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Announcements and Comments

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Announcements and Comments

FOR A special issue, March 1991, which will focus on *Irish Women Writers*, the editors welcome critical, sociological, or biographical articles that explore the particular contributions Irish women have made to the world of letters. The deadline is September 1, 1990; manuscripts should be sent to the guest editor, Marilyn Throne, English Department, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio 45056.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

SUSAN GOODMAN teaches at California State University, Fresno. Her book, *Friends and Rivals, Edith Wharton's Women*, will be published next spring, and she is at work on a study of Wharton's circle of male friends.

CHRIS BROWN is in the English Department at the University of South Carolina and has published articles on James, Lawrence, and Eliot.

FREDERICK SHILSTONE is a Professor of English at Clemson University. His *Byron and the Myth of Tradition* was published in 1988, and he has written essays for *CLQ* on Hardy (1976) and Byron (1984).

KEITH N. HULL is Professor and Chair of English at the University of Wyoming. He has published essays on Synge, T. E. Lawrence, Ursula Le Guin, and Jack Kerouac and is at work on a study of rhyme and theme in *Samson Agonistes*.

SANFORD STERNLICHT, Adjunct Professor of English at Syracuse University, is a scholar, theater director, and poet who has written more than a dozen books on a wide range of topics, including a full-length study of Padraic Colum and editions of his stories, plays, and poems.

THOMAS F. SHEA teaches English at the University of Connecticut and is completing a book on the novels of Flann O'Brien.

NOTES FROM THE MUSEUM OF ART

TWO SMALL objects from the museum's permanent collection were put on exhibition during the fall semester in connection with a course being offered by the Art Department on the art of the Middle Ages. They were a 13th-century French gilt bronze plaquette of birds (illus. front cover) and an Italian bone carving titled *The Lovers* (illus. back cover) which dates from the 15th century.

The plaquette, which measures 1½" by 3⅝", was made in Limoges and depicts two highly ornamental birds contained within a rectangular border. An almost abstract, curvilinear design is created by the tails, wings, and bodies of the two birds. An identical plaquette is in the collection of the Seattle Art Museum. The two plaquettes are probably from a series that decorated a coffer or small chest. It has been pointed out that a piece of work in the Cluny Museum in Paris is stylistically related to the two plaquettes and could be by the same hand.

The Lovers, in which a male and female stand under a tree, was carved from a bone panel in relief and measures 4⅛" high. It is also thought to have come from a series that once decorated a small chest. The piece is attributed to the Embriachi workshop in Venice. In 1976 *The Lovers* was lent to the exhibition "Images of Love and Death in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art" held at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. In the catalogue entry for *The Lovers* it is noted that although the museum's piece is secular in nature it is similar in treatment to a series of panels depicting scenes from the life of Christ which are in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

The plaquette and *The Lovers* were purchased by the museum from the Adelaide C. Pearson Fund, established by a bequest from Miss Pearson. She was interested in decorative arts and founded the Rowantree Pottery in Blue Hill, Maine, in 1934. She was an inveterate world traveler and formed a collection during her travels which she left to the College. She also left funds for the conservation of the collection and for the purchase of works of art that were compatible with her taste and interests.

HUGH J. GOURLEY III
Director, Museum of Art

NOTES FROM SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

MRS. MARY BUNTING SMITH of Cambridge, Massachusetts, recently made the handsome donation to the College Museum of Art of a late painting by Jack Butler Yeats, "His Thoughts Are Far Away," 1955. We are pleased that Mrs. Smith and the museum agreed that the painting could be hung permanently in the foyer of the James Augustine Healy Memorial Rooms which house Mr. Healy's extensive collection of 19th- and 20th-century Irish Literature.

Hilary Pyle, Jack Yeats's biographer, has provided us with this description of the painting. "His Thoughts Are Far Away" is one of Jack B. Yeats's last canvases, painted two years before his death in 1957. Interestingly it counterbalances an important early water colour, 'His Thoughts to Himself', first shown as 'The Cattle Drover', in 1897, which shows an individual, in a bar in Devon, wrapt in private contemplation.

"His Thoughts Are Far Away", however, is obviously a Sligo scene. The central character, with his beard and hat, is a sailor or a returned American, whose mind is suddenly activated by the masted ship seen moored

nearby on the quays, a symbol of travel, freedom, the excitement of what has been and what is to come. His head, with its dark and light sides, is silhouetted against the sky, thus giving the theme a philosophical dimension, as is often the case in Yeats's late paintings, stated in a visual metaphor, which the spectator is free to interpret in his own way."

In addition to Mrs. Smith's gift, we recently identified in the Healy collection a graphite drawing done by Jack Yeats's father, John Butler Yeats, of the Irish poet, playwright, and novelist, Padraic Colum. Once restored, remounted, and framed, the Colum portrait will join on display in the Healy foyer "His Thoughts Are Far Away" and ten other drawings by John Butler Yeats of prominent members of the Irish Literary Renaissance.

J. FRASER COCKS III
Curator, Special Collections