent the Eucharistic elements of bread and wine, the butterfly the resurrected human soul. Yet the idealising motto and portrait seem weak beside the vividly realised macabre skull and reptiles.

The clash of death and immortality, grotesque and ideal, is more understandable given the circumstances of the artist's death, and his relationship to the designer. By September 1897, when he left Berlin for Rome for the last time, Geselschap was ill, coping with rheumatism, digestive disorders, and a debilitating running sore on his leg. He stayed initially

near the Piazza del Popolo, then moved to an apartment in the Piazza di Spagna with better light for drawing. He worked intensively on designs for the Hamburg Rathaus and the Potsdam Friedenskirche. Geselschap complained of Rome's 'hurly-burly'; 'strangers keep arriving, who always want me to act as a tourist guide, and I can't take much more of it'. Despite the care of his housekeeper and model Anna Lettkow, in March 1898 he became seriously ill with influenza and 'a high degree of nervous exhaustion'. Doctors advised complete rest, and he spent April recuperating on the Campania coast. His physical condition stabilised, but he was suffering depression and delusions. Back in 'blazingly hot' Rome, Geselschap had a crisis about the Potsdam commission. On 16th May he wrote: '[I am] so nervous that I'm getting barely four hours' sleep a night, and can't get anything done'. He decided to return to Berlin in early June, but disappeared on 31st May. He was found two days later, hanged from a tree near the Fonte dell'Acqua Acetosa. He was sixty-three.

The euphemism of 'Triumphing over death' for suicide originates with the memorial's designer, whose name is discreetly incised on the ledger: 'R. SIEMERING / SEINEM FREUNDE'. Sculptor Rudolf Siemering (1835-1905) was Geselschap's direct contemporary. They shared similar views on art and aesthetics, and had wintered together in Italy; Siemering and his wife visited Geselschap in Rome in 1897. Siemering is known for major public sculptures and monuments in Germany and America: his subjects include Luther, Frederick the Great, and Washington. His public style is realistic, monumental and imposing, a stark contrast to the overwrought symbolism of this grief-driven personal creation. The tomb design also expressed both men's belief in art's transformative powers and the artist's cultural importance. Siemering conceives the memorial as a unified art-work. The portrait medallion has the artist's signature, while the portrait and skull are mirror-images, both turned quarter-face. The tomb's material itself articulates unity: cast bronze, with the maker's mark 'Lauchhammer' (an artistic German foundry specialising in casting sculptures, memorials and bells). The bright bronze has dulled and darkened over a century, but Siemering's tribute is an enduring 'herald of the beautiful'.

Contributed by Samantha Matthews, who thanks Tom Baynes for invaluable help with German translation. S.Matthews@bristol.ac.uk



The painter William Pars and the funeral of 'Mrs Pars'

William Pars (1742–1782) was a painter whose delicate and atmospheric watercolours of Italy, Greece and Asia Minor are often used today as illustrations to publications on the Grand Tour and the discovery of classical sites in the eighteenth century.

Pars was born and trained in London, winning awards as a student and setting up as a portrait painter by the age of twenty-one. But in 1764 he was chosen to accompany an expedition recording classical monuments in what is now western Turkey; his views were exhibited in London and reproduced as engravings. In 1769 he was off again, this time to Switzerland. Returning to London, his personal life became as lively as his travels, for he fell for the wife of the London miniaturist John Smart. Pars conveniently avoided trouble by taking up a three-year bursary for study in Italy (offered by the Society of Dilettanti, which had sent him to Asia Minor). Mrs Smart accompanied him, becoming known in Rome as 'Mrs Pars'.

Much of our knowledge of the couple comes from the Memoirs of the Welsh artist Thomas Jones (1742-1803), a fellow-student of Pars in London who arrived in Rome soon afterwards. After the death of 'Mrs Pars' in 1778 he recorded what he knew of her sad history, a lengthy account of this 'high spirited, handsome Girl' who had been 'picked up at one of the Bagnios about Covent Garden' by Smart, and who 'had a



William Pars, *The Colosseum, Rome* (Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne (Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums))

taste for Poetry and elegant Amusements – He was a Muckworm [a miser] – And as his brutal appetites sufficiently satiated, he treated her with rude neglect'. After Pars fell for her, and she for him, her husband was out for revenge – 'Pars was well aware that Smart waited only for Sufficient Evidence to substantiate a criminal process against him'.

