

# miscellanea

CULTURAL AFFAIRS OFFICE OF THE EMBASSY OF AUSTRALIA ♦ MARCH 1998

## PHILANTHROPIST KLUGE DONATES IMPORTANT ABORIGINAL ART COLLECTION TO U-VA.

**B**usinessman and philanthropist John W. Kluge has donated the majority of his collection of 20th-century Aboriginal art to the University of Virginia. In December 1997, the institution accepted 1,570 objects from Kluge, who resides in neighboring Albemarle County. The collection is valued well in excess of \$5 million.

The Kluge-Ruhe Collection is remarkable for its comprehensiveness and size. According to Margo Smith Boles, a curator at Morven, Kluge's Virginia home, "The Collection is especially impressive for its broad representation of different regional styles in painting and for its number of artifacts and archives. The only comparable collections in the world are found in Australia, and almost all of these are held by national or state museums and galleries."

Known as the "Kluge-Ruhe Collection", the gift includes more than 900 objects previously owned by Edward Ruhe and purchased by Kluge in 1993. The Ruhe component of the collection includes paintings, carvings, tools, ceremonial artifacts, and detailed archives. In addition, Kluge's extensive collection contains paintings on bark, canvas, and paper, many of which he commissioned directly from Aboriginal communities.

"We are deeply grateful to John Kluge for his generosity in donating this splendid collection to the University of Virginia", said President John T. Casteen III. "This gift presents a unique opportunity to build the University's art collections and to enhance the interdisciplinary study of world cultures. The popular and the educational appeal of this collection is enormous."

John W. Kluge is the general partner, chairman, and president of Metromedia Company, one of the largest privately held companies in the United States. Metromedia has businesses in the restaurant, food and hospitality industry, in media, entertainment, telecommunications, automotive components, robotic painting,



*Ochre painting on bark attributed to Namerredje Guymala.*

computer software, and medical technology. Kluge's most recent enterprise is Metromedia International Group, Incorporated, a public media and communications company. Kluge's many philanthropic interests include medical research and scholarships for minority students.

Kluge began collecting Australian Aboriginal art in 1988 following the opening of the *Dreamings* exhibition at the Asia Society Galleries in New York City. Later, he acquired University of Kansas Professor Edward Ruhe's collection, which includes works produced in Arnhem Land from the mid-1950's until 1980. Since 1996, Kluge has sponsored four major commissions of contemporary art from Aboriginal communities in North and Central Australia. Kluge's gift to

the University of Virginia will allow greater access to the collection and promote its use for education and research.

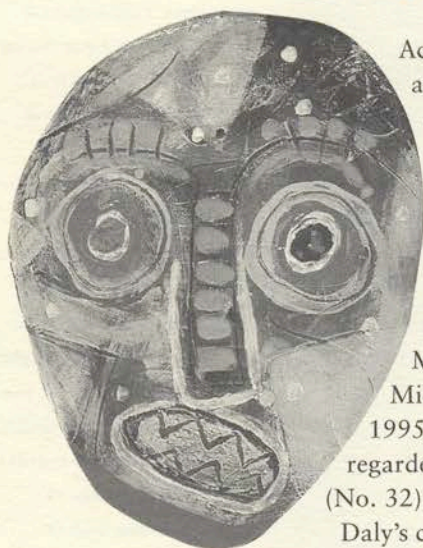
Aboriginal art is significant both as a contemporary art form and as a means for expressing traditional relationships to land and ancestors. The stories depicted in Aboriginal art relate to ancestral beings who roamed the earth creating the landscape. Aboriginal artists base their designs on stories that are passed down from generation to generation through participation in ceremonial life. A November 1997 symposium on the art, held at Morven, drew visitors from around the world.

In all, the Kluge-Ruhe Collection contains well over 800 paintings and more than 700 artifacts. The gift also includes Kluge's library on Aboriginal art and a detailed electronic catalog. The University will mount an exhibit of pieces from the collection in the spring of 1998.

For more information, contact Carol Wood, Director (News Services), or Clorisa Phillips, Special Projects Consultant, University of Virginia Foundation, at tel: (804) 982-4864.

