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Announcements and Comments

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Announcements and Comments

THE PICTURE wrapped around both covers of the present issue is of a large oil painting by Luca Giordano (Naples, 1632–1705). The painting is entitled “Hercules on the Funeral Pyre,” and it is a new acquisition of the Colby College Museum of Art. For more information, see the museum notes, below.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

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RACHEL V. BILLIGHEIMER is a lecturer in English at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario. She holds a B.A. from Queen’s University (Kingston, Ontario), a B.Ed. from the University of Toronto, an M.A. from the University of Guelph (Ontario), and a Ph.D. from York University (Toronto, Ontario). Her M.A. thesis is entitled “Common Bird and Golden Bird: A Study of a Key Symbol in the Poetry of W. B. Yeats”; her Ph.D. thesis is entitled “Wheels of Eternity: Circle Symbolism in the Works of Blake and Yeats.” Her article, “Blake’s ‘Eyes of God’: Cycles to Apocalypse and Redemption,” is forthcoming in *Blake Studies*. She writes: “I am engaged in a study of the poetic works of Blake and Yeats. In particular I am considering their use of symbolism, especially in the role of the female and of the dance.”

CHARLES E. MAY is professor of English at California State University, Long Beach. His B.A. is from Morehead State University (Ken-

tucky); his M.A. and Ph.D. are from Ohio University. He edited *Short Story Theories* (1976) and he is the author of over sixty articles on Thomas Hardy, literary criticism, and the short story genre. He writes: "I am currently working on a six-volume study of the short story; volume one is completed."

FRANK G. NOVAK, JR. is associate professor of English at Pepperdine University, Malibu, California. His B.A. is from Harding College (Searcy, Arkansas); his M.A. and Ph.D. are from the University of Tennessee. His representative publications include "The Metaphysics of Beauty and Terror in *Moby-Dick*" (*Studies in the Novel*) and "The Dialectics of Debasement in *The Magus*" (*Modern Fiction Studies*). He is at work on a study of Lewis Mumford's autobiographical writings. In 1984-85 he served as a visiting professor in Pepperdine's "Year in Europe Program" (in Heidelberg).

JHS

NOTES FROM THE MUSEUM OF ART

IN 1982 the Jere Abbott Acquisition Fund, an endowment fund to acquire works of art for the Museum, was established through Mr. Abbott's generous bequest to the College. During his lifetime he was keenly interested in the development of the Museum's permanent collection and gave a number of distinguished works to the Museum. Through his bequest he assured the future growth of the collection.

One of the first purchases that has been made from the Jere Abbott Acquisition Fund is *Hercules on the Funeral Pyre* by Luca Giordano (1632-1705). It was painted between 1665 and 1670, is oil on canvas, and measures 44¾ by 113½ inches.

Giordano, who was born in Naples, traveled throughout Italy fulfilling commissions, and was court painter in Madrid from 1692 to 1702. He was a prolific painter and had a great influence on his contemporaries as well as on the younger artists who followed him.

The painting's subject matter, which reflects the strong interest during the Baroque period in classical themes, was based on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book 9, lines 230-39. Hercules, knowing that his mortal life was about to end, built his own funeral pyre and had his friend, Phyloctetes, set fire to it while his father, Jupiter, appeared in the sky. Hercules is shown with his traditional attributes, a club and the lion skin he won when he strangled the lion of Nema.

The format of the painting suggests that it might possibly be one of a series depicting mythological subjects that Giordano did for the decoration of a specific location.

HUGH J. GOURLEY III
Director, Museum of Art