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Alas, the couple enjoyed less than three years together. In April 1778 Elizabeth Banks, wife of the sculptor Thomas Banks, wrote that 'Mrs. Pars is not long for this world, she is in what they call a Galloping Consumption, reduc'd to a skeleton'. She died on 6 June, Jones writing in his diary that:

'We went both of us, immediately to poor P's lodgings & kept him Company Day & Night, till the Corps was interred which was at night on the 8th – during which interval my poor friend was almost in a State of distraction...At the funeral all the English Artists who were then at Rome walk'd in procession with torches to the number of 18 or 20 – BANKS the sculptor read the Service – And great Numbers of Romans attended, who behaved with the greatest decorum, and a profound Silence was observed – The Scene was grand & striking – The Moon, just hid behind the Tomb of Caio Sesto, cast her Silvery Tints on all Objects around, save where the large dark Pyramid threw its broad Shadow over the Place in which the Solemn Ceremony was performing by the dusky Light of Torches – These last Rites – performed – The Flambeaus were put out and given to Our Attendants, each of us having one for the Occasion – We then return'd by the light of the Moon.'

The English artist James Northcote also attended the funeral. His account of it, transcribed some decades later by Stephen Gwynn, describes the event less poetically but giving much more factual detail, including: 'The husband of the deceased gave gloves to all his friends who attended the funeral according to the English custom, and also a large wax torch to each to light at the place of interment, which was at the base of the pyramid, the tomb of the ancient Roman Caius Cestus. There being no Protestant priest at that time in Rome, Mr. Banks, the sculptor, read the funeral service.'

William Pars died suddenly four years later, and his friend Jones wrote that 'though he was rather hasty and sometimes indeed Violent in his Temper – He was a Warm and sincere friend – 'Adieu Dear Pars! Adieu –'. Neither grave is marked and there are no known portraits of the couple. However, the watercolours of William Pars remain his monument, highly prized for their artistic merit and topographical information.

Contributed by Dr Patricia Andrew, Edinburgh, who researches 18th-century British artists in Rome, including Jacob More (see Newsletter 21)



J.L.Chapman's painting (1862) of Sophia Howard's grave



John Linton Chapman, *The grave of Sophia Howard in the Non-Catholic Cemetery at Rome*, 1862 (collection of Mr. and Mrs. John F. McGuigan Jr)

When the estate of the painter John Linton Chapman (1839-1905) was sold in New York City in 1979, one gem stood out: a romantic and haunting picture of the grave of Sophia Howard in the Non-Catholic Cemetery at Rome. It is an intriguing little composition, not only for its funereal subject but also because the artist retained possession of it throughout his life. Although no relationship between Chapman and Howard is documented, the painting itself stands in homage to a long-forgotten but meaningful encounter. In spite of the dearth of primary evidence regarding Sophia Howard's brief life and death, several family connections between her and the artist help to elucidate the history and significance of this compelling image.

J.L.Chapman was the elder son of Mary Elizabeth and John Gadsby Chapman. The family moved to Rome when he was only ten years old because his father, an accomplished painter, had studied in Italy in the 1820s and longed to return (see *Newsletter* 23). Chapman *père* taught his craft to John Linton and his younger brother Conrad Wise in their home-studio at Via del Babuino 135, which became a fixture on the social circuit of Americans – especially Southerners – who were visiting the Eternal City. On her arrival there in 1852, Sophia Howard would have been a welcome guest, as a native of Baltimore in the

historically Southern state of Maryland and as the grandniece of the noted collector Robert Gilmore Jr. whose early patronage of John Gadsby Chapman had been instrumental in establishing his reputation.