Dan Grogan for the University of Virginia

## AUSTRALIAN ARTIST PETER DALY FEATURED IN SOLO EXHIBITION



Peter Daly  
*Ceramic Mask*  
(Courtesy of Arts  
Council of Greater  
Kalamazoo)

Acrylic paintings on paper by Australian artist Peter Daly are being shown at the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Daly's work has been exhibited in Australia, Europe and the United States. Daly gained his graduate diploma of visual arts from the University of New South Wales and Masters in Fine Arts from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. In 1995, Daly was featured in the highly regarded magazine *Crafts Arts International* (No. 32).

Daly's compositions of bold, layered colors contain many abstract symbols that are metaphors for the artist's documentation of social and political aspects of past and present cultures. Daly

explains that his imagery contains 'inherent values such as the traditional relationship between form, meaning and subject matter'. The formal aesthetic considerations are essential ingredients of his work, into which he plunges icons that are full of social and political metaphor. Daly goes on to say 'for me, art is a unique form of knowledge — it has its own cognitive and theoretical value, in addition to that which is aesthetic. Consequently, it engages the intellect as it stirs the imagination'.

Daly's exhibition will be on display until April 1998 at the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo.

For gallery hours and further information please contact Lisa Williams at tel: (616) 342 5059, fax: (616) 342 6531 or email: [kazooart@kazooart.org](mailto:kazooart@kazooart.org). The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo gallery is located at 100 West Michigan Avenue, Suite 280, Kalamazoo. Gallery hours are Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm.

## THE MONTSERRAT GALLERY PRESENTS PORTRAYALS, AN EXHIBITION BY AUSTRALIAN ARTIST SUSAN DOROTHEA WHITE

Susan Dorothea White is an Australian painter, sculptor and printmaker. Ms White works in a variety of media including acrylic on panel, watercolor, collage, sandstone, wood, bronze, mixed media, lithography and blockprinting.

Ms White's exhibition is entitled *Portrayals*, since the common theme of her work is portrayal of the human image: She uses facial expressions and hand gestures to describe the human condition in her portraits and narrative paintings.

She also creates visual images of symbols and idioms by portraying them in the human form such as the bronze sculpture *The Soprano*, based on the treble clef symbol. Fantasy and irony are also important features of her art. The satirical painting *The Seven Deadly Sins of Modern Times*, is an example of her narrative work whereby the traditional sins are reversed and each of the seven sections are represented by a noxious species introduced to Australia. Based on a female character from Aboriginal mythology, the bronze sculpture titled *The Spirit of the Willy-Willy Wind* is a portrait of a wind. This sculpture expresses the energy and capricious nature of a miniature tornado. A face can be seen from every angle because the one head carries three different views of the face. *The Dance of Eternity*, also a bronze sculpture, is a torso-less male figure, wound in the endless surface of a moebius strip, and symbolizing the energy of continuous movement. *Recovery After Brain*

*Surgery* is a powerful self portrait describing the artist's experience from surgery to recovery, expressed through different views of the subject, the operating hands of the surgeons, the supporting hand of the visitor, views of the ward, wilting kangaroo paws and so on.

Ms White was born in Adelaide, South Australia in 1941. She graduated from the South Australian School of Art and has participated in group and solo exhibitions since 1957. Since 1980 she has represented Australia in more than 50 international exhibitions and biennales in Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Norway, The Netherlands, Switzerland, England, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Korea, Japan, the Republic of China, Brazil, Canada and the USA. Many honors have been bestowed upon her and she has received numerous awards over the years, among them the *John Gero Painting Prize*, Macquarie University Australia and *The Mornington Peninsula Print Purchase Award*. Her work is in public, private and museum collections worldwide. Ms White is cited in *Who's Who in International Art*.

*Portrayals* will be on view from September 11 to 30 at the Montserrat Gallery 584 Broadway, New York. The exhibition opening will take place on September 17 between 6.00 and 8.00 pm.

For further details contact the Montserrat Gallery at tel: (212) 941 8899, fax: (212) 274 1717 or email: [montse@mindspring.com](mailto:montse@mindspring.com).

## EXHIBITIONS



Courtesy of the artist