Sophia Howard's prominent father would also have been known to the Chapmans, as Benjamin Chew Howard was a Brigadier General during the War of 1812, Congressman (1829-39), and Reporter of Decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court (1843-61). Since there appear to be no passport records for either Sophia or her parents, and since Benjamin needed to remain at home when the Supreme Court was in session, Sophia was probably chaperoned by other family members or friends during her travels. When she died in Rome from an undisclosed illness or accident, it was probably John Gadsby Chapman who arranged her funeral and burial, a sombre task that he occasionally performed on behalf of absent families during his forty years' residence in Rome. His intimate involvement may have influenced his son's decision, ten years later, to commemorate her grave *in situ* with an oil sketch.

Howard's marble headstone (Zona V.3.4) is a restrained Gothic arch with five blind tracery arches in the tympanum. Below, within a single ornate rosette of quatrefoil design, is a cross, a motif that Chapman emphasizes in his painting. His sidelong vantage-point permits a reading of the brief inscription which states that Sophia Howard of Baltimore, Maryland, died at Rome on 23 May 1852 aged twenty-nine. Other grave markers recede into



The grave of Sophia Howard and Jessie Tyson today

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the distance. Visually, the most fascinating element of Howard's plot is the wrought-iron fence that originally delineated it and enclosed climbing roses on wooden stakes and purple-flowering groundcover. Such fences were not uncommon in the 19th C and only in the 1930s was it no longer permitted to erect them (information from Nicholas Stanley-Price).

In early 1863, soon after Chapman painted this moving tribute to Sophia Howard, her younger sister Juliana arrived in Rome with her husband Richard Wood Tyson and their infant daughter Jessie, born in Nice the previous November. The Chapmans were well acquainted with

the Tyson family, especially Richard's late father Isaac Jr., whose Baltimore Chrome Works was the world's largest supplier of chromium which was used in artists' pigments, among other purposes. Did Chapman paint her deceased sister's grave as a memento to give to Juliana? It is entirely possible that he did but that, following the tragic death on 24 February of the infant Jessie and her burial alongside her aunt, he thought better of it and kept it. The epigraph on the headstone was amended to add Jessie and the simple lines "In a foreign land these two / Sleep together."

Contributed by John F. McGuigan Jr, independent art historian



A German artist and philanthropist in Rome: Charlotte Popert



Charlotte Popert, *Self-portrait* (Casa di Goethe, Weimar)

In his memoirs the scholar Ludwig Pollak (1868-1943) wrote: "A painter of great talent, of Jewish origin, was the young lady Charlotte Popert from Hamburg (born in 1848, died...). In Weimar she was a pupil of Friedrich Preller the elder, and then studied in Dusseldorf, Rome and Paris. She settled in Rome in the '90s. She was very proud of her friendship with John Singer Sargent and owned some fine paintings by him. Towards the end of the 19th century she had built for

herself a splendid house on the Lungotevere Arnaldo da Brescia, then quite isolated, where she often received visitors. As a philanthropist she gave much help to the sick and the poor of her neighbourhood. She was not rewarded. Her house was confiscated as enemy property and she died of heartbreak soon after the war in....?"

We can complete her biography: she was born on 1 March 1848 to Joseph Popert, a trader in leather, and Emma Rothschild, Jews who were baptised in 1853. The family was related to the poet Heinrich Heine. In 1878 Charlotte visited Italy for the first time and there she fell in love with the Ligurian painter Nicolò Barabino, for many years her partner. She travelled often to London – in fact, some databases describe her as an English artist. After Barabino died in 1891, she moved permanently to Rome where she was a friend of the watercolourist Pio Joris, who used to call her "the romanised German, a cheerful chubby and little mascot". She was listed in the Association of German painters and in the Album of Casa Baldi [the German artists' house in Olevano]. At first she lived in Via Margutta, 53 and led a busy life among artists and in society while also travelling. The guest book in the Capri house of the painter C.W. Allers from Hamburg reveals her presence on 3 March 1896.

She also spent time in Sardinia, then little known and illustrated, where she did two study-tours in 1899 and 1900. Many of her photographs were

used in Grazia Deledda's *Character and landscapes of Sardinia* (1901). She published in Munich a series of ten etchings entitled *Sardische Typen und Trachten* (Sardinian characters and costumes), in 50 sets, numbered and signed. Gabriele D'Annunzio refers to these in a letter dated 21 December 1901: "The etchings by Charlotte Popert have re-awakened in me old memories of my own journey to Sardinia. The soul of this people, rich in its mysterious origins, expresses itself in alternating light and shade, with an aspect in turn passionate and prudent... We have to thank Charlotte Popert for this unexpected revelation."

The antiquarian Augusto Jandolo devoted a chapter in his *Antiquaria* to the Villino Popert that Charlotte built in the first years of the 20th century with the help of her archaeologist friend Wolfgang Helbig. Queen Margherita, who admired the painter, was a frequent guest in the spacious house-studio on the Lungotevere. Other sources refer to her extraordinary generosity: she donated an etching *In church* to the Lottery for the benefit of Calabria sponsored by the Press Association, and she helped the victims of the 1908 Messina earthquake, opening up her house on the Lungotevere Flaminio in Rome to refugees from the affected zone, and involving many Roman ladies in welcoming them to the capital. In 1911 she founded the Flaminio Educational Garden for children in the Flaminio quarter.

When war broke out, Charlotte Popert as a German citizen had to leave Italy and returned to Germany where she looked after children in need. Four years later she returned to Italy but failed to re-possess her house, now lived in by three families, nor her art collection which ended up in the collection of the Opera Nazionale di Combattenti [an organisation set up to help

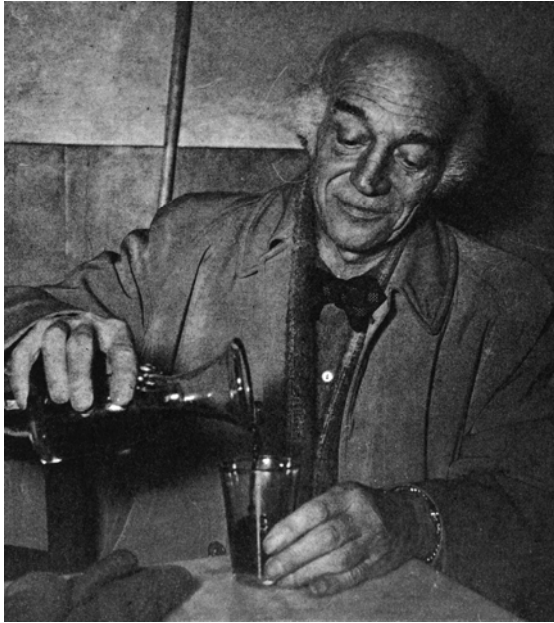


Charlotte Popert's house (from A. Jandolo, *Antiquaria*)

veterans]. She continued to work in the studio of her friend, Pio Joris (now deceased), in the Via di Villa Patrizi. She died in 1922 and was buried in the Cemetery (Zona 1.13.18). Of her house on the Lungotevere there is now no trace, nor is it known where most of her paintings are. Some (mainly etchings) are preserved in the Ministry of Finance and in German museums and private collections.

Contributed by Dorothee Hock, Casa di Goethe, Rome

Niklavs Strunke: a Latvian Modernist painter in Italy



Niklaus Strunke in a Rome *trattoria*

The First World War ended his studies and he volunteered in the Latvian national army. After the independent state of Latvia was declared in 1919, he settled in Riga. An impulsive and restless character, Strunke took an active part in the expressionist Artistic Group of Riga. In the same period he designed more than 25 stage-sets for the National Theatre and Opera in Riga, about 30 for other theatres, 60 illustrated books, 600 illustrations, and various paintings. He published critical essays about art and took part in many exhibitions in Riga itself and abroad: Berlin, Paris, Moscow, Warsaw. His creativity was extraordinary. 'He would fly around like a bird', wrote his friend, the writer Jānis Plaudis. 'He would come in, shout "Ciao!", leave the work finished and take off.' They say it was Strunke who introduced "ciao" to the Latvian vocabulary.

In 1923 Strunke met Ruggero Vasari and attended Marinetti's lessons at the Futurist House in Berlin. He then decided to study Italian art seri-

An unusual monument (Zona 1.2.34) carries an inscription in Latvian: *Art is eternal*. It is the grave of the Latvian painter Niklaus Strunke.

ously and in the autumn set off for Italy. He was the only Latvian modernist to have worked with the Futurists in Italy. His friends in Rome were Marinetti, Fortunato Depero, Anton Giulio Bragaglia, Antonio Marasco, Ivo Panaggi, Ardengo Soffici and others. Later he wrote that he was never a Futurist but he liked the movement's audacity in destroying old traditions and seeking new forms. He also published articles in the Futurists' reviews: *The 20th century and us*. In the article *The Russian theatre of Tairoff*, he reproduced his stage-set for *The Golden Horse* (1918) by Jānis Rainis (one of Latvia's most famous poets).

In 1924 he settled in Capri, the Italian Futurists' preferred spot. He stayed in Italy until 1925, working in Rome at the Independent and the puppet theatres. Since his youth he had loved the Italian masters of the 14th and 15th centuries. On returning to Italy in 1926, he settled in Florence, fascinated by Fra Angelico's frescoes in the San Marco convent and spending entire days between the Uffizi and Palazzo Pitti.

It was in Italy that he learned better to appreciate the natural beauty of his own country. Back in Latvia, he started to travel, studying closely its inhabitants, its countryside, the cities, the people and popular art. His flat in Riga became a kind of museum of popular art full of ceramics and wooden artifacts and textiles. Not by chance is he considered the most Latvian of 20thC painters.

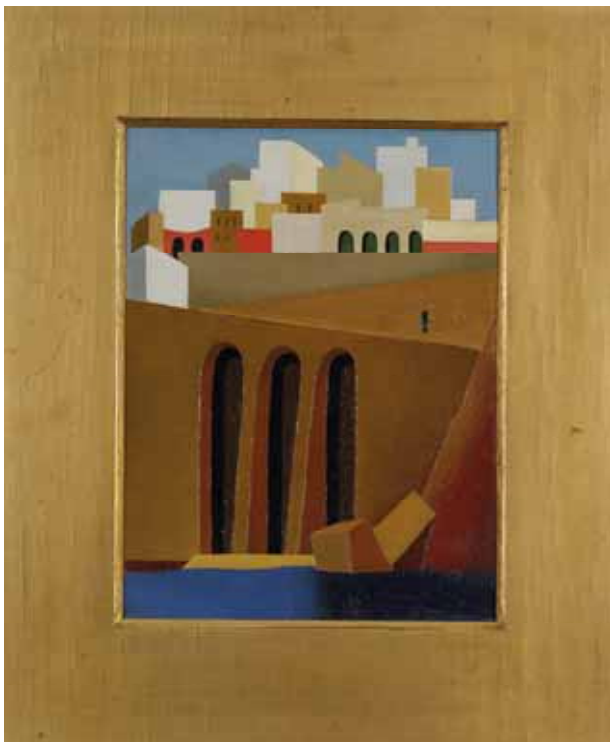
Political change and WWII forced Strunke to flee in 1944, taking refuge with his family in Sweden. In his work there appeared new motifs and a tragic tone, as in his cycle *God, your earth is burning*. His compatriot Marta Rasupe wrote: 'Exile discourages and often demoralises; but for Niklaus Strunke, faith in art was the source of energy in even the most testing moments. He didn't allow either advancing age or the adversities of life in exile to overwhelm him.' He took part in exhibitions, made illustrations, published articles and even a book *Svētā birze: esejas* (Stockholm: Daugava, 1964) in which he expressed his love for Italy and his image of the country: 'After losing my Latvia and Kaugurciems [his village], I feel at home only in Italy. I feel close to its art, its people and its nature.' He was the only Latvian artist to be included in the exhibition of Sacred Art held in Rome in 1950, and he gave the Pope his canvas *Via Dolorosa*.

Rome was familiar. Here he found friends from his youth to talk about art and to share reminiscencies, here he didn't feel a foreigner but absolutely at home. He died in his Rome apartment aged 72 on 13 October 1966. His children erected the tombstone in the form of a Latvian cross taken from a sketch by Strunke himself.

Contributed by Astra Šmite, National Library of Latvia



Grave of Niklaus Strunke



Niklavs Strunke, *Sorento*, 1924 (The Latvian National Museum of Art)

The man who loved Raphael: the art dealer Morris Moore



Alfred Stevens, *John Morris Moore*, c.1840
(Tate, London)

The headstone on the grave (Zone 2.5.19) of the English art dealer Morris J.J.C. Moore (1812-1885) identifies him as "the man truly enamoured of Raphael". His love for Raphael was real, but it seems to have been his inflated sense of self-importance and stubbornness which brought him to fame – or perhaps notoriety – during his life. His name appears in museum catalogues around the world that record the many sales he made to prominent collections, but his story is mostly unknown.

The wonderful portrait by Alfred Stevens in London's Tate Gallery shows him as a handsome Byronesque figure with shoulder-length hair and long beard. At the time (1840), Moore and Stevens shared a studio in Via Margutta. Stevens was to go on to success; Moore's own efforts were not widely appreciated, but he found he had a talent for selling his friend's work.

Morris Moore was born in France, where his British parents were detained by the Napoleonic authorities. It is said that his mother obtained a personal interview with the Emperor to secure the family's liberty. For a brief period after school in England he joined the British Navy but when aged 18 he left to join other British adventurers in Greece, fighting with patriots for Greek Independence. By 1832 he was in Italy, and took up a career as an art dealer, critic and connoisseur, studying particularly the work of Raphael. Later in life he acquired a painting of *Apollo and Marsyas*, and set out to prove that this unattributed work was in fact painted by Raphael.

He returned to Britain and in 1843 married Rose Osborne. They had four children. The three girls were given the florid, Italianate names Venice Rose, Florence Rose, and Adria Rose. More prosaically, his son was named Morris John.

Moore is best known today for his role in a controversy over the cleaning of paintings in the National Gallery in London. In 1846 he wrote a series of letters to *The Times* under the pseudonym "Verax", savaging the Gallery's restoration methods. This set off a long debate over the appropriate restoration of Old Masters and, arguably, the beginning of modern conservation techniques. Later he petitioned various VIPs, including the Prime Minister, proposing that he should be appointed Director of the Gallery. He was unsuccessful in his bid,

but the controversy over the cleaning and the Directorship rumbled on in the London press, and was re-ignited in the 1850s when he attacked the Gallery's acquisitions policy. He was dismissive of the quality of paintings that the Gallery was buying, but keen that they purchase his own *Apollo and Marsyas*. His correspondence on the subject was so voluminous that by 1857, *Hansard* records, the mere mention of his name in the House of Commons was enough to raise a laugh. Despite his public profile, one event of the 1850s went unmentioned in the press: a scandalous liaison in 1852-4 with Sarah Juliana Goffrie, a renowned pianist and the young wife of violinist Charles Goffrie. Goffrie divorced Sarah, citing Morris Moore as the co-respondent. The court records show that Sarah had a son by Morris Moore: we are both descendants of this son, a result of this little-known affair at the height of Moore's fame.



Pietro Vannucci (known as Perugino),
Apollo and Marsyas, c.1495 (Louvre)

Either by reason of the scandal, or because of the furore over the National Gallery and his pestering the authorities, Morris Moore returned to Italy, considering himself to be in exile. He resumed his concentration on Raphael, and made a significant donation to a group in Urbino to allow it to purchase the house of Raphael's birth. The house is still a museum to the memory of Raphael, and a bust of Morris Moore, as a principal benefactor, is one of the exhibits. *Apollo and Marsyas* was sold to the Louvre in 1875, with the attribution to Raphael accepted by some but not all. The Louvre currently attributes it to Perugino, Raphael's teacher.

Contributed by Andy Russell, retired civil servant, and his daughter Amy Russell, Department of Classics, University of Durham, UK

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